

Recent posts that really resonate

Posted by starting - 31 Jul 2020 01:13

If you have already read this post, read it again

If you have not, read it twice now

[starting wrote on 28 Jul 2020 20:52:](#)

"starting" post=353099 date=1595969544 catid=19

In about 10 hours I reach level 1: 24 hours clean

In 18 days I will beat my current longest streak

This mornings post did not have this tone

I just had a phone conversation with my greatest mentor on GYE.

?This was the most powerful thing that can ever be done on the path to recovery.

I just spoke to a guy who is over 1000 days clean. Before that he was doing the same things as me. He may have even felt it more 'necessary' than I do now.

I spoke to someone who is pure love. Just wants to hold my hand and lovingly guide me out-at my pace and in a way that's appropriate for me.

Does not care to know who I am, where I'm from or what Shul I daven in.

Just wants to share his extensive knowledge and experience.

And I now have much much clearer understanding in how to view this habit and ly"n break free.

My dear friends

I beg you

This is the most relieving move you can do

Forget about masturbating as a stress reliever.

There is a much more pleasant way.

PICK UP THE PHONE AND CALL SOMEONE EXPERIENCED.

SOMEONE WHO HAS BEEN THROUGH THIS AND CAN GUIDE YOU OUT OF HERE.

SOMEONE WHO CAN RELATE TO EVERYTHING YOU ARE GOING THROUGH.

People who have broken free can relate to you. Can love you more than you love yourself and believes in you more than you believe in yourself.

Because we are still stuck in it. They, the on other hand, are looking from the outside and not judging you by what you judge yourself. Because you look at yourself (even if you don't realise) to some degree, as a loser. Because you are stuck in it.

They are looking from the outside and they see you as a person and your habits as an external 'situation' that is clinging itself to you. It's not you!

And through a phone call they can help you see that and plenty more that you cannot possibly see by yourself, I only chose one point to elaborate on but there is so so much more I can say.

Pick up the phone!

Speak to someone!

It is the greatest, most important, possibly the hardest though it shouldn't be and the most powerful step towards breaking free

What are you waiting for? Why are you still reading?

Pick up the phone

All my love to myself and to all of you

Starting

You might say it's too hard, too scary, too nerve wrecking but I'll compare it to something you've probably experienced.

You see this food and it's not quite your style. Too be frank, it looks gross. Maybe it's the first time you saw sushi, sashimi or gravalux. Maybe it was a rare steak. It could have been corn or pineapple on pizza or really anything with (black) olives, you get the gist.

Comes along your friend and starts raving about it. Just goes on and on about it.

Eventually, you take the plunge and give a try.

You like it.

You really like it.

And you kick yourself for your years of perceiving to hate it.

Take the plunge. Leap the leap. This is one move you won't regret. This call will take you places.

I can not attempt to explain the difference between reading and writing dozens of posts on the forum and a single phone call.

Special thanks to @snowflake and @hashem help me for gently convincing me to take this step. Shame it took me so long but I look forward to being in touch with both of you regularly

I'll say one more thing.

I have been writing very honestly on the forum and I have been helped tremendously, thank you all.

As you have all read, I was a pretty bad guy acting out and doing bad stuff. Recently, I've embarked on a serious journey to purity and teshuva.

However, after one phone call, all that changed.

Retroactively, I became a good guy who has made mistakes. Or pulled into it perhaps.

I signed off that post saying 'all my love to myself'

Without going into detail, I'll just say that I meant it. I will say that when I wrote that, I cried.

And when read that later, I cried.

And when I reread that I cried.

For no reason. Nothing drastic happened.

Just a change in perspective.

I also thought that I could manage without getting emotional.

I am made of strong stuff.

Tough material.

Which means that a lost battle equals to some extent and subconsciously, a loser.

One phone call and I can look at this fight from a different angle.

ly"h soon I will learn to surrender my lust.

It's OK to need help especially from god.

