

On the way... Again

Posted by Hopefulposek - 26 Jul 2023 16:54

Hi everyone,

I made it to 90 days once before and then had a fall shortly after. I have made several attempts since then but have not been successful. I'm hoping that starting this thread where I will post updates and insights throughout this journey will help me stay motivated and grounded. Any chizuk or advice in response to the updates my journey would help me on the way. Thanks everyone for being such a supportive community.

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Re: On the way... Again

Posted by hopefulposek - 30 Jan 2024 13:49

"Hashem has always provided for me until today. Why would He stop now?" - The Chofetz Chaim

"Maintain faith in God during distress; from the darkness will come the light." - Rabbeinu Yonah

The last couple days have been pretty rough. Lots of sadness and loneliness feelings coupled by desires is not a healthy combo. I think part of it is coming from wanting more out of the intimacy with my wife and not getting it (partially due to pregnancy). Still waiting to go see a therapist about it, but it might be a while until we make it there.

I had a thought the other day which may be helpful for where I'm struggling and perhaps others here have found it useful as well. (Part of) the reason I may not find my wife so attractive and the intimacy pleasurable is because I have expectations based on porn. So in my mind I want that and I want my wife to be that. I know that she's not, and she's not going to change in a second, but I want her to change. So it comes out that my unhappiness with intimacy is based on my own expectations, which hopefully is something I can change.

Legabai the depression and sadness, I'm not sure where it's coming from, I don't think it's the classic 2-3 week hurdle (1. it feels different and 2. I was really feeling this way even before my recent falls.) I'm leaning towards saying that I feel weighed down by various emotionally stressful situations going on in my life, I'm looking for an escape (read: drug) and not being able to use any. I'm so used to always being able to escape my emotions that I don't think I have the proper tools to handle these situations without drastic measures.

Yesterday I was feeling very down before second seder, so I went home to have a beer to relax (I don't enjoy hard liquor but if I did I would have gone for scotch). In hindsight what I did seems

strange, about to start learning and drinking alcohol? Stam drinking to deal with your emotions? Sounds like a bad track to be on.

I think that B'etzem, I don't feel like I'm able to handle certain feelings and therefore need others to talk to and "lean on", however it's easy to feel that others don't know how I'm feeling and therefore I do drastic strange things in order to cry out for attention. Of course this never works, but I think that is the motivation for the drinking and also for the desire to go back to P and M. I don't actually want to so much, but during raging emotional storms I can't be alone and need others beside me holding me up, going back to P and M is just a way for me to turn on the warning lights to try and attract other's attention. (It's a little scary to be this straight forward)

So, with all this clarity of why I'm acting this way...

I am going to start working on handling stress and emotions in a healthy way.

On a happy note, today is day 180 since I had a big turn around and though I haven't been clean the whole time It feels good to look back on. Only fell twice in 6 months!

Rasing a Glass of amber liquid Here's to another 180!

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Re: On the way... Again
Posted by foolie - 30 Jan 2024 15:41

Good News hopefulposek. You're on the right track. Realizing your expectations need to change is excellent. Also realizing that climbing into a bottle to deal with your emotions is a bad thing now means you're way ahead of so many people who crawl into a bottle to get away from life. Dealing with your emotions in a healthy manner will take time and a therapist so stop dawdling and get to a therapist for yourself, couples counseling if I understood what you are waiting for isn't going to help you a stitch if you don't work on your relationship with yourself first

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Re: On the way... Again
Posted by richtig - 30 Jan 2024 15:55

Amazing!!! The fall after the fall may be worse than the original fall- kol hakavod for getting right back on the horse!!!

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Re: On the way... Again
Posted by hopefulposek - 12 Feb 2024 14:29

Maskim that the second fall is the killer. Thanks for the chizuk!

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Re: On the way... Again
Posted by hopefulposek - 12 Feb 2024 14:42

"Like a child clutching his parent's hand, Hashem leads us to exactly the right destination." -
Reb Yerucham Levovitz

B"H things are going well. I was thinking the other day, reminiscing to how I felt a couple of months ago, I would walk down the street and see pretty women and have absolutely no desire for them. It was an amazing feeling, and I want to get back to it.

So I started today to review the yesodos which helped me get there, mainly visualization. Also started thinking for a minute everyday that the yetzer hara lies about how pleasurable things are, trying to get it ingrained in me. IY"H gonna fight another day!

Never give up! Even if you took a break, get back up and get back in the fight! Even if you fell down, get back up! Even if you got knocked out and couldn't get back up, get back up now! You only lose when you give up, as long as your "in the fight" evne if you don't seem to be doing well, you're still winning. GET BACK UP! It's OK to lose a battle, it's OK to fall , it's NOT ok to give up!

(this was my pump up speech to myself, take it with a grain of salt)

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Re: On the way... Again
Posted by eerie - 14 Feb 2024 18:33

[hopefulposek wrote on 12 Feb 2024 14:42:](#)

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I'm skipping the salt. Thanks!

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Re: On the way... Again
Posted by youknowwho - 14 Feb 2024 18:47

[eerie wrote on 14 Feb 2024 18:33:](#)

[hopefulposek wrote on 12 Feb 2024 14:42:](#)

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I'm skipping the salt. Thanks!

