

with Hashem's help

Posted by ahavas hashem - 25 Jul 2013 19:33

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There are so many things that are racing through my head that its hard to put them into words. I'll start with explaining why I started this thread on the forum. I first came across GYE about three months ago. I have been slowly exposing myself to the various tools that exist on this site. Initially, I found it to be overwhelming, but decided to utilize one thing at a time. I have read through part of the handbook and am still working my way through it for the first time. When I saw that I was still falling, I signed up for the daily chizuk emails. Then, about two months ago, I started my journey on the 90 chart. In the last two months I have learned a lot about my problem and am hopeful that the chizuk, suggestions and companionship in this area will help me find my way. Like I said, my thoughts are all over the place right now so I don't want to get into the struggles I've faced in the last few months. Over the course of time and the more I post, these things will iy"h be spelled out.

I do want to declare what my acting out problem is. It took me a long time to finally realize that I have a serious, chronic (possibly addictive, but I'm not there yet- maybe I should be) masturbation problem. I have been masturbating since I was 13 and there have been certain tekufos of my life when I was masturbating almost every day and sometimes multiple times a day. This, I believe, is my main area of struggle. I have as a teenager and single bachur occasionally viewed pornography. This is not something that I have done in a long time and it was not something I did consistently enough to become a real problem.

I know that there is probably a lot that should be included in this introduction that I am leaving out, but this is a very hard thing for me to do. I am not the kind of person that turns to others for help and I rarely share personal information with others. However, I believe posting on the forum and learning to share with others is a necessary step in my recovery. Hopefully with Hashem's help I will begin to truly live life.

And today is day 1! And [b]today[b] I will not fall!

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Re: with Hashem's help

Posted by ahavas hashem - 02 Sep 2013 20:57

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Today is day 40 and thank G-d I'm clean.

One day, one day, one day...

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Re: with Hashem's help

Posted by Dov - 02 Sep 2013 22:27

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Re: with Hashem's help

Posted by ahavas hashem - 09 Sep 2013 20:34

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Today I am clean for 46 days!

I have to say, I never thought I would make it this long. It truly is an incredible accomplishment for me! I think that this is due to a combination of two things.  
One day is the best way....and it rhymes, too

1. The fear of having to tell my wife that I acted out. She has only known about my masturbation for a little more than a month and we are still in the very beginning stages of working out our issues. This kind of news would drown her. She wouldn't know what to do with herself and I'm scared what that could do to us as a couple.

2. Over time this fear will dissipate, so thank G-d I was lead to Dov's conference call where I am working the 12 steps. The feeling that I am together with other frum people who struggle the same way I do is motivating for me. Working the steps themselves allows me to **do something** about my acting out. I'm not just holding my breath waiting to explode. I have already worked the first step which has helped me gain insight into how my acting out has effected my life and to accept myself for who I am with this acting out problem. My only fear is that as working the steps loses it's freshness and newness to me, I will become lax in working them.

For today I am clean and will cross bridges as I reach them. Thanks, Hashem for opening so many doors in life for me.

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Re: with Hashem's help

Posted by Pidaini - 09 Sep 2013 21:19

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no point in worrying about anything but today, it's all you have. If there comes a time that you feel that you are not fresh and are getting lax, you will deal with it then, but why the need to worry about it now?

KUTGW!!

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Re: with Hashem's help

Posted by ahavas hashem - 11 Sep 2013 21:43

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Today I am clean for 49 days. I can't believe it!

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Re: with Hashem's help

Posted by Dov - 12 Sep 2013 12:01

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Re: with Hashem's help

Posted by ahavas hashem - 16 Sep 2013 20:13

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Ok so I havent been very good about staying on top of posting. I wonder if I'm finally burning out

of posting here or if I'm getting what I need from other places like like Dov's phone group or my new friend I found. Either way, I'm on now so I'll gladly relate that with G-d's help I am 52 days clean. **Thank you, Hashem.**

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Re: with Hashem's help

Posted by cordnoy - 04 Aug 2015 21:54

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[tryingtoshteig wrote:](#)

AH:

I think that I get what Inna & Dov are trying to tell you (I hope). I am not completely sure if you are understanding them, maybe you are, but maybe not. I will try to explain in a way we all can ).

