

My 90-Day Journey

Posted by TalmidChaim - 06 May 2014 16:45

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Hey Everyone,

Thanks, already, for the outpouring of support and motivation! I'm five days into this haul, and still very motivated.

My first thoughts (read: anxieties) moving forward, however, are related to what happens when this initial dopamine rush of optimism fades, as rushes are wont to do. We all know, especially as men with addictive and obsessive personalities, that there's a biochemical fix associated with new and exciting things. The GYE journey, for me, now, is new and exciting. But what happens after ten days, twenty days, B"H...90 days? I'm beginning to see the wisdom in the old adage, one day at a time. But I'm also eager to benefit from the erudition of the veteran (and freshman) tzadikim here on GYE.

Thank you so much!

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Re: My 90-Day Journey

Posted by TalmidChaim - 18 May 2014 18:06

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I had another fall Motzei Shabbos, late at night/early in the morning. I managed to keep the temptation at bay for a number of hours, but eventually gave in. However, my resolution to post about (confess)every fall is proving to be sufficiently motivational.

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Re: My 90-Day Journey

Posted by TalmidChaim - 20 May 2014 01:10

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I had another fall today. While I managed to stay clean on Sunday (according to the secular calendar), the idle time and isolation today were overwhelming. However, I think I could have staved off a lot of the temptation had I just *let* myself think of something else. However, I clearly

did not want to think of anything other than shmutz. This was definitely one of those weird, "forcing myself" to indulge moments, which is a sure sign of addiction. It was purely compulsive, and not precipitated by a clear trigger.

On the bright side (once again), I am going to post to this thread EVERY time I fall, and work on distracting myself and occupying my time. That's the advice I have give to others here; I should really follow it as well.

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Re: My 90-Day Journey

Posted by dms1234 - 20 May 2014 01:31

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**TalmidChaim**

I'm one day clean, and motivated. I just have to stay focused.  
That's whats going to help you stay clean? Being focused? Focused on what?

**TalmidChaim**

However, I need to work harder: 0% tolerance of lustful actions; 100% self forgiveness if I fall. Both sides need to be worked on.  
That is how you are working? But this is also reactionary. When a thought comes into my head..., When i fall i will....

Perhaps you should shift your focus. Right now you are concentrated on the results.

KOAC!!!!!!! (Keep on attitude changing!)

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Re: My 90-Day Journey

Posted by TalmidChaim - 20 May 2014 23:04

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Good point, dms; thank you!

By focus, I mean remembering just how awful acting out really is. That is, preserving the presence of mind necessary to avoid falling.

Because of the dopamine rush they receive, addicts have a biochemical tendency to narrow their mental field of vision onto their obsession. In doing so, the outside world gets pushed to the wayside, along with the ugly nature of the aveiros and the terrible, terrible nature of the bad behavior. By staying focused, I mean keeping myself mindful of this: the intrinsic ugliness of the aveiros, the nature of my addiction, the biochemical mechanics at play in my head...everything. In other words, focus, for me, means not letting myself fall into the "bad mindset." It means keeping myself (my eyes, my ears...my thoughts) focused on the Mesilas Yesharim. It means training my mind's eye on positive thoughts -- family, nature, HaShem -- and keeping my mind's eye out of the gutter.

In my experience, achieving all of this is largely a matter of focus. It requires effort, energy and a dramatic shift in perspective, like you said.

As for my efforts being reactionary, that's another story. I am looking into how to fit the 12 step phone conferences into my schedule, and I'm planning on reading and actuating the GYE manual.

How do you recommend I shift my focus? It's a little unclear to me what you were recommending.

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Re: My 90-Day Journey

Posted by TalmidChaim - 20 May 2014 23:21

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I fell again, today: Tuesday morning. And yes, I also fell the day before. I'm finding that the hardest thing about these recent falls, aside from the soul-draining shame I feel afterward (I know, not a good thing -- trying to work on that!), is admitting my fall here on the forums. Even

as I write this, I'm embarrassed. Not because anyone here is even remotely judgmental, or unfairly critical, or even harsh. No. Rather, I'm embarrassed because I'm in the presence of such tzadikim, such masters of self control. Yes, it gives me something to aspire to, and I know I could do it. But just knowing I'll have to 'fess up to you guys afterward is also making it more difficult to act out. And that's a good thing!

