

## A Modest Proposal

Posted by chosemyschem - 24 Jun 2024 18:19

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A'ight,

I want to suggest an idea for GYE that I believe some of you have been contemplating.

I think many, many people who have gotten clean credit that to connecting with other members. The connections go from phone calls without sharing a name, all the way to in person meetings. Many people have called it the most important step to getting clean, no matter the level of the struggle.

GYE doesn't currently really push that. There's the partner program, which is underused, unclear, and very hit or miss. There's Dov's phone call, which is not pushed, invitation only, and marketed as more of a step for people who are/may be addicts.

So currently the way this is recommended is by people posting on other people's threads suggesting that they reach out to recognized members. Which is great. But perhaps it's possible to work personal connection as more official element of the GYE program. And that's important because 1) it's a very helpful tool and helpful tools should be in the GYE program, and more importantly 2) people are more likely to actual do it if it's presented as "part of the program" and not just a recommendation from some rando on the forums.

Here's a suggestion as to how to work it in. [I don't know if anyone is familiar with Miriam Adahan's EMETT program, but this is loosely based on that concept and Dov's call.]

GYE should institute a vaad system. The broad outline is like this. Small groups of members would get together on a conference call for perhaps 45 minutes a week to study a text together, share about their application of the text, and schmooze a little. The groups would be moderated by a member, but the moderator is not a teacher. That's it.

Here are some of the details I've been thinking about.

Who would join: A big thing is safety. Members need to feel that they are sharing safely, and there needs to be some screening to ensure there's no predator joining a group. To that end, I think joining a vaad would be predicated on completing the F2F program, and perhaps a minimum forum post count. Ideally, it should also require the member to do an inventory and share it with the group moderator, but that may be too hard for many people. Groups should either be with all members using their real name, or no members using their real name (individual groups could maybe make that decision on their own).

Members could be on any level of the struggle. I'm not sure if it would make sense to segregate people out by age, area of struggle, marital status etc.?

Ideally, groups would be small (5-7 people) so everyone has a chance to talk in a short meeting. Also, large groups of people on a conference call gets very confusing very fast. New people could be added one by one to existing groups, or could form new groups. It would probably make sense for groups to be arranged by a central coordinator, because if they are self-arranged, many people would not work up the gumption to form or join a group. That being said, it's essential people feel comfortable in the group, so there should at least be an option to choose your own group.

The text: What the groups study and apply is actually less important than the actual connection and discussion. They could study the battle of the generation, a mussar sefer, the gye handbook or whatever. That being said, it would be amazing if we could find/put together a book specifically for the vaad (some excerpts from TBOTG, some of the white book, some classic posts, whatever. Just a thought).

The leader: The leader does not need to be someone experienced. They're there just to keep the group on track. More of a gabbai than a leader. Ideally, they would be established, clean members. Even better, they would get a little training on how to identify someone who needs a recommendation to SA or therapy or whatever.

Meeting schedule: A basic meeting would be a few minutes of reading and discussing the text. Following that every member would share something (a success, failure, struggle, whatever. Not generic advice or commentary). No advice should be given unless specifically requested - the goal is connection, not problem solving. Certainly no criticism should be dished out, however, praise is great. That's it. Short, sweet, and simple.

Some other points. Because it's individual small groups there's room for personalization. Groups could pick specific texts, times, even choose to be in person. The general format of connecting

is the ikkar. Also, because it's a "mussar vaad", it doesn't have the stigma of SA and people will be less deterred from joining (e.g. there's no way I personally could tell my wife I'm going to an SA meeting, but I could tell her I joined a new mussar vaad that I want to do in private.) And again, if it becomes part of the official "GYE program" people are more likely to join it. I think that it took me a very long time to pick up the phone and call someone. And if there had been an official program to do so, I would have likely done so a lot faster. And while people are embarrassed to share honestly, once you're on a call with 5 other guys sharing honestly it'll seem a lot less intimidating.

