

To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by obormottel - 02 Nov 2011 07:09

Ninety one days ago I was miserable and despondent. I was in a relapse from an attempted (and quite short-lived) sobriety effort. As always, the renewed filth-a-thon was dragging me deeper than ever before, forcing to search out darker and darker fantasies and visions. The lowest point of that particular escapade was arguably from the lower ones in my adult life: the night before, I got up in front of the whole shul and made a public "siyum" on a maseches I haven't finished learning. And it hit me really hard: the realization that I had no integrity left, that I can lie to dozens of people who are my friends, my Rabbis, my sons' teachers; that I can say the wonderful words of Hadran Aloch and know that I am lying....and all because pictures and videos of people doing all kinds of deviant acts take up so much of my life, that I am only faithful to god of orgasm. That is my only true commitment, for which I would lie, deceive, manipulate, throw a fit over, neglect responsibility, assign blame.

By then, I have already instinctively made the first step: I acknowledged my problem for what it is, admitted that I am powerless to stop it, and wrote to my Rebbe begging for help. I may have davened that day for Siyata d'Shmaya, too: because while browsing some Israeli website, I saw a GYE banner.

Ninety one days later, I am, by the Grace of G-d, ninety days clean from intentional watching of pornography and masturbation.

Poischim b'cvoid achsanya: I owe hakoras hatoiv to the Riboinoi shel Oilom and Rabbeinu Guard Meshichoi, and the GYE family. I love bickering with Dov, shmoozing with Bardichev, exchanging thoughts with Alexeliezer, ZemirosShabbos, Gevura shebeYesod, Gibbor120, Yosef Hatzadik, Shmeichel.....and everyone else whose name is omitted solely due to space constraints. Thank you! Thank you to Mordechai, who pledged \$90 to GYE if I stay clean for 90 days. Thanks to our newest moderator, UAJ, for a consistent flow of good ideas.

Thanks to all the new guys (can you even see me, I'm so high up in the clouds?) for letting me rant and vent on your threads.

Originally, I was going to wait till the end of ninety days and refer back to the handbook, and to the "GYE in the Nutshell" for whether I need additional help. Thank G-d I realize now I will always need additional help.

So I hope to use this thread as an interactive journal (like so many people here have) and take you guys with me to

SOBRIETY AND BEYOND!

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by Mordechai - 07 Nov 2011 20:37

Thank you Obormottel,

I'm glad you knew what I mean. I didn't mean to say that one should get himself in the shmuck but like you said once you are there you can take encouragement and hope in the fact that your efforts of climbing out get you higher than where you stood before, because in the place where the penitent stands the perfectly righteous cannot stand. (Berachot 34b)

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by obormottel - 08 Nov 2011 00:35

So the things I did to get to 90 days, and the things that I hope will get me to day 100 and beyond:

1. Internet filter to which my wife (only) has a password.
2. Automatic internet shut down timed to coincide with the end of the work day, so that there is no reason for me to linger in the office and look for trouble.
3. Vigorous shmiras aynaim: I cut myself totally off movies, magazines, billboards, pantyhose wrappers, Costco catalogues, beer posters.

As for live triggers, I implement the three-second rule (in reality, it's about three milli-second

rule).

- 4. Reading daily Chizuk emails (at least on of them).
- 5. Posting on the forum, and reading other people's posts.
- 6. Working on the idea that sex is optional.
- 7. Coming clean to my wife and one trusted friend.
- 8. Talking to a live chaver from the forum (and not only one).
- 9. I started going to live SA meetings.

The reason for live meetings is as follows:

Originally, I was thinking to get through 90 days, and then, based on the GYE in the Nutshell, figure out the next steps.

However, as I was nearing the end of my 90 day clean streak, I realized one important thing: All the above tools kept me sober, but they didn't make me better.

I am still the same egotistic, self-centered, deceitful, proud son of a gun as I ever was, only now I put some distance between me and the last time I masturbated to internet porn.

I still have integrity issues, anger tantrums, pity parties, self-righteous indignations, etc.

If I want to become a better human being, I need to stop being a dry drunk, and I need to work on the underlying issues for my addiction, so that eventually I can actually be a recovered sex addict.

The way I understand it, the surest way to get there is by working the 12 steps in a live group. So as they said in my last meeting: It works if you work it, and you are worth it, so keep coming back.

I'll keep you posted, G-d willing, as to my progress.

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!
Posted by ur-a-jew - 08 Nov 2011 01:04

Thanks for sharing that. Well said. Continued hatzlacha.

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!
Posted by gibbor120 - 08 Nov 2011 13:48

[obormottel wrote on 08 Nov 2011 00:35:](#)

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WELL SAID! I can totally and completely relate to what you wrote. I am not going to live meetings, but I'm on one of the calls. My emotional issues are different than yours. (ie. not anger, etc.), but I've got my own pekel as well. I also basically came to the realization that *behving* out of fear of my wife if I would continue to act out does not constitute change. I could write more, but suffice it to say, you expressed pretty well exactly how I feel.

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!
Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 08 Nov 2011 15:50

great stuff Mottel, thanks for sharing

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!
Posted by obormottel - 08 Nov 2011 17:15

Thanks for thanking me for sharing. I think I better shut up now, especially in light of Google indexing us and assigning a big brother to keep track of all our posts.

I often feel that I say too much.

Yesterday, I was an idiot shebeldiot. I showed the Wife Maverick's thread, thinking how she will be happy to learn that I am not like that (anymore).

Of course, she took it the wrong way, and this morning she only remembered that I think she's overweight and her friends are hot.

I think I need a big stick to hit myself over the head with every time I want to open my mouth and "share".

