

Back at it again!

Posted by lwtbf613 - 30 Nov 2018 20:22

This is my second time trying GYE, the first time I didn't really give it my all, but this time I want to beat this habit for good. I think what made last time (I used a different email address) from this time is that I didn't fully accept I had a problem. I tend to be an all or nothing person, so I thought to myself "I'm either a 100% full blown s. addict that should be in SA or I don't have any problem. This time, I see many more shades between black and white, I definitely have a problem, but it doesn't make me an "addict" per se. I'm on day 3 of a conscience journey to 90 days and iyh I'll be able to change my life for the better for good.

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Re: Back at it again!

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 02 Dec 2018 14:57

Welcome. It should be with hatzlocha. "All or nothing" is an unhealthy way to live life in general. Hashem made a very colorful world including the very complex brain and nefesh of human beings. We constantly fluctuate in our avodas Hashem, and general mental equilibrium in many different areas as we go through a day. People who are at peace with themselves, and accept their being imperfect human beings, are able to face the world with menuchas hanefesh. For many of us struggling with these issues our first step is to simply accept where we are up to and peacefully, with humility, begin a most fascinating journey. B'ezras Hashem you will break free and be zocheh to true simchas hachaim.

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Re: Back at it again!

Posted by lwtbf613 - 03 Dec 2018 16:20

amen! Thank you very much for those words of chizuk. It seems like everything in life is exactly like what you said: fluctuating, flowing, changing...it's funny that as human beings sometimes we go contrary to nature. Realizing this, that holding a staunch "all or nothing" mentality is actually against our nature, I feel makes things so much easier. I'm not putting as much pressure on myself. What I'm noticing though is this fear that I have of falling. Obviously, all of us want to maintain our personal kedusha, why else would we be on this site! But what concerns me is the fear, like I *NEED* to stay clean and the prospect of failing scares the day lights out of me. I'm sure that this comes from the yetzer hara, but I'm just not sure how or why he would be making me feel this way. Any thoughts?

In general though, I'm feeling really strong and eager to continue on this path to sobriety. It's

funny, I feel like whenever I just ride on pure inspiration without any follow through (i.e. taphsic vow, taking on the 90 day challenge, gye boosts, posting in forums and talking on chats, making a concerted effort to guard my eyes in the street, etc.) then I'm not thinking about the taavas and struggles as much. It's only when I tell the yetzer hara that enough is enough that he starts throwing major punches my way. Does anyone else feel this way? Has this happened to anyone else? BH, so happy to be part of such a loving, caring, and supportive group of frum men trying to achieve and maintain personal holiness and a strong relationship with Hashem through our often times difficult avodah.

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Re: Back at it again!

Posted by cordnoy - 03 Dec 2018 17:02

It (fear of fallin') has always been on the fourth step fear sheets.

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Re: Back at it again!

Posted by lwtbf613 - 07 Dec 2018 14:57

Good morning! (it's early morning where I live) I just wanted to check in. If all goes well today iyh I'll have 10 days clean. I normally fall around the 2 week mark, which means that I start to slip at the 1.5 week mark, meaning today. But today, I feel really good. My mom is in town from NY, I'm off of work, Shabbos is coming BH. I made a taphsic a week ago and today I'm going to renew it, but this time, instead of doing it for another week, I'm going to take the plunge and renew it until rosh chodesh shvat. I'm a little nervous to do it, but honestly, I've been doing GYE work and staying in contact with people for the past week and feel like ready or not, it's sink or swim. I'm trying the 90 day challenge and feel like this will be a significant step for me. I do GYE boosts, the taphsic, forums, chat, I journal everyday and read through/do reflections on each of the 30 GYE principles, I do my very best to guard my eyes in the street, which is the real trench work. I can do this! Any suggestions from those holy soldiers of Hashem who have maintained personal holiness and sobriety? Gut shabbos!!!!

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Re: Back at it again!

