

Shomer's Journal

Posted by mevakesh - 18 Dec 2008 19:22

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I just wanted to start a new thread here to track my progress.

Today is day 7 and I am doing reasonably well B"H. I have been reading the chizuk e-mails every morning and reading the forum periodically throughout the day.

Will try and stay strong through the weekend and will *bili neder* be on Sunday's support call w/ Elya.

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Link to my original post on GUE [here](#)

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by mevakesh - 29 Mar 2009 04:08

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Thanks Guard for everything and thank you ykv for the continued support and encouragement!

I went to an SA meeting tonight, but more about the meetings and the SA groups later.

I need to be up late for work tonight and just wanted to share a personal commitment that I have made with a fellow SA member and that I am now making with all of you here.

These late night maintenance jobs have been a real sore spot for me and unfortunately have led to many a slip. After the group I was feeling a bit nervous about the maintenance, so I decided to make a call. This SA member who has about 1 1/2 years of sobriety under his belt

told me to do 2 things.

1) Tell my wife about my concern. He told me that I have a new and fantastic resource now and that it is not just me alone in the house struggling.

2) No visiting ANY non-work related websites tonight, period.

I have done step 1 and will bezras Hashem will sign off when I am finished and confirm step 2.

Thank you all!!

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by mevakesh - 29 Mar 2009 06:26

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Signing out ... no other websites visited other than work related and GUE.

One small success in this *milchama ha'gedolah*.

I just wanted to mention a point quickly. I was catching up on the *chizuk* e-mail's and reading through the [12 step thread](#) and although I am certainly no authority, I would like to offer an opinion based on the 2 weeks that I have been with the SA groups.

1) Regarding women in meetings. I have been to 3 locations (2 non-jewish) and have not seen a female yet. SA is a more traditional and conservative group and I believe the chances of encountering a women there are relatively small.

2) Based on my short experience, the groups themselves are VERY VERY powerful. I think that

ykv and battleworn have been so successful using their own methods because they have managed to stay pro-active regarding their addictions. I myself am probably not as disciplined as either of these courageous warriors and tend to "forget" about my addiction as time goes on. What inevitably happens is that I end up getting sucked right back in. For me, I have come to realize that there is truly no other option.

Walking into that room day after day and listening to people that were sunk much deeper into the addiction than I was (prostitutes/affairs/same-sex) and have managed to stay sober for years is truly inspiring.

I truly admire and am envious of hero's like battleworn and ykv and wish that I had their courage and ability to connect with our holy Torah to the degree that it will supersede our addictive tendencies. The reality, as has been demonstrated over and over again through the painful process of continual relapse, is that I cannot do it on my own. I am grateful for the SA program beyond what words can describe. It may not be perfect, but it works.

Hatzlacha to all!

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by the.guard - 29 Mar 2009 11:44

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Shomer, you are so inspiring that I made today's Chizuk e-mail all about you!

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by mevakesh - 29 Mar 2009 18:17

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Thank you GUE for the beautiful writeup in the chizuk e-mail.

Just to clarify 2 points.

1) I am not over 40, boruch is about 10 years my senior.

2) Unlike boruch, I am **not** a talmud chacham. I try to be a *koveah eitim la'Torah* and that is about the most I can hope to say for myself.

I hope to write more about the groups as time goes on, but at the moment all I can say is this.

Just after logging on to my computer right now, I inadvertently stumbled across an open hole in my filter that would have allowed me to circumvent my filter/monitor and surf as I please. Without hesitation or temptation I simply removed the loophole in my current filter. I can say with certainty that 2 weeks ago I would have at the very least tested the limits of this gaping hole and probably fell. I literally feel like a new person and you can confer with boruch that I am not generally given to exaggerations.

Wishing all of your much *brocha & hatzlacha lorech yamim tovim!!!*

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by the.guard - 29 Mar 2009 18:43

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Sorry about the mix up. I don't know why, but I had heard you quote Chazal a lot and had thought you are a Talmid Chacham. I bet you are, only you're an ANAV too :-)

And I had known Boruch was older than 40 and had somehow assumed you were too, being his partner... Sorry.

Powerful stuff about closing the loop **without even a struggle**. Absolutely incredible.

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by Ykv\_schwartz - 29 Mar 2009 20:29

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[shomer wrote on 29 Mar 2009 18:17:](#)

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Seems like you were makayim biur chametz a week and a half before pesach. This is so inspiring. It must feel good to be in control.

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by boruch - 29 Mar 2009 22:31

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[shomer wrote on 29 Mar 2009 18:17:](#)

Just after logging on to my computer right now, I inadvertently stumbled across an open hole in my filter that would have allowed me to circumvent my filter/monitor and surf as I please. Without hesitation or temptation I simply removed the loophole in my current filter. I can say with certainty that 2 weeks ago I would have at the very least tested the limits of this gaping hole and probably fell.

No exaggerations here at all. This is nothing less than a 180 degree transformation.

