

Living a holy life

Posted by committed_togrowth - 29 Oct 2021 04:06

Dear Chevra,

After a few months of visiting this website and quietly gaining chizuk by reading the incredible posts from this community I've decided to speak up and introduce myself. Over the past couple of years I've become religious starting from an almost entirely non-religious past. Hashem's Torah has transformed my life and imbued me with a new and deep sense of purpose, and it is my greatest desire to live each day with a sense of purpose, perfecting myself and living in connection with and recognition of Hashem. My path in Torah has led me to face the matter of shemiras habris, and in this I've encountered a great challenge. After many failed attempts at breaking free, late into this past Elul I found the resolve to pull myself out of the pit again. Since then BH I have been clean for a couple of months, but I still struggle greatly with temptation. The last time I fell I learned two things: I am not in control, and, more than anything, I want to live a life of kedusha. These two acknowledgements shocked me out of my sleep, but alarmingly I can feel over time that the clarity I gained from my last fall is diminishing. So, I've decided to jump in here to reinvigorate my journey. I look forward to growing together with each of you!

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Re: Living a holy life

Posted by Zedj - 29 Oct 2021 06:07

Welcome!

we are thrilled that you've decided to speak up!

Stick around, keep posting and with Hashems help you will have success.

have you spoken to anyone about this particular struggle?

What have you tried?

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Re: Living a holy life

Posted by Avrohom - 29 Oct 2021 21:05

Welcome CTG! I hope you can gain a lot from the Chevra here, and get Chizuk from being part of the conversation.

I, too, have often been inspired to be strong for periods of time, and then when the inspiration wears off, I go back to where I was before. So far, following GYE regularly, being in touch with someone daily has really kept me vigilant - and I'm hopeful that can continue without wearing off.

Also, I think that it's important to find specific strategies and tools that are effective (I've listened to a good amount of Rabbi Shafier's Shiurim on the fight, and learned some of the strategies used in SMART recovery)- so that you don't need to always rely on inspiration which can come and go.

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Re: Living a holy life

Posted by committed_togrowth - 31 Oct 2021 07:55

Hi Zedj and Avrohom,

Thank you for your kind messages! I think you are both exactly on the mark in that I need to define specific strategies to help my struggle. As it happened, the night that I posted this thread I had a fall by looking at inappropriate content online. I was able to stop by myself before things went further, but in terms of what I saw it definitely felt like a fall. This failure is hard to take. For the past couple of months I feel like I made progress in making my mind a cleaner place and was able to really focus on my relationship with Hashem, and now I've re-opened the floodgates to frankly gross thought patterns and it's hard to shake the feeling off. My two strategies that led to success in my latest streak were: 1) I had a friend set parental control of my phone which completely removed access to internet browsing and downloading any apps. 2) I committed to not using my laptop in the privacy of my room. If I needed to use it, I decided to work on the computer only in public spaces where either my roommates or coworkers could see me. Solution number two ended up being the weak point. After a few intense work weeks, one night while stressed and tired out I allowed myself to be convinced to watch tv shows on my computer in my room. Using my computer in private immediately led to a fall. I'd appreciate any

suggestions you have about ways to improve my approach. Avrohom, how did you feel at first about finding someone to speak with daily? I know GYE can connect us with mentors online, but since this struggle is so personal I feel hesitant about speaking to someone I don't know well about it directly.

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Re: Living a holy life
Posted by Hashem Help Me - 31 Oct 2021 11:09

Webchaver can help as a back up if you find yourself slipping with other gedarim you made. Knowing that someone will receive a report with screenshots is a deterrent for many guys.

As far as speaking, of course it is awkward for the first few minutes, but after that you will be very thankful that you did it.

Hatzlacha!

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Re: Living a holy life
Posted by anonymous.lost.everything - 31 Oct 2021 12:35

Never using a computer in a secluded place may be a viable neder. You could renew it every 30 days. Ask your rav, obviously.

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Re: Living a holy life
Posted by anonymousmillennial - 31 Oct 2021 13:53

[committed togrowth wrote on 31 Oct 2021 07:55:](#)

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Welcome committed_togrowth. May you gain lots of continued chizuk and inspiration from being part of the conversation. I'm confident that opening yourself up over here is a stepping stone to greater kedusha and closeness to Hashem.

In response to your query of how to improve you approach, I've got a question back for you: do you have a filter on your computer and would you consider one?

If you do have a filter, what is it that is causing you to fall?

If you don't, what's holding you back from getting one?

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Re: Living a holy life
Posted by Avrohom - 31 Oct 2021 17:14

[committed_togrowth wrote on 31 Oct 2021 07:55:](#)

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My two strategies that led to success in my latest streak were: 1) I had a friend set parental control of my phone which completely removed access to internet browsing and downloading any apps. 2) I committed to not using my laptop in the privacy of my room. If I needed to use it, I decided to work on the computer only in public spaces where either my roommates or coworkers could see me. Solution number two ended up being the weak point. After a few intense work weeks, one night while stressed and tired out I allowed myself to be convinced to watch tv shows on my computer in my room. Using my computer in private immediately led to a fall. I'd appreciate any suggestions you have about ways to improve my approach. Avrohom, how did you feel at first about finding someone to speak with daily? I know GYE can connect us with mentors online, but since this struggle is so personal I feel hesitant about speaking to someone I don't know well about it directly.