Posted by Shower640am - 10 Dec 2018 04:15

I also usually fall at about the 2 week mark so 1 1/2 weeks in it starts getting to my head. But today i'm B"H 13 days clean. Which reminds me that i have to make a call.

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Re: Back at it again!

Posted by lwtbf613 - 13 Dec 2018 04:42

So I figure that I should once again check-in to my personal journey to 90 days forum post. BH, I just celebrated 14 days clean, today was my 15th day. As I've said before, in truth I am 17 days clean, but 15 days in a serious course of recovery. I have been checking into GYE website several times a day whether it is to read articles, check in on forums, have personal chats, or most importantly work the GYE principles. I have a penzu account (a really wonderful resource for those who are still hiding their "dirty little secret" and need an online journal that they can write openly in without fear of being discovered) that I write daily in and have been doing reflections on the GYE principles.

Just to do some honest self-reflection and to be open with you all, even though I am 15 days clean, I find myself looking at posts from people who have had accounts for several years, but don't have serious amounts of clean time. I know that this is coming from the yetzer hara, since how ridiculous is it to look at someone with maybe 50-70 clean days and scoff at them when I only have 15 days?! However, I think it's really important for me to identify these moments of arrogance so that I can realize the absurdity of them, where they are coming from, and what the yetzer hara is trying to use them for. Rabbi Shalom Arush says in his amazing book "The Garden of Peace" that the ultimate root of lust is arrogance. When a person is arrogant, they feel that they can have pleasure without any sort of necessity to give in return. This is the exact nature of my addiction: I seem to have some "peter pan syndrome" where I'm afraid to grow up and as a result, I would much rather **not** have to work for my pleasure and just look at porn and masturbate instead. In a sense, correcting my addiction to lust is correcting myself as a human being since my lust is ultimately the false self-medicated panacea that I've used to treat symptoms of a diseased existence, one in which the self has been placed at the center and all responsibility as been pushed away like the plague. But no more! I can and will be the man that I know I am supposed to be! The man that my wife wants and my children need me to be for them.

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Re: Back at it again!

Posted by lwtbf613 - 18 Dec 2018 06:25

So I'm starting to feel my interest in recovery slipping and I think it's from interests in non-jewish things. I've also been getting back into my youtube surfing habits (not for porn, just out of

boredom) I could use a chizuk, I'm not really feeling recovery right now. Any suggestions?

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Re: Back at it again!

Posted by Calculator - 18 Dec 2018 06:40

My 2 cents:

Don't be so particular on the non-Jewish things right away, and try to have a goal other than GYE (but not too many goals) to strive towards.

I might be alone but the reason often surfing leads to worse is when the Yetzer Hara convinces us that watching Football highlights or wasting time is the same aveira as pornography. This is simply absurd. Of course, we need to work on spending our time wisely. But there isn't a YouTube Anonymous (at least as of yet), it's a bad habit - not a destroyer of life. We can't stop all our bad habits at once.

If you have trouble focusing, I'd suggest YouTubing some positive stuff. Rabbi YY Jacobson is very good, Rav Dror has some interesting stuff, or Rabbi Mizrachi if you want to hear about the leburullls and the moorderers.

There are people who just need to stay clear, and we all have times when we need extra caution. But when we set up walls, we create a new yetzer hara to check out what is behind the wall. The best way is to build walls that we don't really have temptations, and slowly add on. If you don't feel like falling in an extreme way, try to start getting healthier computer habits.

Going to sleep is also often great. A Baal Habus is b'chekas tired at all times. If you have nothing good to do, just go to sleep even it seems oddly early.

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Re: Back at it again!

Posted by Calculator - 18 Dec 2018 06:57

Rabbi Gruen has great classes on Shalom Bayis on Torah

Anytime: <https://www.torahanytime.com/#/speaker?l=904>

I also want to clarify that I can't currently filter all my devices, so I am researching how. Until then, I know there isn't anything stopping me, so I have to be ready a few miles away. I personally have been dealing with some withdrawal feelings that I'm jittery and sometimes a little all over the place. I feel, and I am biased, that I need to allow myself to have whatever it takes to get thru this. If now I am low and want to watch a game, I watch a game and usually I get bored anyway after 15 minutes. I don't want to masturbate ever again. I have never had such an extended positive streak that was done with real focus and growth, and I personally feel it is because I have just let go of everything except the ikkar. I have so much to work on, and I am working on all those things - just not carrying around all my problem's baggage.

