

Restarting the journey, after a plateau

Posted by Looking_to_improve - 13 Aug 2020 22:00

New phone, new thread, new me?

I fell today.

But for the first time in a while, it hurt. I feel it has penetrated into me and made me feel regretful.

I'm not sure what hurts more, the fall itself or the fact I can't remember the last time I felt bad like this (and that's not because a lack of falling). Strangely I fell proud that I'm internally understanding the weight of my actions (and therefore falls) for the first time in a while. For far too long I felt that when I fell, it was like breaking a diet, "oops, let's try not do that again", but not much of an internal realisation of what I've been doing. No genuine sense of regret or that I had made a bad mistake. Overall I don't think I'm in a negative place, I just want to utilise my current feelings and use it to spring back up to greater heights.

Currently this is where I think I'm at:

I think I've been falling between every 2 days and every 2 weeks, probably with this frequency since Corona and even before probably up to Jan, off the top of my head. Unfortunately I don't think I've been putting in much effort, realistically I think I've just been waiting between urges and then falling, I don't think I've done much prevention on my part.

Just got a new phone and used the opportunity to fix up my filter a bit. **For anyone reading don't delay fixing your filter, I've found it has made a huge difference.** Not to be naive but pretty sure it's mostly working correctly now, no loopholes. (I did spend quite a while today trying to find one before I fell:grimacing:) Although my goal of 90 days should not be dependent on a good filter, even though I plan on having one nonetheless.

Earlier in the year I was struggling with porn but I think that was a temporary stage, long term it was less of an issue to me than masturbation, which I've struggled with for more than the past year.

I've been re-listening to a chabura by a Rebbe on the topic and I briefly bought up that I'm struggling to him, and I plan to speak to him more about it. This week I've been putting in the effort to try not fall and think about hirhurim, whereas in the past sometimes it was a matter and of just waiting until a good time to fall, not having any real method of prevention nor of fighting the yetzer hora. Already in the past few days I have had multiple times where I could have fallen but did not, and didn't follow my urges blindly. Obviously I need to be more preventative, but I still think this is a big step up from basically just hoping never to have an urge, because that's isn't the aim, rather it is our reaction to our urges. I think with this previous mindset of mine it

was going to be near on impossible to get to 90, now I'm starting to feel more confidence that it is achievable, even if I haven't been more than 2 weeks clean in a while.

I also plan to listen to the fight by the shmuz (was there website down for anyone else recently?)

I also want to be more active in the forums, both here and in other threads. I often lurk around, but I think I should really join in a bit more.

That's it from me for now, that's a bit of a megilla to read. Drop in to say hi, I wanna hear from you guys how you are all doing in your battles, it really helps knowing that we are all fighting this war together

Looking_to_improve

Warning: Spoiler!

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Re: Restarting the journey, after a plateau

Posted by Looking_to_improve - 16 Sep 2020 10:46

Morning Seder today felt very sluggish and tired from late nights and early selichos, and would probably be susceptible to urges. Went to have something to eat before shiur and had a very solid shiur today bH. Feeling in a much better mood now

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Re: Restarting the journey, after a plateau

Posted by Looking_to_improve - 16 Sep 2020 19:39

Having a very stressful and anxious night, Corona related. Not really looking to act out to escape from the reality, pretty much just facing the stress head on (and also demolishing a bag of skittles)

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Re: Restarting the journey, after a plateau

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 16 Sep 2020 20:13

Hang in there buddy. Corona stress is a real issue, but there are a lot of guys you can kvetch to about it. The oilam has "had it" with corona.

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Re: Restarting the journey, after a plateau

Posted by Looking_to_improve - 16 Sep 2020 21:07

[Looking_to_improve wrote on 16 Sep 2020 19:39:](#)

Having a very stressful and anxious night, Corona related. Not really looking to act out to escape from the reality, pretty much just facing the stress head on (and also demolishing a bag of skittles)

Having a pretty tough night, but bH not going down the wrong path into acting out. Hopefully I'll

be able to sleep and won't feel so rough in the morning

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Re: Restarting the journey, after a plateau

Posted by lhavestrength - 17 Sep 2020 03:23

[Looking to improve wrote on 15 Sep 2020 21:31:](#)

I've been reading my diary in the 90 day chart section of this website. Perhaps why I felt I was making no progress was because I was not making any changes either. In the last month or so I've reached out to 2 people and spoken out where I'm at, and also changed my filter. Too many times when I fell over the last year, the thing to change would be too vague, or clearly not done as it was also written the next time I fell. Occasionally I would fix small things with my filter, but only after it caused me anguish and I acted out multiple times before changing it, and even that would only be a drop in the ocean when I still had many other (not as inappropriate)triggers available on my phone.

