

BroadLife's journey

Posted by broadlife - 04 Nov 2012 16:11

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This is my fourth year on the GYE program. I have never posted on a forum or had a public dialogue about my struggle with lust, because it's something I have always been ashamed of. I figured that I could get through this test from hashem on my own and without any support system, but considering my track record, my approach/mindset has yet to be fully successful.

One of the most important lessons I have learned from GYE is that there is nothing wrong with being honest with yourself and saying that your current approach to dealing with addiction isn't working as well as it should. I have tried many of the methods on the website...90day chart, taphsic/shvuot, GYE partner that I update with regularly etc.

These methods have been very helpful. Compared to when I was a teenager and sinning through lust daily, I am very far away from that stage. Since being on the GYE program I have been able to stay clean for (considered me) long periods of time beyond 90 days. But I can't help feeling depressed/dismayed that I can't achieve abstinence, or, for me, being clean for an entire year.

I am self aware and in my long experience with the yetzer hara I have become pretty familiar with some of my triggers. I have an excellent filtering system on my computer, and if it wasn't for that I would be very very lost.

But with all of my progress I am still very unhappy with where I am. I want to act like a ben torah all day long for the rest of my life. I really want that lifestyle more than anything. I want to learn torah without a guilty conscience or lustful thoughts entering my mind. I want to be an eved hashem that is 100% committed to the service of hashem and sees the hand of hashem at every moment of my life. But I have not been able to achieve this. And it's so hard to want that relationship with hashem, and not be able to maintain it with consistency.

I'd like to give some background about myself. I started struggling with my addictions around the age of 13.

You can't blame other people for your struggle with lust, because it is your bechira, but lets just say that I was exposed to very inappropriate things lying around my house when I was very very young (about 9). That definitely wasn't my fault, and I sometimes think about whether my struggle would be less sharp if I had not experienced such an abnormally young exposure.

Then I ask myself why hashem would have allowed me to be exposed to such stuff at such a young age...and I get pretty depressed/lost when i go down that path.

Regardless, where I am now is on the path of working toward a deep relationship with hashem and not looking at inappropriate things on the internet or when I walk around.

I am around 80 days, about to hit 90, but over the past week I have been going through a rough time. I could use some momentum.

Chizuk and advice considering my personal experience are very welcome.

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Re: BroadLife's journey

Posted by Machshovo Tova - 05 Nov 2012 16:36

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Welcom to the forum and congratulations on your heroic decision to really join up with the chevra. Keep on posting, and may this interaction be just what you needed to keep up your great momentum. After all, you wouldn't want to disappoint us, would ya?

Hatzlacha

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Re: BroadLife's journey

Posted by Dov - 05 Nov 2012 17:52

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Dear broadlife,

Welcome aboard!

How about a *not-so-incredibly-deep* relationship with Hashem - but one that allows you to stay above erotica and just be a normal, average, good Jewish person? Is that acceptable to you?

I am 100% serious. This is a very important question to ask. You do not need to answer it, though. It's still a free country! (let's see what happens in the election, though... :-X)

- Dov

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Re: BroadLife's journey

Posted by mr. emunah - 05 Nov 2012 18:26

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WELCOME BROADLIFE!

we wish you much Harchavat hachaim. Please don't fall, I just did after 60 days, and it totally sucked

as we say KEEP ON TRUCKING (don't look back) (like lots unfortunate wife, that was one salty tale...)

you know Dov,

i am finding the more i try to keep it simple with Hashem just doin' what gotta be done, God starts dumping love and happiness on me (i'm grinning as I write these words), the trick is to not get off track becuase of all the extra love and happiness and think that WHOA! I'VE ARRIVED!

just keep davening good learning good doin' shmirat eynayim good ... Lo alecha hamlacha ligmor

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Re: BroadLife's journey

Posted by Dov - 06 Nov 2012 17:29

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U R so right. Unfortunately, the addicts cannot accept any mediocrity. we hate it. It makes it all feel worthles to us - so we say to ourselves: If I keep masturbating to porn, I must really need to be on the highest madreigos of emunah, hisbatlus, and yir'as Shomayim. I should study kabolah, cry through every shemoneh esrei, and fast or go to the mikvah every day.

