

the yetzer hora keeps beating me

Posted by ataglance12345 - 02 Jul 2015 15:45

First time poster...So here is my issue. I have run out of any ability to stop the following behavior: I will go to a bar. First mistake. Then I will drink too much. Then I will start flirting with women. Then I will sometimes go to a dance club from the bar. Then I will pay for services...all types. I have also been known to sometimes have had actual relations with these woman as well, sometimes quasi-prostitutes other times just loose women that I meet at a bar. Then I usually will go to a nearby restaurant and eat everything on the menu that is not kosher. Last night I had a bacon cheeseburger, french fries, pancakes and steak and eggs. Then I go home and go to bed. The next day I will feel horrible, beg Hashem for forgiveness, maybe go to the mikvah to make myself feel clean, and then stop for a week or two. Then I will go to a bar, and the whole thing starts over again. Oh, and let's not forget that I will access pornographic sites as well and sometimes finish myself that way. Talk about a yetzer hora. I am not sure what else I could be doing that is worse. I am a Shomer Shabbos Jew. Obviously, I know that what I m doing is terribly terribly wrong, but I cannot seem to stop. Even when I stop for months at a time, I still go back to this behavior. And it is getting worse. Just as an aside, when I am sober, I do not engage in any of this behavior, but am a good Jew, learning and davening, keeping kosher etc. I always seem to drink to drunkenness at the bar as well. Binge drinking they call it. I do not drink at all during the day and can actually go weeks without a drink. Obviously, I feel like a horrible hypocrite. On a "postive " note, I have never had a long term affair with another woman, only one time sexual trysts. Of course, I often fantasize about having long term affairs with my coworkers or people I meet. I am a basket case, living a double life, and fully aware of the spiritual damage I am doing to myself and my family. I keep praying to Hashem not to punish my family on account of my sins, as that is my worst fear. I also find myself wishing that I was dead after these incidents, but have only thought about it and said it to myself, I have never attempted to take my own life, but it scares me that I could if I get so low. Oh, and lets not forget how many times I have driven while drunk, clearly breaking the law. I always pray to Hashem to get me home safely and not let me be pulled over and arrested while driving drunk. How is that for scary stuff. So, what am I? Alcoholic, sex addicted, or just a creep with a nasty Yetzer Hora that he can't control. G-d, writing this down and actually seeing it on paper scares the daylights out of me. Help! What should I do?

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Re: the yetzer hora keeps beating me

Posted by cordnoy - 01 Mar 2016 19:53

We read in the white book today (perhaps page 62): how could it have happened? Where did we go wrong? Etc.

To some, the answer may be that they were not workin' the program the way they should.

To others, the answer may be that they do not have filters installed.

To others, they are not watchin' their eyes appropriately.

Whatever....you have been doing well....keep at it.....B'hatzlachah

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Re: the yetzer hora keeps beating me
Posted by ataglace12345 - 02 Mar 2016 20:31

Yashe Koach. Yep, the Yetzer Hora is a beast. Ugh.

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Re: the yetzer hora keeps beating me
Posted by ataglace12345 - 02 Mar 2016 20:33

Thank you for the chizuk achi!

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Re: the yetzer hora keeps beating me
Posted by ataglace12345 - 02 Mar 2016 20:35

I do like Cordnoy's writing style! Esoteric, minimalistic, but deep.

Thanks and Yasher Koach!!

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Re: the yetzer hora keeps beating me

Posted by ataglance12345 - 02 Mar 2016 20:41

Man, I just read my first post from July 2015. That was pretty hard stuff to read again. B"H I have not seen a repeat to such base and low behavior for the most part. But then I realized it is really only about 8 months since I posted this. That is such a short amount of time compared to how long I have been engaged in this behavior previously.

It seems like it has been years since I stopped acting this way but in reality is just a few short months.

Well, I have to take the successes that I can and not dwell on the limitation of that success.

Daven for me brothers, please daven for me!

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Re: the yetzer hora keeps beating me
Posted by cordnoy - 02 Mar 2016 23:41

[ataglance12345 wrote on 02 Mar 2016 20:35:](#)

I do like Cordnoy's writing style! Esoteric, minimalistic, but deep.

Thanks and Yasher Koach!!

For my bio.

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Re: the yetzer hora keeps beating me
Posted by ataglance12345 - 03 Mar 2016 20:21

Ugh. Big fall last night and then again this morning. Not the worst I have experienced, but close. I will not go in to the details but you just need to read my previous posts to get an idea of how low I can go.

