

Steve's Journal

Posted by Steve - 15 Dec 2009 18:46

So here I am, finally beginning my journey into my New Way of Living, thanx to Reb Guard, Duvid Chaim, the fearless crew on the Good Ship Lust-Will-Pop, and the GYE family.

I got here around 7/28/08 while searching for chizuk for shmiras eiynayim, signed up for the emails, then wasted over a year letting them collect in an inbox folder hoping to get to read them one day. The forum looked too intricate for me to navigate, so I didn't even try.

B"H for "falls" at the right time, cuz picking myself up from one led me to finally read one email. And THAT ONE, ladies and germs, is where I saw the advert for DC's new 12-Step Program Group Call, and thank G-D I followed the links to find out more. Again, Hashem was stretching out His hand to me, but THIS time, I TOOK IT!! I joined his group when it started in October.

I NEVER would have suspected I was a sexaholic, I just thought I was a guy with a very big yetzer hora for "girlwatching" that just got out of hand with the ease of internet access. But when I read the descriptions that an addict is ONE WHO KNOWS HE SHOULD STOP, BUT CAN NOT, or described as someone who loses time from work and family because of this uncontrollable drive, someone whose life is heading to ruination, it hit me. Those words described me to a tee. I was seeing myself and my uncontrollable life mirrored in the words of so many others, I couldn't believe it! I WAS NOT ALONE.

All the years of acting out; the guilt and the shame; the hours glued to bad sites while family time and parnose slipped away; the lying to my children who'd call me at work and ask "when are you coming home, Ta?" And I'd close my eyes to the screen to say "I have to work late", then open them up again after the call to keep watching for hours more... And the self hate, the loathing, the name calling and cursing of myself I did when I'd drive home at 3 am, the promises to Hashem, and then breaking them the very next morning. Days, months, YEARS lost, and I thought I could climb out of it on my own one day.

Duvid Chaim and the brave members of our crew have shown me the real way out of this decrepit existence, toward a life of freedom from this "lust addiction", and hopefully from my other shortcomings as well.

On the calls I found people whom I could talk to thru the blessed veil of anonymity, to discover who I really am and find how I could heal, and on the forum I found the rest of you, inspirational and needy both, and I've been blessed that I could help a little here and there. What I love best is that the time I would have spent on my computer pushing Hashem out of the world, I am now using to pull Him back in, into my life and the life of others.

Thanx to Duvid Chaim, I am on the road to recovery. It was hard to accept that "I'm a pickle, and will never be a cucumber again." He showed me logically the truth behind it. But I never really understood the depth of my emotional loss at that recognition until I read Letakein's amazing poem, Falling Leaves. She wrote that to help herself heal, but by sharing it, she MADE me heal. I wasn't afraid to take the next step, to Let Go and Let G-d, to trust His re-creating me into something new, even tho I do not know where it's heading.

So, my friends (and it means so much to me to be able to call y'all that), I will be using this journal to share with you my ups and downs (which I'm sure I'll have – we're only human), Please forgive me if it's not as dramatic, or filled with "near brink disasters" as so many of you brave people have to fight every day. I stand in awe of your strengths, your courage and your honesty. THIS is the place on earth for real Milchomas Hashem.

I will try my best to post everyday, and the next few days I'll add short installments of the BIG inspiration I had just before this Shabbos, on Erev Chanukah, that I'm still flying high from. The A & W's just kept rolling in, so stay tuned!!

Even tho I've been clean now since starting the calls 7 weeks ago, I'm gonna start my 90-day count as of Monday, the third day of Chanukah. Marked for my memory by my physical birthday, but in honor of my spiritual re-birth thru the 12-Steps and ALL of GYE.

Starting this Chanukah, may we all be blessed together to move far away from the Great Darkness that has owned us until now, and come into the GREAT LIGHT of Hashem's Love.

Kein Yehi Ratzon.

Steve.

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by Steve - 15 Aug 2010 18:42

Hi gang. A gutte voch to the chareidiim, A Shavuah Tov to the sepharediim, A Rotzah Ruck to the chineseiim... ;D

Had another moment where the Aibeshter took me by the hand and gently slapped my face again to wake me up with something i already knew but was too selfish to admit...

