

Restarting the journey

Posted by Snowflake - 04 Nov 2019 19:13

Hey guys, I had been clean for a year before marrying (using GYE), and during my 5 year marriage (still married B"H) had 3-5 relapses total. I had everything pretty much under control. Basically I'd have a fall once a year or less.

A recent tidal wave swept my life, where almost my faith and marriage went down the sink with it. Loads of personal problems. Thank G-d they seem to be under control now B"H. Needless to say I'd been stuck in shmutz for quite a few months. In the past month my wife came to know of my struggle, and I was very happy with the fact she supported me, instead of judging me. This "allowed" me to be back here and start the 90-day journey again and make full use of the tools here. I guess we are always in day 1 right?

Just wanted to share an interesting machshave that I read somewhere, regarding addictions: if we want to make teshuva, we need to completely change who we are. A new man, with new habits. The old man is always going to make the same mistakes. The new one has a completely different life, in regards to habits, behaviour, etc.

Prior to the struggle I'd been neglecting praying with a minyan and studying Gemore as I used to. Now I think it's high time I take back control of my jewish life. Hopefully this should help me get back on track. Today is literally day 1.

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Re: Restarting the journey

Posted by Realestatemogul - 17 Feb 2020 06:22

Hey Snowflake,

It is really inspiring to see someone come back to GYE after so many years! There are 6 constant mitzvos in the Torah. One of them is "lo sasuru" and it is a mitzvah we always must fulfil every second of our lives. I would like to say that every second you own a filtered device you are fulfilling this mitzvah. I know for myself when I fully filtered all the devices I own my challenge changed dramatically for the better.

I wish you much hatzlacha and that you should only know good from this day forward!

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Re: Restarting the journey
Posted by Snowflake - 17 Feb 2020 15:00

Thanks REM,

I second your words in your thread. It's very nice to receive feedback in our threads. We get a valuable self-esteem boost. And when you say it, it really is shocking how much time has been. B"H a lot of learning, clean streaks, a few falls, and then my recent situation. Still, were it not for GYE, I wouldn't have made it clean before for so long. Thank you for your kind words.

B"H a week clean. It's been a while since I made it this far.

Things were so automatic, that the way out seemed impossible.

Every now and then bad ideas pop up, but I try not to reason or discuss it with the Yetzer, I just try to change topics as fast as possible. Also I'm always thinking about something meaningful to do. I'm avoiding boredom at all costs. I'm also trying to make a point of coming here everyday or almost everyday and then Reading about other people's struggles, replying in topics and participating in the chat.

Thank you all again for the invaluable support!

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Re: Restarting the journey
Posted by Hashem Help Me - 18 Feb 2020 12:18

You seem BH very focused. Have you ever spoken with anyone here? If you think it boosts self esteem when someone replies to a post, imagine the boost that comes from speaking with a "real" person.

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Re: Restarting the journey

Posted by Snowflake - 18 Feb 2020 14:53

Hey HHM,

As a matter of fact I have, through the phone. It was an amazing experience. But it was only once or twice. Maybe I should do it more often.

Food for thought.

Day #8

Still clean B"H.

Every now and then, some small frustration comes and the YH comes to me like a drug dealer. I just try to shun him and not engage at all. I think what really got me the past few times when these events happened was the unfiltered phone. It's like the famed "bottle in the fridge" dilemma. If the alcoholic knows there's alcohol in the house, now matter how hidden it is, he'll find it. Its a conforing thought knowing I can't have it, even if I want to.

I got the cold now, so it's actually good. Keeps me busy lol.

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Re: Restarting the journey

Posted by DavidT - 19 Feb 2020 19:49

[Snowflake wrote on 18 Feb 2020 14:53:](#)

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Hi I waned to point out that filters on their own are only part of the solution. What happens if you have access to a device without a filter, or if you know how to bypassing your own filter? Also controlling your environment is tricky for masturbation, since you can't filter yourself...

On the other hand, urge management alone is not enough either. The habit of visiting certain sites might be so ingrained, that it is done almost automatically without thinking, and before you know it, the site is open... But when you control your environment, such surprise situations become uncommon. Even the weakest filter will give you a short delay before you can access a porn site, just enough time to catch yourself and use an urge management technique to deal with the urge.

By including both of these areas in your battle plan, you're increasing the chances that your plan will be successful with Hashem's help.

Keep up your great work!

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Re: Restarting the journey
Posted by Snowflake - 21 Feb 2020 15:06

Thanks for the feedback David.

You're right, you need both the filter and the environment.

