

Giant Leap's short journey & experiences

Posted by Giant Leap - 06 Mar 2010 00:36

Hi everyone.

I felt a calling to write some thoughts that I had about my ups and downs. Prior to Purim I had some difficult battles with the Yetzer and often fell. My computer is protected with the K9 filter, but my phone does not have a filter, and was my tool for lust. Because of my consecutive falls, I was in a downward spiral and felt somewhat depressed. I could not focus in prayer and had little interest in becoming shmirat habrit. However, I often would drag myself to mincha/maariv services, don my grad (hat and jacket) and squeeze out a lingering hypocritical prayer. To this date, joining the morning minyan is still a difficult task and I feel that being pogem has made that difficult, especially that being pogem has made me more tired, irritable, and sad. On the other hand, I was extraordinarily happy on Purim, but fell that Sunday night. I felt so down that I could not take it anymore; I was angry. It may be a surprising thing to say, but I was angry at Hashem that He gave me this challenge. Questions like, why did He chose me to have this addiction? What do I have to always feel bad about myself after the falls? Why do I "somewhat" understand that I am doing something spiritually wrong, and yet I still get hooked on lust?

However things changed. Since Purim I am still clean, and it has been five days. I also have made many improvements. I got rid of my Youtube account (I am partly sad because there were many Torah videos and Jewish music on my account), but I needed to make a leap for purity. Additionally, I took off the internet option on my phone and only use it for productivity reasons, and never for leisure. Thereafter, I take the internet option off after I am done. All this change for the better has now made me more happier. Hashem has given me His sword for a bit to weed the garden clean from the YH weeds. I do not feel like a hypocrite anymore, and I have developed a new mental framework on battling with addiction and living to the fullest. So, thats why I wanted to come here and share some thoughts that I had after my struggles.

1) Give yourself a L'chaim.

Pamper yourself for your successes, even if you believe that they are miniscule. If you under the age limit for a l'chaim, treat yourself to something you would like, ice cream, a delicacy etc.

2) My Personal meditation while reading the Shema.

First some brief background. I have been reading the book Light of Ephraim (I highly recommend it for all on this site). In one of the dialogues, the rabbi taught his student who had issues with shmirat habrit that when he was younger and had trouble with lust, he would focus on the Shema, and each time he read the word "levavecha" he would meditate on the two vavs in the word. The two vavs represent that we as Jews have to utilize both chambers of the heart in serving Hashem. As an explanation, the Tanya, as I understood it explains that the Yetzer sits in the left ventricle of the heart (where the blood is) and he wants to conquer the heart and brain completely. The right ventricle is where the good part sits and it has to dominate the entire being so that we can serve Hashem. We have to utilize both ventricles, the entire heart our service in Hashem. Just to note, I am not all that learned and am a BT. Anyhow, I began to read the Shema more carefully and meditate on the word or words that had levavecha in them. I found that there were 6 similar words in the entire Shema. Then I remembered an interesting fact from the site called JewishSexuality - another website on Shmrat Habrit. The author wrote the following: Six represents Tikun HaBrit (the sefirah of Yesod, the sixth of the lower sefirot-channels). So when I read the Shema, I meditate on the 6 words of levavecha and tap my heart (like in viduy-confessions) as a meditation and remembrance of my goal to be shmirat habrit.

Lastly, in the last two days, I have read some articles and postings by various Yidden on depression , so I wanted to post it here.

Here is an article on depression written by Rabbi Dr. Abraham J. Twerski I found on VosizNeias. Entitled: Understanding Depression In The Jewish Population (March 3). Link below.

www.vosizneias.com/50538/2010/03/03/new-york-understanding-depression-in-the-jewish-population

On facebook, I am friends with a very special Rabbi (I wont mention who he is). He utilizes works from the Lubavitcher Rebbe, R' Twerski and others. Here is what he wrote on depression, the other day.

Depression is forbidden completely and utterly

One of the distinguishing qualities of the path of Chassidus is the focus on constant joy, and in Tanya (ch. 26), the Alter Rebbe explains that only at auspicious times designated for a personal

spiritual reckoning may one bring oneself to bitterness over one's sins. The rest of the time, however, one must serve Hashem with joy and completely disregard any sadness that comes from thoughts of one's sins .

