

It's all in the name

Posted by eerie - 24 Nov 2022 19:25

Hi there all my anonymous friends!

I am on here for a while, most of the time just to sign in and update where I'm holding, but from time to time I do read around some posts on the forums, and I am really at a loss of words when I try to describe what I think about all of you. I'm simply awed into silence. You guys are all amazing, fighting the terrible urges, sometimes in such difficult circumstances, from complicated pasts, I stand humbled. I am so proud to at least be part of the same nation, even if I don't come close. Keep up the fight and may Hashem be with all of you and may you feel his closeness.

And now, Hi! I gave myself the name eerie because that's what I think about my situation. I am blissfully married to a really special person,(which, I learned from the posts on this site, is not to be taken for granted. It's something that so many of my dear friends here struggle with, their addictions creating issues in their marriage and the problems in their marriage further exacerbating their addictions) and we have a few wonderful kids. I really cannot imagine a better marriage, we respect each other, love each other, communicate beautifully, and my intimate life is wonderful. I believe my wife would say the same. I am a seriously respected member of my community, I am in a position of chinuch (and I think I do a pretty good job:)), so why oh why on earth am I here? What would the people think if they knew? Would I still have a wife? Would they let me talk to my kids? At that point would I even care about my job or my life's mission? I BH had a wonderful upbringing, loving and caring parents who are very proud of their "successful kli kodesh" son. What would they think if they knew? These thoughts were on my mind as I created my account and the feeling I had was "This is eerie. A mechanech. A talmid chacham. Sought after maggid shiur. This is totally eerie." So there you have it. It's all in the name.

A little about me. I think many of you would disagree but I don't think I'm addicted to P&M. I have normal urges like all healthy people. I have no smartphone (if you would only hear me speak about the downfalls), no computer at home. So where and when do/did I fall? I called a talk line by mistake, I was trying to reach a company. I was horrified. I hung up and told my wife about it. But, of course, my curiosity plus urge got me to call. This was probably 10+ years ago, called maybe 10 times total. Can't remember the last time I did that. Then my wife got a smartphone, and we blocked the browser entirely through parental controls, with each of us having half the code. Of course, when I was down I tried a few times and of course I figured out her half. Here and there I would go on really bad sites. Not long thereafter we got rid of that phone. That was also 10+ years ago/ But every once in a while I fall. I once found that one computer in the Yeshiva (!!!!) where I work had no filter. You read that right.. No filter, in the yeshiva computer! I would estimate that once in 2-3 months I went on really bad stuff there. One day I just realized that I need accountability, so I came to GYE. I know I have to answer to someone, I'm going to write it if I fall, and that helps me.

Now you might wonder, what am I writing this for? I am writing it first of all because I feel a kinship and I feel like it's "therapeutic" to tell my story someplace. Because even the people that I really trust, I can't tell them any of this. I sometimes wish there was an anonymous phone line where I could call and tell a Rav what I struggle with, to get it out of my system. When I was

bachur I was really close to my rebbeim, and I shared with them even my deepest secrets and struggles, I would tell my Rebbe if I M'd. BH I didn't struggle with that much, but I did do it a few times in my bachurische years, and my rebbe knew/knows about it. Maybe I'm weird that I shared that with my rebbe, but that's me. If I felt an attraction to a bachur I told him, and he understood me, always helped me, never judged me. There's no question that having such a person in my life changed me in unimaginable ways. Alas, I don't think I'll ever have the nerve to go to anyone and discuss my normal struggles and mistakes at this point. What would a rav or even my rebbe, whom I am still very close to 20+ years later, think if a person in my position came and said "I struggle with this. Once in a while I can fall into watching P." I can't do that, so I'm saying it here. I'm a healthy person with normal urges and desires and it can happen that I fall sometimes. I try to avoid unfiltered machines, when I'm at my parents' house I don't touch their devices, I told them to never let my kids touch their things and I warn my children to stay away, not even to look at Grandma's phone. But I know that every once in a while I'll find a device, and my urges, desires and curiosity (yes, I am still curious as to what some tags on some sites are supposed to mean. Curiosity is powerful.) can get the better of me. I joined GYE so I have to give an accounting, and I even had a fall since I joined, which I reported. I have a life's story, like everyone else, and here I shared some. Maybe some more another time.

