

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 - 10 Mar 2025 19:37

I've been slipping and sliding a lot lately, went on a long run yesterday which was great but spent the whole time checking out all the women in the park. Today also found myself taking many drinks in the street. tried some of my old tried and true methods and they helped a bit, but I think the fight has gone out of me. It seems like it's time for renewed motivation and a clarity in what the struggle is, what is it costing me, what do I want to accomplish and what will bring me long term happiness.

An interesting thought I had today concerning some of the negative beliefs that come along with addiction: If someone doesn't understand my pain then they will not take care of me and support me. This is a strong belief I have and it morphs into more destructive ideas, such as: If they don't understand me they don't care about me, If they would know what I struggle with since they don't understand it they would think me strange and leave me. I can't trust you to give me the help and care that I need because you don't understand what I'm going through.

I used to think this was a bit strange, just because someone doesn't understand the pain I go through why does that mean they don't care for me and won't support me?

But today I had a nice mashul which helped me get clarity: If you go to a doctor and tell him your head hurts, and he thinks that you just have a headache, he will give you advil. But in reality you have a migraine caused by a tumor. So if the person you are turning to for help truly doesn't know what you mean when you are describing your pain, and they don't understand what is going on underneath the pain and the need to use, and they have no idea how to help even if they would understand, then it makes sense that they wouldn't be able to give you the care and support you need.

For me this is helpful to come to terms with going to SA and staying on the vaad. To get the support and care that I need as I go through troubled times and try to stay clean, I need people who understand the pain and struggle.

But it's also good to acknowledge that these beliefs are not %100 true, others can care and support me, although I may need additional support from "experienced members". And not everyone would abandon me if they knew the internal struggles I have, though I don't have much proof for this except for the fact that I've learnt about others' intense struggles and haven't abandoned them, so I hope the same is true of others.

A Freilichen Monday Everyone!

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Re: On the way... Again

Posted by hopefulposek - 14 Mar 2025 01:41

Happy Birthday to me,

I feel so lonely,

Happy birthday dear Hopeful,

Finally a year clean.

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Re: On the way... Again

Posted by trying1989 - 14 Mar 2025 01:57

Wow! Happy Birthday!!! What a way to celebrate your birthday!!! Why do you feel lonely?!
Everyone is celebrating your birthday!!!

Mazel Tov on a year clean!!!

Happy Purim!!!

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Re: On the way... Again

Posted by lamaazavtuni - 16 Mar 2025 03:09

R hopeful MAZEL TOV. Your a real gem!! Keep it up.

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Re: On the way... Again

Posted by hopefulposek - 18 Mar 2025 03:54

OK, I've spent most of my day lusting, and now I have a choice to make: either continue the lusting now that my wife has gone to sleep and stay up way too late, and then have a bad day again tomorrow probably consisting of more lusting, or write up some of what's been going on and then go to sleep (hopefully the alcohol which I'm consuming in copious amounts right now will help with that).

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Re: On the way... Again

Posted by hopefulposek - 18 Mar 2025 04:09

Gratitude:

Thank you Hashem that:

- 1) I didn't Masturbate yet
- 2) I went to 2nd seder
- 3) My wife doesn't realize I'm spending hours a day trying to break through this damn filter
- 4) I have leftover wine to drink
- 5) I'm going to a meeting tomorrow
- 6) I have friends who reach out to me after reading my posts which basically say I'm half a step from masturbating for the first time in over 400 days
- 7) I don't feel like a total piece of garbage as bad as I used to
- 8) I have a happy and healthy family
- 9) I'm not dead broke and divorce
- 10) I didn't get caught yet

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Re: On the way... Again

Posted by hopefulposek - 18 Mar 2025 14:41

To quote macklemore: "If I can be an example of getting sober, I can be an example of starting over."

To be totally honest, the past year has not been clean from lust, and especially the past few months and the last couple weeks have been very lustful. I don't think it was totally great that I finally fell, but I do feel that until now i was teetering on the edge trying to just hang on, now I fell and am ready to get back up and reapply myself to working on myself.

Please hashem help me in my struggle and help those who are still struggling both on GYE and off GYE

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Re: On the way... Again

Posted by chosemyshem - 18 Mar 2025 15:57

Hurt to read this post. A fall doesn't negate the year of change that you lived. The determination that you're displaying to keep those changes progressing is inspirational and a real mchayiv.

