

How do you put this behind you once and for all?
Posted by siyatta - 09 May 2024 21:01

There are people in this group who have managed to put this whole thing behind them. I personally envy you! How do you do it? Is there something I'm missing? How come some of us keep coming back to the same struggle and others have seemingly moved on?

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Re: How do you put this behind you once and for all?
Posted by yitzchokm - 09 May 2024 21:40

Although everyone's struggles are similar in certain ways, each and every person has his own unique experience, and it would be very wrong to compare two people. I for instance was never an addict, I have almost no desire at the moment, and I am familiar with psychotherapy for decades. What does my success say about someone else who is struggling a lot?

I have many things that physically and spiritually due to my health I am behind almost everyone. What good will it do me to compare myself to others? I know that Hashem wants me to focus on my challenges on my yardstick and see whether I am making any progress from the day before. That is all he wants from me and that is all he wants from you. It is very unhealthy and unproductive to start comparing ourselves to others. All that does is takes away from our focus on our responsibilities and leads us to analyzing our egos instead.

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Re: How do you put this behind you once and for all?
Posted by gye365s - 09 May 2024 22:00

Yes.

Don't judge your success based on the results of others, it's all about your progress. Lo amus ki echyeh - if we aren't dead, then Hashem desires for us to keep trying. The length of time is irrelevant.

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Re: How do you put this behind you once and for all?
Posted by vehkam - 09 May 2024 22:40

[siyatta wrote on 09 May 2024 21:01:](#)

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It took decades of struggling back and forth before I broke free and put it behind me. I try to keep my relationship with hashem fresh and passionate. If I am pursuing my relationship with hashem there really isn't any room for anything that will pull me in a different direction.

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Re: How do you put this behind you once and for all?
Posted by jackthejew - 10 May 2024 01:17

[siyatta wrote on 09 May 2024 21:01:](#)

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I don't think there's anyone here who doesn't have healthy male impulses. The goal in my mind is to get to a point where having an urge or a trigger isn't a "Meltdown Moment".

Because I know what to do, I know the steps I have to take. I know that these steps work and I have had practice with them. That doesn't mean it's always easy. But it's become routine to deal with them.

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Re: How do you put this behind you once and for all?
Posted by cande - 10 May 2024 03:23

[vehkam wrote on 09 May 2024 22:40:](#)

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A gem of a post!

thank you!

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Re: How do you put this behind you once and for all?
Posted by Captain - 10 May 2024 11:56

I highly recommend reading Vehkam's thread. See the link in his signature above.

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Re: How do you put this behind you once and for all?
Posted by siyatta - 10 May 2024 14:00

Thank you for your responses, and I hope they keep on coming.

I don't think that what works for one person will automatically work for another but I'm trying to find certain commonalities, the tzad hashaveh, that worked for some across the board. We all discuss the same tactics over and over yet I see a big difference between myself who keeps coming back to this vs some who seem to be past this.

Maybe my hanacha is wrong and for some it needs to be a lifelong struggle, but I sure hope that's not the case and there are certain mehalchim, that if implemented correctly, will lead to success.

My biggest goal is to get past this, to be at the point where this nisayon is no different than

eating a cheeseburger, Im sure it's yummy but I know that this week I can bet money that I won't eat a cheeseburger. I don't want to be in place where I keep coming back to this struggle again and again.

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Re: How do you put this behind you once and for all?
Posted by siyatta - 10 May 2024 14:05

Im going to make a hypothesis, obviously I can't speak for someone who's made it to the other side but I can still say a svara, and I'd love to hear what others have to say.

Perhaps what separates those that have been successful and those who have not is **commitment**. I once heard from an AA member that typically people need to hit rock bottom before they are ready to change. Pshat is, because once they hit rock bottom they know that they "need" to change. So long as a person doesn't feel a "need", and it's just a "nice thing" there's no way he'll stick to it.

L'mashal if a person's whole motivation is because it "feels" like garbage after he's acted out, well guess what, in a few days it won't "feel" like garbage anymore, it will feel geshmak, so now what, why shouldn't he act out. But if a person has come to the conclusion that he "must" change, whether because he got in trouble for acting out or he just came to this undeniable conclusion and he writes down his reasons (as is recommended in the F2F program, not my chidush), and he reviews his reasons regularly, I think he would be in a different league. Perhaps those that were successful in moving past this were people who were "all in" and totally committed while others only came in with a half-hearted commitment.

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Re: How do you put this behind you once and for all?
Posted by siyatta - 10 May 2024 14:13

I have one more thought and you can probably ignore me because Im speaking not from experience but if you want to humor me, please keep reading.

Perhaps what separates those that were successful from the rest was the act of complete

removal of all provocative stimuli from their lives, whether from their phones, from where they go, from what they think, from who they interact with ... a complete change of how they live their lives. Even doing things at times that would seem a bit extreme for "normal" people, just in order to avoid any provocation.

This is similar to the fresh AA member who won't go to a party, kiddush etc if any alcohol is being served. I don't remember if its the Rambam who said that in order to straighten out a bent bar or metal you can't just try to make it straight, you need to bend it in the other direction so that afterwards it balances out. (would love the source if anyone knows). Here too l'choira a person needs to go more extreme measures to root out anything that could be stimulating in order to be matzliach.

Any thoughts?

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Re: How do you put this behind you once and for all?
Posted by gye365s - 10 May 2024 14:46

[siyatta wrote on 10 May 2024 14:00:](#)

Thank you for your responses, and I hope they keep on coming.

