

Ben is on the track

Posted by GYEBen - 12 Jul 2017 08:14

Hello to all,

I decided to open a new topic and write along my journey to the first goal - 90 days clean - mainly for myself.

I feel that this will help me achieve the goal. Having a place to write about my thoughts, my challenges, my successes and my failures that might occur along the way.

This might be a bit egocentric, but the reader I aim most is myself. I want to have a place I can go back to and read about my feelings along the way.

This is more a travel journal than anything else. If someone can benefit from it - that would be really great, although I am sure that I do not have many Hidushim to bring out as many better and wiser than myself have gone through this path before me.

OK, so.... 90 days...

2 down, 88 to go. and then more... of course.

I looked around the site, and it is really well built. Regarding my Motivational settings, I found that the strongest one I have for now is... my Personalized Chart!

Definitely not by chance, I began my journey on the 17 Tamuz. approaching the 3 weeks, Ben Hametzarim, and an event just the night before (my wife caught me looking at a site...) triggered the urge to finally do something drastic and take care myself for good, seriously.

I knew about GYE because I had a short and failed attempt at recovery two years ago... I was not serious at the time.

So I found that starting now is the best anyone can hope for, when looking at the calendar.

My motivation to stay on track and clean continuously is strong: If I succeed, then I shall reach the first 4 levels still during the three weeks and get to Tisha BeAv a better person. But more significantly, I can reach level 7 just Erev Rosh Hashana! What a tremendous achievement that would be! What an opening for this year's Yamim Noraim!! And then B"H finally get to the 90 days during Hol Hamoed Sukkoth - meaning that Hoshana Raba would find me with a cleaner body and mind.

I know that all that seems a bit over enthusiastic... From the high of my 2 days streak I am already happy about an achievement I am so far from...

Nevertheless, I think this is a great motivation, and I know that I must take encouragement from anywhere I can find it because this is not going to be easy.

My Tefila this morning was already completely different than before. I felt that I could really relate to the words and found that almost every sentence was written with GYE goals in mind.

The only fact that I decided to go for it, open myself to external support, understand that I must ask for, and accept, the strength from Hashem to overcome my addiction - made me feel fresh and happy, the Kavanot flowing in as never before.

I now must keep this momentum, and writing here will help me for sure.

Ben

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Re: Ben is on the track

Posted by dms1234 - 19 Jul 2017 02:49

WOW, Ben incredible steps. Joining SA seems to be a great step for you. If you want to be in contact (I assume your sponsor mentioned you should phone members regularly, please email me at dms1234ongye@gmail.com. I would love to speak on the phone.

I am very glad you got a sponsor right away. A Sponsor is a critical part of the program, we can't do the steps by ourselves.

Did you end up going to a second meeting?

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Re: Ben is on the track

Posted by GYEBen - 19 Jul 2017 07:02

Good morning Daniel and all GYE fellows,

The counter on the 90 days chart shows 8 this morning, and for some strange reason I felt something like 'Dear passengers, we have reached our cruising altitude'...

And this might be a reason to worry a bit...

From experience in various fields of life, its exactly in those times when everything seems to be on the track, the turbulences and excitment of new beginnings start to wear off, the routine is taking over and then... something goes wrong.

And you are not reacting well, because the attention was off...

OK, but what can I do in order to maintain the high level of consciousness?

I have asked my sponsor - are we doomed to be in en eternal tension of a recovery process?

We discussed this a bit, and reached the conclusion that we are not doomed to be in a constant struggle. Some of us here are RECOVERED addicts. But to be a recovered addict is a state in itself. It is not that we are erasing our past and starting from a blank page.

After a succesful recovery, I believe that I can become a much better person, I wont need to struggle with lust because I will have surrendered my will completely and thus developped natural protection mechanisms.

But the allergy will remain and I will forever be aware that a 'sip' is as dangerous as a full bottle.

Well... I still have to work on these concepts and understanding. I believe that I'll get it better when I 'grow up'.

I do not know who works on the 'Daily Breaking Free Chizuk' mails - but he (she? they?) do a wonderful job! To my amazement, I find these very interesting and enriching - and even helpful in my recovery! Yishar Koach Gadol! KUTGW (Hey Daniel!, I finally decyphered your acronym... witout googling it...)

I have daily work sessions on the twelve steps with my sponsor.

I decided to attend the SA meetings weekly, so the second one is scheduled for Sunday IYH (I did get a 'keep coming back' token... so now I must return!).

SO, another wonderful day lays ahead... I am now ready for it.

