

Starting Again...

Posted by Lou - 21 Dec 2020 22:15

Hi, I have posted in other threads but just wanted to start this new one to get this of my chest. I guess i am venting more than anything else. To make a long story short, I have been a struggler for years with these issues. This includes watching and also chatting with online relationships etc. BH over the past few years due a variety of reasons things have ~~greatly~~ improved in this area. Don't get me wrong. It wasn't fixed but the issues were less serious (trying to avoid triggering {embarrassing} details. As it still was certainly an issue eventually I recently joined GYE and working on the 90 days etc. I have started and failed more than once but I understand that is part of the process. What is really getting to me and is actually confusing to me is that my most recent fall was to a level worse than I have had in a few years! In other words, when I was working on the issues less officially i was staying away from that level. Now that I am working on really cleaning up my act I have stooped back to my really low levels Why?? It definitely was some Hashgacha Pratis in this as I was faced with a nisayon I have avoided in the past. Is Hashem telling me that now that I am stronger I should be able to deal with nisayon?? Well, I didn't...

Any feedback is welcome!

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Re: Starting Again...

Posted by Lou - 04 Oct 2021 03:31

Been slipping and sliding...falling here and there.

BH nothing drastic, and I still see an improvement from my pre GYE days. However, it is not good. I want to bring back the tahara and the enjoyable life I had during my 100+ days streak.

I am not really saying anything of substance. Just sharing what is going on with me. I don't post much lately. Not really sure why and maybe that is part of the issue. I just don't have that same fire in me to post as I had back then. I think posting and helping others was very beneficial.

Either way, thank you for all for just all being there and posting your own stories. It really is what keeps me going sometimes.

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Re: Starting Again...

Posted by Captain - 04 Oct 2021 13:16

It's good to hear from you Lou

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Re: Starting Again...

Posted by Lou - 07 Nov 2021 19:52

I have come to the (obvious) conclusion that GYE as a spectator sport is not worth all that much to me. If anything it perhaps is the opposite. Does that mean I am committing to get much more involved immediately? No, but the first step is awareness of the problem....

You guys are absolutely amazing!!

Lou

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Re: Starting Again...

Posted by Lou - 14 Nov 2021 20:43

Just sharing my thoughts.... It is a bit lengthy and detailed... I hope it makes sense

I work in the field of behavior. Without going into detail, we often categorize behavior in 2 ways. One is the topography (what it actually looks like) and one is the function (what you are looking to gain). Two behaviors can look identical yet have different functions. Vice versa 2 behaviors can look totally different but have same function. For example 2 kids misbehaving in class can look totally the same but have totally different functions for their behavior. One needs attention and one just wants to escape his tasks. Or 2 kids can be doing totally different behaviors yet both are just seeking attention. Generally, we try to treat the function rather than the topography.

I hope the above makes some sense to some people!

I have noticed with myself that although my actual behaviors are much "better" than years ago I am still doing things for the same reason. In other words I was watching and communicating in a far more detrimental way in the past. Now BH, my falls are usually limited to things that are lighter in nature. (I am leaving out details of both types of behaviors intentionally for a few reasons), however it still is that same pleasure seeking (or perhaps escape behavior). It is still serving the same function for me. So am I really any better than before?? Maybe I am just as bad as before? Or maybe the fact that I have it made so challenging to get the really bad stuff is in itself something to celebrate? Or perhaps a little of both?

I am posing this question with the exclusion of the 100+ day clean steak that I had ,as then I do truly believe that I was doing well.

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Re: Starting Again...

Posted by Ish MiGrodno - 15 Nov 2021 06:52

Rabbeinu Lou Shlit"a,

This argument (*i.e., it still is the same pleasure seeking escape behavior, it still serves the same function....so am I really any better than before?*) is super dangerous, as it can be used to convince a baal teshuva that he did nothing special...After all, isn't the ecstasy of tahara "self serving?" Isn't such a life far more pleasurable? So you are the same hedonist regardless of whether you are dirty or clean..

..so my humble Grodnian advice is to break loose from the analysis paralysis and start living again by improving your behavior. Even if it is ultimately to give yourself a better life; I promise you that Hashem will be happy nonetheless.

Today is you first day en route to 200! At least!

With Litvishe friendship and Chasidishe varmekit ~ IMG

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Re: Starting Again...

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 15 Nov 2021 12:10

I humbly join the Grodnian advice - stop thinking so much. Fake it till you make it works for everything else.....

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Re: Starting Again...

Posted by Lou - 16 Nov 2021 04:49

[Ish MiGrodno wrote on 15 Nov 2021 06:52:](#)

Rabbeinu Lou Shlit"a,

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Thank you very much for your insight.