But another reason I write this is because I look at what other people have written here, and I realize how small I am. I, the guy who sits up front at dinners, the guy whom you may have even heard at a dinner or some other place, I look at you in awe. Because I am not torn to shreds like some of you are, I have a happy marriage, and so many of you are working so hard to just keep the pieces in place. You are brutally honest with yourselves, and in spite of being in places I have only read about, doing things out there....in spite of that you are here, trying mightily to get only closer to Hashem, to be good, to be clean. I also struggle, but nowhere nearly as much as most of the people here. And I wish I could shake your hand and tell you how proud I am of you. I am so proud, and I know that I can't imagine how proud Hashem is. Keep it up!!! In this world I'm at the head table at the dinner, but believe me, at the se'udas livyason you guys will be up there, I hope I'll at least be in the crowd!

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Re: It's all in the name

Posted by sleepy - 27 Dec 2022 22:24

[Eerie wrote on 27 Dec 2022 22:21:](#)

[sleepy wrote on 27 Dec 2022 22:18:](#)

[Eerie wrote on 27 Dec 2022 21:27:](#)

Hi there, dear friends and brothers at GYE! I was looking at some other threads and I noticed something. I see that many successful warriors have worked on something that I find difficult, as embarrassed as I am to say it. I read through some of Vehkam's truly inspirational posts, and others' too, and I noticed that besides for working on the issue of staying clean, this journey is an opportunity for working on developing a real relationship with Hashem. In my first conversation with Vehkam he actually pointed that out to me. But I'm embarrassed to say that even though I feel that I'm BH having a successful journey, please Hashem hold my hand and let it last forever, but I find the part that they've discovered very hard. I will admit that if I don't have something inspirational going on in my life, I find it very hard to concentrate during davening. It's only when I have a tzarah c"v or I'm riding on inspiration of some sort that I really think about what I'm saying. I always loved learning, but davening, even today that I understand the words, is really hard for me. My mind just wanders. From time to time I am inspired to work on my relationship with Hashem, and what I do is that when I walk down the street by myself I think about how much Hashem loves me and how many wonderful things He has done for me, and that list is very, very long. But I usually don't stick to these things, and I feel like I have a whole undiscovered world before me. How do I get in? I wish I knew. I try to do what's right, I try to raise my children to do what's right, but I feel like I really need to focus on developing my relationship with Hashem, my love for Him, my reverence for Him, my gratitude for all He's done. It won't happen on it's own, and it's hard work. I don't feel like I even have a clarity on how to go about it.

everyone is different but i think my relationship started with Hashem after i started reading rejoice o youth by Rabbi Avigdor Miller z"l and listening to his tapes and other sefarim of his. Rabbi Yoel Teitelbaum from satmar Z"TVKL said that Rabbi Miller is the Pillar of Emunah in our generation !

I got the idea of talking to Hashem and thinking about His love for me as I walk in the street from rabbi Miller. Agreed, he was a giant of a man with many practical thoughts on connecting to Hashem. I will try to get that book. Thanks

wow ! beautiful! keep it up ! hatzlacha!

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Re: It's all in the name

Posted by frank.lee - 27 Dec 2022 23:38

I just read somewhere, maybe GYE, that one way to hold on focus by davening is to point your finger at the place, moving along word to word.

Another thing that may help, before each bracha, think for a couple seconds about what you are about to ask for.

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Re: It's all in the name

Posted by Vehkam - 28 Dec 2022 01:00

[Eerie wrote on 27 Dec 2022 21:27:](#)

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To my dear friend R' Eerie,

I will respond when i can formulate my thoughts properly. I tried to do it now but i ran out of time.

B'yedidus,

vehkam

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Re: It's all in the name

Posted by Vehkam - 28 Dec 2022 03:43

[Vehkam wrote on 28 Dec 2022 01:00:](#)

[Eerie wrote on 27 Dec 2022 21:27:](#)

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as promised....

