

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 - 08 Oct 2020 22:14

Another clean day bH.

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Re: Restarting the journey, after a plateau

Posted by Looking_to_improve - 11 Oct 2020 17:24

40 days clean bH

Last 2 days I've not been as careful as I should have been with my thoughts. My thoughts are more about how I would fall or act out, than fantasising, which is what I normally have to clear my mind of. Not sure why it's harder to clear my mind of these thoughts more than those, but I need to put in more effort.

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Re: Restarting the journey, after a plateau

Posted by Looking_to_improve - 11 Oct 2020 19:51

Also been feeling quite stressed today, don't feel any urges right now, but need to be careful tonight

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Re: Restarting the journey, after a plateau

Posted by Looking_to_improve - 13 Oct 2020 07:55

42 days today, 6 weeks

Taking it one day/ a few days a time, trying to count by the smaller goals.

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Re: Restarting the journey, after a plateau

Posted by Looking_to_improve - 14 Oct 2020 13:10

Good news today, another capsule in my yeshiva who were in quarantine, after 1 boy had symptoms and tested positive, all tested negative. Given that we don't need to distance or wear mask around people in our own capsule, it's a big relief that no one else tested positive in their capsule. Feels like a big weight has been taken off my shoulders, I was quite stressed out about it.

Also today I found out I can still access some social media sites from my phone, so I just emailed my filter company and I'm writing this as I wait for them to respond, to keep busy, they are normally quite quick to make changes. My heart rate definitely went up a bit, and I'm a bit on edge, so I'm going to post later as well. Going to nap now as well, so should be changed by the time I wake up. A bit worrying that I didn't know I could, but glad that I had the right mindset to email them now.

I have a bit of a question about this situation. In the past when I used to go on social media sites often, I could waste hours a day on them (other times they could be triggering, but I could go a few days just wasting time and not looking at things I shouldn't).

Why is it now that I've decided to filter them out and not use them, that my mind is set on doing one thing, namely: acting out? I didn't think to myself once I realised it was unblocked: "I wish I could waste 3 hours looking at sports highlights and memes", but in the past when I used them, that could be exactly what I did.

I guess it's a more general question, why is it that when we decide to make gedarim, and set up filters, that suddenly our minds become a one track record (I hope that's the metaphor I'm looking for) set on looking for inappropriate material. (Here's a poor moshul): It feels a bit like trying to use a funnel to stop something, you stop most things going where they would have gone (eg. going on random websites for news etc.), but you direct everything that does go through into one place (inappropriate material).

Obviously the alternative is no longer appealing, no gedarim or filters, but before I had filtered devices, I wasn't drowning in filth at every opportunity, but now that I have filtered my phone, I feel like any access which isn't filtered comes with the caveat that I could end up rolling in the mud.

While I'm in yeshiva I really don't need access to anything, but next year I will be in uni and in the future probably the workplace, and it's not going to be practical to delete my browser, or whitelist everything but the gye website.

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Re: Restarting the journey, after a plateau
Posted by Captain - 14 Oct 2020 14:10

Wow amazing! You have a lot of strength.

Maybe the reason is that now your yetzer hora is telling you that you have an "opportunity" to give in. Now that you don't always have that ability (at least not so easily), when you do have the ability it's "an exciting opportunity that you don't always have." And that's how it becomes your first thought.

In a way the fact that it's something that you can do now that you usually can't do makes it harder for that time. But obviously the alternative is much worse. When a person can do whatever he wants, he can stumble at any moment. So this is a normal part of the fight, that such "opportunities" happen at random points when there is an issue with the filter, etc, and we have to be ready to overcome them and have a plan of exactly what we will do when it happens, knowing it will be such a big struggle.

That's how I understand my own similar experiences.

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Re: Restarting the journey, after a plateau
Posted by Looking_to_improve - 14 Oct 2020 14:41

Just woke up feeling a bit better, still a bit on edge, but think I've mostly calmed down.

Thanks captain, I'll respond soon, just in a rush right now

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Re: Restarting the journey, after a plateau
Posted by Hashem Help Me - 14 Oct 2020 15:43

It is to be expected that your subconscious is not willing to forego previous pleasures. Obviously it is getting the message that you are consciously blocking access, and therefore it is putting "new ideas" in your head. Similarly, many guys who were heavy porn watchers, report that after not watching for a few days, they find themselves noticing every girl in the street....which they did not used to do. The good news is that the subconscious eventually recedes and "gives up". However there will always be moments where we get that urge "maybe i can just taste that stuff again for a few minutes...."

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Re: Restarting the journey, after a plateau
Posted by Looking_to_improve - 14 Oct 2020 16:49

Feeling somewhat back to normal now bH, davened mincha and wrote up a shiur, which I think set me back on the straight path, wasn't expecting that challenge earlier

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Re: Restarting the journey, after a plateau
Posted by Looking_to_improve - 14 Oct 2020 18:07

Feeling a bit worse now, I haven't done anything, but feel like I might be headed down the slippery slope soon.

I'm playing football later tonight, so I think I'll be ok if I make it to then

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Re: Restarting the journey, after a plateau

Posted by Looking_to_improve - 14 Oct 2020 19:23

Leaving for football(soccer) now, gonna try tire myself out a lot

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Re: Restarting the journey, after a plateau

Posted by lhavestrength - 15 Oct 2020 00:17

[Looking_to_improve wrote on 14 Oct 2020 13:10:](#)

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I can relate to this a lot. Here's how I understand it: If I am preoccupied with thinking that I need to filter my devices otherwise I will look at inappropriate things, then that is a belief. We act based on our beliefs. So if I believe that completely filtering my devices is necessary for me not to look at inappropriate things, then if I am not filtered, I will feel like I can't help myself but look. This is why I actually do not use filters.

That said, maybe you can reframe your use of filters to something like, "I use it so I don't accidentally find schmutz", or "I use it so if I have a weak second and search something, it will act as a reminder and I won't have already looked at inappropriate things". Hope that helps!

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Re: Restarting the journey, after a plateau
Posted by Grant400 - 15 Oct 2020 03:20

[lhavestrength wrote on 15 Oct 2020 00:17:](#)

[Looking to improve wrote on 14 Oct 2020 13:10:](#)

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Brilliant. Thank you for this point. Because of you, I'm realizing that my last fall was literally because of this skewed mindset. I thought I was being a smarty pants by restricting my access completely, so when I was confronted with a breach in my secure perimeter I was practically helpless. All the energy I put into was preventing access to what I desire. Sort of like locking non kosher food in a sturdy safe and throwing away the key. The second you gain entry you will indulge because the muscles of discipline in that specific area were never trained and strengthened.

I'm not heaven forbid planning or suggesting not to restrict access. I will still IYH be as careful as ever. But like you wrote so beautifully, I must change my mindset and work on not indulging not because I'm locked out but rather for the proper reasons. I must understand that filtering is just an added protection and security, not the primary and exclusive method of purity.

How to do that isn't simple and is a whole different discussion. Thank you for this enlightening insight, Mr. Ihavestrength.

A grateful

Grant

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Re: Restarting the journey, after a plateau
Posted by OivedElokim - 15 Oct 2020 04:31

To sum it up-restricting your internet access doesn't absolve you of restricting the inclinations of your mind, heart, eyes and hands.

Very powerful and thought provoking.

Thanks!

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