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Re: Back at it again!

Posted by lwtbf613 - 18 Dec 2018 13:44

Another thing besides surfing on youtube is that recently I got really into near death experiences, I've always been interested, but I started listening to a few of them and believe it or not, they actually caused sfekos in emunah. I think it has something to do with the fact that most NDE's that I read about/listened to were from goyim, and it made me feel like "they met this amazing all-loving endlessly compassionate Diety and they haven't kept torah and mitzvos, why am I keeping them again? Also, sometimes they would say that this Diety is the same in all religions, which we know according to torah is not the case. Like, yoshke was not a good person, buddhism is avodah zara, etc. I think listening to that stuff just caused sfekos in emunah. Recently (like last night?) as an outgrowth of NDE's I started reading accounts of non-frum Jews who had NDE's but went to hell and had very vivid experiences connected to their aveiros, then I watched some stupid christian youtube thing with animation about Hell (it was surprisingly graphic!!!) and maybe it's because I got spooked out or because it was late, but it scared the s**t out of me and now I'm terrified of going to hell. I've never really had that fear before because in Chabad, we don't place so much emphasis on heaven-hell, it's more about making a dwelling place for Hashem in this world. Eitherway, it got me totally freaked out, scared, depressed, hopeless, etc. so ACTUALLY, I'm not too sure how useful it is in my avodas Hashem or in my recovery in particular! Would love to hear so thoughts.

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Re: Back at it again!

Posted by Calculator - 19 Dec 2018 06:01

That sounds fascinating!

Your interests are extremely important. We have to stay interested in our life. If not, we are trapped in feeling meaningless and depressed. That isn't a valid approach in my opinion. We have to analyze our interests, and use them to live our lives in a meaningful and fulfilling manner.

However, if you have an interest that is causing problems, we have to channel it in a better way. For example, a person might like playing music. That's great. If he starts violin lessons with an attractive female, that can be a problem. That doesn't mean it what he finds interesting is inherently bad, it's just not being properly focused. Even learning from a teacher that isn't fitting is frowned upon, while of course learning Torah is the greatest interest of all.

The interest in life and death, which in your case is being displayed as interest in near-death experiences, is I'd say a top philosophical issue of all time (I use philosophy loosely), maybe second to G-d. A thinking person looks around the world and sees amongst other basic truths that his or her time is limited. And longs to know what will be when it's over, what will happen then.

In fact, if not that we face an end and have faith in that there is an Olam Haba that has a *din v'cheshbon*, we would have all the excuses in the world to just follow our *taavahs* and whims. Especially as we get older, we see more and more that we have to *chap-a-rine*. I think Sefarim bring this as a reason that we do have limited lives, and as the Chazal say that we have to spend each day like it is our last. Also the Gemara that as a last resort, one should think of their day of death if in midst of potentially doing an *aveirah*. The idea of thinking what will happen when we die is not a problem, it's a question that Amoraim and Tannaim had.

So the question is not is your interest bad or negative. It's not. It's what's a good channel. I also don't think the idea of turning off our question side of our minds in matters of *emunah* is logical. We are a generation that wants answers, directions, not just turn off our urge to figure out what's what. Unfortunately, there is a limited amount of kosher options to analyze a lot of things online because we are just starting to use the interest *l'toeles*. There are *shiurim* etc.

Let me suggest the following matter that might interest you.

There is a *sefer* I got from a friend call *Yalkut Meishiv Nefesh*. It gathers *divreichizuk* from all over. The author is named Yosef Simcha Klien - his phone number in the *sefer* is (718) 871-8652 - with an Oak Park, MI address. I can't find online, other than a citing in a Jewish Press article. It's an amazing *sefer* on uplifting torah thoughts gathered from many sources to give *chizuk* to our generation.

