

Work in progress

Posted by Vehkam - 02 Jan 2022 18:43

Trying to post here on a somewhat regular basis so that I stay on course. I have to rewire my thinking patterns of over thirty years! I set the counter to the last date that I fell in masturbation. I have been able to stay away from other things for longer. I thank hashem for his kindness in helping me to this point.

this shabbos I was in Florida. Obviously there are a lot more nisyonos. I definitely was more successful than other times in not following my eyes and gazing with the help of GYE. (Not to say that I was successful in every instance- at some point my feet just took me in the wrong direction even though my mind was saying- STOP!)

One thing that helped me alot was a shiur I heard recently that describes the power of a tefila that one has immediately after he withstands a nisayon. When I feel a possible weakness to a temptation, I quickly resolve to turn away and then I immediately daven for something that is very important to me. Each small victory is another tefila. I don't want these nisyonos, but if they are coming anyway at least I have the opportunity to use them for something very meaningful.

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by Markz - 01 Aug 2022 02:57

[Vehkam wrote on 31 Jul 2022 20:42:](#)

... ...I can't wait to share it all with someone really special who will do the same with me.

May you be zocheh to that very soon!

If I recall correctly, you shared some background in the hub which hasn't been brought to the light on the forum. I feel it can be helpful to add that here. Care to share?

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by Lchaim Tovim - 01 Aug 2022 14:00

Wow! Thank you for sharing! Very inspirational!

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by Vehkam - 16 Aug 2022 17:27

For those following my journey there is nothing new in this post. It's an update and synopsis of some of my posts on the road to recovery.

I am now at 9 1/2 months since the beginning of my journey. In the words of Eli Nash "like birthing a new person". As I wrote in a letter to my daughter recently "As much as I was always a mature, practical, self-aware and thinking person, I can say with conviction that I never really knew myself." I am delighted to finally know the real me.

As I am not in crisis or transition mode I do like to review my old posts from which I take much inspiration. I pulled some excerpts together to read them in one place. I am posting them here. I hope to be able to write more and fill in some of the missing pieces of my inner struggle at some point.

I am not writing this to be self-congratulatory. There is a life of work ahead of me. I am writing to inspire and be inspired.

For a long time I thought it was all over. My only distant hope was that somehow after 120 hashem would understand and cut me some slack. It was not very comforting. I know there are others out there with the same thoughts. I hope I can inspire them to realize that there is real possibility of change. We can get through the struggles, the shame and the guilt to live our lives with confidence and happiness as true avdei hashem. We need not be bound by the shackles borne of years of chasing and escaping into fantasy.

And so, here are some excerpts basically in chronological order...

(My first post)

Hello all. I am new to the site. I have been aware of GYE for quite a while but had come to terms with the “fact” that I am too deep into my secret life so I might as well embrace that side of me.... I listened to today’s boost and I could not even bring myself imagine what success feels like..... I don’t remember what it feels like to be pure. I am an emotional person and I am tearing up as I write this.

So just an update. I had a very good conversation with Yaakov. He encouraged me to get in touch with Relief for a therapist referral.

It takes a long time to rewire 30 years of the thinking but only a second to turn towards the right direction!

I consider this a gift straight from hashem and working very much on focusing on how much hashem loves me.

(Advice to a fellow gye member)

If you have good music that you like you can try putting that on at night. (For me, anytime I feel any urge, my automatic response is to put on music (or a shiur if I’m holding by that)).

(Reflecting on my first post)

Wow. It’s seven weeks since I wrote this. I just reread it and I cannot believe how much my perspective has improved. Just seven weeks ago a part of me questioned if success was even possible for me!

I am at 87 which means I will be having a massive party on the day I complete my original goal of 90 days. I feel like it’s a another hug from Hashem.

hit my 90 days last night. Danced the night away at our Daf Yomi siyum.

That has been the single most valuable lesson that I learned from being on GYE. For many years I totally viewed myself as a closet rasha. For a few years Even davened on yomim noraim for Hashem to just end it already. I am starting to see myself in a different light and, although I try not to think about all the stuff I did in the past, I can appreciate how important I am and how much Hashem wants me (and is helping me) to succeed.

I'm still on the offensive. Gearing up to delete my Hulu account one of these days.

(After being faced with a difficult challenge right in front of me)

I think that this was probably my most difficult struggle since I started this journey. I put my headphones on and some music and spend the rest of my time sitting there staring at my phone. It took a few minutes to process what I just went through. The feeling of desire to talk to them was so intense.

It took another 10 days but my Hulu account is now history. I don't have time for it anymore anyway....