In the letter below, the Previous Rebbe warns a chossid not to engage in any inappropriate sadness:

I have heard that you are worried and sad, and consequently you are neglecting your health and proper behavior in your eating, drinking, and sleeping. This is obviously disturbing your work to disseminate Torah and strengthen those who engage in Avodah [character refinement] and study Torah.

All those who study the teachings of Chassidus know that the worry and depression, even when it stems from concern over one's spiritual level, is a wicked trait. Not only should one distance oneself from it, but one should uproot it at the root, for it opens the way for all kinds of evil.

Our sages have said: "Such is the craft of the evil inclination" (Shabbos 105b). The bestial soul [another term for the evil inclination] is a seasoned craftsman, and his craft is to come to each person with a different tactic. To the small, the average, and the great—each one he approaches on that person's level.

Sometimes the bestial soul comes wrapped in a Tallis not his own—with the appearance of the good inclination. He reminds the person of his personal faults, and rebukes and torments him. He advises the person to study works of mussar and threatens him, and his entire goal is to degrade the person and distract him from the tasks that he needs to do.

This is the entire intention of the evil inclination—to preoccupy and distract the person from engaging in good things. When he sees that he can only accomplish this through a method that apparently stems from fear of Heaven, he will slip on this garment in order to perpetrate his wicked scheme. This is why he is called a craftsman, for his enticements are committed in such a way that when he reprimands and torments the person for something not good, or bad, it is impossible to recognize his true face—that in reality this is the evil inclination.

Therefore our holy fathers, the Rebbeim, decreed that worry and depression, even from one's

spiritual state, is a wicked character trait, and they forbade it completely and utterly. They sentenced it to the four death penalties, that it be banished from the domain of chassidim, and uprooted until no minute trace remains, for even that brings great damage. .

Igros Kodesh Admur HaRayatz, Vol. 4, pp. 356-357.

The Rabbi's response to a commenter:

There is nothing as whole as a broken heart. Chassidic saying

Depression is not a sin; but what depression does, no sin can do. Chassidic saying

Is sad bad? Chassidic teaching differentiates between two types of sorrow: merirut, a constructive grief, and atzvut, a destructive grief. Merirut is the distress of one who not only recognizes his failings but also cares about them; one who agonizes over the wrongs he has committed

, over his missed opportunities, over his unrealized potential; one who refuses to become indifferent to what is deficient in himself and his world. Atzvut is the distress of one who has despaired of himself and his fellow man, whose melancholy has drained him of hope and initiative. Merirut is a springboard for self-improvement; atzvut is a bottomless pit.

How does one distinguish between the two? The first is active, the second—passive. The first one weeps, the second's eyes are dry and blank. The first one's mind and heart are in turmoil, the second's are still with apathy and heavy as lead. And what happens when it passes, when they emerge from their respective bouts of grief? The first one springs to action: resolving, planning, taking his first faltering steps to undo the causes of his sorrow. The second one goes to sleep.

Hope this helps. Thanks for reading. ;D

Giant Leap.

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Re: Giant Leap's short journey & experiences
Posted by the.guard - 06 Mar 2010 19:06

Dear Giant Leap!

I am the admin of this forum. Welcome to our community! Once you've arrived, there's no turning back. Everyone here will just grab a hold of you and pull you up, up, up!

Based on your posts and inspiration, I would think that you would relate very strongly with our Attitude Handbook. See the link below.

The continued falls, even though you so much want to stop, shows that it's an addiction. Accepting this is an important part of recovery. You have come to the right place!

Scientific studies have shown that it takes 90 days to change a neural thought pattern that was ingrained in the brain through addictive behaviors. Did you join the [90 day chart](#) on-line? Sign up [over here](#)...

Make sure to install a strong filter. It will be almost impossible to break free of this while having all the garbage within a mouse click away. See [this page](#) for one good filter option, along with instructions on how to install it best - and give away the password to our "filter Gabai"... See [this page](#) for another 20 (or so) filter ideas and information...

And that is why we created the GYE handbooks (links below). If you read them well, from beginning to end, slowly, and try to implement what you read, you will find the answers within them to enable you to completely turn your life around. **You're worth it.**

Also, join the [daily Chizuk e-mail lists](#) to get fresh chizuk every day, and post away on this forum. You will get tons of daily Chizuk and support. This disease can't be beat alone. It works best when you get out of isolation!

