

Reset

Posted by brlife101 - 11 May 2018 10:57

Day 1. Had a hard fall to compulsive lust last night. Feeling pain from the fall and feeling like a low and pitiful failure. Hoping that posting to 90 days+ will help. I find myself staying clean for a few weeks at a time, sometimes less sometimes more, and then a moment of compulsive lust surfaces and i feel helpless and totally overwhelmed by it. Overwhelmed meaning it completely takes over my focus in that moment and i can't refocus and reset myself to think like a clean normal person.

For those who are 90 days+ clean, is it fair to say that the overwhelming state of mind compulsive lust triggers never goes away? When it surfaces, or even starts to surface, how do you deal with it, especially when it continues to hammer back at you? Like a throbbing headache that you simply can't ignore. That's at least how it feels to me when it surfaces, constantly hammering at me and any efforts i make to let it subside.

Hoping to post here regularly as i try to refresh and rest myself on a clean path.

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Re: Reset

Posted by brlife101 - 15 Nov 2018 16:47

I was at 60+ days clean and had a fall this morning (P+M, no release). The issue is my laptop (has K9, but K9 is not foolproof), my phone is heavily restricted but more importantly it's dumbed down. At this point I want to get rid of my laptop and not keep it in the house, but my wife and kids use it. I am definitely prepared to make that change or work with my spouse to find something that works for her to have access to a computer at home but also works for me. It's just going to be hard to speak to her about it but she has been truly an amazing partner through this. I know I want to do the right things for a long term clean sustainable life and I know I want to grow as an eved hashem. On this round I made some amends in my life, started going to minyanim consistently, learning Torah, going to shiurim, and deleted movie and TV apps from my phone. I was also open and honest with my wife and she has been supportive. This is just a tough low, I feel a lot of shame and it's hard to be hopeful and say all this without feeling like I'm being judged. I want to move on from this fall make the necessary adjustments and continue connecting with friends who know exactly what I'm going through and have been able to stay clean.

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Re: Reset

Posted by brlife101 - 29 Nov 2018 12:52

14 days clean today Bh. today is a good day!

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Re: Reset

Posted by brlife101 - 16 Dec 2018 12:50

30 days clean Bh! Eliminating shows and movies has made a huge impact and diminished that constant feeling in back of my head that a fall is right around the corner. so much to continue working on of course but so much to be thankful for! Hodu lahashem ki Tov

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Re: Reset

Posted by brlife101 - 25 Dec 2018 19:43

Was 40 days clean but fell this morning to lust. Trying to focus on making amends and moving forward, not dwelling on shame and guilt. I know deep down I am a good guy and only want to do the right thing in life. The lust attacks can be very sharp and hard to shake off. Hoping some changes in internet restrictions (essentially complete lock out unless spouse unlocks for half hour interval if need to use it at home) will help. Will try to post more regularly and connect with others on GYE to be michazek and stay strong...here's to day One of, with hashem's help, many more clean days on this challenging journey

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Re: Reset

Posted by brlife101 - 27 Dec 2018 18:20

Bh 2 days clean. I am in a good place and this fall is different than others because I know I took on a lot gedarim and positive changes in my life and I am proud of myself for that despite the fall. A few months ago I couldn't even look myself in the mirror without thinking that I am a piece of____ (You can fill in the blank...). In the past few months I was 50 days clean, fell, than

was 40 days clean, and then fell. I'm not proud of the falls, but I do feel the impact of the work and gedarim I've put in place.

I learned a lot from this fall and took on much more rigid restrictions for internet use. Will share more on that soon, but basically my access to internet on a home computer is completely locked out by K9 unless my wife unlocks it. And my phone is, at least from my perspective, as kosher as an iPhone can be (no internet browser, only clean apps with no backdoor to internet browser, and no ability to download new apps). It was not easy to accept that I needed to 100% block internet, but deep down I know that any form of unrestricted and unfiltered internet is toxic to a person like me. And I know in the past I've never given it my 100% effort and put everything to the side to completely lock internet and prioritize access to a clean shmirat habrit lifestyle, even though it definitely crossed my mind on many occasions and after many falls.

And i have begun to accept myself more for who i am. not justify my actions and inclinations, but recognize them as part of me and play defense accordingly. I now accept the fact that my desire for internet lust is part of me whether I like it or not and it will never just poof disappear no matter how many days clean I am. Whether 2 or 2,000 days clean is irrelevant, a fall can happen any day to a person like me if I have access to unrestricted and unfiltered internet, especially in yichud. And any thoughts that I can beat that inclination and continue to use unrestricted and unfiltered internet by being some arbitrary number of days clean is just me fooling myself.

Anyways, here's to a clean day 2 of Be"h many more days. If anyone else has took on this degree of internet restriction and has anything to share please feel free to reach out. This is new territory for me...

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Re: Reset

Posted by Calculator - 30 Dec 2018 06:54

You seem to be doing a great job and thus are getting amazing results.