Different folks, different strokes...I took it with a grain of salt. Actually, more than a grain...

Sorry y'all! -Moldy Voldy

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Re: On the way... Again

Posted by chaimoigen - 14 Feb 2024 21:41

Glad it's going well! Good Chizzuk Shmoozel.

I am thinking that the realizations that you posted a few days ago were incredibly honest and powerful.

You wrote about how you understand that you have a hard time dealing with emotions and reaching out for help, and sometimes even feel compelled to act in a destructive way as way to force those connections, and avoid the situation in which you can't deal with your feelings. Getting a real understanding of what sometimes compels you is a previous gift, and can open new doors to new ways to deal with the stuff of life....

Fighting back and never giving up can take different forms. One of my Rabbeim used to say that understanding a problem is more than half of a solution...

I'm raising my glass to you, hopefulposek. You're a fighter and one who keeps growing.

I admire you,

Chaim

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Re: On the way... Again
Posted by hopefulposek - 20 Feb 2024 19:29

Nothing wrong with some salt, I actually put a nice amount in my cholent, it brings out the flavor.

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Re: On the way... Again
Posted by hopefulposek - 20 Feb 2024 19:32

Mother Goose inspiration:

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall

Humpty Dumpty had a great fall

He Got up and brushed of his knees

Then Got back up on the wall for Hashem to see

One day at a time, one small step at a time.

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Re: On the way... Again
Posted by hopefulposek - 26 Feb 2024 19:17

One step at a time...

B"H overall I am starting to feel good, not having so many struggling thoughts these days.

2 points I wanted to share,

1) Yesterday I mentioned to a friend of mine an eitzah of how to avoid looking at women in the street, and from the conversation it sounded like this guy had no idea what I was talking about in the struggle. Not that he didn't have regular taavah just that he wasn't struggling to not look at women on the street every time he walked outside. Now maybe he really was just embarrassed to admit it, but L'maaseh he sounded legit. Anyways, I felt very down afterwards, really down, more towards overwhelming feelings of loneliness and despair. I think it comes from being so focused on normalizing the struggle that I forget that there may be guys out there who don't struggle with P and M. And every time I find one I get shocked feeling that I really am a weirdo. BH once I relax I remember GYE and all the other guys on here who share these struggles. But I want to work on not having that initial feeling of waves of crushing depression that hit me whenever I have one of these conversations (it's happened a few times before).

2) Right now I have a tremendous amount of stress from a situation with my family and I know that I get feelings of escapism (turning to P and M or alcohol). What are some basic things to do to destress in the moment? (I have tried breathing exercises, grounding, speaking out loud my feelings with little to no success. Also I'm learning full time so I can't just distract myself with an enjoyable activity, and for some reason learning doesn't help for me.) Thoughts?

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Re: On the way... Again
Posted by cande - 26 Feb 2024 19:29

[hopefulposek wrote on 26 Feb 2024 19:17:](#)

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Hit the gym! theres nothing like it! (do spin, or personal trainer its worth every penny)

helps me ***emotionally, physically, and spiritually.***

or eat ***cande.***

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Re: On the way... Again

Posted by yitzchokm - 26 Feb 2024 20:38

I hear that it is crushing when we meet people who don't have these struggles, or so it seems. They are truly special people. On the other hand, we have the capacity to guide others in a way that they probably can't. We have a strength that should make us feel uplifted rather than downtrodden. It also isn't proper to measure ourselves against other people. Only He knows how to measure our true worth and we don't have the right to step into His shoes. On a personal level what truly matters is how much we perfected ourselves and not how perfect we are. We are meant to use our personal yardstick and measure progress. We can be humble knowing we are imperfect compared to others and yet uplifted because we know how much we accomplished.

Reading Chaimoigen's recent post on a different thread I realized that regret is an important component in the Teshuva process. We should feel regret that we missed the opportunity to be a Tzaddik m'ikara like the person you met, however, the Tanya in chapter 29 writes that we should have designated times when we focus on our shortcomings but outside of those times we should feel happy. Keep on trucking.

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Re: On the way... Again

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[hopefulposek wrote on 26 Feb 2024 19:17:](#)

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Aderaba. This might just be me being mkayim chazal's rule, "kol haposul bmumo posul." But I think there's two types of people, people who struggle to guard their eyes, and liars. There's a famous story with a bochur who mentioned to Rav Elya Lopian that he doesn't have any issues with shmiras einyaim. Rav Lopian replied, "What's wrong with you?" "I'm 90 years old and blind in one eye, and I still struggle." Or something like that.

Yes, it's possible your friend's place of struggle is not in the Lakewood streets where no doubt all the women are dressed to the highest standards of tznius. But everyone has the same struggle, the only question is where and when it kicks in.

I don't know how you can internalize that to not have the initial reaction of shame you are describing. But know that everyone's in the same boat.

*That's not to say there won't ever be a time when, as part of your teshuva process, it may become productive to feel pain over your choices that moved your nekudas habechira to this

point. But that time is not now.

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