On page 147, he discusses the concept of *Gilgulim*, and gives *chizuk* that a person could be living a life that is not the sole life *per se* of his life. And even if he feels that he has not succeeded or his life is lackluster, there could be other lives that are included and his end is NOT lack of success and an eternity of being pushed away. The author mentions in the note that this concept of *Gilgulim* is in fact recorded by the Chachamei Umos Ha'alom, mentioning a particular book in hebrew called *Nishmas Chayim* and in English "Children who remember previous lives - Ian Stevenson (Vivid Examples of Reincarnation in Recent Times). [I look and

see on Amazon that he has a revised edition - this my own note not the sefer]. It says in the note that the Steipler quoted the book in his Sefer Chayei Olam many times.

Perhaps an interesting read to pique your interest that it seems will b'chazek your emunah not decrease.

Alternatively, speak to Rabbi or Mashpia for suggestions on sefarim that might exist on near-death aggadatas etc.

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Re: Back at it again!

Posted by lwtbf613 - 19 Dec 2018 07:26

Thanks so much for that! I do enjoy reading about NDE's, I find them extremely interesting and can be uplifting. It was really only looking at the hellish parts of it that freaked me out and the "universal truth found in all religions" part that caused me to doubt certain things. I am a big fan of Alon Anava, as well as another video called "Seal of Truth" in which you actually see a man writhing in pain from having experienced the malachim he create through spilling his seed. VERY disturbing and easy to become depressed from all of this, so that is why I actually chose to say to myself "ok, what is **actually** going to help me in my avodas Hashem in general and in my shmiras habris in particular? Is getting depressed going to prevent me from being hz"l or provoke it?" It was actually very inspiring and clarifying for me to ask myself the question of why I do what I do. If I truly want to have an honest relationship with Hashem, then I need to ask myself if meditating on the resultant outcome that He has decreed should be on people who are hz"l (and really, I heard from Rabbi Alon Anava- an amazing rabbi who I have mentioned before is frum because of an NDE that he had- that until a person does complete teshuva for being hz"l, there is still a status of kareis and that their mitzvos don't have the proper effect that they should) will help me in actually having shmiras habris, which will in turn bring me closer to him. I can't be doing this for the schar or even onesh, but something beyond- my commitment to Hashem.

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Re: Back at it again!

Posted by lwtbf613 - 25 Jan 2019 07:33

Just checking in with my 90 day journey. BH, I am at 58 days clean, I am very grateful to Hashem for giving me the strength to be able to reach this point. There was honestly a time when I couldn't even make my way beyond 2 weeks. The thought that I'll soon be at 60 days, 2/3's of the way to my 1st goal in seeking to live a clean and sober life is awesome, but I know that I need to take it ODAAT. The YH tries to come and have me focus on the bigger picture. I know that this is a set up so that when the ta'avos come, I can get down on myself.

Just a moment of honesty in my journey. I fell out of my sober habit building, I stopped using gye that much except to just update my 90 day count, certainly not taking the time to work the GYE program (still dwelling on principle #12), not reaching out to people, not posting on forums or chats, not journaling, but knowing that this is a priority. Also, I started becoming lax on youtube binges and checking news sites. I sort of hit a bit of a low yesterday when I engaged in some borderline behavior. I still consider myself clean, however, I engaged in some internet habits that in the past would precede an actual fall.

I DO NOT WANT TO FALL. I have come too far and want this too bad to give up on my clean time. I need to remember the things I have at risk for engaging in such behavior: my marriage, my relationship with my kids, my career, my goals and dreams, my level of kedushah and connection with Hashem. Why throw it all away for a few moments of cheap imitation thrill?

I CAN DO THIS!

I CAN. I WILL. I MUST.

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Re: Back at it again!

Posted by Dave M - 25 Jan 2019 12:55

That's a beautiful post. Really gave me tremendous chizuk to start my day. Thanks brother.

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