So far I've felt I'm really avoided fights with a long stick, a wide berth. Compared to previous streaks, I've had fewer urges. But looking back it starts to look more obvious, that when I walk down the yetzer horas alley, and *I've made no meaningful changes, of course he's going attack the same weak point, time after time after time after time*. Of course a boxer will attack the place where he's already damaged his opponent, and drag him into a rut, with punch after punch.

It's a shame and disappointing that I didn't notice this sooner, but I guess this is what people refer to when the yetzer hora doesn't want you to fall, he wants to get you down. Although I didn't always feel mentally or emotionally down after acting out, I think he was successful in preventing me deciding to make long term, not short term changes.

Awareness of a problem is the start of the path to s solution, not the end of it.

I hope now that beH I'm out of the ring, out of the rut, avoiding the alley and not getting dragged down into fights. But even when I am, making sure that I don't consistently have the same achilles heel

Hey brother. Great post and KUTGW! This post brought some thoughts up for me, so I hope that it's OK for me to share. It really is hard to make changes after falls that are actually effective. It is even hard to KNOW what changes to make! I definitely relate to that and what I realized for myself is that instead of that behavior being foolish and regrettable, it actually was

unavoidable and part of the process of growth. I used to think that if I can just find the correct way to go about solving this struggle then I'd be set. In the end it turned out that growth is a lot more messy and confusing than that. Mistakes and failures REALLY are part and parcel of growth. No child that currently walks has got there without falling many times. When they got up and tried again they didn't necessarily have a different strategy.

Regarding staying out of the ring, I think you really hit the nail on the head! That really is definitely a massive part of this. I would just like to take issue with your characterization of the YH hitting you at a weakness. Sexual desire and impulses are not a weakness or a bad thing. It is part of the nature of man. I'm not weak because I have desire and am affected by things I see. I am human. Also, I would like to challenge the contention "that you've made no meaningful changes." I think that not giving up and continuing to accumulate clean days is continued growth. But that is just one man's opinion. Who said that streaks getting longer is a necessary element to prove that there is a "meaningful change."

Anyways, sending you all my love and wishes for continued hatzlacha! None of the above was meant as a challenge at all. Just some thoughts that came up for me that I thought might be

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Re: Restarting the journey, after a plateau
Posted by Looking_to_improve - 17 Sep 2020 05:15

[lhavestrength wrote on 17 Sep 2020 03:23:](#)

[Looking to improve wrote on 15 Sep 2020 21:31:](#)

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useful to you or others. If they are not, find your closest trash can

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Thank you for sharing, really appreciate it. It's always good to hear another opinion other than the one in the echo chamber that is my head.

I think you're right about the YH, the desire is natural, but hyping it up and making you think about acting out is the YH.

When I said I've made no meaningful changes, I meant over the last few months, more recently in the last few weeks I feel that I have

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Re: Restarting the journey, after a plateau
Posted by Looking_to_improve - 17 Sep 2020 05:39

Still not feeling great this morning, not in a good mood

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Re: Restarting the journey, after a plateau
Posted by Dave M - 17 Sep 2020 19:14

[Looking_to_improve wrote on 17 Sep 2020 05:39:](#)

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It's very normal to have ups and downs in our moods. Do you have a good chaver in yeshiva you can talk it over with? I know that helps when I get into a funk.

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Re: Restarting the journey, after a plateau
Posted by Looking_to_improve - 17 Sep 2020 19:23

[Dave M wrote on 17 Sep 2020 19:14:](#)

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I spoke to a Rebbe today about some of my concerns, and I've been speaking to some guys. People have come into contact with cases and I'm nervous that rules aren't always being kept. It's different to a regular bad day

Thanks for the suggestion!

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Re: Restarting the journey, after a plateau
Posted by Im Tevakshena Kakasef - 17 Sep 2020 20:39

[Looking_to_improve wrote on 17 Sep 2020 19:23:](#)

[Dave M wrote on 17 Sep 2020 19:14:](#)

[Looking_to_improve wrote on 17 Sep 2020 05:39:](#)

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Thanks for the suggestion!

Not sure exactly what you mean 'people have come into contact with cases.' I imagine you mean corona wise. Remember what my Rav told us right at the start of corona. "Either you catch corona, or you don't. If you don't, great! If you do, 1 of 2 things happen. Either you get it bad, or mild. If mild, nothing to worry about so great! If you get it bad, 1 of 2 things happen. Either you get really ill, or just ill for a couple of weeks with flu like symptoms. If its the latter, you'll be ill for a bit, but after that you'll be fine, so great! If you get really ill, 1 of 2 things happen. Either you live, or you die. If you live, great! If you die, 1 of 2 things happen. Either you go upstairs or downstairs. If you go upstairs, its unbelievable! Its better than all of olam hazzeh combined! Its paradise! So great! If you go downstairs, not so great. So do teshuva, make sure you don't go downstairs, and every other option is great, so nothing to worry about!