147 days since I started my journey. I finally spoke to "hashem helps me" on the phone. I am very excited to now have another resource

nearing the completion of the book the battle of the generation and am looking forward to starting again.

just had to post today. After waiting for the right person for a few months I finally started therapy today. I was literally crying before the session out of gratitude to hashem for getting me to this place.

For the past 47 days I've been reading a chapter of the book of the battle of the generation every night. Tonight I made my first siyum and tomorrow I will begin the book again.

(Advice...)

A Little over one year ago I had no idea who I wanted to be. I had two separate identities and it was becoming increasingly unclear which was the real me. It took a lot of siyaata dshmaya and also some very difficult decisions but I can say that I now have a much clearer understanding of myself and I am not struggling with that anymore. Be honest with yourself and take small steps.

Recently I started another thing. I try to remember when I kiss my tzitzis during shma (even just one time) to have in mind that hashem loves me. I find it very powerful.

(Regarding pritzus in the city)

At first I was a little disheartened- is this what I will have to deal with all summer??

Then my preparation kicked in and I realized that I didn't choose these nisyonos- what an amazing opportunity to gain zchusim.

(Post Pesach)

Dear Hashem

There are no words to thank you for these past eight days. The feeling of closeness to you that I experienced each day of yomtov was so much more than at any time I can remember. The feeling of living a life that is "real" is indescribable.....In my conversations with my children I knew where I stood in my own mind. I was no longer confused as to who I am. . And when we discussed the purpose of life to become close hashem it no longer felt like empty talk on my end. And when they responded to me, it was obvious that the feelings I had were penetrating their thoughts as well....

Hashem this yomtov will always be etched in my heart. Zecher l'yetzias mitzraim has so much additional meaning now.

(After visiting my fathers Kever)

Then It hit me, that the disconnect I always felt had nothing to do with my father's somewhat closed personality. Over the years I had been closed myself! I was fiercely guarding my secrets and had an inner wall that I had put up. It was not visible to anyone else and I seemed to function just fine but the wall was there nonetheless. Ensuring that no one ever got close enough to see through the façade and discover all the terrible things I was doing.

(From my Seder Hayom)

If I could only daven one word it would be the word ????. All of my essence is wrapped up in that one word. Please hashem desire a connection with me. (And all of klal Yisroel). ????? ????? ????? ?????????? I think of the fire of desire that engulfed me forso many years. That is my korbon to hashem. Please accept it with ????.

(Responding Re my approach to davening)

The excitement and relief I had in being freed of this burden I was carrying for 35 years allowed me to open up to hashem in a way that I never dreamt possible. As I started to reconnect many of the emotions that I was feeling found their way into my davening.

(From seder hayom - constant reminders)

Daven mincha in the middle of the day if possible instead of waiting for the evening. Daven because I want to connect to hashem, not because "I have to".

A person can only be going in one direction. Either up or down. There is no such thing as just staying the same. My goal is to make sure that i am always slowly growing

(After walking in the streets)

I should be excited about being strong but for some reason I am feeling pain. May it be a kappara for the all the forbidden pleasures of the past.

(My last friend from the forbidden world)

said goodbye today to the closest friend I ever had. I saved the closest for last. All the other contacts are long gone. We knew each other for seven years. Once I started this journey I knew I would have to do this eventually and I am glad it's done. But boy does it hurt. It helped that we haven't been in touch in two months.

(celebration)

the second day of shavous will iyh mark a full six months of being totally clean bh. Planning a major bbq to be""h celebrate with probably 30-40 people. they will all think that its in honor of my upcoming birthday... but you all know the truth!

Now, when I say ??? ?????? I have in mind. Please hashem hear my voices. Not just the voice of the tefila I am davening now, but also hear the innocent voice and of that young boy of over 40 years ago pleading with you - the only one who can possibly help- to please help me stay clean.

???? ??? ?????? - ?? ?????. What is it that watched over me and protected me from falling even further? It's the Shabbos that was so ingrained in me and separated me from that world (even if it was by a hair's breadth).

Yom HaMeyuchas

My heart filled with emotions of gratitude and joy that I am able to finally feel that I too am a part of this ????? ?????? To feel that hashem is lifting me up. That is taking me out of my personal mitzrayim... To feel that ahava that he has for us, his chosen nation... to be part of a group of mevakshim that will keep getting up no matter what and no matter how many times we fall!

I finished the last chapter of The Battle of the Generation last night. I will spend the next few nights reading the addendum and start the book again on motzai yomtov.

