

Lessons Learned

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 03 Sep 2018 23:39

It has been quite some time since I have posted on my own thread titled "My Story and G-d Bless GYE". Being that those submissions are in the balei batim forum and therefore off limits to all our single friends here, I figured if I wish to post, it's time to open a new thread.

BH we are at day 627. That's a big number. A number that represents a chunk of life. Different seasons, various occasions, many opportunities, a kaleidoscope of challenges. And with Hashem's help (and as I have written many times - with the help of some great GYE chaverim - specifically "one_day_at_a_time") I have stayed clean.

During this period of growth I have made some observations. Firstly, as a rebbi of mine used to say - no specific type of yid has the "copyright" on yiras shomayim. Eye opening to me has been how individuals from very varying lifestyles all truly want to be close to Hashem. It is not just lip service. It is genuine. I am humbled and amazed how even so called "modern" Jews walk determinedly against the tsunami wave of decadence, indecency, immodesty, and liberalism which is trying to inundate the world and destroy every vestige of holiness in its path. These dear teenagers, married fellows, and even post middle aged heroes ignore the current threatening to drown them and keep moving forward. And of course, being that this scourge does not discriminate, all kehillas and "types" are affected. GYE is like the Kosel - one can find every type of yid there crying for help. In summary, everyone wants to be kadosh v'tahor. Imagine how proud Hashem must be.

A second observation. So many unnecessary tears, so much unnecessary pain. How many bochurim stay clean while in yeshiva and camp only to fall within hours of returning home on their parents' devices which have not been properly filtered. The anguish these boys share is heartbreaking. These are boys who will not enter an internet café or library. They avoid public transportation except when absolutely necessary. They are careful in the street. They are the

brave ones who picked up the phone and shared their most personal and embarrassing secrets with total strangers from GYE. But spending a weekend at home where every other room has an unfiltered device....How naïve can people be? How many drashos have been given, and articles written, and people really still think "it cant happen in my house"?! Is the convenience of unfiltered internet worth these churbonos? I am not passing judgement on anyone specific - just publicizing the very painful issue.

Number three - There are many helpful ideas on GYE. Each successful person here will tell you about the "cocktail" he used to break free. A combination of all or some of the following: shiurim, forum, chats, Taphsic, chizuk emails, 90 day chart, phone conferences, therapy referrals, 12 steps, and of course tefilla, guide people from the abyss of the sewer to the summit of a life of freedom. However I believe if a poll were taken, a great majority of people would credit the human connection as the main weapon in the arsenal that blasted them through and saved them. To hear, and even better, to meet and see, an individual who struggled and now is clean, is a tool that is extremely powerful. It shatters the destructive mindset of "it's impossible - no one gets better". Sitting by therapists, as helpful as they are (and they are part of many people's recovery), is not nearly as powerful as someone being honest and telling you what he used to do and how he stopped. Someone who "has been there and done that" can help rewire the unhealthy thinking and give new perspective - there simply is life, even without sex. Plus one must learn the true and Torah perspective on sexuality. One must be educated that he has been poisoned by the evil and filthy portrayal of an act that we now know is uplifting and elevated, even holy. We are more open to be reeducated by one who initially believed as we did. Secondly, that real person can hold your hand in those first days and weeks when it is really difficult to get started. He can give you the chizuk to get past the withdrawal period. He is an anchor. Thirdly, when you see a successful frum fellow standing before you, you realize you are not the rasha or loser you thought you were. You really are a nice good person who has a struggle. That knowledge gives one more self esteem and resolve to get started. Based on my personal experience I would advise any newcomers to figure out which safe person on the site appears to resonate with them, and then carefully - in the beginning anonymously - reach out and let someone help them.

Lastly (for now), we see a sad issue. So many people join GYE and then disappear. They had hisorerus, found the site, joined, maybe even posted, and then they are gone..... It is incumbent on those of us who have tasted success to make ourselves available to help others. We know the pain anguish anxiety depression and turmoil these chevra are experiencing. We know where their eyes and hands are - even though they don't want to be doing those things - and we have

the ability to help. Some will argue, "I don't know what to do". Others will say, "Now that I am better it isn't good for me to be focused on this so much". True, but its payback time. Do something. And if you really can't, then at least daven your kishkes out for all the strugglers. And of course - give a nice donation to that great place that got us all back on track - the very holy mosad GYE. If not for them, where would I (and you) be today?

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Re: Lessons Learned
Posted by reallywanttobegood - 07 Sep 2018 00:37

Amazing! Spot on! May hkbh grant you continued kedusha and menuchas hanefesh!!

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Re: Lessons Learned
Posted by cordnoy - 07 Sep 2018 03:27

Speakin' of beginnin', I found this stashed away post from even before GYE was stashin' posts:

The beginning is the hardest. Think of it like this...