I don't know if my bit of humor is what you need right now, but either way I wish you well and hope you have a sweet amazing new year.

Keisva v'chasima tova.

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Re: Restarting the journey, after a plateau
Posted by Looking_to_improve - 18 Sep 2020 14:29

Still been a bit anxious, but been in a bit of a better state of mind. Very thankful to Hashem that I've stayed clean over these last few days, it hasn't been a strong fight, but often being more stressed can overflow into acting out. Also glad that I am coming into rosh hashono with 2 and a half clean weeks, bH.

Hope everyone has a kesiva vechasima tova!

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Re: Restarting the journey, after a plateau

Posted by Looking_to_improve - 21 Sep 2020 18:16

Rosh Hashono - clean

Didn't sleep so much over the last few days, but bH somehow I still had a good yom tov with good davening.

Today was mostly ok. I saw a bit of a trigger, but from a WhatsApp group that's for a positive thing. It's not immediately obvious that I should avoid it, but then I realised that it's probably my yh talking. I made use of the good while I could, and when I realised that it's going to be an issue, I left it there, I've done what I can so far to benefit, but I'm going to get rid of it whilst my mind is still clear that there could be a problem, before it actually does become a problem.

3 weeks is on the horizon tomorrow beH. Feels like it went by quite quickly. I'm going to set my next goal for motsei Yom Kippur (isru chug? I mean the daytime). Tuesday, so 9 days from today I think.

Avoiding triggers helps a lot with controlling thoughts, *there's nothing to think about when you don't see anything*. Seeing a trigger today makes me realise that when you see one, my mind starts to head down the wrong path. Personally some of my triggers aren't always inappropriate per se, so they don't always strike me as something to avoid, but once you realise it's causing you issues, it's probably best to avoid. For me at least, I'm not missing out on anything anyway if I get rid of them, so it's a no brainer.

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Re: Restarting the journey, after a plateau

Posted by Looking_to_improve - 22 Sep 2020 11:26

3 weeks clean today! Wow, thank you Hashem for helping me get this far.

Thank you to all of you for helping me along the way, looking forward to seeing you all around as we continue!

I think I'll rather make my next goal 30 days, so it's just like the 90 day count.

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Re: Restarting the journey, after a plateau

Posted by Looking_to_improve - 22 Sep 2020 22:00

Had a huge amount of stress and anxiety over the last few day. Spoke things through with a madrich tonight, beH things will change soon and I'll feel somewhat back to normal.

I think being in this situation means 1 of 2 things:

Either I feel overwhelmed and have less desire to act out and fall.

Or I feel an greater sense of wanting to escape from the current situation, into the fake reality I often fall back to.

Still finding it hard to judge which one it is. It feels like I've had less desire to act out, so seems like the former, but I hope the lower desire is because of progress I've made. If it is the latter, then I'm really glad bH to had made it through such a tough situation, it gives me confidence that I can make it through easier times.

Every morning we ask to not be ????? ?????, (meaning that I'd like it to be the latter and that I've progressed, but that means I'm still in a big nisayon, until the situation passes) so I think while I'm still dealing with this situation, I'll treat it as the former, once the situation passes maybe I'll start to look back at it more as the latter.

I hope it's not too vague, I hope this makes some sort of semblance of sense, I'm feeling tired, yet restless at the same time, so don't really know how that's impacting my writing right now...

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Re: Restarting the journey, after a plateau

Posted by Im Tevakshena Kakasef - 23 Sep 2020 19:41

Hang in there buddy. Stay strong.

I once read 'worry is like paying interest on a debt you may never owe.' So whilst I can't tell you not to stress (because, lets face it, it doesn't work like that) try and keep calm however you can. Stress is never good, but for us it can be really bad.

If you feel less desire to act out, that's great. However, I really don't want to be a pessimist, but I don't think you're out of the danger zone yet. 3 weeks is incredibly impressive, but a little optimistic to think the taiva would lessen yet. That having been said, it varies person to person, so you never know. Just be prepared for any lust attacks, because they may cv still come.

I hope your situation sorts out. In the meantime, don't drop your guard.

Have a great new year, gemar chasima tova, with only beracha and hatzlocha.

p.s. congrats on 3 weeks!

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