

newbie - first time I try to get clean with help
Posted by mike dupont - 20 Aug 2015 14:23

After years of having been an internet addict I got caught by my wife recently which I believe was Hachem's gift to me so I can finally start to better myself. In the mean time I met with a therapist which is going to coach me (and my wife) on how to cope/get things under control.

I'm happy my wife wants to give us a second chance and she's been looking online for help, this is how she got to GYE and convinced me to subscribe.

Just one concern: I looked at the 90-day chart and was actually disappointed by seeing the longest current streak is 89 days although some people have been clean for hundreds of days. Does this mean almost everybody will fail again? Is there no chance to become clean for the rest of our lives?

Mike

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Re: newbie - first time I try to get clean with help
Posted by waydown - 21 Aug 2015 18:10

I definitely agree that a big part that has helped me and many others is doing the little things that I don't want to do."

I think you mean doing the "BIG THINGS" that I don't want to do. This a tough battle for me and it ain't "little things". I have to change my whole life style, altitude, way of thinking etc.. (Thats kind of why I don't get the selfish part. Because we must do "big" stuff which are great sacrifices. But its not for erev shabbos! Its too tense.)

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Re: newbie - first time I try to get clean with help
Posted by mike dupont - 25 Aug 2015 10:25

(as I'm new on the forum and did very little research I appreciate the feedback even more as it also deal with the Jewish part of it)

When I think about my situation I know there's an image which stuck with me when I was age 7-8, way too young to consider it in its full meaning or even realize I'm have attracted by something interesting. Without going into details B'H I've never been with a woman but I'm attracted by some body parts in certain situations (not that I try to get myself a heter for looking).

But then I question myself: if it started at such a young age, did I ever get bechira chofshis? Did I ever get a proper chance to have a normal life or was I 'abandoned' into the claws of the YH from birth?

Besides that I'm also struggling to come with terms with myself (at least short term); can I ever make proper Tshuva and expect to be pardoned? I feel completely different the last couple of days during davening and hope I can sustain this for the long term. I feel a totally different connection to Hashem and indeed feel powerless for both my past and future.

But I trust Him; I know Hashem loves me the same way He loves all the Jewish neshamos.

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Re: newbie - first time I try to get clean with help
Posted by cordnoy - 25 Aug 2015 11:05

[mike dupont wrote:](#)

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But I trust Him; I know Hashem loves me the same way He loves all the Jewish neshamos.

The more you focus on that image and the more you question this issue, the greater it will haunt you. Focus on living just for today.

B'hatzlachah

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Re: newbie - first time I try to get clean with help
Posted by mike dupont - 25 Aug 2015 11:24

Cordnoy,

I understand your point (my wife had mentioned it already, she read it on this forum) but tachles we're getting very close to Rosh Hashono/Yom Kippur. I need a way to approach those days (besides obviously the rest of my life).

How can I ignore the fact we're in Elul? Now that I started my journey to better myself it hurts me more than any other previous year until now.

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Re: newbie - first time I try to get clean with help
Posted by cordnoy - 25 Aug 2015 11:41

I surrender all attempts to control life....anybody's life....I live for one thing....to live a godly life, firmly and joyously in the moment....sobriety is all I know and all I ever wanna know, and that is how I live today.

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Re: newbie - first time I try to get clean with help
Posted by mike dupont - 25 Aug 2015 12:15

At this point I don't consider that making Tshuva (and hoping for a Kaporo) means controlling my life. I agree totally this is impossible but it doesn't take my responsibility away.

Pardon my way of thinking but I guess I still view the concept of surrendering as a way of exempting oneself from his duties. As I'm still at a very early stage in my journey I'd have no problem to admit I'm wrong but I think I still need some explanation. I've sinned for too long (around 15 years) in order for me to say today that I 'merely' surrender.

Based on your -and other's- comments I hope I'm not making my life more difficult than need to be at this point.

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Re: newbie - first time I try to get clean with help
Posted by cordnoy - 25 Aug 2015 12:22

[mike dupont wrote:](#)

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Based on your -and other's- comments I hope I'm not making my life more difficult than need to be at this point.

Sounds to me like you are, but ask your rav.

I have been in the throes of this addiction for double the time.

For me, at this time, this is the only way to live.

B'hatzlachah and may you be zoche to find what you are searching for.