Just to clarify,when I refer to pleasure seeking behaviors that are lighter,I am not referring to eating too many cookies. That was an issue I had when I was really clean and worked through at that time. I am referring to behaviors that really need to be worked on and eradicated,however the way the behavior looks is more socially acceptable and less extreme in nature than had been years ago.

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Re: Starting Again...

Posted by Lou - 28 Nov 2021 03:19

I had some slips a few days ago,but BH I am back on track now...

I had some thoughts to share with the oilam but will have to wait till I have more time...

Hatzlocha to all

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Re: Starting Again...

Posted by Lou - 28 Nov 2021 16:45

I had more slips last night. I took a concrete step to avoid this slip in the future. Still requires internal work,but I took care of the external temptation.

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Re: Starting Again...

Posted by Lou - 28 Nov 2021 16:54

I had a thought that I wanted to share on here...I recently noticed a family member that BH I have no attraction to, dressing in a not Tznius fashion. It was nothing major,but I noticed it. It looked disgusting to me. This was a real eye opener for me. In other words,if I remove the Yetzer Harah aspect from any lady that is provocative to me,it probably would look just as disgusting. I am just so conditioned to the lust and taivah viewpoint that I see it as attractive for a female animal to publicly show her udders (Took that term from R Miller)or other body parts to all of us.It is really distasteful and disgusting! It is just a challenge to see it in that light. A mighty challenge!

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Re: Starting Again...

Posted by DavidT - 28 Nov 2021 17:08

Rav Avigdor Miller on Women In Public

Should women take pains to look good in public because they are the daughters of Hakodosh Boruch Hu?

A:

The answer is that women should be out of the public sight as much as possible. Now, this may sound queer to you; you'll say it's reactionary and old-fashioned but I'm telling you how very important it is. As much as possible women should be not noticeable in public. It just can't be helped because that's human nature and they are causing harm. And therefore, when they must go out they should be dressed *b'tznius* and not necessarily attractive.

You should be *tzanua* and respectable but you don't have to be attractive. Attractive on the street is a great mistake – the word 'attractive' is the wrong word to use for women. They *shouldn't* be attractive. They should be respectable and dignified; but they should mind their own business and not try to have such an appearance that will cause people to look at them. That's very important. I cannot overemphasize that.

However at home is a different story; in the house a woman should go out of her way to win the favor of her husband – and don't say it's superfluous. If necessary she should always have a *sheitel* on whenever he is at home. She should always look her best at home when her husband is there. And there's no question that Hakodosh Boruch Hu will reward her for that.

Sometimes we need to use the approach from the gemara below as well...

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Re: Starting Again...

Posted by Lou - 28 Nov 2021 17:09

One more thought... Sorry I guess I finally have some time so just getting it all off my chest!

I was thinking that one can compare living a "clean" life to Shabbos. How is this? Most of us on here enjoy Shabbos. We enjoy the seudos and food etc, but I think many of us also enjoy the break from the world and it's temptations. We hopefully enjoy Davening, singing Zemiros, family time etc. It is safe to say that for most Frum Jews it is the highlight of the week. However, if you try to describe it to someone that never experienced it, it is almost impossible! "You are not allowed to do so many things and it is enjoyable!!? It doesn't make sense" and it really doesn't. Except that it does! Because there is nothing like it in the world, it can't be explained.

Same with cleaning up our lives. I will be the first to ask "Are you telling me that if I deprive myself of all the enjoyable stuff I like to watch and act upon etc etc etc I will be happier and enjoy life more!??". I love this stuff. It keeps me smiling and makes my day or night so enjoyable" Logically the argument may make sense, however anyone who has had a taste of living cleanly can tell you that somehow the truth is that life is soooo much more enjoyable and fulfilling without the garbage. (Admittedly this is even more true for a married man). I have only had tastes of the cleanliness here and there. Some longer (100+) than others. I can only imagine the taste of true freedom.

Thank you for listening

Lou

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Re: Starting Again...

Posted by BT Again - 28 Nov 2021 18:24

Amazing post! Many people today don't understand how true enjoyment in life can only be achieved through restraint, but as religious Jews we know this. Having things not allowed on Shabbos is what opens up the day to do what truly brings us joy. A lot of folks think that true happiness is scrolling through social media on your phone, and couldn't imagine 25 hours without it... I feel bad for them. Same goes for how much of society is focused on "sexual liberation" and that doing whatever you want in this area is how you enjoy it. Sadly I used to believe this before I became religious and did things I regret, but I know from that experience that being married is a million times better. Real life is waiting for us!!!

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Re: Starting Again...

Posted by Lou - 01 Dec 2021 21:29

I am restarting my count... It wasn't terrible, but it was unacceptable...

I don't see any major reason to go into the details of my stupidity.

Hatzlocha to all

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