

SonicReducer's story so far

Posted by sonicReducer - 04 Jan 2010 17:16

Evening all (;

I only discovered GUE a few weeks ago, but it's been such a huge help to me. I thought I'd post my own story.

I'm a baal teshuva, and I've been shomrei mitzvot for about 5 years. Becoming frum has been both the most fulfilling and difficult journey I've ever undertaken (still on it!). Although it can be very hard day-to-day, and I've had more than a few moments where I wanted to throw off my yarmi, the Aibishter has helped me to keep going.

My family emigrated from Johannesburg, South Africa, to London when I was about 14. This move was very, very hard on me, especially socially. I left behind a lot of my friends I grew up with, and struggled to rebuild in the UK. For the past ten years (I'm 24 now), I've been quite lonely, and my self-esteem took a lot of big hits (although Baruch H-Shem therapy has helped a huge amount). I was unhappy with my situation, and unhappy with who I was. I think I used p**n and shfichas zera as a pick-me-up, and as an attempt at some kind of intimacy, besides the usual urges and curiosities of a young man.

This continued when I become frum, although frequency decreased (and guilt increased). University was a very difficult time, fashions left very little to the imagination, although I managed to avoid getting involved with all the shmutz that goes on.

I spent a year at a well-known baal teshuva yeshiva after uni. This was to be my greatest length of shmira - just over a year. I fell badly when I came home for pesach - after 9 months in Yerushalayim, the fashions and posters in the UK were just far too much to handle, along with my PC that I had left behind.

Since then, I've really fought (and fallen), and GUE has given me a lot of inspiration. I was quite happy to realise I had been mechavin to the Guard Your Eyes Handbook already about 3 years before I had read it! My browser opens onto the chizuk list, which is really handy.

London is a tough place for shmiras eynayim, and I really daven hard that H' should help me. Baruch H-Shem I'm usually ok but sometimes the y'h just gets too much. My recent best period is about 6 weeks. I found a good filter and I'm really considering accountability software, but I'll see how the next few months go.

A big challenge at the moment is shidduchim - I'd really like to get married (and feel emotionally I'm finally in a good place to deal with it properly). I don't fit in very here - I'm too 'modern' for a chareidi girl, but too chareidi for a modern girl, so it's been hard meeting girls that are shayich. That sneaky y'h gets me here a lot - telling me that it will be years before I find someone and in such a tough environment, who can blame me for giving in? Positive thinking and bitachon are really my biggest weapons here, but they don't come easily.

One thing that really surprised me reading others' stories is how widespread these struggles are, and how wide a cross-section of yidden it affects.

May the Ribono shel Olam give you all the beracha and hatzlacha you all deserve for your truly super human efforts!

sR

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far
Posted by briut - 05 Feb 2010 04:16

So let us know how the time off and the therapist time has been....

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far
Posted by imtrying25 - 05 Feb 2010 09:51

SR, i just caught up on your thread. And boy does my heart go out for you! But i stand up for you too. Going through it all, hell on this earth, and keeping yourself sane, and clean?? This is something i dream about in my wildest dreams!!

I hope the situation works out for everyone, but im sure either way wont be easy on you. :-\

Wishing you continued hatzlacha from the deepest depths of my heart!

Have a great shabbos. Ba shabbos ba mehucha. I bless you that shabbos will bring you some menucha from this whirlpool!

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far

Posted by sonicReducer - 07 Feb 2010 14:32

Hi everyone - thanks again for the words of chizuk

silentbattle: do you have any suggestions? I've started jogging again (which is hard to keep regular in the winter), and my rav took me to topgolf on Friday morning to blow off a bit of steam (although he also really wanted to play, so it wasn't completely altruistic)

Things with my folks have been tough - my dad is in a really bad place emotionally, and my mom is begging me to just make up with him, which is really uncomfortable. I've always tried to be as kavodik as possible, but my relationship with him has gone from bad to awful.

New drama! (seriously, I couldn't make up this stuff if I wanted to).

There's been a big machloikes in the house I moved into about 6 weeks ago, between the landlord and one of the lodgers. There were arguments about the kashrus and lashon hara and

everyone getting angry and arguing and worrying about reputations and whatnot. Me and the other flatmate (who's been here the longest) have just kindof kept our heads down and tried to placate whoever we're dealing with. It's really spun out of control and the 2 of them are both pretty upset.

So b'kitzur- my parents are sofeik getting divorced, I can't deal with being near my father, my mother doesn't stop kvetching at me, and my landlord and an ex-lodger (he moved out very quickly without really telling my landlord or speaking to him) are having a broigus, and I'm waiting for my referral to a neurologist.

I told the therapist I saw on Thursday about everything that had been happening - the epression on his face was pretty priceless. He told me I should write a book because he taka doesn't know how I'm getting up in the morning and I could probably help a lot of people if I get it onto paper. So at least he has faith in me. The session was good, just to bash through the issues and get things in the open, but as he said, baruch H-Shem I'm dealing with things. Shidduchim are definitely going on hold, I couldn't trust my self to sit with a girl and either just freak out or start crying or something.

Bought some music and a new mp3 player as a little pick me up, enjoying it so far.

Proud to report at least that I'm still clean, and the end of today or tomorrow I think will be 40 days. I've been feeling a bit shaky about it, but I have enough today to keep me occupied, and often when I get to a point like this, the fact that I made it is often a good incentive to keep fighting

Hope everyone is all good otherwise, thank you so much again for all the kind comments and chizuk

sR

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far
Posted by sonicReducer - 07 Feb 2010 14:35

Made a nice discovery - I am currently on day 41! so 40 days clean :D

hatzlacha raba,

sR

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far
Posted by briut - 07 Feb 2010 15:18

Now I see why folks on this forum might use the word inspiration! When I looked up the word in the dictionary, I saw a picture of a SonicReducer!! Wow.

