

Striving for Excellence

Posted by excellence - 23 Jan 2021 21:36

Striving for Excellence

Introduction

I've been waiting for some time to introduce myself. I wanted to be 'well on the way' before I posted my own journey, I feel more comfortable this way. I must of discovered GYE I believe at least a good 6 years ago, if not more, but it was a mere glance here and there. Over the past 2 years I started reading up much more on GYE, I printed the handbook & read up a lot, however I did not become a member. Nearly half a year ago I was overlooking a friend whilst he was looking at his emails & I noticed that he was signed up to the daily Chizuk emails. Being that GYE was on my mind anyway it gave me the boost to go ahead and sign up, (he doesn't even know what a Zechus he has -perhaps it's you!). Last Rosh Hashono I made a Kaboloh to be more active by using GYE's platform/resources regarding my personal battle with this struggle. You may have seen my posts here and there, & BH this Kaboloh has given me a renewed lease of life, mostly in regards to my perspective on this battle, how to fight, and on marriage in general.

The idea I have in mind by posting my story, which I see as pretty simple and basic, is to inspire all those who lurk around here but don't feel that their struggles are anything too big in particular, perhaps rather basic, or those who find that they keep telling themselves "this will be the last time I fall", to please take my advice and get out your shell by speaking to someone at GYE, or at least post on the forum, (because we won't let go of you!). It makes no difference where you're holding on the spectrum of this struggle but if you struggle even just with mzl, even if it's only at intervals, but you find that you don't seem able to totally break free, then I beg of you PLEASE PLEASE reach out. The professionals here have so much to offer and so much want to help, why wouldn't you make that first step towards your own happiness/ Menuchas Hanefesh?

Many times the question has been asked, 'why are there so few people active on the forum, relative to the 30,000 users signed up to GYE?', I believe that the answer may be, because many of us feel we don't struggle as strong as those on the forum, or we're more comfortable battling this on our own. We lurk around for Chizuk but remain silent. Oh, how foolish, don't we see we're not managing on our own, are we not desperate just to break free/grow up, etc. Let's stop living in denial that every time we fall will be the last time, or that at the next stage I will be clean or any other one of the Satan's tactics. This is also a call to the hundreds of Bochrin out there. DON'T WAIT, ACT KNOW. You're still young, you have such beautiful lives ahead of you, why wait. Sorry for venting but it's on my heart. I was like this for so many years, always excusing myself that at the next stage, it will be a thing of the past, this went on for 11 or so years, until I just picked up the phone to GYE who gave me incredible practical tools on how to break free. Instead of spending your days with patchwork, like kenosos, they will guide you

through and show you the correct perspective. Once again I Beg & plead of you, don't just sit back- Do something.

Part one, coming shortly...

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Re: Striving for Excellence
Posted by excellence - 27 Jan 2021 13:31

Part 4

For some reason, even though I'm from a frum Yeshivish home, with parents who are involved in Chinuch, but somehow with me -their pride and Tzadik- there was no suspicion of me doing anything naughty, to the extent that when it came to Bein Hazmanim I found myself a job which not only involved working all day on an unfiltered laptop, but I was allowed to bring it home and take it with me to my bedroom, lock the door, spend many hours on it, but seemingly it didn't enter anyone's mind that perhaps, just perhaps it may not be so safe. I mean, was I waking up so late in the morning because I went to bed early? Why was I sleeping 14 hours a night? Or maybe just maybe I was spending my time viewing ?? ??? ??? ???????? The only good thing I remember is that I always had some sort of battle with myself before I gave in. This was my first exposure to porn. Of course the intense chemical rush/pleasure, was a way I could enter a new world where I left my real life behind.

All this just led to me living more in denial with myself. I was always ruling out my life, telling myself that until now I was bad, but from now I will be good. You can imagine what I went back to Zeman feeling like.... This took place one Bein hazmanim after the other. At this point I had much more to fantasize about, more things I saw aroused me which subsequently led to more mzl. **Once again I must point out that at the same time, I was learning away, living in denial.**

Part 5 coming shortly

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Re: Striving for Excellence
Posted by excellence - 28 Jan 2021 19:44

Part 5

I was back to Yeshiva for a fresh Zeman of Shtieging, but at some point I ended up in yet another physical relationship with another friend which ended up in a disaster of uncomfortable feelings between us, however this didn't put a stop to it. This just goes to show that during a moment of lust, nothing else matters. Even though I knew it would just lead to more friction, but somehow during a moment of lust this just didn't matter. (BH I had the courage at different points and asked these friends for a formal mechila, to get the guilt off my chest.) At that point my need for lust was much stronger. B.H I never had access to internet during Zeman, but I figured out during Bein Hazmanim, that lo and behold at home we have unfiltered internet....., yes unfiltered internet in one of the community's leading role models home.... This led to yet another relationship once back in Yeshiva.