One day at a time.

Hazak Veematz,

Benjamin

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Re: Ben is on the track

Posted by GYEBen - 20 Jul 2017 08:40

Good morning to all my friends here on GYE,

The last 24 hours were really eventful, recovery wise.

I had to face some challenging triggers (just walking to a meeting in the streets of Tel Aviv in mid-summer is pretty suggesting) – until now I did not even realize this was a trigger at all - and this caused some cravings on my drive back, but fortunately I had a work session planned with my sponsor just following this event – and this helped me a lot to just let go. The cravings disappeared as they had come.

The work session was wonderful and I am making my way towards step 1 of the 12 steps – and I really enjoy the way. I also listened to one of Harvey's talks while running my 10 km on the treadmill... Enlightening!

My partner also reached out for me and I may have been of help in some way... that feels really good.

But for sure the most significant event happened during this last night.

I had a dream... Yeah, OK... this sounds dramatic, and we already heard that somewhere – but really man – I had a dream. And I felt it was important. I woke up immediately following the dream and I understood that I must write it down, now. So I decided – after some thoughts and preparation – to go and bring my PC from downstairs.

You must understand that in numerous other occasions, when I woke up at night and went to get the PC, it was not for writing something for the GYE forum... So I had some hesitation to do so, but after realizing the danger of the situation, this danger just disappeared and I brought the darn machine up, back to my bed, my wife deep asleep next to me.

And I wrote the following. I am just copying now the text I wrote this last night without changing a word. This is the exact recollection I had immediately after the dream:

It is half past four in the morning and I lay in bed – next to my sleeping wife. I just went down to fetch my PC because I felt that I had to write down this dream I just had – fearing that if I do not do this now, I will forget important details.

I feel that this dream is important for my recovery.

In my dream:

I just arrived to Paris main train station (whatever this is – there four or five large international train stations in Paris).

I am carrying a small bag with me, and I am not going out of the station immediately, but stay at a bar drinking a coffee. I am in the arrival area (in my dream the train station is actually built like an airport, with an arrival area, and a luggage retrieving area before you actually exit the station – this is not so in reality), and the place is really busy, many people urging me to finish up and free the place because they want to sit there...

So I do stand up. There are these huge luggage belts carrying all sorts of bags and boxes. I pick several, a big pile of boxes actually, and make my way out to the exit. I pass a kind of check point and, the moment I am out, I remember that I forgot some bags. So I go back to the guy at the check point and tell him so, asking to go back in and fetch the bags that I forgot. It so happens that the guy is a religious Jew and, because he recognizes that I am a fellow Jew, he lets me in – lifnim meshurat hadin. So I go in, take a few more bags and go out, in the middle of a real crowd of people.

And suddenly, I find myself standing in the middle of a street. Everything vanished around me. Its just me, a huge pile of luggage, boxes and bags, and it's raining – heavily.

And I feel totally helpless, alone in this big strange city with all this luggage.

But I also know that I am not as helpless as it seems, because I know this city well, I know that I have friends around here somewhere and that I can reach out for help. I also know that I have in my pocket a payment mean, a credit card or something, which allows me to draw from a very significant source of funds... But still, I feel completely helpless for a moment.

And then I woke up.

And I was in an almost complete state of consciousness. I know for sure that I was not dreaming anymore. And the first thought that came to my mind was my introduction to an SA meeting. "Hello, I am Binyamin, sexaholic. I am lusting since forever and acting out for the last 36 years. I am clean for the last 9 days. My M.O. include, but are not limited to ..." (I actually started to list, but I won't write this down here).

And then – I went to full consciousness – and I felt that I have to write all this down because it is significant. And so I did.

Back to sleep.

The above is what I wrote this last night.

I then laid in my bed and thought about the possible significance and interpretation of the dream, and eventually fell asleep for another hour until it was time to get up to Shaharit.

I'd like to share my interpretation of the dream, but I'll use a 'spoiler' so if someone would like to write his own interpretation and share it with me – he can do so without being influenced by my own thoughts.

So my interpretation follows:

Warning: Spoiler!

This is my interpretation. It is very optimistic, and I feel strengthened by it – so I select it for me.

I welcome any other analysis or suggestions.

That's it for today my friends...

Hazak Veematz,

Benjamin

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Re: Ben is on the track

Posted by GYEBen - 23 Jul 2017 08:13

Good morning to all my friends here on GYE,

Well, the week-end is over and I am back to my office.