But the thought that it might be OK with Hashem for me to just be a regular yid - not makpid on takonas Ezra...and also not masturbating my head off - is unacceptable and sopunds crazy.

Too bad. For we end up in the toilet then, anyhow. :'(

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Re: BroadLife's journey

Posted by broadlife - 18 Nov 2012 13:58

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Dov, can you please explain some basic steps I can start taking to have normal relationship with hashem, and not get caught up in the extreme approach I may currently have of having a super deep relationship with hashem?

Can you give me some concrete advice based in the 12 steps?

I am ready to accept mediocrity, but I need something to hold on to...some type of concrete steps to see it with that perspective

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Re: BroadLife's journey

Posted by nederman - 18 Nov 2012 14:10

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Do you go to SA meetings?

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Re: BroadLife's journey

Posted by broadlife - 18 Nov 2012 14:45

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No. I have never fully understood how to get involved in that.

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Re: BroadLife's journey

Posted by broadlife - 18 Nov 2012 18:14

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Last night I had a fall.

I looked at some bad stuff on youtube, but with hashem's help no shfichat zera.

I have been trying to get the filter help guys to help me block you tube, but they havent responded to me for the past couple weeks...If anyone can help there that would be great

I started my 90 day journey again...

I am going to try to focus more on mediocrity rather than trying to live the controlling, extreme lifestyle I somehow convinced myself is my ideal.

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Re: BroadLife's journey

Posted by Dov - 18 Nov 2012 22:27

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[broadlife wrote on 18 Nov 2012 13:58:](#)

Dov, can you please explain some basic steps I can start taking to have normal relationship with hashem, and not get caught up in the extreme approach I may currently have of having a super deep relationship with hashem?

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I sincerely doubt you are an addict, that's first. And I agree with your approach based on trying to stop, as you have clearly made much progress and should continue that way, be"H. So you are probably way ahead of the game already. (Because a non-addict thinking of himself or herself as an addict makes things **so** much sicker and more complicated.)

And you seem to accept the possibility that an *even more* intense and ecstatic relationship with Hashem may actually *not* be what you really need in order to really live life right. You are way ahead of the game, now. (For so many intuit that all they really need is to *really* be a "tzaddik" and then these problems would 'leave them'....sending them on a self-absorbed, ego journey to nowhere.)

So now, how can I share 12-step program concepts to assist you if you are not an addict?

But what I **can** share with you is this: *calmness* - not intensity - reflects true bitachon in Hashem. This is the same in marriage - see the young marrieds vs the old happy couple: the old ones can be so relaxed with each other, for they are confident in each others' love and patience. The calmness is an acceptance of things like these:

1- no matter how hard I try, I cannot stop Hashem from loving me;

2- Hashem is not a dummy, and *knows* that I will fall sometimes; (We need to admit to ourselves that sometimes we think He fully *expects* perfection from us - that would be just stupid. He '*wants*' perfection for us? Yes! He does not ever *expect* it, though.)

3- Hashem is not a meany nor a jerk and does **ever** hurt me, for any reason - even

masturbating myself. Tzaros are only for my best benefit and only out of love and purpose - never ever to hurt me. Any other attitude is saying that He is capable of being bad or acting in *any* way that is not in my perfect best interest - and he is not capable of that any more than He is capable of dying from Small Pox! Rather, all He wants (as we say clearly in Y"K davening over and over is for me to make him my G-d. He said that the *only* reason he took us out of Mitzrayim was to be our G-d.)

4- Give Hashem all the credit for your successes. Keep none whatsoever for yourself. Your joy - and it is a very great joy - is to see sweet evidence that He does love you, and that He does use you. Rachamin *megulim*. Chizzuk is nice, but pats on the back are poison for many. Success is its own pat on the back. G-d is with you, and knowing that is a greater chizzuk than any "You are great! You beat it! You did it!" schmooze can give. And the poison of it is this: we insidiously stop needing G-d. It is the nisayon of wealth - the ruchniyus version. Hashem shows His love to the **oni** and makes them b'nei beiso (Zohar in many places) because they are like His malchus - d'leis megarme' klal. And the *real* oni is the person who knows he has nothing at all without G-d - not the person who says he believes that because that's what the sforim tell him to, but the one who **knows** it. Telling a person he has the power is just a trick to send him away from G-d.