But that doesn't take away from the sorrow and pain of being back in something that had been somewhat in the rearview mirror.

I don't really believe in the "Was struggling and now fell so now I can start over strong" feeling. That's just because in my own personal experience the fresh feeling of resolve lasts for somewhere between 30 minutes and 2 days and then it's back in the same struggle, except harder because of the post-fall feelings. YMMV. Not to put down your resolve to get back on your feet. That's an important resolve, and something you've been demonstrating with the steps you're taking. But to say that you can't count on that feeling lasting and you need to be on

guard.

I guess if we're still allowed to quote Macklemore: "Stand for something or fall for anything / I'm sick, but it's game time / Ayy / The world's on fire and we don't own the water y'all

Warning: Spoiler!

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Re: On the way... Again

Posted by hopefulposek - 18 Mar 2025 16:59

I have a few minutes before the vaad to throw my thoughts onto the screen.

I have several theories about what caused me to fall. But honestly they're just theories, and some of them are really raw truths about myself that are sometimes too hard to face.

In the past year there were many times, weeks and months, where I did not struggle at all with using P and M, at all. I would get frustrated, I would be in pain, I would feel alone, but I wouldn't go back to using because it just wasn't something I did anymore. I hadn't used in so long that the relationship in my brain between porn and pain relief was almost completely removed. But I was turning to other things, some healthy, some not so healthy, and I was always struggling to cope with basic life and the feelings and emotions that were coming up for me. Then I started to take some drinks in the street, starting small, second looks glancing for a few seconds. but it got longer and longer until I spent an hour driving and walking around just looking for women to look at.

And i didn't feel so bad about it and label it as a problem because it wasn't porn.

And then it got back to the movies which I was trying so hard to move off of and which had in the past been my lust access and slippery slope to lust land.

And it was hours off watching trailer after trailer just searching for the next glimpse of something arousing.

And then it was a dirty movie.

And then it was a movie which was basically porn.

And then it was masturbating.

I could have stopped by the first steps, but it was too hard and I wasn't on top of myself and I needed something to help with the feelings I was having and lust was helping. But then I needed more and more, and then I couldn't stop.

There is more behind the scenes, insecurities which fuel this and certain actions which bring on feelings which need to be doused. But I'm not ready to face those truths yet.

Now it's time to just take some practical steps in the right direction and keep moving forward.

First things first: have my wife have the password to the computer so I can't just spend a whole day zoning out, and also it's easier to escape, just close the damn thing!

And last things last: One! Day! At! A! Time!

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Re: On the way... Again

Posted by hopefulposek - 23 Mar 2025 00:46

Was a hard week, and just spent the day feeling depressed and alone, white knuckling to not drink or watch movies. It's hard to see the light in the future when things are rough. I'm feeling unfulfilled and not productive as well as losing hope that I'll ever get better and be able to function in society the way I would like to. I wish I could reclaim those feelings of being relaxed and free which I had six months ago.

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Re: On the way... Again

Posted by hopefulposek - 16 Apr 2025 01:06

it's been a while since I posted and I've sort of fallen out of the forums, I want to try to get reconnected on here, especially over pesach when I don't have my regular support system. Plan to spend 20 minutes in the morning for the rest of chol hamoed posting and connecting on the forums.

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Re: On the way... Again

Posted by hopefulposek - 16 Apr 2025 17:11

feeling a bit frustrated right now, upset with my family's dysfunction, and scared that I see my father in myself and the way he would get frustrated when things wouldn't go well, I have to not keep my thoughts inside and expect others to read my mind, thats not fair to myself or them.

I spent some time reading through the old posts on my thread and while it's good to see the growth I had it is also scary that the feelings and thoughts I am struggling with now I was struggling with a year ago.

It's not easy to get clarity in how I want to live my life, but some words that came out in a conversation with a GYE friend yesterday may be helpful: I can choose to recommit to the fight and recovering, or I can give up and accept drinking lust as part of my lifestyle. Theres no real middle option, relapsing and then picking up the fight later is pointless, I will just have to go through the same painful choices and situations that I face now, and I'm not lacking the strength to make them whichcould be a svarah to push it off.