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Re: newbie - first time I try to get clean with help

Posted by AlexEliezer - 25 Aug 2015 13:34

[mike dupont wrote:](#)

How will/should she cope? Can she accept today that for the rest of her life she will be married with an addict who will stumble from time or time or is she better off leaving me and maybe try with someone else?

No need to ever stumble again.

It is quite possible for an addict to get it right.

It's done by making one right decision at a time.

It's all about commitment, honesty with yourself, and consistency.

I will always be an addict.

This doesn't mean I will always stumble and/or fall.

It simply means I need to avoid triggers and being triggered.

I need to know that I can't mess with lust, can't get into the ring with it.

Can't cheat here and there.

If I'm caught off guard by a trigger, I can surrender my lust to Hashem.

There are millions of alcoholics who haven't slipped or fallen in decades.

Because they haven't taken a single sip.

One right decision at a time.

We can all do this.

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Re: newbie - first time I try to get clean with help
Posted by Bigmoish - 25 Aug 2015 13:53

[mike dupont wrote:](#)

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But I trust Him; I know Hashem loves me the same way He loves all the Jewish neshamos.

Is this the first Elul in your life that you felt an urgent need to do teshuva on these inyanim?

I've done teshuva for masturbating during every Elul since my bar mitzva. It never helped.

One aspect of teshuva is azivas hacheit. Work on that part first. And, in my experience, if we keep dwelling on getting a kapara, we will never be able to stop masturbating.

Hatzlocha

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Re: newbie - first time I try to get clean with help

Posted by serenity - 25 Aug 2015 23:06

Maybe your journey can focus on just doing the right thing for right now. For me, I was always looking at the big goals and getting frustrated in the short term. I don't think much about the big goals anymore and changing myself, I try to just do what good I can right now. That's me here in the now, with all my faults and shortcomings.

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Re: newbie - first time I try to get clean with help
Posted by gibbor120 - 27 Aug 2015 21:03

I haven't had much time to be on the forum lately and didn't read the entire thread, but let me just say that my wife caught me too. After over 20 years of acting out, I'm B"H sober for the last 6 years. My marriage has gotten better too. It was tough at first, but it can get better. There is hope my friend. You just have to be willing to do the work. Share openly, and be open to change. Sorry for the short post, but I gotta go. Hatzlacha my friend!

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Re: newbie - first time I try to get clean with help
Posted by TalmidChaim - 27 Aug 2015 21:40

Great and inspiring advice on this thread. My experience with "big things" is that they're totally unmanageable until you realize that they're really just made up of a lot of little things, clinging together. And once you pick away at a few of those little things, the structural integrity of those big things just goes to shambles. It's one of the nicer chain reactions in the universe, the Self-Improvement Cycle.

So don't get bogged down by the enormity of it all. That grand perspective really isn't for you anyway; it's for HaShem.

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Re: newbie - first time I try to get clean with help
Posted by mike dupont - 28 Aug 2015 11:03

B'H I'm getting close to my first full week being clean.

Reading the many messages is helping to get a different perspective on things, thanks again to all of you.

I praise myself as very lucky that my wife is highly supportive; she's also on the forum (women's side) and helps me getting through this war in many ways.

After 'only' 8 days I already see many positive changes in my life (eg more time with family, more kavana during davening...). The combination of little changes (no more phone in the bedroom at night...), GYE and therapist help me staying clean so far.

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Re: newbie - first time I try to get clean with help
Posted by kilochalu - 12 Sep 2015 21:04

[mike dupont wrote:](#)

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Based on your -and other's- comments I hope I'm not making my life more difficult than need to be at this point.

don't mean to disagree at all with any of the other wonderful comments here but just want to point out that even for non addicts surrendering definitely has a major role in tshuva. sforim are full of this yesod too many too even start to list but just one basic one from the rishonim the chovos halvovos has a whole shaar haknia and the next shaar which is shaar tshuva he starts by saying that it all begins with knia where several of the aspects of knia definitely have to do with surrendering to Hashem (also see mishnas r' aharon where he brings this at length specifically in regards to rosh hashana and how this is why rosh hashana is the beginning and foundation of the whole aseres ymei tshuva)

but as you say it is not 'merely' surrendering,

'surrendering' brings to an entirely different way of viewing everything and acting as avdey Hashem

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