I am not sure that this will answer your question but hopefully there is something here that can be helpful. (every journey is unique and each person needs to develop their own way of connecting)

I would say that for me it was more than just an “opportunity” to develop my relationship with hashem. Once my perspective changed to believe that hashem still wanted me, my whole journey became about being close to hashem. I was more focused on that positive aspect than anything else. That was (and still is) my motivation. This was absolutely necessary in order for me to be successful. If my desire to have a close relationship with hashem was not stronger than the desire to act out I would not have had a chance. This was an emotional reconnection. It did not start by having long shemona esrai's. It started with small things that I was doing throughout the day. Saying Modeh Ani out loud and thinking about it. Thinking about how hashem loves me before I kissed my tzitzis in shma. Bentching slowly from a siddur. At some point my davening started to become more emotional and I found messages that resonated with me throughout the davening. Much of the davening started to come alive. At that point my davening slowed down and for many months I was able to maintain focus.

I found that in Nissan and Elul there was an extra siyaata dishmaya in getting close to hashem. I was able to imagine hashem in front of me (if it could be) waiting lovingly to hear from me. I focused a lot on how a father longs to hear from and embrace their child and I tried to relate to hashem as that child. I chose to daven every tefila as an opportunity that I cherished and was excited to do. I did not approach davening as something that I needed to cross off of my to do list. If nothing else, I was speaking to the one who clearly saved my life and my gratitude for that and for so much good that has come my way needed to be expressed in a way that was genuine and heartfelt; not rushed and scripted.

There were also Friday nights that I found myself home alone and I was able to close my eyes and connect through the zmiros. I did not have to contend with any interruptions, and it was just me and hashem. (and any neshamos that I imagined might have joined us.) I did not hold back. At times the emotions caused me to be overcome with tears but I did not shy away from that. I wanted to express myself from the deepest recesses of my soul. To give voice to the part of me that was always yearning to connect to hashem and had been stifled for way too long. To allow that voice to define who I am and who I always want to be.

When I was in an emotional state, it was easier to connect and stay connected. Often my writing would reflect this. I knew that I needed to capture the emotions into written words. With time, the emotions fade and I wanted to be able to revisit them. I have tremendous gratitude to hashem that he allowed me write everything that I did. On occasion I go back and read what I have previously written and many times the emotions temporarily reawaken.

Life goes on and I am certainly a lot less emotional. There are days that I find it much harder to keep my mind focused during shemona esrai. However, I try my hardest and if I “space out” even for a lot of shemona esrai I focus on salvaging what I have left. I don't want to take anything for granted but I also know that I am human and I will have my ups and downs. My goal is to keep pushing myself, ever so gently, so that the ups will become higher and the downs will be shorter.

One of the things that was helpful to me, specifically for davening, was that I bought a copy of Rabbi Feigenbaum's teen siddur. I tried to prepare a page each night. I also thought a lot about how I relate to hashem. I used to relate to hashem as the policeman or judge that would certainly throw the book at me for all the wrongs I had done. I no longer think that way. The fact that hashem knows what is in the recesses of my heart used to cause me to worry and be ashamed. Today that same fact is a source of comfort.

I want to serve hashem with all my being. This is easy to say when I am not tested. I daven every day that I not be tested. Yet, I do believe that if I was offered a billion dollars, plus a guarantee that hashem would be mochel me 100% for doing it, I still would not choose to look at an improper picture for a fraction of a second. My relationship with hashem means that I will not knowingly choose to do anything that is not ratzon hashem.

Thanks so much for all of your support and friendship

B'yedidus

Vehkam

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Re: It's all in the name

Posted by Teshuvahguy - 28 Dec 2022 04:16

[Vehkam wrote on 28 Dec 2022 03:43:](#)

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Thanks so much for all of your support and friendship

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Vehkam

Oh my gosh, Vehkam. I didn't think you could do any more for me...and then, this post. It's hard to type because my eyes are watery. I am going to read and reread this post over and over and over again. What you just wrote is my aspiration. What you just described is what I deeply want and am working toward, and you give it substance and share tools to make it happen. If you have any more wisdom to add to this, please, please don't hold back. Your words are a gift. I don't know how to describe it so I won't try. But what you have to say is deeply transformative. I just want to hug you. I have read where you came from and seeing who you are now is incredibly motivating to someone like me, and it fills me with hope that even I can connect to my creator. I'm sorry to be so emotional. Just, thank you. Your friendship is a treasure. I'm 68. I only hope I still have time to get where I want to be.

