

Dear fellow anxiety sufferers

Posted by transforming - 28 Oct 2019 04:08

Dear fellow anxiety sufferers,

First some of my background: I am in my twenties, and I am blessed by HKB"H with a good life KA"H. I am completely Shomer Torah U'Mitzvos, have a job and live in a Frum community.

I have first become exposed to Shmutz five years ago. Without getting in to details, my very first exposure to Shmutz took place after I was gruesomely hurt (in a figurative sense) by an individual, who did not even intend to hurt me, yet did so unintentionally. That event led me to Shmutz, which eventually led me to five years of sporadic Shmutz consumption.

I joined GYE nine or ten months ago, and was encouraged to finally open my own forum by fellow member 360gye.

Now that I shared my basic background, let me share with you what I am looking for on this forum;

Over the course of the last few years, I easily detected specifically what triggers me to fall, and what causes me to stay afloat.

Ever since I was a young child I suffered from unreasonable anxiety. The smallest of life incidents terrified me from a young age. For example; I always lived and continue to live in utter fear that any of my immediate family members may die any moment unexpectedly, or may go broke and starve among other fears. Circumstantially, I have no reason to believe this whatsoever Baruch Hashem, yet I cannot get rid of these fears and dozens of similar fears.

Naturally, I have consciously and subconsciously tailored my day-to-day lifestyle to curb these fears, and thankfully, I do pretty well on days that I busy, and am well fed and well rested.

However, I cannot escape my anxiety at various times of the year, and upon various occurrences. For example, Yom Tov can be tense for several reasons, and my anxiety is always exacerbated around Yom Tov time. Similarly, I usually become particularly anxious days or sometimes even weeks before I travel.

Since I have been exposed to Shmutz, I have had some pretty long clean streaks, without falling whatsoever. I have gone as long as 7.5 months without falling whatsoever. The overwhelming majority of my falls was a result of my anxiety [only some of my falls were a result of loneliness and / or boredom]. When I would be in Yeshiva doing well and socializing with others, I would go months without falling, and shortly before Bein Hazemanim would begin, my anxiety would kick in, and I would fall, sometimes even three or four times a day. Then, I would continue to fall Bein Hazemanim due to the heightened anxiety throughout Bein Hazemanim, and then I would return to Yeshiva and be clean for months, until my next anxiety phase kicked in.

This pattern continues in my working life. When I go to work and succeed, I can go months without even urges to act out, yet as soon as life throws me a curveball, and I my anxiety kicks in, I fall.

While I have never been officially diagnosed with anxiety, I am confident [based on several factors] that I suffer from GAD (a form of anxiety).

So dear fellow anxiety sufferers; if you can relate to my nightmares, please help!!! I refuse to surrender to my Yetzer Hora, yet I need a hand...

Thank you, and can't wait to hear from you

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Re: Dear fellow anxiety sufferers

Posted by Need a yeshua - 30 Oct 2019 03:10

Just a quick point. Medication doesn't treat the underlying issues. For that you get therapy. Medication helps the symptoms.

you mentioning the opioid epidemic and drug addiction. These drugs are not what are used for addiction at all. But like with therapy, you need a competent doctor to prescribe them.

I feel bad that you have the anxiety and most of the tips and suggestions won't work for you. I hope you find something that works for you. Good luck!

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Re: Dear fellow anxiety sufferers
Posted by David26fr - 04 Nov 2019 09:05

Concerning mindfulness, you can see this link from ColinColin :
www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/beyond-self-destructive-behavior/201601/mindfulness-in-the-treatment-self-destructive-behavior

As he said : in mindfulness, you treat the urge to fall as an external thought...

Concerning Rav Fanger, you can find shiurim translated in english at Hidabroot.com

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Re: Dear fellow anxiety sufferers
Posted by transforming - 12 Mar 2020 04:00

Dear community of GYE,

Hello,

Thankfully, the last five months have been incredibly successful for me. I am just three days away from being 150 days clean (!!!). This is the second to longest clean streak that I had since I exposed to shmutz for the first time. I look forward to making this clean streak my longest streak ever, when I will – with the help of Hashem – reach 225 clean days.