(Excerpt from my poem)

I started my journey full of energy and light

Excited by Mitzvos learning day and night

I thought I was immune had not much to fear

Just keep to the Torah he won't get very near

But the yetzer hara had other plans

He knew I had desires just like every man

The pictures I looked at, the things I read and saw

And then there was no stopping I wanted more and more....

my father in heaven can I express even a fraction

For allowing me back in spite of my actions

I took one step towards you in the hopes to repair

And you showed me a world that you always were here.

My dreams once abandoned are now back in place

I want only one thing, to live in your grace

Excited by mitzvos learning day and night

I continue my journey full of energy and light.

(2 of the 13 points I would want to say at an internet asifa)

8 -The desire to be close to hashem needs to be stronger then the desire of the temptations around them. Otherwise eventually the willpower to resist can easily fall away. Try to bring an awareness to that connection which is unique for each individual person.

9 -Your children must know that hashem loves them no matter what. So many years have been lost by people that fell and didn't bother getting up because they did not believe that hashem still wanted them. (It's not all or nothing)

(Understanding the consequences I live with)

...Perhaps with time, those memories will dull. Perhaps I will be able to attain a level of purity that will filter my mind from the perversions of the past....Until then, I must live with the consequences of my past choices and daven that the pain of these memories be included in the yissurim tovim and add to the zchusim that I so surely need....This is my current challenge and i accept it wholeheartedly. I am not dejected by this. I know that if i do my part, hashem will continue to carry me.

(Birthday vort)

This past year was arguably (to my knowledge) so far, the best year of my life. As I begin a new year I ask hashem ??? ????? ?? ????? ????????? ?????? ??????. May it be a year of even more growth, may it be a year of hatzlocha, gezunt, parnassa and nachas for me, and may I in turn be zoche to bring nachas to hashem.

Musings...what if someone finds out...

What if I just stop?

(Yerushalayim)

Dad, its been too long. I need to be with you. To feel your love, your embrace. Please just take me home. You promised me you would come get me. That I could come live with you and spend time with you. Forever. Just like the old days.

I am begging you my dear father in heaven,
?????????? ???? ?????? ???? ?????? ?????? ???? ????...

Please just take me home.

I am two thirds of the way through reading through The battle of the Generation for the third time. I don't believe that i have missed more than one night since i started the first time. (not sure if i actually did miss a night or not!) I continue to gain from the book and internalize the messages and responses to the yetzer hara.

(Excerpt from my full story)

Tomorrow will mark nine months to the day since I started my journey home. The truth is that I didn't know at the time what path I was headed towards. I just knew that I needed clarity and that I could not attain that clarity while acting out sexually.....

Sometimes I had to go out once or twice during seder to relieve myself of the pounding intensity that was going on in my body. I needed to do that just to be able to focus on the gemara. So I came back to my shtender feeling like a lowlife, no longer dealing with intense cravings, but carrying a brickload of guilt for where I was holding.....

I carried my heavily guarded secret with me into marriage.....was now stuck with my secret, my guilt, my loneliness and divorce on top of it all.knew where and when to go and act out on my fantasies and I became very comfortable spending time in very disreputable places.

it is now nine months and I am no longer looking over my shoulder. Of course I always have to be vigilant, that will never change. I am comfortable with who I am. I understand (through therapy) much more of my personal vulnerabilities and how to deal with them in a positive way. I am hopeful that I will soon be able to finally have a real relationship with a wife that understands me. My only secret now is GYE. (my friends and family have no idea.) I have opened my heart and soul and cried rivers of tears during the course of some deeply emotional writing on these forums. I can't wait to share it all with someone really special who will do the same with me.

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by willdo - 17 Aug 2022 01:10

WOW WOW WOW!!! NO WORDS !!!!!

THANKS YOU!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by Shtarkandemotional - 18 Aug 2022 05:17

Wow! I haven't been on GYE lately...but each time I log on I jump right to this thread! It's the place to be for inspiration and chizuk! Vehkam is one of the heroes in my heart! When I'm weak and broken I think of vehkam.. he's been through the worst pain and managed a way out! We all must learn from you! some people start their life at 0 and burn out and get weak by 50. but your strong at 50 and your gonna go full force ahead till 120!

A small point vehkam wrote which really talks to me:

"My work is not about filters it's about changing myself. If I come to a point where I need the filter, the filter will not help!"

I can't agree with this more! This attitude has changed my life! having a filter "might" work for the device however, having the right attitude works with the inside!

I've been very lucky to join vehkam with reading the most amazing book the battle of the generation! i suggest that everyone should read it too if they want to live a good life!