[shomer wrote on 29 Mar 2009 18:17:](#)

I literally feel like a new person and you can confer with boruch that I am not generally given to exaggerations.

As Shomer has told me many times, he is very practical and sees things in very matter of fact terms. And if you think that I am exaggerating you can do a search on Shomer's posts and I believe you won't find anything remotely close to the phrase "New person".

No, when Shomer says he is a "New person" he means it. To paraphrase what R' Chaim is supposed to have told Reb Shimon Schkop (some say the Rogachover) he and his wife deserve a Mazel Tov, if Shomer is a new person, they are **newlyweds**, in **shono rishono**, and that may not be an exaggeration...

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by mevakesh - 31 Mar 2009 18:20

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As a relative new comer to the steps I have been working to gain a general understanding about what the steps are and how to properly apply them.

Perhaps the most shocking revelation to me personally, having come to the 12 steps out of the realization that I truly have no other option, is this.

The steps are not a self help program, they are not a psychological methodology, they are about making a connection with G-d in a very basic and real way.

For all these years I thought that I could fight my addiction with increased will power, with turning to Torah, with making *nedarim*, with setting up fences (filters, avoiding certain places etc.), but I am just beginning to realize that I cannot. While in reality, this is a very tough pill to

swallow, I do not think that my years of fighting and struggle have gone to waste. Addiction, just like any progressive disease, grows and extends itself to new areas of the body over time. Sexual addiction, as I am beginning to learn, is truly a spiritual disease. If I did not struggle and did not fight with every fiber of my being for all of these years, I do not know where I would be today. I can, however, say with certainty that it would be in a lot worse place than I am in today. Although I did not have the right medicine to *cure* my disease, I was able to limit the degree in-which it spread, and for that I am truly grateful.

I once heard the question posed to an *adom gadol* ... why do some members of a secular family merit to become *balei teshuvah* whereas others do not?

The answer is that each individual has to be *zoche* based upon some individual good quality, character trait or deed to become a true *baal teshuvah*.

I personally feel that this same principle applies no less to those that merit to find a *refuah* to this spiritual malady.

I can say with honesty and from the depths of my heart that Hashem has truly blessed me with perhaps one of the most important gift of my life, the tools through which to get better, and for that all I can say is *hodu la'shem ki tov ... ki leyolam chasdo*

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by the.guard - 04 Apr 2009 21:17

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Shomer, we love to hear from you.

I trust all's well and I updated your chart to 17 days, welcome back to Level 3!

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by mevakesh - 05 Apr 2009 17:51

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Hi Guard,

Today is B"H is day 18 for me.

I had been going through a bit of a rough patch since Friday, but I think that the *nissayon* has begun to pass.

I was very tired on Friday and was feeling completely out of sorts with all the work I needed to do to wrap things up before *Pesach*. I was just sitting at my computer and no matter how much I tried to concentrate, could not get myself to focus. At about 1 PM, I went to block an image on a website using [AdBlock Plus](#) and inadvertently blocked the main navigation off Yahoo.com. When I went back to unblock the content, I inadvertently turned on the Yahoo banner advertisements. Well, a banner for match.com burst onto my screen and I became extremely triggered. I immediately left work and made a phone call.

The person I called is a long standing SA member who really helped me pull through the day. He told me that when you make a call it already takes away half of the *nissayon*. I ended up talking to him for about 10 minutes and then made up to call him every hour on the hour to check-in throughout the rest of the day. This B"H worked great and I made it through the day without any incident.

That night during *kaballos Shabbos* bad thoughts kept popping into my head. When the same thing continued happening over Shabbos day I began to become disturbed. I tried following the 12 step prescription and admitting that I am powerless over lust and asked Hashem to take it away from me, but 5 minutes later it was right back again.

I knew that I needed to go to a meeting, so I asked my wife to rush the *motzei Shabbos* preparations (we went away for Shabbos) so that we could make it home in-time for a meeting. She was happy to oblige, and B"H after the meeting I was feeling much better.

I saw the individual that I called on Friday there and told him about my submitting my lust to



Hashem only to have it promptly resurface.

He told me something so simple that I am almost amazed that I did not think about it myself.

He told me that each time that we are tempted by lust, we need to submit our will to Hashem each and every time. Even if lust surfaces 30 times an hour, it is our *avodah* each and every time to admit we cannot do it alone and ask Hashem for help.

The big takeaway, and perhaps revelation, for me is that the 12 steps are no silver bullet. The lustful thoughts and the urges to act out will not disappear. SA and the 12 step program, does however provide the framework necessary to succeed if and only if you are willing to work it.

I am well aware that I am very early in my sobriety, but thanks to SA and the fellowship I feel that I finally have the tools and support to combat this terrible disease.

I am sober today and acting out is simply not an option.

Hazlacha to all!

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by Ykv\_schwartz - 05 Apr 2009 18:19

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[shomer wrote on 05 Apr 2009 17:51:](#)

I am sober today and acting out is simply not an option.