Do you think about walking on a daily basis? Chances are not. You most likely do it without concentrating on it or even realizing it. But when you were first learning to walk, it sure didn't come that easily. Watch a toddler and you'll see. There's fear, anxiety, stumbling, and many times "boo-boos". Even though, in the big picture, those incidents are insignificant, all along there is a parent there ready to guide, reassuring, and prepared to kiss the tears away. Why? Because without the parent it would make the whole experience so much more difficult. Most likely the child would prefer to crawl. There's less risk involved. A whole lot less pain. But with the parent by their side, each time they stumble or get thrown off balance they take that experience and learn from it. They learn not to try to walk off the edge of a step. They learn to hold their mother's hand when they are scared. They learn that they'll get "big girl/boy" shoes. They learn to run without tripping. And then, all those times that they did stumble and lose their balance are no longer mistakes. They are building block for their motor skills. Those incidents not only teach them to walk, but they allow them to run, learn to jump, hop, and skip too. Without those slippery spots, they'd never have learned that at all.

Yes, the beginning is a really rough time, but you're not alone. In addition to Hashem who is your parent, you've got all of us, your siblings in this addiction, to help you through. And there will be real struggles, bruises, and stumbling. But it's worth it. In the end you'll not only learn to "walk" the life of recovery, but you'll be able to run, jump, skip, and hop, while being able to support others in their recovery.

About which addiction is your drug of choice, in the long run, it only matters in how you tackle it. It's not which addiction we prefer that is the issue, it's the fact that we turn to an outside means (other than Hashem and other people) in order to feel or not feel. The addiction is our solution to life's problems. It is but a symptom. The problem is our inability to cope and function that is the problem. All addicts need to learn to let go of their maladaptive solutions to life's problems. That's why I can go to any kind of meeting and still relate. It's not about the problem of addiction, rather it's about the solution for living.

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Re: Lessons Learned
Posted by Hashem Help Me - 12 Sep 2018 04:40

Gmar chasima tova! A thought popped into my head during Rosh Hashana. The new year Tav

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Re: Lessons Learned
Posted by DeterminedtoWin - 13 Sep 2018 17:26

[DeterminedtoWin wrote on 05 Sep 2018 14:11:](#)

I would love to give back by helping others and donating to GYE but I have two problems. One is that I don't have the time and I am having trouble even keeping up with my current partner. And second of all, the fact that my wife has no idea about all this makes it hard to be too involved. I have to stick in my time on GYE or with other GYE chevra when she wont know about it and that leaves me with even less time to be involved. I guess if there is a will there is a way and be"H if I try hard enough I can make it happen like you and so many other very busy people do. I'm also afraid to donate because I'm scared that my wife will see and find out about

it all.

I have to say that I got inspired and pushed myself a little to reach out and lend a hand (ear,) to a couple more people. I even got past my fears and gave a donation! I just couldn't

I believe that be"H I wont loose from giving back and showing some hakoras hatov for the invaluable gift that GYE has given me.

Yasherkoiach for the inspiration!!

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Gmar chasima tova!!
resist, I feel like I owe GYE my life!!

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Re: Lessons Learned
Posted by Eyeglasses - 13 Sep 2018 18:13

If I might add, some newcomers will (for some reason) get a negative welcome & that gets them confused and they disappear for good (perhaps does who do it don't realize) - **Please** use caution.

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Re: Lessons Learned
Posted by Hashem Help Me - 14 Sep 2018 05:07

There is so much pain on this site. So many really nice guys who are wallowing in guilt, depression, anxiety, etc. In mama lashon - tzubrochen. The Chidushei Harim says that as we know a keili (vessel) that is tzubrochen (broken) cannot be mekabel tumah anymore. However if those broken pieces are put back together, it once again can be mekabel tumah. So he posits that if that is the case, it is actually a ma'alah that something can be mekabel tumah. We have to get the message out that being broken is not a tachlis. Our goal is to take all the broken pieces and put them together - even though it can now be mekabel tumah. The natural state of a person is one of imperfection, one where the possibility of becoming tamei exists. Once

someone understands that this is the ratzon Hashem to be constantly in a state of nisayon, he can be more at peace with himself and have the yishuv ha'daas to break free.

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Re: Lessons Learned

Posted by Jman356 - 16 Sep 2018 14:30

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Re: Lessons Learned

Posted by Jman356 - 16 Sep 2018 14:31

[Hashem Help Me wrote on 12 Sep 2018 04:40:](#)

Gmar chasima tova! A thought popped into my head during Rosh Hashana. The new year Tav

Rabbi coren said that in one of the daily boost emails before Rosh Hashana

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Re: Lessons Learned

Posted by Shnitzel and kugel - 18 Sep 2018 15:18

I know I'm Abit late just never got around to type it up.Hhm mentioned that people come to gye post and then leave, I want to add that although majority of people that come and leave because their inspiration was short term, there are definitely guys that leave due to being put off.In my case when I joined someone was pressuring me to call him up, when I refused he made me feel guilty like I'm the issue here, which really put me off but I wanted to break free so I neveerhless stayed on gye. When I did agree to talk to some people, (after them pressuring me) some didn't even know my whole story nor did they even have a specific message/tips they wanted to convey.. some people's calls did help though. You had guys asking me my personal life story for them to figure out how to psychologically fix my issue.Then you have people being sarcastic or saying comments which aren't helpful which all these things puts people off, and if someone leaves gye because of it, that's no good cuz he has no other way to break free...So before you call someone, make sure you have a clear understanding and know exactly what you'll be saying. Before you post a comment make sure it's a positive one, if you wanna argue do it in a nice way, if your not sure, then don't post.Like cordnoy wrote let people get their feet wet, people need to bring out their inner desire to stay clean, and let them reach out to you for help, instead of them getting put off quickly.????????? ?????,hhm keep up your good work!