GuardYourEyes also offers various free anonymous phone conferences, where you can join a group of other frum Yidden, along with an experienced sponsor. See [this page](#) for four different options. Our conferences are taking place daily, throughout the week... This would be a tremendous step in the right direction for you and help you learn freedom from this addiction. Not only will you learn the secret of the 12-Steps - which is known to be the world's most powerful program for beating addiction having helped millions world wide, but joining the group will be another way of GETTING OUT OF ISOLATION and connecting with others who are going through what you are.

Let me tell you a little about the two GuardYourEyes handbooks. They lay down the cornerstone and foundation of our work, and they make our network much more effective and helpful for people.

You see, until now, people would often get "lost" when coming to our website, not knowing what tips and techniques to try. For example, a beginner wouldn't jump straight into therapy or 12-Step groups, while on the other hand, someone whose addiction was more advanced wouldn't be helped by the standard tips of "making fences" putting in "filters" etc... So it was essential to develop a handbook which details all the techniques and tools to dealing with this addiction in progressive order. Now with these handbooks, anyone can read through and see what steps they've tried already, and if those steps haven't worked, they can continue on through the handbook where the steps become progressively more powerful and "addiction-oriented".

And the second handbook, called the "Attitude" handbook, can also help anyone, no matter what level of addiction they may have. Often people write in to us saying that had they only known the proper outlook & attitude that we try and share on the GuardYourEyes network when they were younger, they would have never fallen into an addiction in the first place! So we hope that through this handbook, many addictions will be prevented.

The handbooks are PDF files, set up as eBooks, and they have bookmarks and hyper-links in the Index, to make them easy to navigate.

Note: You might want to print them out to read away from the computer. Keep in mind though, that if you do this, you won't be able to click on the many web links in the articles. But you can always come back to them later. The truth is, it's anyway good to go through the whole handbook once without clicking on links, just to get an overview of all the tools available. Once you did that, you can start again from tool #1 and read each tool through more carefully, click the links and study each technique and assess whether you have tried it fully yet or not...

Right click on the links below and select "Save Link/Target As" to download the handbooks to your computer.

1) [The GuardYourEyes Handbook](#)

This Handbook details 18 suggested tools and techniques, in progressive order, beginning with the most basic and fundamental approaches to dealing with this addiction, and continuing down through increasingly earnest and powerful methods. For the first time, we can gauge our level of addiction and find the appropriate tools for our particular situation. And no matter what level our addiction may have advanced to, we will be able to find the right tools to break free in this handbook!

2) [The GuardYourEyes Attitude](#)

The Attitude Handbook details 30 basic principles to help us maintain the proper attitude and perspective on this struggle. Here are some examples: Understanding what we are up against, what it is that Hashem wants from us, how we can use this struggle for tremendous growth, how we can deal with bad thoughts, discovering how to redirect the power of our souls, understanding that every little bit counts, learning how to bounce back up after a fall, and so on and so forth...

May Hashem be with you!

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Re: Giant Leap's short journey & experiences
Posted by silentbattle - 07 Mar 2010 01:42

Thank you for your deep post!

I'm glad to hear that you deleted your youtube account, despite what you feel you lost. Not because it's bad for everyone to have a youtube account, but because YOU feel that it's a step forward!

Fantastic! Keep growing! May your journey be long and beautiful - and please share it with us!

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Re: Giant Leap's short journey & experiences

Posted by Giant Leap - 08 Mar 2010 07:52

I fell. I had just gone through the longest clean stretch in, well awhile, but it came to an end tonight. I just don't know how to feel about it. My goal was to occupy myself with mitzvahs and busywork in order to stay away from sin. Literally, the whole day I was helping someone out, and I was really satisfied with the effort and accomplishments. But as the night fell, the addiction crept up on me, and I fought a losing battle that I knew I could not win. I knew that if I began to see illicit imagery, I would never be content with what I looked at. In the burst of lustful passion, I saw imagery that I would surely be ashamed to every say to anyone, things that are truly sick, things that I never ever dreamed of thinking of, things that never ever crossed my mind; not even once. I feel that my current sorrow will subside, and sooner or later I will be back at lusting. I really want to stop, but I know its beyond me. I say it, but I can't. I don't have what it takes. Why did Hashem choose me to be shomer habrit? I just don't know how a person like myself can even be part of a minyan!