So what does the oilam think? Good idea? Bad idea? Would you join if you were a new (or old) member? Any suggestions, comments, tweaks, or critical comments?

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Re: A Modest Proposal

Posted by redfaced - 25 Jun 2024 15:32

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The only real issue I have with it, is what do we eat?

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Re: A Modest Proposal

Posted by BenHashemBH - 25 Jun 2024 15:34

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[redfaced wrote on 25 Jun 2024 15:32:](#)

The only real issue I have with it, is what do we eat?

Popcorn, of course!

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Re: A Modest Proposal

Posted by chancy - 25 Jun 2024 16:19

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I also think its a great idea.

Ive been here for years and really have no spoken to more than 2-3 people once or twice.

I would love the oppurtunity to meet and talk with more folks on here, and I believe it can and will have a huge benefit for fellow strugglers.

One idea of a topic is to work on the F2F program together, there are so many amazing tools on there. It would be a much more powerful tool if worked together with other people.

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Re: A Modest Proposal

Posted by BenHashemBH - 25 Jun 2024 19:21

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I wonder if you could build off of this structure that is already in place for making private groups through GYE?

[GYE private online groups \(guardyoureyes.com\)](https://guardyoureyes.com)

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Re: A Modest Proposal

Posted by chosemyshem - 25 Jun 2024 19:39

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[BenHashemBH wrote on 25 Jun 2024 19:21:](#)

I wonder if you could build off of this structure that is already in place for making private groups through GYE?

[GYE private online groups \(guardyoureyes.com\)](https://guardyoureyes.com)

Interesting. I never knew those existed. Anyone in those groups wanna share if they took off?

The ikar is having personal connection - which posting online cannot really do, even in a closed forum. But it might be a nice idea if each group got a private forum.

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Re: A Modest Proposal

Posted by chosemyshem - 25 Jun 2024 19:51

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And another thing I never knew existed: an in person [F2F group](#). Maybe we could adapt whatever program they do for the vaadim. Though I imagined it as less structured than "working through a program". More like just reading and talking about a text and sharing.

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Re: A Modest Proposal

Posted by BenHashemBH - 25 Jun 2024 19:54

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The post says that the groups were moderated, so perhaps [chaim@guardyoureyes.org](mailto:chaim@guardyoureyes.org) could provide insight on how it developed (or didn't).

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Re: A Modest Proposal

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 25 Jun 2024 20:44

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A nice simple melava malka in someone's house would be great - real live interaction. Exchange of ideas. Chizuk and tips how to help each others and newcomers. Slight technicality - we have chevra living on every continent (besides Antarctica....)

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Re: A Modest Proposal

Posted by Heeling - 26 Jun 2024 02:31

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[Hashem Help Me wrote on 25 Jun 2024 20:44:](#)

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Totally! I'd be open to hosting.

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Re: A Modest Proposal

Posted by proudyungerman - 26 Jun 2024 03:35

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[Heeling wrote on 26 Jun 2024 02:31:](#)

[Hashem Help Me wrote on 25 Jun 2024 20:44:](#)

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For this?!?!?!?

Of course I'm flying in!!!!!!!

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Re: A Modest Proposal

Posted by Heeling - 26 Jun 2024 14:25

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[proudlyungerman wrote on 26 Jun 2024 03:35:](#)

[Heeling wrote on 26 Jun 2024 02:31:](#)

[Hashem Help Me wrote on 25 Jun 2024 20:44:](#)

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Are you the only one in Antarctica?

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Re: A Modest Proposal

Posted by chancy - 26 Jun 2024 16:37

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or a nice bbq now in the summer when most of the wives are away and wont ask too many  
questions.

HMM, are you ready to start choosing people for the first meeting?

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Re: A Modest Proposal

Posted by chancy - 26 Jun 2024 16:39

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There is a glitch. nobody freak out.

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Re: A Modest Proposal

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[chancy wrote on 26 Jun 2024 16:39:](#)

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I have the same thing....

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