Had a couple of altercations with my wife and a daughter on a health walk this morning, and i got very hurt and then withdrawn from the disrespectful way i was spoken to. So i said out loud "I'm just going to close down now" and stopped talking the rest of the walk. (And oh yeah, there were times i was tempted to look at women along the way, but i was AWARE of my motives, that it was only because i was in emotional pain just then. Even tho i wasn't over the pain, that realization alone gave me the strength not to give into the lust and look at them). When we got home for breakfast I was still being 'inner-childish', and I ate in another room by myself, didn't talk to anybody really, just mumbled along, then went to my chavrusah.

While waiting for him, i opened my Gemorrah Berachos, and said to myself i'll open a page randomly, and see what message Hashem has for me in the words i look at. A cheap imitation of the Gra's Goirel. So the page i opened to was daf 7a, and the words i found were the pesukim where Hashem taught Moshe the derech eretz rule that one should not try to appease a man in his moment of anger. It's usually counter productive. Rather, wait till his anger passes, and when he is calm, one can then try to appease him.

Being medaik (very concise) in the words, it said that one should not appease **A MAN** in his moment of anger, meaning **another person**. But what i got from it was the message that "one SHOULD try to appease **HIMSELF** at the moment of his own anger." Be quick to cool down from anger, like the mishna in pirkei Avos says, true. But for us in the program, what this means is I'VE LEARNED THE STEPS TO DISSIPATE THE RID - NOW **GET OFF THE SELFISH TRACK** AND USE THEM! I should not make my getting out of RID (and hence my own happiness) **DEPENDANT** on the actions of another, i should not wait around wanting the attention of their apology. It's **MY** RID, and it's up to **ME** to dissipate it using the Step 5 Tools of changing perspective. I must **REALIZE** that I am in **SELF-PITY/TAKER MODE** when i get mokey and wanting for others to notice that they've hurt my feelings. I built this trap by being

less flexible, it's up to ME to get myself out of it.

I dont give 2 hoots if there's not a single Rishon who ever thought of this idea from that gemorrah, but this was what Hashem wanted me to learn from it right that second. BH i was able to see His message and internalize it.

I was in a much better place when i got home. Perk - my daughter immediately came to me then and apologized. And because of the work on myself that i did before i got home, the acceptance and the hug we shared was on a whole 'nuther madreiga.

HAVE a GREAT DAY and a GREAT WEEK everyone.

Onward and upward,

Steve

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by sci1977 - 16 Aug 2010 16:10

KUTGW!!

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by silentbattle - 16 Aug 2010 16:56

Man...you rock!

That is very important. I'd say that it's probably important for pretty much everyone living on this planet, with the exception of squirrels. Because squirrels never get angry, anyway.

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 16 Aug 2010 17:11

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by Steve - 19 Aug 2010 20:45

WOWIE! Another week's gone by. Another attempt to get things right.

We all have heard the vort on the pasuk "me'Reishis HaShannah ad Acharis Shana." Every ~~Steve, you walk stroll with God on your side!~~ Rosh Hashanna and Yom Kippur we make the kabbala "THIS is going to be THE year when i do teshuva, when i get it right!" only find ourselves in Elul, looking back on our whole year and seeing it was "just another year, like all the others." Not THE year (with a Hei) but just a year.

Nice reminder, but it doesn't give me much chizuk that i can change, does it! :-[

BUT, LO! (BTW That's LO' as in POETIC ENGLISH, you know, Byron, Keats, those dudes - not half of TXT-SPEAK like LOL or something). Anyway, comes along one of my GYE/DC chavirim (sorry, i can't remember who it was) who said over that he heard a pshat on what we add in the Nusach Sephard Kedusha of Mussaf - Hashem will appear to us "Acharis K'Reishis" - at the end, like in the beginning. This pshat says that Moshiach will not come unless Acharis K'Reishis, the END of the year is like the BEGINNING of the year.