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Re: It's all in the name

Posted by Human being - 28 Dec 2022 04:30

[Eerie wrote on 27 Dec 2022 22:19:](#)

I forgot to end the last piece with the words "any advice?". I really would appreciate if someone shared something very practical -not fluffy- on how to get working on living with Hashem in my life. I thought maybe stopping before each mitzva and remembering the idea that every mitzva is our connection to Hashem, but I wonder how practical that is for a starting point.

What worked for me, is how the Missilas Yesharim tells us to have a loving relationship with Hashem. Treat Hashem as you would anyone you love. Talk to Hashem as you would talk to anyone you love. Feel like bonding with the light of Hashem in the same way you feel like bonding with anyone you love! Wish about spending time in Hashem's presence just like you would wish to spend time in someone you love's presence. Once we start talking to Hashem as if he was a loved one, Hashem really becomes our closest, most lovable and most cherished loved one. And we begin to understand and feel a little bit of the "no word to explain how big" love for us Hashem have for us.

Try it, it really works! Do you tell your wife "I love you so so so so so much"? Then say the same thing to Hashem! Next time you want to thank Hashem, instead of saying "i have hakoras hatov to hashem", say to Hashem ---(shouldn't be in front of others, its inappropriate for a close relationship, it ruins the intimacy-just like in a regular relationship) --"**Hashem i love you so so so so so much**" i love you and i want to just cling to you forever i love you so much". "i cant get over how much i love you and there's no way to express the love you have of me and the love i have of you Hashem" "**thank you so much for being there for me, tatty/daddy/father who I love so much**" Now for the missilas yescharim,

????? ??? ????? ?????, ?????? ?? ?': ?????, ???????, ??????. LOVE OF G-D: Let us now speak on the matter of love [of G-d]. Its branches are three: joy, clinging, and jealousy.

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Warning: Spoiler!

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which depends on something" (Avot 5:16). Namely, that one should love the blessed Creator,
not because He bestows good to him and grants him wealth and success. **Rather, it should be
like the love of a son for his father, which is actually (mamash) a natural love, to which
the son's nature compels and forces him to this. As scripture states: "is He not your Father,
your Master?" (Devarim 32:6).**

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Re: It's all in the name

Posted by Teshuvahguy - 28 Dec 2022 04:34

[Human being wrote on 28 Dec 2022 04:30:](#)

[Eerie wrote on 27 Dec 2022 22:19:](#)

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your Master?" (Devarim 32:6).

Thank you, HB. I'm just lapping all this up and it's all really helpful (even though Eerie is the
one who asked the question, I'm vicariously benefiting from the responses!)

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Re: It's all in the name
Posted by chancy - 28 Dec 2022 19:25

I think a lot of us suffering from lust have much greater opportunities getting closer to Hashem
then others without this struggle.

This is not a guess, i have done lots of research on this. Its clear to me that Hashem has given
us a greater portion of love then other people and when we learn how to channle that love to the
right places, we can go much higher.

This is also based on a lot of Chasidish Sforim that say the same.

SO lets use our powers for good. And create light from darkness.

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Re: It's all in the name
Posted by Eerie - 28 Dec 2022 19:53

To my dear friend Vehkam, I'm jealous. I read a lot of your thread yesterday, and that was the
impetus for my yesterday's post. What you wrote here just blew me away. I needed the tissues,
like our friend TG. The thought that you wrote so eloquently, that your motivation to stay strong
is your relationship with Hashem, that's the thought you shared in our first conversation. It still
resonates in my mind. We all know that so many people diet, lose weight, they behave, and
then they just bust, binge eating anything in sight. Why is that? I recall seeing from Rav Dessler
that desire is like a spring. The tighter and harder we push the spring down the more force we
give it. And the harder it becomes to keep holding. That's why at a certain point we just plotz. So