You should know triggers will come, but you can get by them. I speak as someone who literally thought that they had to just let triggers go ahead or else I couldn't move on with my day. Now, I usually (emphasize on usually, not always) feel like machine gunning down the yetzer hara when he tries some of his old tricks - it really is some cheap junk he's selling. It's a matter of patience and recognizing that strength (just like weight training) comes only thru continued work. At first, it's a big boxer attacking us and we try to defend ourselves with a cheap water

pistol. But as we get thru challenges, we improve our ability to withstand.

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Re: Reset

Posted by brlife101 - 26 Mar 2019 02:13

Bh I reached 90 days clean yesterday and wanted to share a bit on my path here

Looking back I can finally acknowledge that for many years I viewed staying clean as a way of proving to myself that I could defeat my struggles with lust and finally stop hating myself. Only now do I realize how my focus on perfection and defeating lust turned out to be one of my greatest impediments to making progress.

With the guidance and support from some very special people I connected to on GYE I finally was able to accept that my struggles with lust are a real part of me that required some very serious lifestyle changes. Over time I took on some very restrictive gedarim such as completely locking off access to internet on my personal computer at home and on my phone. We installed a filter on the computer and set it up with a default to lock out internet for all hours of the day. Only my spouse knows the password and it can only be unlocked for an hour at a time at most and even then it's heavily filtered. My phone has no internet browser and I deleted any apps I suspect could pose a risk by having a back-door to internet. my phone is password protected from downloading new apps and only my wife knows the password. I used to constantly binge shows on my phone or the TV, particularly on Netflix. I no longer have any access to that content and any TV access I have is limited to basic channels like news and sports.

These are all changes that for many years I was unwilling to take on. For decades I really was convinced that I could beat my challenges with lust without having to make such significant and inconvenient lifestyle changes, as crazy as that may sound. I now know deep down and can finally accept that no matter how long I stay clean if I were to have access to an unfiltered phone with internet for an evening, this week, in a month, in a few years from now, etc I would most certainly remain at a major risk of falling. I've finally come to accept that there is no cure for me in being at risk when exposed to unfiltered internet.

Aside from them helping me stay clean these changes have also helped me come to respect

and accept myself. Not feeling like I have to constantly beat myself up for falls has allowed me to focus on growing as a husband and father and put my family first over my own personal pleasures. I've also resumed minyan and shiur attendance, activities I had been far away from for many years while acting out to lust.

I made a difficult life choice to grow up and put embarrassment and shame on the side and share my challenges with others. Real people who struggled like me. This struggle is a very real part of my life and isn't going to go away regardless of whatever goals and number of clean days I reach. It is foolish to think that one day I will no longer be in danger of slipping or falling again, but I now know that getting depressed and ashamed over that is even more foolish and self damaging. Comparing my struggles to others who I presume have no challenge in this area of life is also foolish. Everyone has their own life struggles and it's not healthy for me to compare myself to others and doing that bears the risk of bringing me down and getting ashamed at myself and thinking I'm a sicko, loser, etc who is unworthy of being clean after so many years of falls. And regardless of my perception and imagination that many others around me don't have any of these kinds of struggles, the reality is many people do struggle with shmirat aynayim and shmirat habrit in their own way, so I am not alone and not the only one in this world or in history who has struggled with this. Instead of comparing myself to others I need to focus on maintaining my gedarim, staying healthy, and reaching out regularly to GYE friends for slips, to stay in touch, etc.

There is much more growth to go but these are all things to be proud of. I owe much gratitude to hashem, my wife, the GYE platform and some special people I connected to through GYE who have been there for me every step of the way. My wife in particular was an amazing support system. It was hard to open up to her but i was very honest and she was very understanding and supportive and has helped me implement and maintain my gedarim.

Much hatzalchah to everyone else here and if anyone would like to connect and share on what I wrote here or anything else please feel free to reach out.

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Re: Reset

Posted by YeshivaGuy - 19 Dec 2020 23:54

Amazing!

How u been recently?

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Re: Reset

Posted by brlife101 - 08 Jan 2021 20:52

Hi YeshivaGuy, thank you for asking. I've had a fair number of ups and downs since I last posted. I've stayed clean for a few weeks or sometimes even a few months at a time and I've had some falls as well. I sometimes fell into a false sense of security when i was clean for several months at a time and I let my guard down by watching too many movies/shows, allowing internet enabled devices to be unlocked from filtering, and not working consistently and proactively enough on mature ways to deal with urges. I am continuing to work on all of the above and wish hatzlochoh to anyone else reading this who can relate to that and is working to stay clean, whether under or over a 90 day count.

It took me a long time to get comfortable with filters/reporting software like webchaver on my phone, computer, etc. In retrospect it seems silly that earlier on I even questioned whether i need to filter all my internet enabled devices. But I know that I've grown up a bit since then and it's clear to me that not having filters on my devices is just asking for trouble. There's no medal or award waiting for a person like me who tries to stay clean without filters, and coming to terms with that is part of me growing up in this area of struggle. Perhaps that's true for others reading this who have yet to fully embrace filtering all of their devices.