That is the bottom line. Acting out is simply not an option. It is this determination that will hold you out in the long term. As Guard wrote today, "HE SIMPLY CANNOT CONTINUE." A person can know all the tricks in the books but he can still fail if he chooses not to use them. It often takes an underlying strong determination to be able to use them on the spot. YOU have chosen wisely. YOU have that determination. We Love you.

Shomer, thanks for the inspiration. You are a true symbol of an eved hashem. Nisyonos are not meant to be easy. But you are enduring with the proper methods. Keep beseeching Hashem even before a nisayon comes your way. Before entering a zone that usually triggers you, put in a special tefilla for protection. This may prevent the nisayon from happening. We are not in control when a nisayon comes but there is nothing wrong with asking hashem to remove it. Hopefully, as time goes on, the yetzer hara will get the hint and stop knocking on your door. But if he comes again, tell him that you are a member of guarureyes. He will probably run away fast. He is scared of us. :D

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by the.guard - 05 Apr 2009 19:46

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Shomer, there are tears in my eyes again. I know it sounds cliché, but I can't help it. There is something so "real" about your struggle that it strikes a chord deep down inside me.

Thank you so much for sharing this. You went through a hard Nisayon on Friday and Shabbos. It seemed helpless and bleak. And yet you did the right things each time and came out on top. And what is the result? Not only did your post inspire us tremendously, and not only will this make an amazing Chizuk e-mail sometime to inspire hundreds of others, but if we could only see what a beautiful Gem you just added to Hashem's crown!

And if you would have known this at the time of the Nisayon, it might have been much easier - but then it wouldn't have shined so bright :-). But for next time, remember that each and every time you surrender your lust to Hashem, as your sponsor so beautifully said, you are creating beautiful gems for Hashem's crown, as well as infinite reward for your soul for all eternity!

And Yaakov, thanks for your **beautiful** answer too. Yaakov is right, today's Chizuk e-mail (448) is perfect for your situation.

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by yetzertov - 05 Apr 2009 22:18

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Hello, friends. I am frankly awed by the participating Chavura. This site is an oasis of light among the cyberworld darkness. I have been visiting this site and reading the posts for several weeks without posting , but it is Shomer's post that shook me to the core.

Shomer, do you know the nachas you have been bringing to Hashem during this past weeks?

I am certainly in no position to give chizuk. However, I would like to share with you some very powerful words I recently read in the Sefer Hatanya (chapter 27, abridged) that will hopefully help us during the most intense temptations :

*Should sadness come from evil thoughts and desires that enter his mind, he should, on the contrary, be happy in his portion in that, though they enter his mind, he averts his mind from them in order to fulfill the injunction "You should not seek after your heart and your eyes after which you go astray". When he averts his mind from them he fulfills this injunction. Indeed, the Rabbis have said "he who passively abstained from committing a sin receives a reward as though he had performed a precept". Consequently, he should rejoice at his compliance with the injunction as when performing an actual Mitzvah Aseh...*

*And with every thrust (of the temptation) wherewith he expels (the thought ) from his mind , the sitra achra down below is suppressed, and since the "stimulus from below causes an stimulus from above"the sitra achra above is also suppressed.*

*Thus the Zohar(p.128) extolls the great satisfaction before Him, when the sitra achra is subdued here below. for then the glory of Hakadosh Baruch Hu rises above all, more than by any praise, and this ascent is greater than all else.*

*Therefore, no person should feel depressed, even though he be engaged all his days in this conflict, for perhaps because of this he was created and this is his service--constantly to subjugate the sitra achra.(until here the quotation)*

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by mevakesh - 06 Apr 2009 14:46

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Thank you yosefyakov for that beautiful quote. It is indeed very inspiring!

Guard, in the interest of accuracy, I do not yet have a sponsor.

There was a member of my SA group that I was very inspired by. I asked him if I could make an appointment with him to talk to him about SA, the 12 steps and his personal story. I subsequently met with him and we talked for over 1 1/2 hours. I have found his insight and commitment to the steps truly inspiring and have been calling him to talk over my questions & concerns. I do not, however, currently have sponsor.

I have many questions about the steps, not necessarily regarding if they work or not (they obviously work), but how to implement them and incorporate them into my life.

This person told me that I should buy a big book and read it thoroughly as that is ultimately the primary reference for the 12 steps.

He also told me that I should **not** "start" steps 1 - 12 yet, but need to focus on step 0.

Step 0 for those that do not know is "identifying with the group".

My friend told me that I need to make one call a day to a different person to start making connections and feel part of the fellowship and begin to develop a support network.

Although this is essentially against my nature (I am on the shy side and will only turn for help/support if I absolutely need it), I realize that I must do what it takes to get better.

Thank you to all for the kind words of *chizuk* ... may Hashem deliver us all from depths of sin and despair to the heights of *kedusah* and *yiras shamayim*!!!.

I could not do it without you ...

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