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by ??? ????? ????? ??? - 29 Aug 2022 13:53

[Vehkam wrote on 16 Aug 2022 17:27:](#)

My only secret now is GYE. (my friends and family have no idea.) I have opened my heart and soul and cried rivers of tears during the course of some deeply emotional writing on these forums.

What a great reflection! I can so join you on that. It bothered me to no end that my family and friends didn't know my dark secret of this struggle. Now, my family and friends don't know about GYE. That I am part of an anonymous online support group that helps me live my best life. I'm

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by Vehkam - 30 Aug 2022 17:55

b"h coming up on ten months since i started my journey!

I listened to another podcast from eli nash last night with LivingLchaim. he has such a great perspective and message. i recommend you listen to it too.

I am working through some delicate stuff with my therapist, which involves me revisiting certain aspects of my fantasies and sexual experiences. It is delicate because i generally put this stuff out of my head and i don't want to let anything unhealthy back in... Hopefully we will get through this quickly. In the meantime i am constantly learning more about myself.

BH i am halfway through the Battle of the Generation. This is my fourth time! Someone asked me last night if i am by nature so disciplined or is it only with regard to this topic that i am disciplined.

I answered that i was very much not a disciplined person. So he asked me what made me so disciplined in this, that i read the book every single night and will not skip.

The answer is -

Desperation!

when i started this journey i knew that the rest of my life depended on it. reading the book was a huge help. i am not going to stop. I need this to keep working.

have a great day!

vehkam

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by Vehkam - 30 Aug 2022 19:24

When I first started my journey ten months ago I had one goal. To stop viewing pornography and to stop acting out my fantasies. I just wanted to clear my head so that I could think straight.

I did not intend to stop listening to the radio, something that I had always done for background noise. Or to stop watching football. Or Law and Order. Or American idol. Or romantic movies that made me cry.

I had no intention of stopping to eat the free krispy kreme donut (one a day!) that I got by showing my covid card. Nor any of the other non cholov Yisroel snacks that I became accustomed to eating (and making sure to dispose of the wrappers lest I be found out)

I did not think my davening habits would change; I thought they would be as sporadic as they had been for the last few decades.

I did not think that I would ever go over to a gadol and ask for a bracha for help with shmiras einayim and shmiras habris.

I did not think I would ever want to get married again

I certainly did not think there was anything about me that could possibly inspire anyone

I did not even intend to stop masturbation!

I just wanted to be able to think straight.

So I made one change. I committed to myself to be clean of pornography for at least six months. And I was given a gift from hashem. A new lease on life. Slowly but surely the obstacles disappeared. And all that I did not originally intend has come to be.

Now Elul is here. The King is in the field! And I just want to connect. Should I be fearful? There is much to regret. But I cannot think about that. My tears are tears of excitement. Of eager anticipation. My king please listen to the beating of my heart. Hear my desire to be close to you. Another year of growth. Please hold onto me for another year. I beseech you. Let me remain close. The king is in the field!

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by Vehkam - 04 Sep 2022 12:52

Be”h tonight I will hit 270. It’s important as always to celebrate the victories. I have a wedding and will iyh be dancing both externally and internally.

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by Vehkam - 05 Sep 2022 14:30

“Be”h tonight I will hit 270. It’s important as always to celebrate the victories. I have a wedding and will iyh be dancing both externally and internally. “

Was a great night bh. Met up with HHM and afterwards danced my personal simcha to the words of ?????? (and got some brachos too)

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by 5Uu80*cdwB#^ - 05 Sep 2022 21:06

[Vehkam wrote on 05 Sep 2022 14:30:](#)

“Be”h tonight I will hit 270. It’s important as always to celebrate the victories. I have a wedding and will iyh be dancing both externally and internally. “

Was a great night bh. Met up with HHM and afterwards danced my personal simcha to the

words of ?????? (and got some brachos too)

Mazal tov on 270 Vehkam! I am cheering for you day by day!

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by ??? ???? ???? ??? - 05 Sep 2022 23:57

[Vehkam wrote on 05 Sep 2022 14:30:](#)

“Be”h tonight I will hit 270. It’s important as always to celebrate the victories. I have a wedding and will iyh be dancing both externally and internally. “

Was a great night bh. Met up with HHM and afterwards danced my personal simcha to the words of ?????? (and got some brachos too)

Awesome, Vehkam! Way to go. If I lived in the area, I would've joined in the dancing too!

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by Vehkam - 14 Sep 2022 02:41

It is difficult to put into words the awesomeness of the state that i find myself in tonight.