I will stop here, I could go on and in but that's more the type of this to do in speech not in writing

Please my dear friends

Reach out

Reach and out and be helped

After all, it's only sushi

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Re: Recent posts that really resonate
Posted by starting - 31 Jul 2020 02:35

[Hashem Help Me wrote on 28 Jul 2020 01:09:](#)

I think we have to write a GYE *kina* for Corona. So many dear friends (mostly bochurim, but some marrieds too) crying and miserable. They had worked so hard, b'ezras Hashem reached major milestones, and had attained real menuchas hanefesh. They had set up practical *gedarim?*, filters, guidelines, accountability. They were doing great. They even had it all

planned out for bain hazmanim - knowing their homes were a challenge (due to parents' naiveté and leaving around unfiltered devices - a painful subject in and of itself). Some guys joined live meetings which were beneficial in so many ways - actual help, camaraderie, and accountability. And then came Corona.... The loneliness, the lack of getting out, the anxiety and edginess, feelings of unproductivity, live meetings non-existent, and weeks of access to unfiltered Internet - including supposedly "safe" zoom for yeshiva and college (the yeshivas that stuck to the phone conferences exclusively should be blessed), was just too much a nisayon. Even those chevra fortunate enough not to have easy access, reverting back to masturbation as the default stress reliever - instead of a good basketball game or other normal exercise - became extremely prevalent. A massive collective tragedy. Oy!!!!

So do we end this post mired in depression? Absolutely not! Everyone here at GYE - after digesting the above - reach out and help. These guys want to hold on to our hands so let's stretch them out. Even if you only listen and validate their pain you will have helped them unload, and show them someone cares. It is reassuring to know one is not alone (and is not a rasha or loser) and that many other great guys are struggling badly. And may Hashem give everyone the syatta d'shmaya to also advise each individual properly.

Much has been written about corona in general and zoom in particular. There was a chizzuk email recently about this.

What I find unique about this is that our dear friend is crying out in pain.

Not telling anyone what to do, what to be careful about.

Just expressing great pain. Speaking straight from the heart. Expressing his pain for all those whose nisayon has just become more unbearable.

Crying in pain together with all those innocent bachurim and girls who themselves are in pain.

Many have just accessed places they have never been before and have no idea how much it will soon hurt. Yet our author already feels their pain and is crying out, not blaming anyone, just expressing deep pain.

Oy meh hayah lanu

How powerful is a message which comes directly from a broken heart.

May we be zoche to have truly shielded children

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Re: Recent posts that really resonate
Posted by starting - 31 Jul 2020 02:40

[AlexEliezer wrote on 13 May 2020 20:43:](#)

What's the plan?

I have found that the cleaner I stay, the cleaner I stay.

Being sober doesn't mean not looking at porn and not masturbating.

Being sober means not taking the small drinks that lead to the binge.

For me, this means aggressive shmiras eynayim, along with not entertaining lustful fantasies or images in my brain.

To the degree that I am successful in avoiding these small pleasures, that is the degree to which the whole struggle is that much easier.

Hope this helps you re-start.

Have a great, clean day.

Alex

This special post rings home.

The one line 'what's the plan' has to be answered every minute of the day.

And much more importantly, what has to be answered constantly is the next points of his. Am I staying clean so I can stay clean? Honestly?

For after all

To the degree that I am successful in avoiding these small pleasures, that is the degree to which the whole struggle is that much easier.

Thank you Alex

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Re: Recent posts that really resonate
Posted by starting - 02 Aug 2020 10:32

This one is old BUT OH SO POWERFUL

[Dov wrote on 21 Jul 2011 23:21:](#)

OK, so you are making a point that divulging all aspects of our identity is the only way to make a full disclosure of self and be truly honest with others.

But we all know that is not true. We all know that we do *not* have to tell a friend *all* about us, in

order to be close with him. There are other ways to get truly intimate.

So you are trying to be *docheh* my words with straw. Intimacy is not what I am talking about here, at all.

Please bear with me and I'll tell you about Captain Kirk in a minute.

First, I will share that I have seen dozens of guys who have had the hardest time just saying their right name on a phone call. I have heard the hesitating, quiet voice on the other end of the line finally admit that "yes, my name - the one the real people in my everyday life know me by - is Pinchas". It is a terrible strain for some - and I hear myself in their trembling. That same hesitancy - fear mixed with shame. It's mine, too. It's just that in my case it is behind me - in theirs it is still in front of them.

What is really going on here?

I have seen frum guys *finally* drag themselves into live meetings and start off the first few meetings using a 'fakish' name - their English name that no one who knows their frum persona really uses. *Only to later change their names in the meetings to the Hebrew name that their wife and friends use* - cuz they began to see the perverts in the room *are* like they are, that *they* need what the guys in the room have been given just as desperately as they do. No difference in that respect. That is when the walls go down and the real juicy work can finally begin. *Until then, they are still unattached to what goes on in the meeting, for on some level it is not really Pinchas who is sitting there, but 'Robert' (the bad guy who is subject to porn worship).*

How to bring them together?

Which brings me to Captain Kirk.