Im sorry for all the negative outlooks. I just don't know how much I can retry and restart. Each time I begin to count clean days, the Yetzer hits me hard. Deep down I know that this fall was meant to be a sign from Hashem telling me that this fall is a brick wall, and if I really want to continue I will find a way to climb over or go through that wall called the Yetzer.

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Re: Giant Leap's short journey & experiences

Posted by the.guard - 08 Mar 2010 12:40

[Giant Leap wrote on 08 Mar 2010 07:52:](#)

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Hey there, stop moping. We all felt the same as you until we read the Attitude handbook.

I already wrote you before:

Based on your posts and inspiration, I would think that you would relate very strongly with our Attitude Handbook. See the link below.

Well?

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Re: Giant Leap's short journey & experiences
Posted by silentbattle - 08 Mar 2010 15:55

First of all, bro, sounds like you need a hug. So give yourself one - go on! And remember that Hashem is always hugging you. Look for it in your life, and I promise that you'll see hugs from him.

There's something else that I always try to remember - the yetzer hora wants me to think that I can't win. Once I say those words, "I can't hold out," "I can't do this" - then it's over. I've already convinced myself that it's not possible.

But the fact is that I CAN do it. one day at a time. No matter what images he puts in my head. As far as being worried about the sick images he puts in your head - if you're truly worried about them, it might be a good idea to let it out, to tell someone.

You are holy jew, and you're going to continue to grow. You can do this, and you will!

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Re: Giant Leap's short journey & experiences
Posted by Giant Leap - 12 Mar 2010 22:07

1st of, thank you silent battle for the encouragement to pick me up when I fell. I was really

Lately I was a kinda busy. In my secular studies, I was learning the other day about the strength based model (or recovery model in psychology). This theory focuses on ones strengths instead of deficits (the previous model which focused on finding a problem and fixing it directly). Focusing on peoples problem makes them depressed, gotta work with people strengths and bonds they have. So, I was thinking of a few things this past couple of days.

A) Why will we succeed in being Shmirat Habrit?

This GUE community, Judaism, Torah, our families & friends, our society, values, beliefs, hopes and dreams etc., are our strengths and we need to evaluate the benefits and positives we get from these aspects and compare it to the falsehood of lust, and we see that lust is a fantasy as the fantasies some of us succumb to, including myself :-[. They are meaningless and serve no purpose to the grandeur scheme in our lives.

B) I've heard this before in a chizuk email. Hashem gave us this challenge because He believes that we have the power within ourselves (from our Forefather) to change darkness to light, improve a worsened situation and connect to holiness when holiness is absent from the heart. I thought to myself, I can not give up on Hashem, He did not give up on me; I'm living a new day, new second - time to connect to Him, in whatever I am doing at least at first in a miniscule manner. I had the idea that I had to fight

the YH directly, I don't need to, but nor do I have to run from my problem.

The falsehood of lust implanted in me a feeling that I was unsatisfied in whatever I had. For example, my lusting was so strong that I was totally succumbed by it, were no picture or video can satisfy me even after falling, I would continue. I dread that downward spiral, that includes feeling down after falling. Also some yidden in my community are getting married and I am still single (a hair younger than them) and I keep thinking, soon it will be my turn (as if we are taking turns to get married :P) and I am not even under control of my own passions yet, so how can I even get married? But, NOW, I thank Hashem for allowing me to be single, work on being shmirat eynaim and shmirat habrit, improve my middos that one day, I will connect to Him on a greater plane with someone special. So, yeah, I learned that I gotta be grateful to Hashem for the good and the bad in life, for everything.

Gotta go now. Shalom. ;D

Giant Leap

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Re: Giant Leap's short journey & experiences
Posted by the.guard - 13 Mar 2010 21:35

Now you're talking!!

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Re: Giant Leap's short journey & experiences
Posted by silentbattle - 14 Mar 2010 01:07

That's great! Keep on rising, my friend!

I'm glad to hear that you're feeling good, as well.

Do you have any plans set up in case the yetzer hora knocks on your door?

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Re: Giant Leap's short journey & experiences
Posted by bardichev - 14 Mar 2010 01:12

Yes he does he will hit him on the head with a bottle of woodford and say

GOOOOOD RIDDANCE!!