I started therapy just under six months ago. I was fully invested. All in. I laid everything out on the table. My goals were clear. I wanted to understand the bad decisions that i had made in life. What propelled me to risk so much and to become so absorbed in a life that was so diametrically opposed to the ideals and morals that i believed in. How did i blindly make decisions that would negatively impact decades of my life.

I wanted to get to know myself. Really know myself. Was i one person or was i two people competing for the same resources? Can i walk away from a part of me that has been intimately involved in my decision making for so much time? Is the person that i portray to others the real me, or is that fake too? Who am I?

I got divorced in December 2020. I had a very good reputation. The person i portrayed was kind, caring, considerate and knew how to learn. There was not a single person who knew about my struggles. I received many phone calls immediately to find out if i would listen to shidduchim. (one of the dayanim on the beis din called me the day of the get!) I was told that i was a catch. I told everyone who asked that I needed time.

The guilt I felt every time i received one of these phone calls was terrible. I felt like i was fooling everyone. Yet I did not know how to change that. I continued my double life until November 1, 2021. That is when I committed to go clean. To gain clarity and to figure out who I really am. To decide if I was going to spend the rest of my life with a proper wife or without one and chasing desire.

It took a couple of months to get the courage to speak to Relief and then another few months to get the right appointment in March 2022 with the therapist that I wanted. I stated my goals and jumped right in.

In a nutshell i can tell you that all of my questions were answered. I know what drove me to do the things I did. (I still take responsibility for the bad decisions, but I understand why they happened.) I know who i was. I am not bound to the world that I lived in and I can walk away confidently without looking over my shoulder to see if that world will keep following me. I can say with conviction that neither person, not the religious portrayal and not the one acting out, was the real me.

Sure, there were elements of goodness in me. The portrayal that people saw was the person that I wanted to be. But i was not that person. I did not have the clarity, the understanding or the backbone to truly be that person. And when the lights were dimmed and I thought no one was looking I did not have the wherewithal to be that person at all.

From November 1, 2021 until today i have worked hard to find my inner essence. To connect with my true self without any outside impediments. Since I started working with a therapist in March 2022, we have sifted through the emotions, the feelings, the actions and the reactions. Over time a picture developed and clarity started to set in. As a clear picture emerged, so did my sense of self. I am no longer attached to the part of me that felt a need to chase after desire. My choices are solely and clearly guided by my inner longing to be close to hashem. The person that I used to portray is now the person that I actually am (with a much deeper emotional connection that is not visible to the uninformed). My inner and outer self are no longer in conflict.

All this brings me to the reason that I am posting tonight. Today is a momentous day in my journey! I have reached the point that I am ready to look for a shidduch. I did not think this would happen, yet here I am! I am cautiously optimistic that I will find someone that will appreciate my emotional intensity and vulnerability. I know that what I portray is the real me and that together with the right person I can continue to grow in my avodas hashem. In the past I may have felt hesitant and unworthy. Today I feel confident and genuine.

How does one go from being steeped in the most decadent behaviors available to being connected to hashem at such a deep level? All that in less than a year! It is not explainable. But it is also clear that I am a different person. My gratitude to hashem is boundless. So too is my appreciation for all those here. For the comments, for the likes. For the PM's and for the emails. Each one of them breathed life into me. With every positive response my confidence was boosted another notch. I continue to daven for your success each and every day.

Lest you think that I am celebrating prematurely, let me assure you that I celebrate only the opportunity to continue along this path. My work will not be complete until the day that my body returns to the earth from which it was formed. I am not oblivious to the vulnerabilities and predispositions that can affect me should I let down my guard or cease striding forward. Indeed there are still sore points that may never fully heal. For example, at this point I will not go into a men's mikva where I may encounter men in a state of undress. This is not because of ssa. The nature of having been so steeped in decadence is that any unclothed body in a (semi) public setting is a reminder of feelings that I wish to avoid. I don't believe anything terrible would happen to me, but it is uncomfortable and I will avoid it until that changes.

The most important lesson I have learned from my long and painful experience is to not judge anyone. My story could have had a very different ending. I could have been found out and exposed for the stuff that I was doing. I could have lost my friends, my family and my reputation. There are many people that lost all that. They were ostracized by their communities. I am sure that they, just like myself, always wanted to be good people and somehow got sidetracked and fell into bad habits and addictions. Their story is my story. Hashem saw fit to grant me a different ending and a new chance at life. I will not let him down. It is my sincerest hope that I can continue to inspire and that hashem grant you the clarity and inner peace that you are each striving to attain.

With feelings of happiness and gratitude,

vehkam

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by committed_togrowth - 14 Sep 2022 04:43

This made me so happy to read, thank you for sharing as always

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