Both choices involve pain, frustration and loneliness. However only the second option, that of fighting and committing to recovery from lust and from the emotional damage I've been subjected to (both from others and myself) also allows for a life of living the values that I hold of, and filled with accomplishment and connection. Yes there will be pain but there will also be progress and reward for that pain. I want to try to do some work on that (I started SA so I think of it as step 1 work but honestly I think it's clarity that everyone needs no matter their level of struggle)

We're going out today am I am going to try visualization on the ride there, this is a tool that helped me grow a lot in the past but has gotten rusty, time to polish it up and use it again.

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Re: On the way... Again

Posted by hopefulposek - 18 Apr 2025 00:55

I have a cold, so everything takes longer and my nose hurts. didn't do anything today just slept in and relaxed the whole day, finally went for a walk at 5 oclock just to get outside. But i did have a nice conversation with a GYE friend about dealing with frustration which is something we both struggle with. an Idea that came out was that there are really 2 things to work on, 1) not responding to pain and discomfort with frustration and anger, and learning how to properly communicate in these situations. I honestly struggle finding a way to tell my wife and family members that they're being retarded and hurting me with their words.

Still feeling a bit lost on this whole sugyah but, oh well, part of life is confusion.

I'm still struggling with whether to give up this whole fight and just live a life of chasing lust. it actually sounds very depressing when i think about it. I just don't have a lot of life satisfaction right now and many days are filled with pain and frustration. I don't see the beauty in living a clean life. I've slowly cut out all my escape methods and now just walk around regretting the decisions I made.

I think I have to go back to choice theory, it's up to me. no one is forcing me not to watch movies, noe one is forcing me not to drink, and no one is forcing me not to watch porn. Hashem gave me bechirah and part of being human is having the ability to choose to do things, thats part of the gadlus ha'adam (I think).

So right now I made it basically impossible for me to watch movies or watch porn, not literally impossible but basically. so am I really choosing not to act out and consume lust or escape, or did I just set things up that I can't leading to frustration and feelings of being trapped. And which is better?

Is it better to have the ability to access porn and escape methods and therefore face more of a challenge (pbviously with some filters in the way so you don't have easy access and can stop yourself in times of weakness and also so you don't get triggered unnecesarily) or is it better to have ironclad systems in place that no matter what you are unable to watch porn or masturbate or watch movies (I'm imagining basically an ankle bracelet and a bodygaurd who follows you everywhere even into the bathroom)?

I assume the first option is better honestly and maybe I just have to be real with myself about whether I have access and whether I'm just choosing not to pursue it. Really I could go into a store buy a cheap smartphone and a repaid plan and have pornography in all of 10 minutes, but I choose not to. with movies it's a bit more complicated. I'm not willing to pay \$200 for a couple hours of relaxing distraction but I don't really consider it free choice.

I don't know a bit to much philosophy for me.

Bottom line is I want to stop, i want to live a clean life full of satisfaction and accomplishment. I need to find the satisfaction in my life right now embedded in this battle and continuing to function (albeit on a low level) despite putting tremendous kochos into this battle and my personal therapy work, as well as talking to the people who were in the same situation I am in now and found freedom and happiness in life.

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Re: On the way... Again

Posted by hopefulposek - 18 Apr 2025 13:52

still have a cold, it really knocks me out. Haven't had much time to think since posting last night, but some self introspection: I should try to take some time to read newcomers posts and respond, a key part of recovery is helping others so I can't just get away with posting on my thread, and keeping in touch with the group of guys I'm already contacting, I have to continue to reach out to the new guys which is hard for me just to find the time to do it.

After my last fall, where I found a way around the filter on computer to access inappropriate materials I had my wife put a password on the computer so I couldn't use it without her. I'm thinking of taking that off, it was good to do right after a fall so I didn't continue falling and spiral back into active addiction, but as I posted about before I don't think it's healthy for me not to have free choice when it comes to movies even if some do contain nonkosherness. I know this sounds a bit off and I wouldn't quickly advice others to do this, I just feel that for me where I am right now it would be positive. Anyway its not really nogeiah until after the chag.

I had started to write up everything I had learned over the years about this struggle but fell out of it once I couldn't use my computer. I hope to find time to get back to that and hopefully share some of it on here.

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