

1 step forward, 1 step back

Posted by bahava - 22 Oct 2009 05:26

howdy gentlemen.

I've been lurking around this site for about a month now (thank you anonymous yid for emailing me!) and i figure its finally time i post a bit about my experiences.

i just made it to level 3 in the 90 day journey. i'm 14 days clean! a record for the past 12 months, yishtabach shemo ;D ;D ;D

my main problems seem to be the r"l standard P and M issues. i'm in my lower 20s, single, in college.

steps i've taken that are working great so far:

1. working through the 2 handbooks
2. stepping out of the room and praying for 10 seconds if inappropriate content appears on my screen, no matter how it got there.
3. daily emails
4. daily 5 minute seder in Esah Einai, a new sefer on shmiras enayim
5. prozac (been on for a year)
6. weekly appointment with therapist, discussing this among other issues
7. keeping the door open when web surfing in room by myself
8. internet filter
9. praying for help with these issues, for myself and klal yisroel
10. helping a friend work out his issues in these areas

11. reading through these forums and seeing holy jews in much worse situations break free!
what a geshmak to see how much hope there is!

12. keeping track on the 90 day program

13. trying to watch my eyes outside in general

ok. holy cow. thats a long list. this is really my number one priority right now. and its working!!!

here's where i can use some advice:

historically, i'd fall 1-2 times a week. getting to a week clean is a challenge. when i do get there once in a while, i tend to fall on that very day. sometimes i'll tell myself "wow! you've made it a whole week! and you're feeling totally in control!" and shortly after, i'll fall.

last Tishrei, i went a whole month clean (first time in over 5 years!!!!!!!) and fell like on day 31.

i've come up with 2 possible explanations for this pattern of falling after milestones:

1. i feel like i'm in control, so i let down my guard, allowing the yetzer to strike.
2. i feel like i've accomplished something, so i 'reward' myself with pleasure

so how do i combat this pattern?

i've made it 2 weeks now pretty bump-free, yishtabach shemo. probably because of the constant chizuk i'm getting throughout the day (see list above).

here's my fear:

i'll hit 30 days, and fall back. c'v. or maybe even 90, and fall back.

how do i break this pattern? anyone with similar experience?

thank you so much. i love all of you. and i pray that you'll all break free.

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back

Posted by Elya K - 20 Dec 2009 20:40

The best way to avoid the 1 month slip is to "bookend." Have people to call or write before the 30 days and after the 30 days. Make a list of things you can do around those days to occupy your time and your mind.

Elya

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back

Posted by bahava - 20 Dec 2009 20:41

...and I just had a slip.

And I was saved by the chasadim of the Ribono Shel Olam.

I don't want to fall back. I've come to far!!!

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back

Posted by 7yipol - 20 Dec 2009 21:22

So CALL someone

NOW!

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back
Posted by bahava - 20 Dec 2009 21:31

I did. Chasdei Hashem saved me.

I'm safe for now.

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back
Posted by 7yipol - 20 Dec 2009 21:36

Baruch Hashem!

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back
Posted by Kollel Guy - 20 Dec 2009 22:20

Hey b'ahava,

I just read all 4 pages of your thread, and was holding my breath the entire time. I was terrified this was going to end like some not such happy stories. You really suprised me. Most people at this point in the story would be discussing how to get up from their last dreadful fall. But I gotta tell you, I'm really impressed. I have such nachas seeing another jew with such determination! I don't know if you realize this, but you have been put through one type of test after another, and you just keep raising the Shem H-shem over everything that insists that it has what it takes to separate a jew from his creator. You are truly an inspiration for us all. You must have a very special neshama.

Being that this is so, please don't think you can take it easy. On the contrary. There is an enormous lack of high-ranking soldiers in the fight for Ratzon H-shem, and whenever anybody looks like a promising individual, he is raised to greater responsibilities - **very quickly**. Yes, the

feelings of despair **will** chase you, and you **will** find yourself lacking any incentive at times. These are the places where the intense battles are fought. There is nothing greater than a Jew proclaiming "H-SHEM HU HA'ELOKIM!!!" when the **only** thing he has to motivate him, is his raw knowledge that "H-shem is King, and his will is for me to be strong" and nothing else.

It's not every day that such a Kiddush H-shem is available to us, and we really have to take advantage of those moments. There's a reason it is so special to keep Torah & Mitzvos in darkness. Because it's **hard**. It takes REAL dedication and will. But it's precisely those moments which build us more than anything else. Your someone we all look up to now, hate to sound cliché, but HANG IN THERE!!!

KG

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back
Posted by bahava - 21 Dec 2009 15:00

Guys, we need to talk.

I made a big mistake.

I ignored the signs.

I violated my fences.

I refused to get out of my rut.

I made light of the severity of the sin.

And I didn't respect my addiction.

I wish I could turn the clock back half an hour. More than anything in the world.

I'm so sorry to you all. I've let you down. I've let myself down. And I've let my father in shamayim down.

I've fallen.

For the first time in 74 days. I've fallen.

I'm ashamed. I'm sorry. I hope you all will forgive me.

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back

Posted by bahava - 21 Dec 2009 15:04

What am I supposed to do now? What am I supposed to feel?

I have such a rush of emotions right now.

I'm angry at myself for being so stupid.

I'm sad. I feel hopeless. I'm crying over a sin for the first time in my life.

I'm thinking about what went wrong.