For me, it was easier to speak to someone on the forum who I know understands this struggle - because he's been through it, and I didn't feel like I would be judged in the process. I would have a much harder time sharing with someone who knows me, and reveal some of the things that I've been doing. That being said, it's a process that you can control. Find someone here - whether with the mentoring program or perhaps better, reach out to someone on the forum who you "know" a little through their posts. You only have to disclose what you feel comfortable with, and you can still remain anonymous. (You can use a google voice number if you prefer). I think, as HHM said, you will find that you will quickly become more comfortable. Most of the awkwardness and discomfort comes from thinking that we will be judged negatively, and that no one has experienced these kinds of challenges. In speaking with someone, you will likely find them accepting, encouraging, and while everyone's situation is unique, your challenges are all in fact not so different than what others are going through.

In terms of strategies, I think you need to ask yourself, what have you tried in the past, and why didn't it work. If blocking access has been the biggest issue, by all means, see what you can do to remove those access points. If you find, though, that you've done that before, but there's always a new challenge, a new loophole or access point that arises, and you can never tie yourself up tight enough then it's likely you need something more. (At least in my limited personal experience) "Work smarter, not harder" is a mantra you'll often see here. Things like a partner for accountability and various strategies to understand how to deal with urges and triggers can help so you don't have to continuously "white-knuckle" through challenges, fighting the Yetzer Hora head-on which is difficult to maintain long-term.

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Re: Living a holy life

Posted by committed_togrowth - 01 Nov 2021 03:51

Hi all,

My fall in shemiras einayim from a couple of days back ended up in a full blown fall today. A few of you pointed out that I need to eliminate access to bad content rather than just trying to stay strong based on willpower/inspiration. I looked into webchaver and it looks like a great tool. I actually signed up and made an account for it and now have the filtering through that, but now I just need to find a chaver. Perhaps by matching to a GYE mentor I can find one? How have others who use webchaver gone about finding their chaver? I think you're right Avrohom, a mentor will be key I just will need to push through the initial discomfort.

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Re: Living a holy life
Posted by Hashem Help Me - 01 Nov 2021 11:00

Feel free to sign me up as your webchaver. Use the email in my signature. One stipulation - If chas v'shalom anything inappropriate is ever viewed, please send a "heads up" email to me immediately so i know to delete the report when it comes to me, and not have to see the images.

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Re: Living a holy life
Posted by committed_togrowth - 01 Nov 2021 14:54

I very much appreciate your time and willingness to help! That stipulation absolutely makes sense I will be careful to give you prior notice beforehand if that were to happen. I've just added you!

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Re: Living a holy life
Posted by committed_togrowth - 03 Nov 2021 20:41

Hi all,

On day 3 and BH things are going well. Something I've noticed is that even though I fell a few days ago I don't feel like I've lost the mentality and growth I gained previously. I feel more equipped than I did the last time around which is in no small part due to the GYE community. I have a question to ask. There is a certain person on Youtube whose content is very wholesome, and watching it for about 20 minutes a day is a bit of a safe space for me where I can recharge after a stressful day. The problem is that Youtube is of course a big problem overall in this fight and even using it for one specific, safe channel is placing myself somewhat near danger. I notice that I emotionally don't want to give up watching this one channel. Oddly enough it fills a bit of an emotional place for me. I'm single, and I'm the only one in my friend group who is religious. Naturally, because of this I spend a lot of time by myself and generally I don't discuss my inner world with my friends because they may not understand Torah and Judaism. I think the bit of time I spend on Youtube is something that keeps the boat afloat so to speak, but I think bigger picture it is something that I should phase out. Do any of you have a perspective on how you let go of things you felt emotionally like you wanted to keep? I'd

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Re: Living a holy life

Posted by DavidT - 03 Nov 2021 20:56

First of all congratulations on your progress on GYE, we hope to keep on celebrating your successes!

Maybe look into an option like "Partners in Torah" to get connected with other real life religious people...

The problem with being on Youtube is that It is very difficult to heal from lust addiction if we continue to be bombarded with triggers at every turn. As lust addicts, our minds have become accustomed to lusting. We can not gaze at stimulating imagery and expect not to be triggered. We cannot have it all within hands reach and expect to be strong enough to stay away. We have grown addicted to the chemical rush in our mind that the lust brings on, much in the same way that an alcoholic craves his bottle. Therefore, if we are to break the addictive cycle, we must first keep lust at a distance to be able to begin our journey to recovery.

Stay Strong!

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Re: Living a holy life

Posted by strugglingWithMyself - 03 Nov 2021 21:15

Maybe to use 613tube or something else which allows you to watch YouTube without the YouTube recommend. (if you can't give it up)

another option is to download the videos and watch them separately (which is what I do for a podcast I listen to)

or maybe to see if these videos are posted on another website

these ideas aren't perfect, but if u only use them once you've told someone, then they might work.

does this make sense?

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Re: Living a holy life

Posted by anonymous.lost.everything - 04 Nov 2021 00:28

[committed_togrowth wrote on 03 Nov 2021 20:41:](#)

Hi all,

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speaking, but I think bigger picture it is something that I should phase out. Do any of you have a perspective on how you let go of things you felt emotionally like you wanted to keep? I'd

appreciate any insight and tips

If you find that you can't control yourself then find a different approach. There are lots of Torah feeds you can subscribe to.

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