"Holding your breath" means that you are trying super-hard, in an unnatural way, to keep your one-day-at-a-time sobriety, without dealing with the underlying issues in your life. Not that Dov or anyone else has anything against staying sober, or even against taking life one day at a time, BUT the bigger question is, what is now filling the "hole" in your life that your acting out used to occupy? Or, put another way, how are you dealing with the issues (stress, boredom, anger, etc.) that you previously used to medicate with your drug of choice? Are you bringing Hashem into your life in a more personal way? Is your davening more meaningful now? Not just davening for sobriety, but davening that every little (and big) issue in your specific life is resolved in the most optimal way (which ultimately is the way He thinks is the most optimal, even if you don't understand it)? Are you working on "feeling" Hashem following you around (or leading you around) when you go to the grocery store, the bank, work, school, yeshiva, home, everywhere, 24/7/365?

Or are you just staying sober, one day at a time, but in the meantime your stress is festering inside of you with no healthy way of treating it in the absence of your old drug? If that is the case, after a while you might turn blue in the face from holding your breath for so long, and you

understand (if that's possible  
In other words, it's not just about SOBRIETY one day at a time, it's also about living your LIFE

one day at a time in the presence of Hashem, who knows what is best for you. It's like being at batting practice, swinging at your pitches one at a time, knowing that G-d Almighty himself is on your team, he is your Batting Coach pitching to you, and is sending you some fastballs, some curveballs, some outside corners, some low and inside, some right over the plate, because He knows exactly what you need to work on.

And speaking to Him regularly, both through davening and outside of davening, is a way to tune into this reality, and breathe fresh oxygen. That's what the quote from Rabbi Sacks was about.

Does this make any sense? Is this what you guys, Dov and Inna, were trying to tell him?

Have a great Shabbos!

and this is not the post i was referrin' to....although it is a good one.

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Re: with Hashem's help

Posted by cordnoy - 27 Feb 2017 00:52

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[Dov wrote on 03 Aug 2013 02:48:](#)

One more way a person can know if they are really just holding their breath:

If they are not taking any real action. Nothing in the way they are living is really changed or changing. Things like using exclusively a fake (username) name with all recovery people. Things like not meeting anyone face to face at all for this. Things like not making the call when they are in trouble and falling back on old ideas - ideas that got them in this mess to begin with.

Those things prove that a person is not really doing anything, but just hoping, wishing, whining. This is a program of action, not of figuring it out and beating it.

Make sense?

Yo - good Shabbos!

Yes.

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Re: with Hashem's help

Posted by Singularity - 27 Feb 2017 07:36

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Wonderful, necessary bump. How d'ya do it?

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Re: with Hashem's help

Posted by cordnoy - 29 Jun 2023 16:32

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[Dov wrote on 02 Aug 2013 20:21:](#)

'Holding our breath' is a totally different experience than recovery offers. This story illustrates what 'holding breath' is:

*The Steipler zt"l was once on guard duty in the Russian or Polish army on Shabbos - and his coat was in a tree, so it would be assur for him to take it down and use it! He decided to stay in place the entire shift without his coat. But it was terribly cold and driving him nuts. How could he stay put?!*

*He told himself that he could withstand the cold for just a minute (or hour?)...and he did! When that minute was over, he told himself that he just proved that he can tolerate the bitter cold for just a minute. So here before him is: a minute! He then waited a(nother) minute. When it was*

*over, he thought: here before me is another one of those minute-thingsies. I can definitely hang on just a minute! So he held on, and tolerated the cold for just a minute.*

*Etc, etc, and the entire night passed! Amazing. Beautiful.*

**AND THAT IS NOT AT ALL WHAT 'ONE DAY AT A TIME', MEANS!** For what the Steipler did was a gimmick. A mind game. And it worked for him, for one night or day...it may work for more than one day - it may even work for a lifetime, who knows? And if I could stay sober that way for a lifetime, *I would probably not take it.* It would be gehinnom, would keep me good-and-miserable/crazy, and would generally...suck. I would surely eventually run to lust again just to get out of such a stupid (but kosher!) life. Yup.

But: the Steipler *could not* have actually held his breath all night using this gimmick. Correct? After a few minutes (about 2-3), a human knows he must breathe, period. So what would you do if someone told you he would give you a million (yep, a million!) bucks if you held your breath for two hours? Would you breath deeply and go give it a try? Silly, of course not. Why suffer for no reason and nothing in the end, anyway?