I catch a few minutes to write here, as a tool against this craving I have to go and surf... just a peek... It's been a long time... I will not act out, just look at some nice pictures for a few seconds... minutes...

Yeah... I've been telling myself all this crap on my way in, knowing that I'll have the opportunity to do so.

Hadn't it be for the forum, the 90 days chart, the 1st step I am trying to make, I would be just back to where I was two weeks ago, all this excitement and energy wasted for nothing. It is a bit worrying since it might mean that all my efforts of today will be wasted tomorrow – but that is exactly the meaning of 'one day at a time'. Let's just make it to tomorrow morning – that all I ask from Him.

Thinking that makes it much much easier.

I've been thinking about this first step that I am undertaking.

Am I really powerless over lust? But more than that, did my life really became unmanageable?

Even if being convinced of the first seems reasonable, the second is much less evident.

I did manage my life not bad until now – or did I?

I feel that I have still a lot to think about and work in order to achieve the first step.

Tonight is SA meeting night... I am really looking forward to it!

Be strong – one day at a time!

Benjamin

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Re: Ben is on the track

Posted by GYEBen - 25 Jul 2017 12:46

Hello to all my friends in GYE,

I did not write yesterday - but I am still definitely on the track.

Working the 12 steps - one day at a time.

My step 1 is really interesting and I find it usefull to share a few thoughts that occur to me while reading the materials from the Big Book and the White book.

We are taught that surrendering and arrest are the keys to freedom...

Actually I had this feeling a few years ago while being arrested on the road for speeding.

What I felt at this moment amazed me. I should have be resentful, angry at the guy for caughting me and eventually fining me - but no. I actually was grateful to him, and I told him so.

I realized when he stopped me that i had to have this external intervention to bring me back to reality. Speeding is dangerous! You are endangering your life, the lives of others around - for absolutely no reason at all! Yes - at that time I needed a Greater Power - in this case a very gentle and kind police officer - to arrest me and by so doing help me be free of this compulsive need to drive fast...

And that brought me to the reflection that my driving is a very good reflection of my inner self.

When I am at peace with myself, I drive calmly and serenely, accept the aleas of the traffic with an open and accepting heart - and arrive more or less on time, or even late - but joyful.

And when I am angry with myself and the world - many times because I caved in to my addiction and I felt ashamed and angry - my driving becomes aggressive and restless. And I arrive more or less on time, or even late - but always feeling like BAD WORD REMOVED!

So my friends - let your Greater Power arrest you, surrender - and drive safely home with joy!

Benjamin

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Re: Ben is on the track

Posted by GYEBen - 26 Jul 2017 06:48

Good morning to all GYE freinds,

Here are my thoughts of the day -

I've been listening to conferences and of course attending SA meetings, and reading personal experiences from the literature... and I realized that even though I did not hit the rock-bottom of others (although I went pretty far myself), the evolution of my disease is now obvious to me and it is unrelenting. I must recognize that I am so very lucky to join the program at this stage of my illness and that this will spare me from going further down, a fate that is otherwise utterly unavoidable!It is not the definition of rock bottom that matters but rather the clear understanding of the evidence of the illness evolution and the realization that if not taken care of now - it might be too late!If not for the recovery - people who went much further down and trully joined the program were cured after all - then for the effects of my disease on my life and the lifes of my loved ones.

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Keep strong and surrender, one day at a time.

Benjamin

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Re: Ben is on the track

Posted by GYEBen - 31 Jul 2017 08:47

Hello dear GYE friends,

It has been a few days since my last post, but a small sentence hidden within the White Book resonated particularly and I wanted to write it down - afraid to forget it, and happy to share it with all.

"We were free to see and admit what we really were inside because we were finally free from having to act out what we were".

The notion of 'freedom' is, for me, intrinsically linked to the process of recovery. I remember very well having a wonderful sensation of freedom a few years ago on one of the many occasion where I 'really' decided to stop acting out completely. It did not hold because I did not know how - I was not in the program and did not know of its existence.

But still, this wonderful feeling left an impression on my soul that I nurtured and kept and the process I am undergoing now is also being fed by this memory, in search of a constant state of joy and freedom that I do not want to loose again.

The horrible and depressing feelings linked to the unmanageable double life I was obliged to have in order to keep some apparence of order was taking me further and further down - just feeding my addiction and leading to unavoidable misery.

At last - I can release my true me, being myself naturally without the need to spend so much energy to 'act as myself' and this freedom enables me to at last stop being self centered - releasing this attention to myself allows to turn this attention to others, to the world around me and finally start living.

Benjamin

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