I'm thinking about how to do teshuva.

I'm thinking about how to break the news to my friend, and how I will ever approach my Rebbi again.

There's too much in my head right now.

What do I do? Do I force myself to go to sleep and think about this later? It feels like that's what got me here in the first place.

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back

Posted by Kollel Guy - 21 Dec 2009 15:37

Why don't you check out the depressed persons chill spot.... Right now you just need to get sane again.

You won't be in your right mind for a few days, so don't even bother trying to fix what you did wrong, what caused you to mess up. Right now just pretend it didn't happen, and place 100% of your focus on not messing up again, because one fall is reasonably reversable-ish, more than that - it's still possible, but gets a little more complicated.

Your still our man!!

A bajillion clean days is only 1/2 of the greatness. The other 1/2 is getting up after a fall and starting again, without letting the fall turn into a disastros en largas proportionos.

Remember, those 74 didn't go anywhere, their yours to keep forever. Now your going to outdo even that. Do yourself a favor, and don't beat yourself up, because as of now, the voice won't be that of the Yetzer Tov. He only speaks clearly - AFTER your already up.

We still love you, we all went through this, we all got up - so will you!!

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back

Posted by Dov - 21 Dec 2009 18:06

Dear, sweet b'ahava,

Even though my general approach to this entire issue is very different than yours, I'll leave that and my opinions completely out here, be"H, and here are some thoughts that may be for you: (all mine are in blue print, yours are in black)

What am I supposed to do now? What am I supposed to feel?

What you feel *is* what you feel. Facing yourself - screwy feelings and all - is always, always,

always a tremendous gift. Even if your feelings are still what you might call "stupid".

On the other hand, feelings are *just feelings* and not reality, as my sponsor (annoyingly) says to me when I take myself *and what i am feeling* too seriously. Sometimes, like when you realize things like There's too much in my head right now it's a really bad time to focus on changing our feelings. It may not sound very nice, but: Too bad. This *is* how you are feeling. But hey, that's all. The way we feel about things is not necessarily the *truth* about things, at all! Admitting that is huge for me, so I'm sharing it with you.

I'm sad. I feel hopeless. I'm crying over a sin for the first time in my life. Wow. You may be having an 'episode' of some true yir'as cheit for the first time in your life. I'd give you a hug (with **Uri** if possible), a mazel tov, and hug you again...if you didn't mind, that is....

I'm thinking about how to break the news to my friend, and how I will ever approach my Rebbi again. Hey - what we *did* is not going to change. We did it. Not facing or admitting it will not help anyone, least of all *ourselves*. Yeah, I feel like running and hiding from myself every time i screw up in some way....but that's just a feeling, not reality. I do not really need to do that, at all. Admitting the truth to a safe person is often the very best thing we can do for ourselves, in every respect - including helping us *feel* better! So, given all the facts, you *are* a **lucky guy** right now.

What do I do? Do I force myself to go to sleep and think about this later? It feels like that's what got me here in the first place.

Yow! A zinger! Surely, it was! I'll rephrase with some help from an AA old-timer, "We can't think ourselves into right living. We can only live ourselves into right thinking." You seem to have the same experience.

Ashrecha, b'ahava!

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back
Posted by the.guard - 21 Dec 2009 21:13

I quoted you and Reb Dov in today's Chizuk e-mail... (the post where you asked how to get out of the Rut and Dov responded how we are still like babies, just beginning sanity... But I loved this part of Dov's post best:

I cannot accept that Hashem brought you through this problem just to get you out of it so you could just move on from here as though nothing happened. He could have protected you from getting into the problem in the first place then, no?

Listen closely, my sweet Yid: To quote Rav Noach Weinberg, "*He found a way to get your attention*", probably because he was missing you a whole lot. This *IS* your trip, not just an accident He "saved" you from.

And my dear Yid, here's some more helpful perspective:

One of the most meaningful things that we can take out of a fall (after a long clean streak like yours) - **besides** for brushing up on our defenses and strengthening our barriers, is simply the humility that we get when we realize that in spite of how well we were doing, we were able to fall - just like that. And that humility renews our connection with Hashem. The more we feel how much we NEED Hashem's constant mercy and help each day, the more connected and dependant we are on Him.

This *kesher* is so precious, that sometimes for that alone Hashem brings a Tzadik to fall.

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back
Posted by bahava - 21 Dec 2009 22:21

So I took a shot of Vodka and forced myself to sleep. Not that my dreams were much of an escape.

But I'm more in control of my thoughts now. Or at least more numb.

The main thing coming through now is sadness. Like mourning sadness. I'm not sure I've ever

been sad like this in my life. I don't remember ever crying from sadness before, and now the tears just flow.

I suppose that's a good thing. 74 days ago, I couldn't get sad over this. Only frustrated and depressed. My attitude is more mature now, because I know this is just a bump in the road. A terrible bump. But one I know I can overcome. I'm not going to let this setback ruin me. I have too much to live for.

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back
Posted by imtrying25 - 21 Dec 2009 22:24

I have too much to live for.
Truer words couldnt of been spoken. Were all so sorry to hear about your fall, b'ahava. But dont forget, to Hashem every second counts even if its not consecutive.

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back
Posted by the.guard - 21 Dec 2009 22:35

b'ahava, **I can only offer you a great bug HUG together with Dov.**

You are such a sweet and precious Jew.

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