People who are not sincerely giving up lust for today are just sitting ducks. They are just holding their breath and 'holding back' one day at a time. It does not work. Eventually they *will* have to breathe. And Hashem knows this. It is a twisting of the meaning of 'one day at a time'.

I know they will say 'vatishlach es amosoh - she sent forth her arm' and all the sweet, encouraging droshos on that. But for an addict, *it just does not work here!* And in the meantime, the marriage and family are brutalized. Yuch.

[A nasty little digression :pinch:

When B'nei Yisroel (on Rosh chodesh Nissan) went to take the korban Pesach (in four more days!) Hashem writes: "[i]And Bn"Y went **and did** as Moshe commanded them." Rashi brings that they went with the intention, knowing that come the 10th of Nissan, they'd take the goat/lamb, and come the 14th, they'd shecht it, etc. In their hearts, it was a done deal. So from right then, Hashem says He considers it that *they already did it all!*

Sadly, the converse is also true. We all know in our hearts that we cannot hold our breath forever. So, as inspired as we may be to hold our breath and resist getting that sweet orgasm/fantasy/porn joy we need...we are full-aware that we *are* eventually gonna pop. We have not given it up at all, see it as an eventual necessity, and a masculine right. The only guarantee, then, is that we *will* need to act out when the maximum tolerance of # days clean is reached. So it is almost as though they are already masturbating, in some respect. By the Korban pesach it means they are given over to G-d and committed to doing His Will - and by lust, it means they are given over to lust and committed to doing nothing *real* about stopping. So what's the use? May Hashem save me from making this mistake and being in that category, one day at a time.

I believe this is true for most ppl who take lots of half-measures and just 'fight it' (but see the exception below).

Therefore, only ***giving it up in our hearts one day at a time*** is useful and bears fruit, and that is the 12 step program way - not *resisting* 'one day at a time'. Get it?

There is one exception to this idea, and it is an important qualification: There are surely some who do the TapHsiC, or 90-day wall thingy, or counting the days, etc...*holding their breath* all the way - and it works! Because they did experience abstinence from their prize, after all, and did not die. Amazingly, their penises did not fall off. And abstinence sometimes makes it clear to the person that *he does not, in fact, really need it at all!*

Surprise!

But I doubt that such things will work for most people in the long run - and certainly not for addicts. For when the day comes that they desire it again as strong as ever, they will be 100% convinced again that they can't live without it, period. Back to square one. But surrender one day at a time really does work for alcoholics and others, all over the world.

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Where were we?

It's truly amazin' that my conversation with Dov today and one we had ten years ago are so



similar. Read the follow up posts as well.

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Re: with Hashem's help

Posted by Grant400 - 30 Jun 2023 04:19

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[cordnoy wrote on 29 Jun 2023 16:32:](#)

[Dov wrote on 02 Aug 2013 20:21:](#)

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Thank you Cordnoy, I really enjoyed reading through those posts.

Truth is timeless....

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Re: with Hashem's help

Posted by chaimoigen - 30 Jun 2023 13:16

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[i]The point is clear and resonates deeply. I had never "gotten" it before.

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End of the nasty little digression.  
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[/i]

Thank you, This point is very clear and resonates deeply.

I have never "gotten this" before. I have always only appreciated the value of reducing the struggle to "not today", on a superficial level. Therefore the idea has never fully resonated with me as a fundamental method of healing in and of itself. Because I have always felt that change can't just be about pure behaviour, it also has to be about actually changing. Becoming different. Replacing the hole in your heart and the things that fill it with changes that matter - with new awareness, a new path, new ways of feeling filled and fulfilled, new awareness of

Hashem, purpose, etc, etc. So pushing off the fall for a day, and then another, doesn't really create healing, as Dov is saying. That's why I never loved the idea. [The nasty digression is spot-on, and hurts.]

Now I think I understand the idea much better. "One Day At A Time" **is** about real change. **But I can reduce the genuine change necessary into day-sized segments.** Then it is so much easier to do the work. I can really want to change, **to be different**, at least for today. If those real changes are being made for today, for now, I can hold on to them. I will then deal tomorrow with holding on to the changes, tomorrow, I will work on being different tomorrow, tomorrow.

I feel the truth in this, I think {and there are divrei Chazal that reflect it} . Thank you

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