There was once an episode of Star Trek in which there was a time travel shtick, and the Kirk of the present, went 10 years into the past. Now, there was another Kirk then, too, right?

That was a big problem. The scientists told him that normally two of the same people cannot coexist. It just does not happen. But as this was an exception (it was a TV show and they were getting paid \$15,000 per episode) as long as the old Kirk did not actually meet the present Kirk, all would be fine. However, if they *actually met each other*, the entire Time-Space Continuum would be 'ripped asunder' (chas veSholom). Under no circumstances could they be allowed to meet!

I do not remember what actually happened to Mr Shatner, but everything turned out OK for there were another few seasons of the show (and also we are all still here, no?). But my point is just this:

How does a frum guy get all drawn into his very private porn, admitting by his actions its awesome, sweet power for him, and privately have sex with himself (masturbate) with such intensity and imaginative pleasure and power? OK, so he has shame, self-loathing, and sadness afterward. But how does he do both tefillin, teaching Torah, being mekareiv and really davening for others hard and really crying for the churban, and really working on his middos....**and** masturbating himself with a fantasy that could *only* mean he (secretly) also worships the beauty and power of those naked shiksas and the act of sex? **How does such a contradiction survive in him?**

How does it survive in us?

My answer to myself is simple. We learn to lie a little. We lie to others and we lie to ourselves. We'll quit really soon. We won't do it any more when we are twenty....or fifty. Never on Shabbos. Never with masturbation. Etc. All lies, to ourselves. And over time, we learn to lie more and more without even noticing it, just as you cannot see yourself grow.

When we are being *good*, we feel good about ourselves and we wish we could forget the bad stuff we did last night - we call that a *hirhur teshuvah*. Really it is just so we do not hate ourselves so badly, but that's OK. We learn not to face it *right now* by pretending that we are 'forgiven' by Hashem. That way, one persona does not invade the other so much. It gets put off till the next time, if we are lucky.

When we are being 'bad', we wish we could forget how devoted we are to Hashem and His Torah and to our wives and children and to honesty with society - because it just feels so good to do the porn and we really see no way out of it. We know we need it and do not in a million

years believe there is really an alternative for us, in the end. We end up 'ignoring' our kedusha during the act. That is lying to ourselves, and again, one persona does not see the other simultaneously. Pretending we are really rotten to the core is a much more comfortable way to act out. Nu. Who wants to hurt so much?

We walk about for years and are tortured inside, for we know the dichotomy we are hiding - we *are* the dichotomy. But we do not really know what to do. We fight to make one side gain mastery over the other and call that *hisgabrus al hayeitzer*. And we fall. Then we assume we are horrible Jews, and assume that Hashem agrees with us about that. That mistake is a hard one to shake...(see step 2)

So now about the time-travel dilemma.

When we open up to others under a username (or fake English name in a meeting) and share the entire truth (which most rarely do) about our addiction, we are still *hiding our 'good' persona - the real me*. It's OK to let them know the horrible dirt - yeah, all of it - as long as they do not know the 'good' persona *too* well. The two are just incompatible.

Thos who got caught by their wives or children know exactly what I am talking about. They understand why they getting caught was so effective for a time - the desire to use the porn left them as a result of getting both personae dragged into the room at the same time. The horror of getting caught with my pants down by a co-worker, son, daughter, or wife is truly intolerable to anyone who has experienced it. Why?

Because the hypocrisy is mercilessly forced to come to a bitter end. The Time-Space Continuum has ripped asunder. We look frantically for a place to bury ourselves. It's hell.

It is the two Kirks being forced to see each other by a third party - ***and only a party who knows both personae can possibly do that***. Till that happens, we are all players. Lying a bit about the 'real' us' to ourselves and to others.

Some of us insist on solving our problem without bringing the two personae together. Perhaps they are just avoiding the terribly painful end of their hypocrisy, perhaps not. I do not know what is best for another. But in my own case, I got caught, and it still didn't help. After a few weeks I was back at it and it got worse and worse until I couldn't take it any more. I was begging for someone to rip off my cover and get me real! My wife could not do that, for she does not

understand what I am talking about when I describe the desperation to get the sweet porn in my mind and heart and does not understand the allergy to it that I have.

So I needed real meetings - with real addicts. Perverts for decades who chose the path of sobriety *because they had no choice*. Just like me. People who can hear both sides of me. And I use my real name, wear my normal Jewish outfit, and talk with them freely about my real life.

And that flows out into being real with everybody else in my life, whether they know about my problem, or not.