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Maybe my hanacha is wrong and for some it needs to be a lifelong struggle, but I sure hope that's not the case and there are certain mehalchim, that if implemented correctly, will lead to success.

My biggest goal is to get past this, to be at the point where this nisayon is no different than eating a cheeseburger, Im sure it's yummy but I know that this week I can bet money that I won't

eat a cheeseburger. I don't want to be in place where I keep coming back to this struggle again and again.

There are common strategies, though you will have to tune them to yourself personally. The nuances are important. I think "getting past this" and "lifelong struggle" need expansion. "Getting past this" is drawing a line, which is good to have a goal, and "lifelong struggle" implies not ever getting to a point of permanently crossing that line? This isn't cheeseburgers. The struggle and fight against this yezter hara is something that has challenged even the greatest of men. There are gemaras that recount older talmidei chachamim struggling against tayva. Gedolim say that our modern-day challenges in these areas are unparalleled. You haven't failed if you don't cross your line, only if you stop working towards it. Fighting is already succeeding. I read ahead to your successive posts and from my own experience I definitely needed to distance and remove myself from stimuli and triggers. Don't pick a fight that you know you'd struggle to win. Learning my own patterns was key in avoidance. Focusing on the "smaller battles" actually helps me avoid the bigger ones, since it keeps me occupied and I have that extra layer of removal. Even if you would consider me as someone who has "gotten past this" it isn't like the war is won, I just have achieved a solid battle position and stay vigilant in fighting without losing major ground (avoiding known ambush situations). The war is done when I am, and I'll have won if I never gave up the fight, regardless of where I end up. It did get easier, but I don't think it goes away for most. You learn how you can deal with it and try to maintain an advantageous position.

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Re: How do you put this behind you once and for all?
Posted by chooseurname - 10 May 2024 15:55

[siyatta wrote on 10 May 2024 14:13:](#)

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person needs to go more extreme measures to root out anything that could be stimulating in order to be matzliach.

Any thoughts?

I think there's a lot of truth to what you're saying. And accepting that you may need "extra" gedarim your whole life that people who never struggled wouldn't necessarily need is probably an important part of staying clean.

It is indeed the Rambam. That is the central thesis of most of Shemona Perakim.

Awhile back, I [posted some notes](#) I wrote on applying shemona perakim to shmiras einayim you might find interesting. Please note that it was just some thoughts, and I'm not sure if I still think it's practical for someone at this point of the struggle to apply "bending the bar in the other direction" on their own.

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Re: How do you put this behind you once and for all?
Posted by jackthejew - 10 May 2024 17:10

There are many great and true points here.

A few things that I would like to emphasize. These don't necessarily contradict what you wrote at all.

1. I would say that while "clearing the area" of triggers is very important, overemphasis can sometimes lead to obsessing over the fight. Where what we really need most is to NOT constantly be thinking about it.

Like @Vekham wrote,

" If I am pursuing my relationship with hashem there really isn't any room for anything that will pull me in a different direction. "

However, if I am obsessing over my relationship with porn and making sure not to fall every second, I can't be pursuing my relationship with Hashem.

2. I would also say that I did the "Complete life overhaul" many times. But I only changed my life once.

By taking it one step at a time.

3. The commitment aspect is very true, but in my experience works much better when it is kept irreligious at first. Because that makes it much more immediate and desperate to us

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Re: How do you put this behind you once and for all?

Posted by proudyungerman - 10 May 2024 19:41

[siyatta wrote on 09 May 2024 21:01:](#)

There are people in this group who have managed to put this whole thing behind them. I personally envy you! How do you do it? Is there something I'm missing? How come some of us keep coming back to the same struggle and others have seemingly moved on?

I clearly don't have the answers as I am not there yet.

However, have you tried reaching out to any of the choshuve members of GYE who have streaks in the multiples of thousands? (There's a guy Steve in the 5000's)

If you go to the Wall of Honor, you can see the people who have seem to have managed to put this beast to rest. Get in touch with them.

(I've tried it myself...)

In general, have you reached out to people from GYE? I personally have found the support of friends to be priceless.

I can safely say that I would not be anywhere near where I am today without them. Whether I call them to vent, talk over an idea in hashkafa related to the struggle, text them an annoyance, or even just call to shmooze, when I get off the phone I inevitably feel better.

Especially when I can text a friend that I am stuck in a challenging situation, and I have accountability to be in touch after to see how it went.

(I hope you find this helpful and it's on target. It's something I feel very strongly about. Ever since I called IWLR and just felt the empathy and normalcy through the phone, I understood the

power of chevra here on GYE. I have spoken to a bunch of people and am always looking to speak to more.

Give it a try. Please. I beg you. Also anyone reading this who hasn't tried it yet.

WE AREN'T JUDGING YOU! WE GET IT!!!

Don't underestimate the power of friends and real life support.)

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Re: How do you put this behind you once and for all?
Posted by eerie - 10 May 2024 22:26

Like JTJ wrote, all the guys here still have a YH and regular, healthy male impulses. We learn and try to implement techniques that qill help is even when those impulses start working. Personally, staying in touch with people here, having friends that I can text or call when I the going gets tough (which has happened plenty) is the biggest help for me.

@Siyatta, you write "complete removal of all provocative stimuli from their lives, whether from their phones, from where they go, from what they think, from who they interact with ... a complete change of how they live their lives.". I would say that yes, it is uper important to remove triggers and access to things that are no good for us. But that doesn't usually entail changing how we live. And the less intense you see the change, the the greater your chances of being successful are gonna be

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