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!
Posted by gibbor120 - 08 Nov 2011 17:20

Knowing what to share (and more importantly *not* to share) is a chochma... your post did make me laugh. You just have a way of expressing yourself that is precious.

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!
Posted by obormottel - 08 Nov 2011 19:48

I am so :-X ! :-X , :-X , and :-X . Hope that does it.

:-X :-[

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by obormottel - 09 Nov 2011 17:20

My friend Shmeichel shared a list of things he did to get to 90 days clean. So did I. While my list is full of pragmatic steps (filter, phonecalls), Shmeichel's is all about davening, and letting Hashem in.

So here is why I'm angry:

I have put in my share of davening to be sure. But when thinking of what it is I've done to get some sobriety under my belt, it didn't even occur to me to count praying as ONE of the tools I used, let along a very important one.

I think it is because I still failed to let G-d into my life and into my recovery. Which is why, at the end of ninety days, I felt I haven't accomplished anything (other than staying clean) for a long-term sobriety. I am very angry right now, Ok, not very. But angry nonetheless > I am white-knuckling it, and I am afraid of exploding at anytime.

So I started the meetings, where I go to church with a bunch of perverted goyim who talk about G-d like He is a major part of their lives, and me, a frum, chassidish Yid, tzitzis and all, only think of Him when a major challenge comes my way, and then even forget to thank Him, like in the story with a parking spot and a lawyer who "found it".

I am angry that all the tools that 12 steps offer us have always been available as part of mainstream Judaism.

Bittul, Hoido'o, Ahavas Rayim, Bateil retzoincho mipnei Retzoinoi, the idea of a sponsor (mashpia), sharing (farbrengen), moral inventory (cheshbon hanefesh) etc etc etc

Why didn't I ever make use of any of that, and now I have to realize that I am addicted to filth, can't even tie my shoelaces without G-d's help, and have to start serving G-d with this newfound wisdom, that was always there for me anyways?

What a waste of a life....My only solace is that Hashem willed it this way, even though it was my own action that threw me down the pit. I just learned a sicha from the Rebbe (printed in Vol. 5 of Likutei Sichos, first one for Lech Lecho), and I'll try to post a synopsis in the Beth Medrash, but there the Rebbe explains just this concept, that even at the time of performing an abominable act, we are still fulfilling G-d's plan for Tachlis Briyas Ho'oilomois.

But I still can't shake off a feeling of disappointment with myself, and real anger at my stupidity in failing to use G-d-given tools for normal living.

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by gibbor120 - 09 Nov 2011 17:35

I was once learning a gemarah with a chavrusa when i was in 5th year of beis medrash (i think). It was a gemarah I had learned before (1st or 2nd year beis medrash), and I suddenly realized that the first time I learned it, I had the **TOTALLY WRONG PSHAT**. I had a chalishas hadaas thinking that my learning before was wrong.

My chavrusa said to me "look how much you've grown in learning in a few years".

That said. I can also realte to a lot of what you wrote. Sometimes I think the christians at work have more G-d in their lives than I do while davening 3 times a day, learning, etc. It's humbling. :-[I guess that's the point.

I think we have the tools, but don't know how to use them. The tools work, it's the artisan that needs to learn how to use them correctly. B"H we are slowly learning that now.

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 09 Nov 2011 17:46

reb mottel,

first a disclaimer, i don't know you (or Shmeichel) from beans. i only know what you post. (and i love both your and his posts).

so in my humble, unprofessional and semi-ignorant opinion, i would surmise that you are actually **DOING** a whole lot of stuff for recovery at the moment. at least it seems so to me.

you are proactive, going to meetings, posting, sharing, being fearlessly honest and honestly trying to make things right. i say kol hakavod!!.

and as they say in AA: time takes time.

and of course, if you look over at the next guy and see that he is sober and is tight with G-d you are only inviting in resentments and envy. learn from him, yes. be jealous of him, no.

you have your own personality, life experience and circumstances.

and the very fact that you are willing and open to a new way of doing things and not being set in your ways is a very valuable and cherished trait.

so i think you deserve a virtual pat on the back and a sincere handshake with the wish of **Keep On Motteling**

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!
Posted by heuni memass - 09 Nov 2011 17:58

Keep on doing what your doing my friend.

Stick with the winners. (Dov says that about meetings.)

Your on your way to the stars!

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 09 Nov 2011 21:37

Hi Mottel,

Just to add my voice to the choir...

What you've been doing till now seems to be working, you've got almost 100 wonderful clean days to look back on with pride. So don't knock yourself. Now you can take it to an even higher level. You have prepared a clean and holy place for Hashem within you, and you already do all those things you talk about (davening, farbrengen, sharing with friends, learning tanya/mussar/whatever). You just need to merge them in your mind and realize that what you have been doing all along IS Ratzon H'AsheM, even if you didn't use the "Yiddish words".

Stay strong and Keep On ~~Trucking~~ ~~Motoring~~ Motteling!!!!

Gevura!

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!
Posted by obormottel - 09 Nov 2011 22:14

I wasn't jealous of Shmeichel, chas v'sholom!

I was just disappointed with myself that even when using G-d to help me out of this predicament, I fail to acknowledge it.

So here is the joke:

I'm not familiar with the story you refer to, but i love lawyer jokes...
This lawyer was late to an important deposition, what after leaving the house late, and being stuck in traffic. The final blow to his chance of coming on time came when he was circling the parking lot lap after lap, without any luck. So finally he screams out: "G-d, if you give me a

parking spot right now so I can be on time, I promise to put on tfilin every day". As soon as he's done saying this, there is a car pulling out right in front of him.

Immediately, he screams out: "never mind, I found it myself"

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