And that is why so many of us are OK with *goyim* in meetings, but shrink into a corner when they meet a frum yid. There is a common strong desire to avoid and evade. And I do not blame them, for I had that, too. Here is a guy who can bring them even closer to the true full self! It's more pain to go through. But more healing, too.

Interestingly, I have seen newly recovering program-guys meet people from the meeting in public places just 'out of the blue' and *totally ignore them*, as if they didn't know them at all. Those guys did not remain sober. I think they may have been shocked by the cross-over from their 'meeting life' into their 'real life'. They were not willing to smile discreetly and say a polite "Hi" to the other guy. Instead, here was trouble - "so get away from me quick." Oy vavoi.

This is *precisely* why AA has a strong tradition of real anonymity. We do *not* reveal the identity of anyone *else* we meet in the rooms to non-members. Ever. But it's not about shame, at all. It's because sharing the secrets of **others** will not help *their* recovery at all! Only the truth that **they** want to share will help them.

Those who just get caught and stay clean out of fear of further humiliation never, ever stay better. Getting humiliated into sobriety does not work, until there is some humility added. Humility (in *hachno'oh* to the truth) is the underpinning of the steps.

And that is why 'accountability groups' are nice but will ultimately fail, as long as they are based on avoiding shame - which they can easily become all about.

And that is why opening up to the wife (and remaining consistently open with her) is so very powerful - when done at the right time. It is powerful medicine for my recovery and powerful medicine for the marriage. Honesty there removes yet another layer of hiding **from ourselves** that has to go to the boards for true freedom.

Sharing my credit card number and address would not do *any* of these things for me, and neither would pulling up my pant-leg. It's not about compromising my *security*, nor my anonymity. It's not about getting hurt nor for the sake of being punished for all my wrongs until I can finally be good. This is not Teshuvah and it is not sigufim. It's all and only about being the real me with everyone that I *can* be, to the extent that I can be without violating the health of my family and others. We do the best we can in that, and ask Hashem to make it work right. And it works, period.

Do you get what I am talking about?

(Really I know you were just playing devil's advocate, YosefhaTzaddik, but I humored you to get it all out there be"H. May it be helpful to someone, Amein.)

Many of us are not addicts, we just have very ingrained habits yet the message is so relevant.

We are leading two lives.

We need to be very honest with who we are and what we do even though it hurts.

As Cordnoy says in his signature 'the right thin' to do and the hard thin'to do are usually the same'

Face to face meetings may not be the right approach for many of us, I don't know, I'm no pro, but be honest. Open up. At least during phone calls

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Re: Recent posts that really resonate
Posted by starting - 02 Aug 2020 20:54

[Hashem Help Me wrote on 19 Jun 2020 11:05:](#)

In the beginning there is normal withdrawal. Don't panic from it. Exercise is very healthy at neutralizing it.

At the same time, "I know it's going to start to get harder in the next few days", should be rephrased, "I know over the next few days I will imagine that I NEED this garbage more and more, but it's not a real need." The more you internalize that thought, b'ezras Hashem you will have the wherewithal to pull through.

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Re: Recent posts that really resonate
Posted by Dave M - 02 Aug 2020 23:05

Very powerful thread. Keep the posts coming.

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Re: Recent posts that really resonate
Posted by starting - 06 Aug 2020 04:45

[DavidT wrote on 21 Jun 2020 15:53:](#)

I wanted to point out thatEven though a person knows he can undo the gedarim he has set for himself, he should still institute them, as doing so has a powerful effect. When one makes a geder, it's as if he is saying, "I am committed to breaking this cycle, and my proof is that I'm going to make things difficult for myself."

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Re: Recent posts that really resonate

Posted by Snowflake - 06 Aug 2020 13:03

Starting, first big mazal tov for not throwing in the towel and not only that, but for constantly inspiring us all to keep going.

I see the phone call as some sort of "cathartic therapy" lol. You just let it all out, your anguishes, woes, and what not. Afterwards you just feel so much lighter. It's not about getting advice (could be that too) but the main thing is just letting your weight out and connecting to another struggling human being. The effects are really strong and unfortunately we can't attain that through forum posting alone.

Anyway, keep doing what you're doing, haba letaher atzmo messayein oto right? One who comes to purify himself, he gets siatta dishmaya. I'm sure you will succeed, keep that mindset that you have and don't give up no matter what. Unfortunately old habits die hard, but they do die, if you just keep trying and innovating each time.

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Re: Recent posts that really resonate
Posted by starting - 07 Aug 2020 05:42

[Grant400 wrote on 07 Aug 2020 00:06:](#)

If it would be so easy there wouldn't be a GYE, but if it would be impossible there also wouldn't be a GYE.