I can't imagine 'why' you have so many areas of challenge right now, but I can see how strong you are in weathering the storm. Sh'koyach. (Have you read sefer Iyov recently??)

I'm also so touched to hear that your Rav would take his Friday morning to be with you instead of his other demands. He might SAY he also wanted the exercise, but I guess that was just a comment to get you to feel less guilty about the time he's giving. What a gift to have such a Rav.

You might have other gifts going on around you right now; look for them and celebrate them would be my thought. You're also finding more support, like music, Torah, therapy, walks, etc. Enjoy the self-help that you're finding, and look for even more to get you through this. Which you will.

And of course, keep posting!

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far

Posted by silentbattle - 07 Feb 2010 21:01

Pretty incredible...I know that when all the stuff hits the fan like that for me, all at once, as un-fun as it is, it's also a sign that god clearly has a plan for me.

It's great that you've been clean for so long - every second is valuable, but the more distance you get from this habit, the better off you are!

There are a lot of things that are making you feel pretty garbage-y right now, but here's one that should make you feel awesome - you're doing what hashem wants, and you're doing what you need to be end up as healthy as possible.

You're doing what's right. You're growing. And that makes *you* pretty awesome!

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far

Posted by Holy Yid - 08 Feb 2010 06:54

The Downloads On Elya' page help me deal with stress.

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far

Posted by G38 - 08 Feb 2010 13:11

SR

You started off with shiduchim and now this avalanche is coming down on you...

Let me tell you what helped me in times of difficulty, and it proved to be true!

R' Shlomke Zviller asked why does the Mishna expect us to thank Hashem on bad just like we would on good? Imagine 2 people walking on the road and one slips and breaks his leg, would you demand from him, on the floor, to thank Hashem like his friend who got saved?

The answer is, imagine a collector knocking on your door for a worthy cause. You hear him out and ask him if he has change. The bigger the change the happier he will be, because that means he will get a bigger donation. If you tell him "give me \$5" that means he will get \$10, \$50 will mean \$100 donation etc.

The same thing with us, sometimes Hashem wants to bestow upon us some very good fortune but the *midas hadin* disagrees, so he first asks for some change in order to set a balance for the BIG gift.

Brother, get ready for the parcel! You want believe it yourself!

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far
Posted by briut - 08 Feb 2010 14:11

May I add one quick thought, SR? Just to say that... sometimes the lofty visions of breaking free to places of mavelous kedusha etc etc blah blah... might seem to stand in contrast to the reality of facts on the ground. Sometimes, I think some folks (esp those relatively young...) might not see how the path to that pot of gold relates to the current bucket of *** they seem to be sitting in at that moment.

So, my quick thought is: Don't worry.

As long as you can hold onto the realization that you're holding on to what is good, holy, growth, love, etc, you should be able to hold onto the fact (yes, FACT) that your current torture will pass into a beautiful place and indeed a more beautiful place than if you hadn't made the journey.

I won't offer any attempts at convincing proof. If you ask for any here, I'm sure 100 guys would be happy to offer up either Torah proofs or their own life stories. May you go from strength to strength.

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far
Posted by silentbattle - 08 Feb 2010 16:05

Well said, Briut!

SR - as far as jogging in the winter, it's not always easy, but wear a scarf over your mouth and nose...or, doing a workout in your house can be helpful, as well.

Keep on trucking!

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far
Posted by Holy Yid - 09 Feb 2010 21:02

Sonic,

I want you to know you are not far from my mind ever. You have GREAT merits for working hard at such times. Chazal say that the tough times count 100 times what the easy times count for. Realize that every day is 100 clean days. also the bali mussar teach that depending on the level of hardship and pain the reward can increase many more times. It is possible that every day counts as 1000 days or maybe 10,000.

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far
Posted by sonicReducer - 09 Feb 2010 21:35

Thanks everyone, your support has really been invaluable, can't really describe how much everyone's chizuk means to me.

Baruch H-Shem things are starting to calm down a bit (more or less sorted out where I'm living, dunno about my folks tho).

I'm pretty exhausted, physically and emotionally. Have a bit of holiday next week, will be flying to the Holy Land for a few days for a friend's wedding. Looking forward to that, seeing everyone from yeshiva.

Still clean!

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far
Posted by imtrying25 - 09 Feb 2010 22:12

Coming to the holyland?? Wow thats great!! Did you hear that boys? Lets make him a welcoming party! :D :D :D

Seriously, im totally impressed on your reaction to everything your going through. It takes a real adom gadol to do all that your doing!! And stay clean all the while! WOW!

Hatzlacha and wishing you the best!

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far

Posted by briut - 10 Feb 2010 03:41

I know jealousy's not a Jewish value, but I think when it comes to traveling to The Holy Land there may be an exception. (It's a mitzvah to live there, every day you're there, after all.)

I hope you'll give some thought in advance to how to make that time count. Daven at your favorite places (kotel, kevrei tzadikim, whatever). See some of the nature of the Holy Land. (I understand the craters down south near Sdei Bokar are now lakes -- how often ya gonna see that!) Say a little kapittel Tehillim bei the chuppah. Don't sleep the time away.

And one more random thought: I see so many people at the kotel davening as if they are pleading to get something. Sometimes Tatty doesn't want to hear only "please please please." Sometimes Tatty likes to hear "thank you." I wonder if, even with all the stuff you're juggling right now, you can plan out what's worthy of your saying "A dank, tatty, a dank" (thanks). Words I wish I'd remember to apply to my own life a little more often.

Write when you get back. We wanna hear what happened.

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