And keep on trucking

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Re: Giant Leap's short journey & experiences
Posted by DovInIsrael - 14 Mar 2010 01:22

nah, it will not work.

The Y"H is waiting for you to pick a fight with him.

when he comes knocking at your door, try inviting him in...

show him to the waiting room.

Tell him you are in the midst of something and will be with him as soon as you can!

and then lock him in - and RUN!!

start screaming for help!!!

and don't look back!

(don't bother feeling sorry for him either - I can assure you he will be OK, and be able to find his way out)

DovInIsrael

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Re: Giant Leap's short journey & experiences
Posted by silentbattle - 14 Mar 2010 01:29

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Re: Giant Leap's short journey & experiences
Posted by Giant Leap - 14 Mar 2010 03:01

Good week everyone.

Thanks for your replies and perspectives. I'm going with DovInIsrael's approach. I'm not going to fight with the yetzer. I have fought the yetzer head on, and sometimes won but mainly lost. I learned in a chizuk email that said that the yetzer was an angel created by Hashem, and Hashem gave me a challenge to deal with him and only my trust in Hashem can help me. I'll keep on praying for all of us who are being challenged by the yetzer that Hashem will restore our will to be an indestructible wall in faith. Although I don't guarantee that I will not fall (motzei) Falling is not in my mind frame. I'm tired of feeling bad because of my fall. So, I'm living life - happily, because the yetzer is a fly who keeps buzzing around me wanted me to fail.

RE: Gaurd's reply. Yeah I got something I want to try from the Light of Ephraim book. Its understandable that different methods work for different individuals. I'll keep all of you posted on what works for me (in that topic section). Currently, I gotta increase my Torah study and get to the deep stuff, regardless of whether I feel like it or not.

Shalom.

Giant Leap

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Re: Giant Leap's short journey & experiences
shabbos is when my guard usually falls - but wont this time
Posted by silentbattie - 14 Mar 2010 05:24

Sounds like a good plan - and remember that you CAN do this!

You can also keep posting about what you're trying, and keep us updated, right here - so that all of us following you can know what you're doing, how you're doing, and learn from you!

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Re: Giant Leap's short journey & experiences
Posted by Giant Leap - 14 Mar 2010 22:06

I was saved by Hashem. Here is the story. I got an email in one of my accounts and I went to check it out. The email was from a girl with a Jewish name and she wanted to connect with me, so I accepted her invitation, knowingly it was probably not a good idea. I thought she was a spammer, which is probably the case. Then, the urge began to build up and I felt the sensation to watch some pictures on a popular sites. I promised myself I would not go there after falling many times. I found out a way to search for illicit pictures that the k9 filter can't block. So I made a account again, in search for illicit pictures, and in short I saved about 30 of them. I had to make a choice, go all the way and fall completely, experience the short lived rush and feel bad about myself afterwards or quit. I chose the latter. I deleted the account with all those pictures, and thanked Hashem for saving me for the downward spiral and its after affects.

Here is how it worked. I was feeling the urge to act out, and the yetzer tapped into it upon getting a loophole. I knew it was him coming to get me and I created a dialogue with him. I said, okay yetzer, I am powerless to you, you can take me into your lustful hurricane and I will go along with you, and after I fall, I will experience the depressed feelings, the emotional withdrawal of feeling not part of a minyan or not willing to study Torah and daven to Hashem etc. So, yetzer I will go with you but under a few conditions. A) I get a lifeline from Hashem when I get too deep He will allow me to make the choice not to go all the way or not and if I chose not He should sa

I will chose to end it when I want to.

Thats how Hashem saved me.

My idea came from someone who quit smoking awhile back. He taught me that the idea the mind can control everything - mind over matter. He said to me that the way he quit smoking was he took his last cigarette, claimed to himself that it was his last one, but under the condition that if he ever wanted to smoke again (cigarette, cigar, pipe) he would do so. The point was the he would mentally control is urge and not feel restricted not to act out on his feelings. I tried that

with lust. I don't recommend that; its too risky. Lust and the yetzer is too strong to play mind games with. Although, I feel that it was not all that bad. I felt actually pretty good that in some way I knew that I had some control over the matter and wasn't restricted in my choice. I still went along with the yetzer and almost crashed and burned, but I had those two preconditions I made, and I guess they helped or maybe not??

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Its tough to be clean. I'm just thankful that it didn't go sour