Grant

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Re: Recent posts that really resonate
Posted by starting - 07 Aug 2020 05:47

[Snowflake wrote on 06 Aug 2020 13:54:](#)

It's all about letting go of lust. You said you've been "poking" around. That's the whole issue.

The masturbation is just the unfortunate consequence of "poking" around. You need to let go of all "poking" on the internet and fantasizing, the extra look at a woman, tv ad, or whatever. At first it will hurt. Force yourself for a week. Very aggressive shmiras einyaim. And shemiras hamachshave. Bad thought comes, immediately think about something else. Doesn't even have to be Torah. Anything kosher. Do that for a week, and it will get easier. But it will hurt at first. It will seem unnatural. But give it a shot. The problem with "poking" around is that, it progresses and feeds the addiction. That's why you should focus on these "minor incidents". And do hear the 12 step shiurim. They're really eye-opening.

Anyway thank you for opening up to us, it gives me great chizuk and I'm sure you're mechazek everyone by opening up your true feelings.

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Re: Recent posts that really resonate
Posted by starting - 09 Aug 2020 07:18

[?"Captain" wrote on 07 Aug 2020 14:00:](#)

It will be even better if you change your mindset from "it's something I don't want to do" to "I actually want to win" by learning to value each victory.

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Re: Recent posts that really resonate
Posted by starting - 11 Aug 2020 08:04

Clean today b"h

[Realestatemogul wrote on 03 Aug 2020 02:20:](#)

People underestimate the power of just posting that you had a good day. Please continue to

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Re: Recent posts that really resonate
Posted by starting - 14 Aug 2020 15:11

[wilnevergiveup wrote on 14 Aug 2020 08:13:](#)

You cant surrender your struggle, you have to surrender your will.

Rabbi Twerski explains in his book Teshuvah Through Recovery (p. 89) "The third step is the recognition that our sinful behavior of our addiction is the result of our yielding to our own will. People in the twelve-step program say that their behavior was "self will run riot." The Talmud instructs us, "Make Hashem's will your will" (Avos 2:4). A prominent trial lawyer, celebrating his fortieth anniversary of sobriety said, "When I was told I had to surrender my willpower, I rebelled. I am a strong-willed person. But my strong will just didn't work for drinking. I had to swallow my pride and accept someone else's will. There was no one whose will I could trust, so I grudgingly accepted G-d's will. As a result, I am now forty years sober."

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Perhaps the two questions the free will and the siyata dishmaya one are connected. Maybe the reason why the Y"H beats us every time is because we think we have the power to affect the outcome, i.e. to become sober or to be clean, when really all we have control over is to make the right choices. When we learn to rely on G-d then making the right choices become less daunting. Sill lots of work but at least we are not trying to do work only fit for G-d.

A recovered atheist once said "I don't believe in G-d, but at least I know that I am not G-d."

There are three parts.

1. We need siyata dishmaya, help from a higher power.

2. We need to surrender our will to his will.

3. We need to do everything in our power before we can turn it over to Hashem.

Or

Step 1: Admit we are powerless over lust (if you are not powerless then you would have stopped already).

Step 2: Believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

Step 3: Decide to turn our will and our lives over to the care of G-d.

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Re: Recent posts that really resonate
Posted by starting - 24 Aug 2020 14:41

[Captain wrote on 21 Aug 2020 17:41:](#)

"Captain" post=354080 date=1598031696 catid=4

I like this. My point was that we should seek to gain all the benefits that come when people label themselves as addicts without the negative consequences and misery that comes along with it, by saying it differently.

"I am a person who is challenged by this and must be cautious and put in work, but I am not defective and permanently broke and I am not an addict for life."

That sounds much better than "I am an addict," which is usually interpreted by the person's brain as "I am an addict and I do these things always, and if by some lucky miracle I manage to reach 90 days clean, I'm still an addict and a tainted person."

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Re: Recent posts that really resonate
Posted by starting - 27 Aug 2020 19:42

[Grant400 wrote on 27 Aug 2020 13:46:](#)

We know the truth. But when it comes down to it we have to start reconvincing ourselves why it's not worth it, and in the face of strong desire, the tiny guy inside who actually uses his brain becomes inept and overrun by much stronger logic called "Arrrrhhhhhhh". So, having it all written out can prevent you having to start a long negotiation process which ends with a hostage getting hurt.

Remember, we don't negotiate with terrorists.

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