I would like to point out, that I don't believe I struggle with ssa, it's just that I was so desperate for 'love' and a true healthy emotional relationship, that this was the only way it could manifest itself as a Bochor, as I had no option of girls in real life. I have one memory already around Bar Mitzva age (perhaps a little younger) sleeping over at a relative with a school friend, where I tried numerous times to give him physical touch. In later years I had watched some g.y p..n which geared me in that direction too. Today B.H I don't have this struggle, unless I positively decide to fantasize about it, (rarely happens) as then it triggers memories of the pleasures I had back then, or if I see an extremely handsome boy I can get a niggling feeling, but I easily ignore the urge. Unfortunately during my Yeshiva years where my tension caused everything to be a trigger, then even watching roommates in their undervest was a trigger, or shopping online for men's underwear. Etc. Unless anyone believes otherwise I would not call myself ssa.

Thankfully I got married young. No, my struggles didn't stop. All I thought about as a chosson was the bedroom.... Unfortunately no one taught me that lust is lust, even with one's own wife. Life continued, I kept promising myself that at the next stage it will stop, but it didn't, so I spent the next few years struggling/constantly battling with mainly mzl, (and p..n when had access, which really wasn't often), or searching for anything inappropriate on my filtered pc. It's fascinating how much one can access on a device that has a strong filter. I would like to open another thread in the bb forum Bez"H reflecting on what I've learnt regarding married life and this struggle.

Part 6 coming shortly

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Re: Striving for Excellence

Posted by excellence - 31 Jan 2021 06:36

Part 6

I'm going to cut my journal short, as I've written everything I want to write about my personal history. Fast forwarding a bunch of years with ups & downs until recently. I had basically come to terms with the fact that even though I must keep battling this, I also have to learn to live with it, and instead put my focus on other areas of Avodas Hashem as I am unlikely to ever totally break free.

But then a miracle, called **GYE**, became an active part of my life, and after speaking to them, and guaranteeing me that if I make this fight my priority/focus I really can break free, and using resources given, I BH now am over 90 days. In the past I had tried all sorts of kenasos, I tried the 'Taphsic method' for over a year and even though it was helpful, it didn't change me. I was missing the guidance I now receive BH.

I have had a number of observations during this stage of my journey, which I would like to post here. I will continue using this thread to share my thoughts, in addition to observations that I'm sure will come my way.

I want to end with the point I started with, please please help yourself by making that one step, to find which gye option works for you, because you are guaranteed to find a method that works for you. We all want to help others in this area, so if you can please post on the forum- this is your chance to help others, and yourself at the same time too! There is no one who can't find help here.

Pls feel free to comment here or pm me anytime.

At the same time I want to express my deep heartfelt gratitude to all the Malachim of GYE, for giving meaning to my life and elevating one another in an indescribable way. May HKBH strengthen all of us, and repay you with happiness and Menuchas henefesh to continue helping others. R' Elafants words constantly resonate within me, describing GYE's founders as the R' Ahron Kotler & Sara Schenirer of our generation.

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With Love & admiration,

Excellence

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Re: Striving for Excellence

Posted by excellence - 22 Feb 2021 06:43

I fell twice in the last 6 hours..... after 119 days. I could blame it on many causes, but who cares. I could spend my life diagnosing causes, but that won't cure me. I'm starting again my 90 day count right here right now. I won't give in, NO WAY. ODAAT

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Re: Striving for Excellence

Posted by anothershot - 22 Feb 2021 11:30

It's amazing that you are catching yourself & starting over right away!

We are all behind you!

Hatzlacha!

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Re: Striving for Excellence

Posted by Grant400 - 22 Feb 2021 22:25

[excellence wrote on 22 Feb 2021 06:43:](#)

I fell twice in the last 6 hours..... after 119 days. I could blame it on many causes, but who cares. I could spend my life diagnosing causes, but that won't cure me. I'm starting again my 90 day count right here right now. I won't give in, NO WAY. ODAAT

How do you feel now? Was the pleasure worth it?