My success can largely be attributed to my full schedule and the general consistency and

stability of the winter season, both of which left little room for any anxiety and depression.

But sadly, over the last few days, I find myself losing grip. No; I did not fall, and I barely slipped. I just feel that I am losing grip. My anxiety is heavily kicking in, and my Yetzer Hora is doing exactly what it does every single time I have an anxiety episode; it is telling me that the world is gloomy, the future is dark, I am both helpless and can do nothing to avert the darkness, and I might as well just throw in the towel on frumkeit in general, and abstinence in particular.

My Yetzer Hora is assuring me that if I just drop frumkeit, move away to a far-flung, small and cheap non-frum town, live in an apartment alone, and have a basic job, I can live peacefully and calmly, and commit every sin in the world (rachmana litzlan) while undisturbed from the endless anxieties of living a frum lifestyle and raising a frum family.

There are numerous elements that are presently contributing to my heightened anxiety (Purim, Pesach, travel, family members etc.). Among the various elements is the coronavirus. In my mind, there are so many potential scenarios that can unfold, including, death and job loss (rachmana litzlan), amongst myself, my friends, my family and my community.

Dear fellow Yidden,

I am certain that if this phase of anxiety results in a fall (rachmana litzlan), the damage would be unbearably excruciating. Getting back to normal would be beyond difficult.

In light of that recognition, I beg those who genuinely relate to my struggles, to please inspire me and motivate me to navigate my way through this phase, so that I can leave this challenging phase unharmed...

Hashem should shower each and every member on GYE with guidance and clarity, so that everyone can leave their own challenges behind them for once and for all.

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Re: Dear fellow anxiety sufferers

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 12 Mar 2020 11:16

lyh you will pull through. Anxiety can be debilitating but not when you have chevra holding your hand! Reach out to the oilam here. I also would propose that someone like yourself that BH is doing bli ayin hora so well should reach out to help others. You have experience to share and can definitely sympathize with others who struggle. It is very helpful for one's self to help another struggler. There is an element of accountability/responsibility coupled with a sense of accomplishment. Hatzlocha!

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Re: Dear fellow anxiety sufferers

Posted by Snowflake - 12 Mar 2020 14:17

One of Freud's first patients was called the "Wolf Man". It seems he achieved little success with him by using his techniques on one hand. On the other hand, the patient kept coming to sessions for years. It seems that, the mere fact that the "Wolf Man" was "lightening his load" by telling Freud his problems, made him feel better and more relaxed. This illustrates an important point in therapy. A big part of it is "venting out" feelings, experiences, etc. That can certainly improve your mental health.

But also I can say from personal experience, more than any technique, the therapist is a 3rd person in the story. He usually "catches you" on your stories, experiences, etc. He sees what you don't see. He says see? You're doing that again. He's more of an eye opener. He disentangles strong and old knots in our minds, like irrational beliefs (even according to Judaism). Personally, it was very liberating for me, all the therapy I did.

Finally it seems to me that you're avoiding your anxiety triggers, which is great. But what happens when they come to you and you're unprepared? Also will you live your whole life in avoidance? Sounds like very stressing to me. Therapy can help you make peace with your past and uncover the underlying reasons for your anxiety. Think of the therapist not so much as a doctor, but as a teacher that will help you discover yourself and guide you. You're 100% right that you should strive to find the best match. On the other hand, if one has a heart problem for instance C"V, does one not go to the doctor at all, since the doc could make a medical mistake?(And I reckon there should be a lot of 'em) Sounds irrational to me, but everyone is entitled to their opinion.

From what I read of your posts, I strongly encourage you to seek professional help. You'd be surprised how much it could make you happier and live an easier life. Try it. If you don't like it you can always quit or change therapists.

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