I'll end with a Chaza"l:

Three great kings, Dovid Hamelech, Assah, and Chizkiyahu, dealt with (success in) battles in different ways.

Dovid fought and killed with his own sword. He thanked Hashem and often gave Him all the credit repeating things like, "You steady my feet and teach my hands to make war, put me over my enemies and give me victory."

Assa said, "I am not like my grandfather David - I cannot go to war and maintain true faith in You, Hashem. I will stay back and pray." Hashem gave Him victory over his enemies.

Chizkiyahu said, "I am not as great as my ancestor David and not even as great as my great-grandfather Assa. If I pray for victory and it is granted, I will take credit for it in my heart of hearts c"v and forfeit my true dependency on You. All I can do is *go to sleep* - You take care of it all, I'm staying out of it." He was granted victory over Sancheriv.

This is the strange truth that the alcoholics knew and plugged into: dependency is the name of the game when facing an enemy that is greater than you. "Ki fadah Hashem es Yaakov, ug'alo miyad chozok mimenu." The more we involve ourselves, the *farther* we get from Him in these struggles.

Of course there is a time to fight, and fight hard. But at all costs, all the credit must go to Hashem, the only real Power. These cannot just be words - and they are, as long as we thrive for self-mastery. It's about allowing G-d in. Having a broken heart allows Him in - Hashem is with the oni, indeed. So stay low. The letter of the RMB"N says it all. Humility is the foundation of all AA recovery, as is written many times in AA.

I do not know what you need and what is gonna work for you. But there things are very special

to me for the past 15.5 years in recovery, and they have transformed me, my family and of course, my Avodas Hashem into a calm success. Not perfection, but success.

You can do that too, if you want to. And you do not need to be an addict to do it - just stay honest with yourself.

I am sorry if that was not concrete enough.

- Dov

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Re: BroadLife's journey

Posted by broadlife - 21 Nov 2012 05:37

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3 days clean!

Working toward my calm approach to being clean and trying to be a good jew. not a perfect being.

Hey after 3 days of mediocrity, I feel great.

And i've been paying attention to my speech in terms of lashon hara and making sure to make my bracha rishonas and acharonas.

Not because I want to be better than anyone else or make my self esteem feel better, but I just want to do the right things and be a good jew.

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Re: BroadLife's journey

Posted by 1daat - 21 Nov 2012 06:28

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Dov, breathtaking. Thank you so much.

Broadlife. progress, not perfection.

There is nothing mediocre about lowering the bar to being human.

Some practical things to do: Daven that Hashem shows you how to be. It can get very complicated trying to figure out how to be "simple". and maybe we're not supposed to be simple, or maybe just now we're not supposed to be simple. Whatever. I encourage you to just turn this complexity over to Hashem, and ask Him to show you how to be close, in your personal way

with Him.

You are stressing yourself by trying to be so close to Hashem. Maybe that's not what He wants you to be right now. Maybe He wants you to accept that you're not close, and that that is His will. maybe maybe maybe. Who knows. That's why I suggest you ask Hashem, in a very personal, conversational (as in R' Nachman) way what His will is for you right now, today.

Take one day at a time. Live it as best you can. Look it over at bedtime shmah, and thank Hashem for the lessons. Then take up the next day when He blesses you with your neshamah back for one more day to be with Him and try to do His will.

Easy does it. Hashem gave you all your "shortcomings" for a blessed reason. Talk to Him. Ask Him about them. How can you sweeten them?

Joel

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Re: BroadLife's journey

Posted by broadlife - 22 Nov 2012 04:36

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Thank you 1 daat.

That was a breath of fresh air for me.

I am not used to thinking about the idea that maybe hashem doesn't necessarily want me to be 'so close' to him in the way I have always thought about it...

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Re: BroadLife's journey

Posted by broadlife - 25 Nov 2012 05:07

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7 days clean! Baruch Hashem. One week clean and so joyful!

I am trying to move toward simplicity and I've been davening to hashem to show me how I should connect to him personally in this stage of my life with my struggles. that part has been tough...

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Re: BroadLife's journey

Posted by Dov - 25 Nov 2012 06:24

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Use your friends. No need to do this alone and just on a virtual network. Make real live friends - it will help you be more real with yourself.

And chill, man. Things are OK, b"H.

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