

A Modest Proposal

Posted by chosemyshem - 24 Jun 2024 18:19

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 - 26 Jun 2024 19:16

It's so worth it.....

Pick one fella who you feel is the least intimidating. And dont forget that hes prepared to be just as vulnerable with you

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Re: A Modest Proposal
Posted by chosemyshem - 04 Jul 2024 19:45

Update:

We are G-d willing getting a proposal in front of the GYE higher ups.

Does anyone have experience putting together a clear and professional proposal (not just a post) and can help me out with this? Pm me if you can help.

(I can do it, but I'd like it to be as clear as possible and sometimes I get unnecessarily wordy and wander on kinda assuming my audience knows what I'm talking about when meanwhile they've been lost since the first run-on sentence and are just sitting there waiting for this interminable paragraph to asphyxiate on its own hot air and finally stop.)

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Re: A Modest Proposal
Posted by parev - 05 Jul 2024 12:37

I'm not sure if you are basing off the SA meeting format or not [and if not possibly speak to some SA guy's to get a feel]

In SA they say

Meetings Meetings Meetings and more Meetings....!

Great idea though

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Re: A Modest Proposal
Posted by chosemyschem - 05 Jul 2024 13:34

[parev wrote on 05 Jul 2024 12:37:](#)

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Great idea though

I'm not really familiar with the SA meeting format (and please feel free to give me a call and explain it to me) but I think this is going to be different. Cross-talk, positive feedback, interacting with a text instead of just reading. Happy to hash it out and make sure we're setting up the

optimal format.

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Re: A Modest Proposal

Posted by BenHashemBH - 05 Jul 2024 13:47

The consensus seems to be that most of the chevra here (BH) are not "true" addicts. Whatever we do, it is good to be familiar with the other resources so it can be suggested when appropriate. That being said, I think the goal is to be a group of friends, building bonds of connection and strength, not so much strangers getting validation and acceptance (though we'll get that too IYH).

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Re: A Modest Proposal

Posted by parev - 05 Jul 2024 13:51

[chosemyschem wrote on 05 Jul 2024 13:34:](#)

[parev wrote on 05 Jul 2024 12:37:](#)

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I sent you a PM with my number.

For the record SA meetings are not 1 size fits all, with various formats, often interacting with the text and sharing.

Crosstalk and positive feedback are not inherently anti SA, just one needs to make sure the maximum benefit to the group, and can be assessed by a per meeting basis

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Re: A Modest Proposal
Posted by Bennyh - 11 Jul 2024 22:18

I think the most telling thing about this thread is that all the people sayin, "love this idea!" are the people who are already out meeting people.

Crickets from everyone else, except for [crispy](#).

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Re: A Modest Proposal
Posted by BenHashemBH - 11 Jul 2024 22:38

[Bennyh wrote on 11 Jul 2024 22:18:](#)

I think the most telling thing about this thread is that all the people sayin, "love this idea!" are the people who are already out meeting people.

Crickets from everyone else, except for [crispy](#).

There are people who may never call, but the signs have gotten responses, and so it should reach other Yidden. Even helping one is enough.

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Re: A Modest Proposal

Posted by chosemyshem - 12 Jul 2024 13:49

[Bennyh wrote on 11 Jul 2024 22:18:](#)

I think the most telling thing about this thread is that all the people sayin, "love this idea!" are the people who are already out meeting people.

Crickets from everyone else, except for [crispy](#).

Exactly. Only posters communicate. That's why the proposal is needed. If it becomes part of the official program people will be much more likely to join and reach out.

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Re: A Modest Proposal

Posted by proudyungerman - 16 Jul 2024 18:46

[chosemyshem wrote on 04 Jul 2024 19:45:](#)

Update:

We are G-d willing getting a proposal in front of the GYE higher ups.

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(I can do it, but I'd like it to be as clear as possible and sometimes I get unnecessarily wordy and wander on kinda assuming my audience knows what I'm talking about when meanwhile they've been lost since the first run-on sentence and are just sitting there waiting for this interminable paragraph to asphyxiate on its own hot air and finally stop.)

Any update on this?

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Re: A Modest Proposal

Posted by chosemyshem - 18 Aug 2024 18:19

Update:

Very productive meeting with the good folks at GYE (who are unsurprisingly knowledgeable and interested in helping guys get better). Some insightful comments and a lot of interest.

Warning: Spoiler!

Hopefully a pilot program will be getting off the ground.

Huge Yasher Koach to @Muttel for his hard work on this.

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Re: A Modest Proposal

Posted by jmyers99 - 28 Aug 2024 16:11

I had a similar idea!

guardyoureyes.com/forum/1-Break-Free/420272-Starting-a-supportchizzuk-group#420273

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Re: A Modest Proposal

Posted by chosemyschem - 11 Sep 2024 13:09

HERE WE GO!!

I hope you all saw the GYE email today. In case you didn't, here is the official kickoff of the Vaad program.

Dear GYE Members,

We are thrilled to introduce the new **GuardYourEyes Vaad program**, designed to empower you on your journey to recovery through community support and shared growth.

The Vaad program offers you the opportunity to:

- Work closely with a small, cohesive group of chavereim
- Participate in weekly, hour-long phone conferences
- Support each other throughout your recovery journey
- Build lasting friendships and connections

Connecting with other members has proven to be one of the most powerful tools for overcoming challenges. The Vaad system aims to help you forge connections and meaningful friendships that will support you every step of the way.

Here's how it works:

1. Weekly Meetings: Join a 1-hour phone conference each week

GYE - Guard Your Eyes

Generated: 10 April, 2025, 07:41

- 2. Structured Learning: We'll begin with the Flight to Freedom texts, then progress to other valuable texts
- 3. Safe Environment: Members are vetted by the Vaad gabbai to ensure your safety

To join or learn more about the GYE Vaad program, [please fill out our brief questionnaire](#).

Let's join together and help each other - ??? ?? ????? ??????? ??????? ????? ???.

The GYE Team

P.S. Have ideas to improve this initiative? We'd love to hear them! Feel free to include them in your questionnaire responses or reply to this email.

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Re: A Modest Proposal
Posted by jmyers99 - 11 Sep 2024 15:57

Pumped for this!

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