the question is, can we never just hold back our desire? Rav Dessler writes that the correct way is to find the desire within ourselves, the happiness within our hearts to be this way. If a person diets with will power, he really desires all that stuff but he holds back, if he does not find the happiness, the true desire, to be this way, the counter balance to his desire to eat, then he is in danger of slipping and binge eating. Dieting is a mashal. I look at you, my dear friend and inspiration, and I see that you discovered that the way to succeed in this journey is not through withholding desire. No, withholding desire only lasts that long. Rather the way to success here is through finding your innate desire, through building on that desire, to turn your desire to connect to Hashem into a roaring flame that will outweigh any other desire you might have. And that makes me jealous, because I want it too.

The practical takeaway that I have from your beautiful piece is that this subject- like any in Judaism, I guess- is hard work, and even if I would love a shortcut, there ain't none comin'. I'm gonna have to roll up my sleeves and get to work if I want it happen. It's back to basics. If this is what I want I will need to work constantly, step by step. The greatest difficulty I think I have with it is that we don't see Hashem. We don't process His presence through any of our senses. So, to counter that, we need:

(1)Spend time thinking about the truth of Hashem's presence in my life and in the running of the entire universe. I think on a practical level the best way to make that happen is to follow Rabbi Miller's idea of confining it to a minute a day. I will Bl'n spend one minute a day contemplating Hashem's presence, including how His presence is obvious through the myriad of miracles that take place every single day.

(2)Work on love of Hashem. How? The rambam says through thinking about the unbelievable world that Hashem created. (Yesodei haTorah perek 2-"When a person will think about the endless wisdom with which Hashem created the world he will immediately love, praise and have a great desire to know Hashem"). He created it all for us, for me, for you, for every Jew. The Chinuch says the way to love Hashem is through learning Torah. So, I guess I should learn more Torah. And spend a minute each day thinking of Hashem's beautiful world and how He made miraculous things. Thinking of all the wonderful things Hashem has done for me will definitely remind me how much He loves me, which will increase my love for Him.

(3) Pick **only one small piece** of davening to concentrate on for this month. Next month pick a different piece.

I was wondering, maybe every day I should post a small piece, something about Hashem's wondrous world, which will remind me to think about Him, to connect to Him, to think about His love for us and our love for Him. What does the oilam think?

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Re: It's all in the name

Posted by jackthejew - 29 Dec 2022 17:09

If I quoted that it'd take up waaay too much room and I have nothing to add that I can express nearly as well as that. Beautiful

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Re: It's all in the name

Posted by sleepy - 29 Dec 2022 17:41

[doingtshuva wrote on 25 Nov 2022 00:38:](#)

Welcome on board,

?? ?????? ?????? ?????? ?????? ??????

Just have in mind that I know many ??????, ????????, and more who struggle terribly.

Its not that they are bad people, they just cant, or didn't yet learn to control there desires.

We are all human and we all struggle, but we are here to work.

wow, may i ask how you know MANY rabonim ,mashgichim and more struggle with this ? doing teshuva....who are you?

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Re: It's all in the name

Posted by doingtshuva - 29 Dec 2022 22:51

I am a simple addict.

With the years and with the people I spoke, I found out that almost everybody has its struggles.

Some just manage to hide it very well.

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Re: It's all in the name

Posted by Eerie - 29 Dec 2022 23:26

As long as we are willing to realize that we have issues and we work on them, it's ok if we hide them from others. Yes, we all have struggles, even truly great people have a YH to contend with, and it is proper that they not reveal their struggles to the public. It is also proper that all of us not reveal our struggles outside of a context of anonymity or seeking help. ????...???? ????. We just have to be aware of our issues, and those great people have to be aware of theirs, and we have to doing what we can to become better. Hatzlacha to all!

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Re: It's all in the name

Posted by Human being - 30 Dec 2022 18:38

[doingtshuva wrote on 29 Dec 2022 22:51:](#)

I am a simple addict.

With the years and with the people I spoke, I found out that almost everybody has its struggles.

Some just manage to hide it very well.

Life's like super Mario bros. If there's nothing that can get you out, there's no point in the game.

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