So I'm writing this as a positive sentiment: I guess a little preemptive shame as a deterrent is okay. And even though I fell, I managed to hedge my lust this morning and curb some old temptations that really used to vex me. I know a fall is a fall, and I am not trying to mitigate the seriousness of even a "small fall" (whatever that is), but I really think GYE is working, and I consider myself, this second, back on the wagon.

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Re: My 90-Day Journey

Posted by cordnoy - 20 May 2014 23:27

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such masters of self control.....who fell hundreds of times in decades of actin' out.

**Warning: Spoiler!**

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Re: My 90-Day Journey  
Posted by TalmidChaim - 21 May 2014 03:59

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Re: My 90-Day Journey  
Posted by Pidaini - 21 May 2014 17:57

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Hey TC!!

Okay, right. Thanks, Cordnoy. I forgot to add exceedingly humble to the list.  
No reason to get down, the only thing is to try and see what you can do to prevent the fall in the future, both inside and out (if possible)!!

Cordnoy wasn't acting humble, he was just being honest. I am on the same page with him, I don't have self control, just like a young child (who's burnt himself once already) doesn't need self control not to put his hand on the fire.

I'm actually worse than that child, because I keep on trying to see how close to the fire I can get, only to get burned once again. So we're taking actions that help us stay away from that fire, not because I have self control, because I **don't** have self control!!

Welcome back to the wagon!!!! (even though falling doesn't necessarily mean that you were off it!)

KOMT!!! We're all in this together!!

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Re: My 90-Day Journey

Posted by cordnoy - 21 May 2014 18:31

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Right on!

Humble is not my middle name; honesty and openness (perhaps stupidity) can be.

b'hatzlachah

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Re: My 90-Day Journey

Posted by TalmidChaim - 21 May 2014 18:42

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Re: My 90-Day Journey

Posted by TalmidChaim - 21 May 2014 19:08

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Okay, I'm still clean. I know it's been only a matter of hours since yesterday's fall, but I'm really trying to implement this whole "worry about the moment" thing. My mission is just to get past this immediate temptation, and not worry about making it 24 hours clean, or 7 days clean, or 90 days clean.

I mean, mathematically speaking, there are infinite amounts of "this moment"s in, well, any given moment (I wax absurd sometimes -- sorry, but it makes sense mathematically). So that means: infinite opportunities for success, and by definition, infinite amounts of victories. Also, if we extend this thinking in the opposite direction, a fall is just a fixed point in time. It happens at a given nanosecond, during a given hour of the day, at a specific, given location -- and then it's

over. It ends. It's finite. It has set parameters, is patently fathomable, and, most importantly, eventually goes away. Falling is human; falling is for Olam HaZeh. But abstinence, victorious abstinence -- that's the province of the Divine. Humans can't define *not doing something* with any meaningful terms. Just try counting the number of picoseconds (that's one trillionth of a second) that you haven't fallen, that you've kept your eyes and brain tahor. It's impossible.

So, yeah. Basically, I see the intrinsic value in only worrying about the present. After all, 90 days is just  $90 \times 24 \times 60 \times 60 \dots$  (ad infinitum) moments of not acting out. That's a gift.

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Re: My 90-Day Journey  
Posted by mischaretani - 21 May 2014 20:07

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i loved that post

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Re: My 90-Day Journey  
Posted by TalmidChaim - 21 May 2014 20:38

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Thanks! It's a revolution for me to think this way, and I have the guys here on GYE to thank for it. Everyone keeps saying, "one day at a time," or "one hour at a time," etc. It's not just an empty sentiment.

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Re: My 90-Day Journey  
Posted by cordnoy - 21 May 2014 21:05

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Aint that a fact!!!!

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