I'm indeed a little bit concerned if my filter is easily bypassable. Should I investigate the concern

further? I fear learning how to bypass it and actually go for it. Although perhaps it's better try it now, that I'm sober, and willing to put up another fence, then risking staying with an easy filter. Right now I'm using qustodio, for free. And I have the password. Although I fear that if I give it to my wife she might just ask why. She knows half the story about my struggle. She knows about the M, not the P. Perhaps I will just give the password to my brother. He knows of my struggle.

Day #11

Erev Shabbos, so much to do, little time to think about unkosher stuff, which is great. B"H clean so far. I slipped a bit these days, looking at some innapropriate TV shows. B"H nothing explicit, but definetely not kosher.

My main triggers are really my emotions. In my childhood I've learned to supress them. But now I can't anymore. When I'm sad, I'm sad, when I'm angry, I'm angry. Problem is I'm more of a silent sufferer kind. I don't communicate my feelings. That makes me prone to acting out, as a relief. I'm going through some very personal stuff right now which now and then triggers those feelings. I try and reassure myself, acting out will only make my personal problems worse. And indeed, in these 11 days of not acting out, my life has definetely improved. More sleep, less depressive, etc etc. I was so anxious about my personal problems, that I was somatizing some feelings. I'd scratch and itch my hands until they were scarred. I couldn't sleep or eat properly. I was acting out on a daily basis. It's amazing how removing the acting out part of the routine, suddenly eliminated all these horrible symptoms. Sure enough, my problems are still there, and I try to find healthier outlets, like sports and other fun activities. I think not acting out is also allowing to look at my personal problems from a sober perspective, which leads to better judgement.

Have a great Shabbos everyone!

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Re: Restarting the journey
Posted by Snowflake - 26 Feb 2020 14:10

Day #16

B"H still clean. Can't really believe I'm making this far. Just a while ago I couldn't keep a day clean.

The thought of acting out has definetely crossed my mind quite a few times, but just as quickly I dispelled it. The real trick is to try to disengage asap and get yourself busy. Arguing with the YH is pointless. It will just drag you down the hole.

Something I'd like to point out is, getting more involved in your judaism, particularly in something

of outreach is a very good remedy.

This Shabbos I've read the Torah, and that kept me engaged in a short-term goal for a while (preparing the kryah) and also I've received some guests at home. They left when Shabbos was almost over. We've talked for hours and it was all very pleasant. All the while the urges were non-existent.

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Re: Restarting the journey
Posted by Snowflake - 02 Mar 2020 14:38

Day #21

B"H clean so far. I've been reading Dov's quotes and I really liked one where he talked about the sin of M and how that doesn't stop people from committing it. In summary, he said that M happens to be a sin. But even if it weren't it would be assur and bad all the same to us. A great example he gave is alcohol. It can be even a mitzva, in Purim or Pessach, but for the alcoholic it's completely assur. Because for him, alcohol destroys his life. The same with lust by us. Lust happens to be a prohibition. But unfortunately, Yiras Shamayim alone hasn't stopped us, hence the 12 steps and all the tools here. It helped me understand that lust is bad for my physical and mental health, and I alone can't stop it, no matter how much mussar I read (not saying one shouldn't read mussar). I need outside help and need to be constantly reaching out so I don't let it invade my life.

When I was lusting, I wasn't sleeping, eating, or even relating to my family in a healthy way. When I gave up lusting, everything turned for the better.

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Re: Restarting the journey
Posted by Snowflake - 06 Mar 2020 13:17

Day #25

B"H still clean, something unimaginable just a while ago. Sometimes the YH whispers in my ear: "just a little lust, here try it", and I try to evade the thought as quickly as possible, without second thoughts. It's the little insidious thoughts we have to be careful about. The YH never starts full-fledged. It gives a gentle knock on the door first. I try to be on guard and never let the first sip in. Hope to keep it that way. The gedarim have been working too so far. I mamash try to not

violate my gedarim, even if I have no urges. Like going to the bathroom and using the phone. If I go in, either the phone stays out, or very much out of reach in the bathroom. (I fear leaving it in the workplace while in the bathroom due to theft concerns). I sometimes do something funny such as a "heker". I put toilet paper or something on top of my phone, like to remind me it's off limits.

Just wanted to share the obvious but whatever. Studying more Torah has been a very good helping hand. To be honest, I feel it's a two way street. Precisely because I managed to stop lusting, I feel more free and motivated to study Torah. Studying Torah, as the sages say, is a great tool to subdue the YH.

A Gut Shabbos and Freilech Purim!

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Re: Restarting the journey
Posted by DavidT - 06 Mar 2020 14:30

[Snowflake wrote on 06 Mar 2020 13:17:](#)

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A Gut Shabbos and Freilech Purim!

I would like to second Snowflake's words.