THAT'S GEVALDIG!! It doesn't say the WHOLE GANZE YOR has to be like TISHREI, it says ONLY ELUL!! The END has to be like the Beginning! It means we have an opportunity to FIX UP the WHOLE YEAR **NOW!!**

So C'mon guys, we CAN DO IT!! It's all about changing our ATTITUDE:

In the SA White book, in the Appendix called The Solution (page 204-205), it reads: "We discovered that we **could** stop, that not feeding the hunger didn't kill us, that **sex was indeed optional**." When we consider sex something we should EXPECT, that is COMING TO US, then if we don't get what we want we grow frustrated and fall to RID. But when we consider sex OPTIONAL (I would like it now, but it's not my whole life and I really could live without it), then if we don't get it when we want it we can just move on. And we realized this message is for unmarried men also - masturbation is basically SEX WITH SELF, and that must also be considered "optional," as in "I don't really need it." I can refocus, as others who have gone this road before me: **"we turned more and more away from our isolating obsession with sex and self, and turn toward G-d and others."**

So let's really do it, guys. I for one am gonna refocus my relationship with my wife AND MYSELF to not be obsessed with the physical desires, and more focussed on the emotional and spitiual ties I have with my wife, and with Hashem. And hey, I can do this for a few weeks - I don't have to be afraid of making a year-long commitment, for goodness sake! I CAN DO THIS!!

"Are ya' wid me, or agin' me?" (Bonanza, cir. 1965)

Have a GREAT DAY, and a BEAUTIFUL end of the week. AND DRINK PLENTY OF WATER!! IT'S **HOT** OUT THERE!!

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by Steve - 19 Aug 2010 20:51

BTW, just updated my chart.

Add 248 days to my 52 earlier ones.

"Put 'em together n' wattayagot? - Bibbity Bobbity Bop!" (The fairy godmother, cinderella, circa who cares...)

300 DAYS!! Even Steven!!

HOOOOOOOOOO-WEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!!

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by Ineedhelp!! - 19 Aug 2010 20:54

Mazal Tov! Steve, you are a true and perfect example of the success of the program if we work it. "*Ze Hayom Asah **Hashem** Nagillah Venismicha Voh*" All God all the time.

-Yiddle

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by Steve - 20 Aug 2010 16:03

Thanx Yiddle, my ol' friend.

Here's a nice ha-orah i had this morning:

Dont you mean Eve Steve???

Today, reading the Iggeres HaRamban, I saw that the Ramban asserts that first we must banish anger from our hearts before we can attempt to gain true humility, and from there we can grow toward Deveykus Hashem.

The 12-Step program asserts that we must get under the RID to reach the EGO, then undermine the EGO by focussing away from ourselves, and through attitude and perspective adjustment, PRACTICE humble traits until we internalize true humility, building our G-d consciousness as we go.

They are basically identical!! The self-focussed, self-pitying pain upon our EGOs feed the RID, which 9 times out of ten brings us to a short fuse, anger, and intolerance, along with Lust and acting out.

The Ramban tells us to remove anger from our hearts. The program tells us how.

If so Fact-o, **LUST** could be another EXPRESSION of **ANGER!!**

Just look at the world around us - We can joke that The Concert of Life is filled with Sax and Violins, but the REAL WORLD is struggling with SEX and VIOLENCE, which seem to go hand in hand! This is not the sex of LOVE, but the sex of LUST. And if I don't get what my selfish soul wants when i want it, I will go to my drug of choice.

So when I remove my desire for lust, I can at the same time remove my desire to express my anger, and as I lose the NEED for lust, I remove the NEED for anger. And the tools to do both are in our hands.

In the words of my favorite Chassid...

GEVALDIGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGG!!

Have a GREAT SHABBOS, Y'all,

Steve

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by bardichev - 22 Aug 2010 12:25

Three hundred !!!!

That's a lot a hundred!!!!

Woooooooooooooow!!

Steve u r a hero

Bardichev

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by trying123 - 23 Aug 2010 02:12

[Steve wrote on 19 Aug 2010 20:45:](#)

Every Rosh Hashannah and Yom Kippur we make the kabbala "THIS is going to be THE year when i do teshuva, when i get it right!" only find ourselves in Elul, looking back on our whole year and seeing it was "just another year, like all the others." Not THE year (with a Hei) but just a year.

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-From Teshuva B'zmanenu by Dr. Sorotzkin

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Re: Steve's Journal

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300 DAYS!! Even Steven!!

HOOOOOOOOO-WEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!!