I have been very happy with some of my progress these past few months, and then mortified at how easy it is to fall and return to my sinful activities.

But, who am I kidding, I will confess that a big part of me knew that fall was coming, and I did nothing to actively stave it off, but instead welcomed it with delicious anticipation. I knew it was going to happen. I should have totally cut myself off from all outside stimuli at that point where I felt the urge roiling up in me. But the Yetzer Hora enticed me again...

It is like a race car driver that circles the track hundreds of times successfully, then decides that he is going to drive recklessly for just a few laps with the full knowledge that at some point he will crash, and then he crashes.

The question is, how to avoid that reckless decision?

I daven, go to the mikveh, I read, I try to meditate, and still these thoughts and desires well up in me and seem to at times totally direct my actions.

I see there is no hope in eliminating these thoughts and desires, but I have not found the magic bullet for controlling them.

Why can I be "clean and sober" so to speak, for months at time, and then fall right back in to the crud????

This is so frustrating.

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Re: the yetzer hora keeps beating me
Posted by Watson - 03 Mar 2016 20:52

[ataglance12345 wrote on 03 Mar 2016 20:21:](#)

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This is so frustrating.

I relate so much to your frustration. I tried hundreds of methods of stopping, every time thinking I had finally figured it out. Then I would fall and feel so annoyed and disappointed with myself. At times I felt there was no hope.

Thank you for your honest share.

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Re: the yetzer hora keeps beating me
Posted by cordnoy - 03 Mar 2016 23:49

I know that race track.

I have been on that roller coaster.

The recovery that I have found now has been workin'. I plan to keep at it.

B'hatzlachah

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Re: the yetzer hora keeps beating me
Posted by ataglance12345 - 04 Mar 2016 21:17

It seems that at certain times, the lust factor just increases exponentially. Every woman I see on the street lately, I begin to fantasize. It is embarassing and demeaning to both myself and the object of my lust fantasy. I try to keep my head down and not stare, but at some point I must look up and, boom, a like clockwork, pretty woman is within eye sight.

I got issues.

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Re: the yetzer hora keeps beating me
Posted by realsimcha - 04 Mar 2016 21:20

[ataglance12345 wrote on 04 Mar 2016 21:17:](#)

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I got issues.

you and me both! I had an idea that has helped for me. Sometimes when i see a woman whom i might feel lust for i think about her father and how much he must love her and want to protect her. I think about the fact that she has parents who want whats best for her. Maybe she has a husband who would walk through fire for her or children who depend on her. either way, this helps me to not look at her a s a "thing" but rather as a person with a life and relationships and meaning...

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Re: the yetzer hora keeps beating me
Posted by ataglance12345 - 04 Mar 2016 21:32

That is a very good suggestion. I will try it. Thanks.

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Re: the yetzer hora keeps beating me
Posted by musician - 04 Mar 2016 21:45

Great idea. I heard that advice for a mechanech who did not like one of his talmidim. He was advised to look at the kid and visuallize the love that his parents had for him, how they dote and adore him, same idea.

I never thought of applying it to this case. Wonderful. THanks

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Re: the yetzer hora keeps beating me
Posted by Dov - 13 Mar 2016 19:08

Dear friends ('ataglance', 'musician', and 'realsimcha'),

You wrote: "the lust factor just increases exponentially. Every woman I see on the street lately, I begin to fantasize." And, "*I daven, go to the mikveh, I read, I try to meditate, and still these thoughts and desires well up in me and seem to at times totally direct my actions. I see there is no hope in eliminating these thoughts and desires, but I have not found the magic bullet for controlling them.*"

And then '**realsimcha**' shared that he has found a tool to help him. When he feels the temptation to stare at and/or follow these women with his eyes, he thinks about the realness of this woman that he is worshiping, and tries to use that realization to snap him out of it and treat her like a real human.

That is a fabulous idea and I am so glad you shared that here!

But I have found that, for myself, the technique that you described is just not going far enough. I need to actually pray to Hashem for the woman I don't let go of. To ask Him to help her in every way He sees fit for her. To bless her with health, save her from the horrible pains of real life (death is not very nice, getting old and losing your loved ones sucks, too, and most of us will have to confront some very frightening disease eventually and there really is no escape for most of us; then there are many who suffer the pains of wayward children, painfully screwed up marriages etc, etc - and all these things must be even harder for goyim than they are for us Yidden, for at least we have a strong moral compass and a Torah and Torah-community that makes facing real life challenges easier.....don't we? If I were brought up as **she** was, gevalt how lost would I be! So, I often have an easier time feeling for their pain, as strange as that may seem.)