Torah study is the spiritual fuel we need to fulfill our potential. Just as food strengthens a famished person, Torah study strengthens us spiritually, providing us with the determination we need to stand up to the yetzer hara. It automatically strengthens us in many areas of our observance, and it reinforces the levels we have toiled to acquire so we don't lose what we worked so hard for. These are some benefits of Torah study.

In Mesillas Yesharim (Chapter 5), the Ramchal elaborates on the importance of Torah study for fighting the yetzer hara:

Hashem, Who created the yetzer hara in man, is the One Who created Torah as its antidote, as

our sages said (Kiddushin 30b), “[Hashem says,] ‘I created the yetzer hara and I created its antidote, Torah.’” Now, it is obvious that if the Creator did not create any cure for this wound [the yetzer hara] other than this antidote [Torah], it is impossible for man to be healed from this wound in any manner other than with this cure. Any person who thinks he will be saved without Torah is making a mistake.

You must know that your learning is incredibly precious. The difficulty and discomfort makes your Torah study hundreds of times more valuable than it would have been had it been easy. Hashem is immensely proud of whatever learning you can muster. It’s worth much more than learning all day without difficulty.

It's also a good idea to find ways to make yourself feel successful through your learning. You might consider setting a realistic goal to accomplish something impressive, such as finishing a masechta or a number of perakim. Doing well in shiur will also help you feel successful. If you understand and become involved in the action by asking good questions, you will taste success and learning will be fun. If this is difficult, find someone to learn with you and help you get there. No matter what happens, you must set yourself up for success in learning because the more you succeed, the more you will enjoy it.

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Re: Restarting the journey
Posted by Snowflake - 06 Mar 2020 14:50

Thank you DavidT for the very encouraging words! I love the Talmud and I do indeed want to finish more massechtos. I'm very into dinei mamonos. Right now I'm studying Bava Metzia. It would be better to have a chavrusa and I think I'm finding one for a once or twice a week session. But for the bulk of the study, I listen to OU's Rabbi Elephant series. It's really amazing. In 40-50 mins he gives the pshat, some rashi, some tosefos, rishonim and a vort every now and then. Needless to say I do pause the shiur and go back many times, so I make sure I get it. I also try to go with the Artscroll every now and then to help solve my questions. I have a long commute (40 mins each leg) so I have plenty of time to listen to Daf Yomi shiurim (I don't really do a daf a day, I listen to the shiur and go at my own pace). I kinda feel it's on one hand wrong to "feel proud" for my Torah learning or for wanting to finish massechtos and holding small syum events (I actually do that lol) but I feel that if it's a way to have me study more Torah, why not right? Mi toch shelo lishmo bo lishmo right?

In fact, I actually think it's the YH that tells us to stop studying, since I'm doing it for gaavah. Who cares if it's gaava right? It's better to even admit it and study every day than just not study it at all and pretend I'm a tzadik.

And indeed like you said, I feel Torah nourishes me. Helps me fight the big fight.

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Re: Restarting the journey

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 06 Mar 2020 20:46

Snowflake, your posts are great. The idea of a heker is great and is not silly at all. Reagrding being proud of your learning, of course you should be and you should make siyumim too. If you

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Re: Restarting the journey

Posted by Snowflake - 11 Mar 2020 13:55

HHM thanks for the feedback!

Haha I hope so, although on the other hand I'm pretty shy and not so outspoken. But I must admit I like being complimented.

become too haughty, don't worry, someone will tell you.....

Day #30

B"H one month clean! Yay!

I feel like I'm facing a much bigger challenge than when I was single, as much as logic would dictate opposite . Even more so now that I have 2 kids which demand a lot of attention and are sometimes a source of arguments. Being married means having a ton of responsibility and entails a variety of triggers connected to the challenges inside a marriage. Just a while ago I had this simple solution to all my issues. Act out. But now that I don't have this option, I'm forced to face the problems in marriage and life in general. That's great, but at least in the beginning, incredibly difficult. On the other hand, I feel like leaving the acting out part behind has really helped me face and solve my issues. I'm feeling much lighter and happier overall. I just need to be careful not to let my guard down. I actually feel like, my life was out of my control, and only now I'm taking it back. The acting out was definitely something in the way, like a drug, preventing me from thinking about my real issues and working them out.

I'd like to thank Hashem and the GYE community in general for all the support!

BTW: Interesting fact. My first day was Tu B'Shvat and today, 30 days later is Shushan Purim. B"H special dates... I feel like Hashem's giving me a sign...

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Re: Restarting the journey
Posted by Realestatemogul - 13 Mar 2020 01:40

Hey Snowflake!

It is really incredible to see your journey! What I find so special about your posts is how clearly real they are. You acknowledge the challenges and are working on the solution. I have seen for myself and other how that is the secret to overcoming these challenges.

Please keep coming back to post and giving us chizzuk!

Keep up the amazing work and know Hashem loves you!

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