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by Steve - 23 Aug 2010 20:31

[Tried-123 wrote on 23 Aug 2010 02:12:](#)

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-From Teshuva B'zmanenu by Dr. Sorotzkin

Thanx, Tried-123, that was VERY nice to hear. Could be HKB"H doesn't "need" it, that he gives us a kapparah every year "B'asher Hu Sham," but I know I NEED IT. I need to see that i am indeed coming with PROOF to MYSELF that I can improve. It gives me a lot of chizuk and a source of pride in finally doing SOME amount of Hashem's will, though i'm not geivedik about it. I have alot more quality in this inyan to work on, as well as many other inyanim.

Nevertheless, we must ALL approach Hashem as Daalim, as beggars at the door, pleading for the Tzedakkah of forgiveness. Hashem takes no bribes, but I think a Father sheps a lot of nachas when his formerly wayward son comes home with a smiley face sticker on his chidon. And all the understanding of this vort from Rabbi Sorotzkin doesn't change the fact that we are enjoined to try our hardest NOT to go back and repeat our old ways, which chazal liken to "a dog that returns to its vomit."

My main point, which I always want to stress, is that we must look at the QUALITY of the days in recovery, more than the QUANTITY of the days of sobriety. White-knuckling our way thru is not the final answer. Let's focus on each day, day by day, and work on the quality of our lives.

A major tenant that we recently saw in the Program is that it's goal is **"to get us to a place in life where we will no longer need to escape from our feelings."** And in doing to, we can become FREE from our desire to lust, because there will be no need to for it. Happiness and serenity will give us no need to medicate. I have B"H seen this on many small occasions, and I daven that over time it will become a global part of my life.

Yehi Ratzon we should all be able to get there, and to do it TOGETHER, b'achdus ub'raiys.

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by Steve - 23 Aug 2010 21:10

Also, I want to share a beautiful Ho-ara we had together in the morning 12-Step call today:

We discussed the idea that while we must surely turn away from "second looks", if we focus on the **NEGATIVE** at that time ("I'm not allowed to look, I'm not allowed to look, I'm not allowed to look") it actual **fuels** the Yetzer Hara more and creates a situation where we are forced to "white knuckle" our way past the nesoyon. If we could instead at that time, turn away and focus on something **POSITIVE**, it would **weaken** the YH and allow us a measure of **QUALITATIVE** recovery instead of gritting our teeth. Examples given were thinking about our wife's meilos (good qualities), saying a kepital tehillim, singing out loud "Acheinu Kol Beis Yisroel," or even thinking "I'm going to keep my eyes, my gaze - my own "Tzitz" - to be "Kodesh L'Hashem" (dedicated to purity for Hashem) [the gold headplate of the Kohein Gadol in the Beis Hamikdosh was called the Tzitz, which means "gaze" - wherever he faced, so did the tzitz - and it was inscribed with the words "Kodesh L'Hashem" - Holy to Hashem].

One of the Chevra reminded us that this is Dovid Hamelech's own advice, from the pasuk "Tzur Mei'Rah V'Asei Tov" - turn from evil and do good. **At the very moment** we turn from what's bad, we should find a positive, **GOOD** thing to do right then. He added that he learned that the YH is strengthened in all three ways of a person - thru dibbur (speech), machshavah (thought), and Meiseh (action), while the Yetzer Tov is strengthened only thru Meiseh - action. So it is essential to **DO** an action at the moment of struggle - call a program buddy, give someone else chizuk, give tzedadaka, do a chesed - find a positive action to join with your tzur mei'rah!

I personally practiced this new advice today right after the call. Going into the office kitchen to make a coffee, I walked behind the office secretary when she came into the room. I turned away and only thought only of my wife's meilos, and mamash a split second after starting that it was like the other girl didn't exist anymore, like it was not even a problem anymore. And I discovered that I was walking around with a serene smile on my face, instead of a knitted brow and beads of sweat.

Thank You, Hashem for my wonderful wife! And that You for enlightening me with a **NEW** way in which she can "keep me from sin," no matter what part of the lunar cycle we're in.

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by sci1977 - 24 Aug 2010 14:28

Keep on trucking my friend. You are an inspiration.

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