Thinking about her as a real person is nice - but it is still thinking about her. And thinking about her is **never** a good idea, for me. If you are lusting after her and wishing to snatch a better look at her, then you are obviously worshiping her on some real level. That needs to be recognized first and foremost, and faced squarely. Denial is no escape - it is just a feeble lie that will get us nowhere. Once that is accepted fully, we can start to take real action for her - not just to '*think about her*'. Concrete actions are usually what speaks much louder than thinking...and thinking will often just breed more thinking. Thinking is also way too close to fighting. And we know the Kotzker tells us that wrestling with a muddy man with just make us more muddy in the end, even if we win. Sincerely praying for them is very different than thinking about them. It's magical, actually....if it is sincere.

And one caveat for this technique:

It's very poor as a first line of defense. In fact, as a first line of defense it is usually just a trick our desire uses in order to keep holding onto the person/image/lust object. It then backfires. I use **dropping it** as my 1st response. I admit (usually *verbally*, speaking the words quietly to myself and to my G-d, not just *thinking* them) that, "She isn't mine and won't be mine and that I have have no business with her." I usually have a faint smile when I say these words, because I find it a bit comical that I would entertain any thought that she really *is* mine or that I have any *real* business checking her out. I have gotten used to laughing about most lust temptations. And they just pass, like driving by an interesting road-kill...yeah, it's interesting to see if that dear has his brains or intestines splattered open and what they actually *look* like...but - I think I can go on without stopping on the highway right now, cuz 1- I'm busy going somewhere and 2- it's really none of my business anyhow.

Don't you find it a bit comical, too? Can't you honestly apply it to lusting, as well? I do. And I am a full-blown, powerless sexaholic. Just cuz I have been sober today for many years does not mean I have forgotten an iota of the pain you go through when she passes and you feel you *must, must* check out her bottom and waist - or else.

I have not forgotten, boruch Hashem. And I am still free, and not asking G-d for for more than today.

The other thing I want to share regarding the comments I quoted from **ataglance** and **musician** is this:

You wrote about how nearly every woman that walks by becomes a flaming battle for you. I would suggest that this is because of (our misuse of) the Torah and yiddishkeit.

The halachos of tzniyus can help make women's figures and body parts become none of our business - to basically leave our consciousness 99.9% of the time...**or** it can make the sweet figure of a woman become the entire focus of our attention when we see a woman. Calling attention to the fact that *it is forbidden - it is a powerful force - it is beautiful* - creates a monster out of a fact of nature.

There are actually from Jews who keep the halachos of yichud - and it creates within them a huge desire for sex where there would not have been one, before. Simply put, they see being alone with a woman as a pretext for having sex with them, or that Chaza"l tell us that we might rape them, or that the woman might actually make a sexual come-on, being alone w him....all sick, twisted, and playing right into the hands of lust fantasy. Chaza"l of course meant none of these things at all. If you need help figuring out what Chza"l meant, just think a second and you will figure it out - and it is not any of those horrid (or exciting - right?) things. Thus, Torah misused creates a monster and perpetuates the 'sexualization' (and eventually erotification) of women...everywhere.

So if somebody is seeing sex everywhere he sees a woman, perhaps the thing they need to do is **stop** thinking about tikun habris, tzniyus, shmiras einayim, and the yetzer hora all day long. For some people, being on GYE is exactly the *wrong* thing to do. Nothing causes obsessing about sex like - obsessing about not thinking about sex.

Every tool can be misused. And this is precisely what I see when I read your words: "*the lust factor just increases exponentially. Every woman I see on the street lately, I begin to fantasize.*"

I respect you tremendously for being open about it and for your honesty and I understand 100% and am just making my best suggestion. It is not a 'philosophy' that I am sharing with you - it is the tog-teglicher experience of a sober (b"H) sexaholic. Granted, you are probably *not* a sexaholic but rather closer to normal...but somewhere along the way it is quite possible that you have learned to create an obsession where there should be just **a neutral fact**. There is a woman walking by there and yes, she has breasts....everyone knows that and it just is. It's not an issue. It just **is**. Yiddishkeit does not *shun* facts - it puts them proper *context*. Torah does not and should not obliterate normalcy. And that does require some maturity, which is a precious commodity that I only started having in recovery.

Hope that was helpful and not hurtful in any way!

- Dov

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