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Re: Striving for Excellence
Posted by Zedj - 23 Feb 2021 00:02

an excuse may be valid but still not a good reason.

I can't wait to celebrate all the milestones through 90 and beyond!

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Re: Striving for Excellence
Posted by excellence - 28 Feb 2021 16:59

Hi everyone, I'm back to continue logging my journey. I'm eternally grateful to all of you. If not for you I would have never made it to around 120 consecutive days, before I slipped.

Many times the issue of perfectionism has been addressed here on the forum. I would like to add my input on the issue and how to channel this in the right direction. All feedback will be greatly appreciated.

Excellence vs Perfectionism

Part a

As I have written earlier in this thread, as a child I grew up with a large emotional void inside myself, I was lacking a lot of encouragement, recognition, compliments and positive motivation. In fact it wasn't just that I lacked this, I grew up with a lot of tension too. Subsequently I was subconsciously yearning to fill this emotional void. I needed love, warmth and most importantly unconditional love.

Out of desperation, this need inside me was causing me (unknowingly) to realize that my achievements/self-worth wasn't worthy of appreciation. Subsequently I would then do whatever I could to achieve this recognition, and when I finally did something BIG, and I got the recognition/compliment I was so much yearning for, my brain would receive a message that in

order to receive acceptance, one needs to do something perfect.

This extended to the perception of myself, that I began to slowly stop accepting myself unless I was perfect (an impossible achievement, btw), and this is how I lived my life from a young child, right through my teenage years and more. Since I actually had a good head and I was the best in my family, this only added fuel to the fire because at times I was actually able to achieve this so called 'perfection'.

This all caused me tremendous distress whilst trying to grow in Yeshiva. It also caused me to have a lot of jealousy, as A-I wasn't content with myself and B-anyone who had a Maalo I didn't have made me jealous since I wanted all maalos possible in order to attain perfectionism.

Every time I made a resolution to grow, I would tell myself that up until now everything I achieved was basically worthless but from now I will be 'perfect'. Every time I fell, my self-image came crashing down. If I learnt well a whole Seder but I wasted 15 min, or if I came late, it would bother me to no end. At the time I couldn't describe what these feeling were, but years later at therapy I realized that the reason why it bothered me so much was because as soon as things weren't perfect I lost my self-acceptance.

All the more so, battling mzl/pn was a nightmare. Every time I fell, in my eyes I was back to zero.

It's actually interesting to note that initially I refused to label myself a perfectionist (not suprising) but once I became truly in touch with myself I saw the truth.

In summary, often people who grew up with parents that were hard to please, or hard to squeeze a compliment out of, then even though the parents themselves may not be perfectionists at all, but the child may often grow up lacking self-acceptance and struggle with perfectionism.

Part b shortly...

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Re: Striving for Excellence

Posted by excellence - 28 Feb 2021 19:48

Part b

The solution:

Firstly, it's imperative to internalize the difference between striving for *shleimus/excellence*, vs *perfectionism*. Shleimus is NOT perfectionism. I am doing Chazra on the key differences between the two, join me if you wish:

1- Striving for *Shleimus* comes with an understanding that we are actually far from perfect. In actual fact, if we were perfect then we may as well dig our graves and bury ourselves today, since we no more have a purpose in this imperfect world.

2- Striving for *Shleimus* comes with an understanding that not only is there nothing wrong with being imperfect and having shortcomings, it ought to be embraced, because we are human beings. We are created with imperfections and our lifelong goal is to slowly, bit by bit work on our imperfections, and as long as we are focusing and trying to grow we should be feeling very content. We are comfortable with ourselves for who we are today.

3- Falling, only hits us so hard when it smashes the perfect image we have drawn for ourselves, but when it comes to shleimus, falling is viewed as part of the growing process to achieve heights on the long run. When a perfectionist falls, his whole self-image comes crashing down. He feels worthless. Whereas in the Torah's eyes You can fall and still be a Tzadik as the Pasuk says: *ein tzadik baaretz.....*

4- ***Shleimus* = striving to be the best possible me, NOT the perfect me. If I'm sincere and I am trying, then even if I don't see the desired results, I am still being the best possible me, and that's all that matters. What matters most in life is that I am focused on working towards certain goals. It doesn't necessarily matter whether I am reaching those goals or not. That's not up to me, but rather up to HASHEM. What's most important is whether or not I am using my Kochot properly.** If someone *lo olaynu* dies young, even though he may not achieved perfectionism in his short life, he can still have achieved shleimus, as long as he used the time he was given properly.

