

starting my battle

Posted by hoping - 03 Jun 2009 03:02

I have just discovered this site two days ago and I think this is the first time in years that I really think that I can do Teshuva for my sins. I have been masturbating for 20 years and I have tried to stop countless times. Aside from my terrible addiction, I have been quite succesful in other areas of my life. I am what some people consideer a solid Kollel yungerman and I have a wonderful marriage. However, every step of my life has been tainted with my feeling that I am disgusting and that if anyone new the real me, they would run the other way. I have tried to stop in the past but I have always fallen down, often to a worse point than where I was initially. I one time made it all the way from Yom Kippur until Taanis Esther. That night I had a wet dream and woke up feeling so degraded that I instantly plunged deeply, falling to depths that I had not been to in years.

Because my addiction is not so strong, I have difficulty marking success with the passage of days. I would love some Chizuk from people who have dealt with similar situations and I think that I would benefit from some advice on hitting the bottom while still on top. I am ready to fight and I cannot be successful without the support of this forum. please help!

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Re: starting my battle

Posted by Dov - 15 Jun 2009 22:35

Hoping - Mesilas yeshorim starts with "yesod hachassidus veshoresh ha-avodah hatemimah" and he explains what the foundation and root are. yet later (or before, I don't remember) he writes that the true chassidus is "rochok mitziur sichleinu" meaning we can't even imagine what it'd look like, if we tried. Not a contradiction? It seems that having a good goal is necessary, even though you don't *really* know what it'd be like to live like that!

Actually, he may be telling us that if our **big** goals in life are things we see and can relate to, we are cheating ourselves. Besides, what happens inside when you reach the 90 day goal? (remember the agadeta about the chazzan wgo stopped and the chochom asked him, "So, are you *done* praising hashem?") How many days are enough? What happens then? Rather than having a goal of 90 days, 100 days or whatever, why not make your goal having proper awareness of Hashem all the time (yirah), or living for giving (ahava), or something like that. Sounds good to me. Then set about getting there by being sober each day and growing in the steps. Can't get there if I'm not sober... If this doesn't help, sorry. if it does, your welcome!!

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Re: starting my battle

Posted by the.guard - 15 Jun 2009 23:00

Dov, you're head and shoulders above us on this forum, like I explained recently in reply #38 on [this page](#) (where I explained why). For those who can truly understand what you are saying - and what you've been saying all along, then yes - 90 days is perhaps not necessary. However, for most us here, perhaps ALL of us, "90 days is a **great** motivator" as Barditchiver just put it. And we're in the "motivating" business here on GYE. :D

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Re: starting my battle

Posted by hoping - 16 Jun 2009 12:28

Just a short post for today. I am happy to be at 17 days. I am trying to internalize Dov's Hadracha.

I have been trying to work on step 3 of the 12 steps and haven't gottten very far. I will continue to focus on it's ideals and hope I will have some clarity.

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Re: starting my battle

Posted by Momo - 17 Jun 2009 12:26

Hoping,

I'm also having problems with step 3. It seems like a magical sort of thing. If you get any tips, I'd be happy to read them as well. I'll follow this thread to see if anybody responds to your request for more information about step 3.

By the way, I wanted to let you know that I've read through your entire blog, and I am proud of what you've accomplished so far. Chazak ve'ematz!

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Re: starting my battle

Posted by hoping - 17 Jun 2009 18:21

Thanks Momo for the Chizuk. I have spent much time just thinking about step 3 but have still gotten nowhere. B'H I am on Day 18 but I really wish that I knew what to do next. I am afraid that if I stagnate, I will eventually become complacent. i need to be able to progress in the 12 steps and being stuck on step 3 isn't very reassuring. Any ideas?

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Re: starting my battle

Posted by aaron4 - 17 Jun 2009 18:57

Rather than having a goal of 90 days, 100 days or whatever, why not make your goal having proper awareness of Hashem all the time (yirah), or living for giving (ahava), or something like that. Sounds good to me. Then set about getting there by being sober each day and growing in the steps. Can't get there if I'm not sober...