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Re: Lessons Learned

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 20 Sep 2018 12:18

Very well said! Its a big achrayus when you reach out. It should be to listen, share the pain, and to express that its possible to break free. Everything else should wait..... When i first joined there was an oilam that was pressuring me to join SA meetings, which obviously is a major step. Bh for "one day at a time" who was simply "there for me" (and by the way, i never went to SA...)

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Re: Lessons Learned

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 21 Sep 2018 02:56

So today a good chaver from here, a bochur who BH is doing well, took the plunge and gave up his phone with internet access. Now he only has a kosher phone. As a reaction, I would like to share some thoughts on the matter and would appreciate responses.

Recently I spoke with TAG of Flatbush. They have a standard called Machane Kadosh, which is almost 100% foolproof. It involves cutting out many sites and removing browsers, etc. However they still beg everyone to switch to kosher phones. Why? They claim that every day new applications, updates, upgrades, etc., enter the market creating new loopholes. Investing thousands of dollars, Machane Kadosh has hired cutting edge tech savvy technicians who watch like hawks for all new developments and then rectify whatever can be fixed. However they cannot guarantee perfection. Therefore they urge everyone to use as a phone, a non internet device. Why have at your fingertips a 24/6 nisayon? For better or for worse, we keep our phones with us all the time. How long does it take on a day where one feels down, lonely, bored, curious, or slightly triggered to take a smartphone into the bathroom, or some other private place to get that "quick fix"? For those who need internet access out of their office, TAG suggests having a tablet (or smartphone set up as per Machane Kadosh standards - which is still the gold standard) in addition to their kosher phone, and to train themselves to use the internet device only when necessary - not for their basic (and nowadays constant) communication. An obvious side benefit of this is that one's phone is l'chatchila usable by his/her children.

Most friends who have switched to kosher phones claim that within a month or two of the switch they came to the realization that they really never **needed** the constant access. They found that the lines between necessity, convenience, and even relaxation/entertainment had become blurred. Even what they had been convinced they needed, they realized was exaggerated. They also claim that their quality of life was enhanced. They feel they had been addicted to technology (even the kosher stuff) and now saw there is a beautiful life without the constant "mental stimulation" the smartphone offered.

Which brings us to the question. Chazal tell us that if one chooses to walk where there is a lack of tznius when there is another route (darka achrina) that is clean, he is called a rasha **even if he keeps his eyes closed**. So why is our scenario different? If one is able (and yes, I understand there are some who are unable) to avoid the smartphone and can use another route - the kosher phone, then even if he is careful and keeps his eyes off the "bad stuff" (which includes a lot more than just pornography - many "pareve" sites contain images that are definitely assur to look at), how would Chazal view him? **Chalila, I am not trying to pass judgement or be mekatreg on any yid, I am just asking.**

There are some people who unfortunately are so addicted that if given only a kosher phone, they will out of desperation purchase an internet phone at Walmart, or find an internet café, or some other outlet to quench their insatiable thirst. However for the vast majority of people, removing the constant nisayon has proven to be very helpful. Yes, some of us with kosher phones still slip and fall from time to time, but don't we all agree that falling once every few weeks or months is incomparable to falling every few days or worse?

Please respond.

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Re: Lessons Learned
Posted by Eyeglasses - 21 Sep 2018 14:28

Very well said HHM

Problem is though when you've a smartphone you look like some vichtik macher vs when you've a plain simple phone you seem like a poor nebechl, people tend to appear like some real knaker..

You gotta understand what it means shlepig a smart phone on the pants almost as big as you are, lol.

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Re: Lessons Learned
Posted by lionking - 21 Sep 2018 16:27

[Eyeglasses wrote on 21 Sep 2018 14:28:](#)

Very well said HHM

Problem is though when you've a smartphone you look like some vichtik macher vs when you've

a plain simple phone you seem like a poor nebechl, people tend to appear like some real knaker..

You gotta understand what it means shleping a smart phone on the pants almost as big as you are, lol.

I guess I'm wearing the wrong "eyeglasses" since I never thought about smartphones that way.

HMM, Your post has a lot of good points.

Keep up your good work!

Hatzlocha Rabba!

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Re: Lessons Learned

Posted by ??? ??? - 23 Sep 2018 06:00

I definitely share you're point about not spending too much time because of wife not knowing(even though years ago she once found out, as far as shes concerned i'm totally passed it by now), and it be hard hard for her for me to tell her that i'm still struggling. But as far as donating to this great hatzolos nefoshos i don't think if she ever noticed it be hard to explain by noting all the great haskomos it has and could've seen ad for campaign in mainstream publications/websites

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