5- When striving for shleimus, our decisions are based on what really is the correct thing to do right know in order to be the best possible me, whereas a perfectionist may do irrational things just to achieve/attain this fleeting feeling of perfectionism.

6- When striving for shleimus, I CONSTANTLY feel good with myself, because as long as I am striving and working on myself I am bringing out the best of my human self, whereas a perfectionist is ONLY happy after achieving the results. A perfectionist's happiness never lasts long, it's a never ending race because you will never be perfect. Your not G-D. Only HE is perfect.

7- A perfectionist doesn't want to lack anything nor feel vulnerable, and will therefore often not take help from others in order to feel like they can do it on their own. However a true

relationship is give and take.

8- A perfectionist will often cover up their mistakes and always justify themselves, because they can't afford to believe they are imperfect, which ultimately refrains them from growing. Not so when striving for shleimus, we embrace mistakes, use them as tools for growth, and that's how we grow and climb the ladder of shlemius even higher.

9- Perfectionism and shleimus are both emotional drives/forces. The difference between the two is that perfectionism is driven by **negative energy**, i.e - it has to be perfect because otherwise it is bad, whereas shleimus is driven by **positive energy**, i.e I accept my shortcomings and I am working on improving them.

10- Perfectionism can never be attained, and in the rare case that it is, it only lasts for a very short amount of time, until we find something else imperfect, however shleimus gives a person a constant good feeling because as long as we are doing what we should be doing we can feel good with ourselves.

Part c coming soon.....

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Re: Striving for Excellence
Posted by excellence - 28 Feb 2021 22:34

Sorry to interrupt the flow, but I must be honest. I fell.

focusing on the positive iv'e only fallen 7 times since Rosh Hasono.

Made a safeguard to avoid another fall.

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Re: Striving for Excellence
Posted by OivedElokim - 28 Feb 2021 22:57

Sorry to hear about the fall.

Shake off the dust and arise, and show us how to fight like the warrior that you are...

Stay clean.

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Re: Striving for Excellence
Posted by Zedj - 28 Feb 2021 23:22

Amazing!

Time to look forward and forget.

The grass really is greener on the other side..

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Re: Striving for Excellence
Posted by Sapy - 01 Mar 2021 02:09

Thank you excellence for your great posts, I can very much relate. You write beautifully and clear, and every word is gold. I'm looking forward to hear your ideas on how to work on this, as I'm actively struggling with this perfection mindset. Thank you so much!

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Re: Striving for Excellence
Posted by Hashem Help Me - 02 Mar 2021 12:30

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Re: Striving for Excellence
Posted by excellence - 06 Apr 2021 09:57

This post is a continuation of my earlier post (part b)in this thread.

Part c

After reading part b one may feel that even though it does help to some extent to keep reminding ourselves the correct perspective, however it is still not a solution in its own right. This is correct and the reason for this, is that most often the reason why perfectionism is so deeply ingrained in our sub-conscious is because over the course of growing up our brains received wrong messages that subsequently fueled perfectionism. For example: instead of receiving recognition when due, or support when we made mistakes, instead we taught our brains that we are not deserving of recognition unless we are perfect, and only when we reach that fleeting moment of perfection do we feel good. This aspect has been explained at great length in earlier posts.

So in order to deal with this we need to rewire our brains, by consciously finding those moments in our day (there are many many such moments) where perfectionism is about to kick in, and precisely at that moment give yourself the correct messages your brain should have been told as you were growing up. E.g tell yourself, "your ok, your great just the way you are, just the way it is" e.t.c, and eventually we rewire our subconscious that imperfection is fine and things are supposed to be that way, as only G-D is perfect.

A very good way of implementing this technique is that when we find ourselves in a situation where were slipping into perfectionism, begin to imagine this situation/ scenario as if it were an outsider, coming to you for help and they describe to you the exact situation you are now in, what would you tell them? Imagine it was your child, what would be the correct messages you would want them to hear? Well take those exact messages and tell them to yourself. Tell yourself 'it's ok to make mistakes, it means your normal, it means your human', 'wow, it's amazing that you keep trying' e.t.c.

With time this should eventually rewire our subconscious to react differently to imperfections.

I've not found it so easy to express this point clearly. I hope it can be understood.

With love,

Excellence.

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