Mind boggling, as usual. There is no contradiction between big goals and small goals, they're one and the same. You try to live properly TODAY. Living properly is a BIG goal, doing so for TODAY is a SMALL goal. And living properly can mean different things on different days, so long as it includes sobriety as a start. That way you can progress in your big goal (getting progressively better at living properly with Hashem) ONE DAY AT A TIME.

Wow.

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Re: starting my battle

Posted by Efshar Letaken - 17 Jun 2009 20:52

Yup! I think that's one of Reb Dov's Great Quotes.

E.L.

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Re: starting my battle

Posted by the.guard - 17 Jun 2009 21:08

To Hoping and Momo who are having trouble with step 3, and to Ahron who always wanted this... We are about to announce two new 12-Step phone conference groups, along with on-line step work. One will be run by Boruch, and one by Duvid Chaim. I had a conference call with them today (and Elya K) and we are almost done fleshing out the details.

Get ready for some major life-changes once you start learning how to REALLY work the steps from the PROFFESIONALS!!

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Re: starting my battle

Posted by hoping - 17 Jun 2009 23:13

Thank you guard. I can't wait!

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Re: starting my battle

Posted by Momo - 18 Jun 2009 05:53

Sounds fantastic!

By the way, last night I read through a lot of the Back 2 Basics version of the 12 steps. Step 3 mentioned there that we need to change the focus of our lives from being selfish and self-centered to being G-d centered. For religious Jews, that doesn't sound so hard. The mitzvot, davening, and brachot should keep us G-d focused throughout our day.

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Re: starting my battle

Posted by hoping - 19 Jun 2009 12:56

B"H I am up to 20 days. I am feeling the difference in my life. Now, if I can only internalize those 12 steps....

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Re: starting my battle

Posted by the.guard - 20 Jun 2009 21:55

Dear Hoping,

Mazal Tov on passing Level 3. I updated your chart to 20 days! I have seen many people come and go on this forum, but your attitude and determination show me that this "hoping" of yours is going to become a reality!

For religious Jews, that doesn't sound so hard. The mitzvot, davening, and brachot should keep us G-d focused throughout our day.

Momo, you are starting to touch on to the "core" of why Hashem gave us all the Mitzvos! See [this page](#)...

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Re: starting my battle

Posted by hoping - 21 Jun 2009 13:48

After a few posts complaining about the difficulty I was having with step 3, I am happy to report that I have made some progress. I know that everything that i am writing here has been written before but I feel the need to post my feelings.

For a long time, I have tried to become a better Eved Hashem by overwhelming myself with Torah and Mitzvos. I learned a lot and tried to bo Chesed. I continued to wonder why I could not force away my attraction to lust. Sometimes, during a particularly good period, I could force myself to do the right thing for days or even weeks. Eventually, however, my problem would come roaring back full force. Even as I was posting on this thread recently and trying to understand step 3, I was taking a similar approach. I was going to bring G-d into **my** life, and that would force everything else out. My efforts were futile. It was like taking a container filled with rocks and putting it under a stream, hoping that the water would fill the container and force the rocks out. No matter how much water flowed in, the rocks remained inside and the excess water just spilled on the floor. I finally realized that my main effort should go to removing the rocks. My main focus has to be the realization that I had to remove my own will from the process. Allowing the stream of Hashem's Siyata Dishmaya to fill me will come easily once I remove my rock-like will. I think that this is the reason why Yissurim (lo aleinu) bring people closer to Hashem. They only show us the limitations of our own control. Once we have that, recognition of Hashem comes easily.

I cannot say that I have reached he goal of Level 3, but I can finally say that I feel like I have begun the journey.

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Re: starting my battle

Posted by Dov - 21 Jun 2009 16:58

Dear hoping,

What a deher! Thank you! You remind me of the vort of the Kotzker (I think) which I have quoted before, that Hashem is **wherever people let Him in**. We cannot force deveikus. It is a gift we usually get after **we make room for Him**, as you put so nicely in your post.

Brachos help me a lot in this, as they are another excuse for talking to Hashem. Talking to Him frequently - not to force or "get" anything - just to make room for Him, is like watering our 3rd step. Hatzlacha!

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