I now have filter-enabled webchaver (aka covenant eyes) on all devices in my home (iPhone, iPad, computer, etc). But relying exclusively on gedarim like filters has clearly not been enough for me, perhaps others feel the same way, and when I feel strong urges to act out I find that I have not yet found or worked enough on specific ways to cope with the urges. That has led to me doing some very dumb things like having my filter unlocked on a device etc without somehow putting myself in check and dealing with the urge in a more responsible way before it gets out of hand. I am continuing to work on that area, managing urges, and welcome any support or suggestions from the guys here.

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Re: Reset

Posted by YeshivaGuy - 09 Jan 2021 23:44

[brlife101 wrote on 08 Jan 2021 20:52:](#)

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Welcome Back! Please please don't leave us for such a long time again. We're all in this together.

May I ask, how do you get the filter unlocked?

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Re: Reset

Posted by brlife101 - 10 Jan 2021 01:01

My wife has the code to unlock my devices from filtering. So for example, one struggle I've had that led to falls is I start off by asking her to unlock it so I can do something 'kosher' but then once it's unlocked I'm unable to suppress the urge to act out and do so before having her lock it back up.

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Re: Reset

Posted by brlife101 - 26 Jan 2021 00:55

Hi I wanted to share that BH today I made it back to 30 days clean. I feel proud of myself for staying abstinent for 30 days (and i feel proud of myself for feeling capable of openly sharing that I'm proud of myself too...something I definitely couldn't do a few years ago so improvement in self esteem has come a long way for me with support from some amazing mentors involved here).

also its refreshing to share that I started getting involved in SMART recovery techniques and have read the first two of four parts of the SMART handbook (building and maintaining motivation and coping with urges), worked through some of the worksheets on my own, and listened in to some SMART calls.

In the past I had made some serious commitments to filters and monitoring on my phone/computer. But that clearly wasn't enough as I continued to find excuses for myself to get the filters unlocked and eventually fall anyways. I think the reason is - I felt that I gave up so much in my previous lifestyle in changing over to filters that why do I still have to try to do anything about urges when they hit me? Shouldn't the filters solve the problem for me?...“It's not fair that I accepted filters in my life but still have to deal with urges...” something like that. Maybe some people here can relate to that but as silly as it may sound it definitely has been an issue for me.

Over the past 30 days the smart program has helped me learn to take a deep breath when an urge/lustful thought pops into my head and stop to think about what I'm going through in a calm, proactive but non-judgemental way. I'm not immediately beating myself up for allowing the thought to enter my head and trying to forcefully STOP the urge or delete my thoughts/push them out of my head. That approach clearly has never worked for me as eventually I fall into guilt/self pity issues and use acting out as a way to soothe myself. I've practiced a technique they call urge surfing to work through the urge and over the past 30 days it's helped me work through lustful thoughts at least 6 or 7 times. I am excited to continue reading through the materials and working on the programs and I hope and daven it will continue to help me and so many others who are trying to keep kedusha in their lives

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Re: Reset

Posted by lampowerless - 26 Jan 2021 17:35

Amazing. Thanks for sharing, I'm happy to hear that you have been gaining from SMART Recovery. Congrats on 30 days that is amazing.

Wishing you all the best,

Yaakov

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Re: Reset

Posted by brlife101 - 25 Feb 2021 01:46

Pleased to share that I BH reached 60 days clean today. I know that this is just a baby step forward and it's not always so healthy to dwell on days/streaks, but for what it's worth I just wanted to share a few things that hopefully will help/motivate anyone who may be reading this and looking for something new to try to help them stay clean that they may have not tried before.

I've read through the entire smart handbook for the first time. I am not a part of any formal SMART groups etc, but I have been in contact with a SMART moderator (very nice person) and working on the tools myself and I've made some cost benefit analysis and higherarchy of values worksheets from SMART that I often go back and read when I feel/sense urges. And I practice urge surfing frequently and as part of that try to remind myself that I don't need to feel bad for an urge or bad thought coming into my head, and no need to panic, just acknowledge that it's there and accept it for what it is and surf through it without getting into panic mode, getting down and thinking it's all for nothing anyways so I may as well despair and give in. Texting a friend when I feel panic hitting me has helped a lot too. I certainly have moments when I feel like I'm white knuckling to get through an urge and I've been working on acknowledging those moments for what they are and moving on instead of letting them get me down and into panic/despair mode that inevitably results in acting out.

anyways I just wanted to share that these techniques have been very helpful for me and have helped me feel more at peace with myself and as a result more available emotionally for my family (something I haven't felt for many years filled with acting out). if anyone wants to

I'm a big believer that there isn't necessarily one exclusively key in this struggle and we have to try to take on as many tools as we can to find the right path/balance for each of us to maintain kedusha in our lives.

Purim Sameach!

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