

Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 13 Jul 2009 21:08

I'm new to this forum, but not new to this struggle. I signed up to the weekly E-mail lists a few months ago. I often just glance at them, as I'm trying not to spend so much time reading E-mails. But, even with this, I have gotten chizuk through the themes that keep repeating themselves.

I grew up secular, but did Teshuva in college--I came to Yeshiva in Israel and never left. Now I'm married with five children (our oldest is eight and our youngest is a month old).

I was in the habit of staring at girls, I remember even in nursery school. I just liked the way they looked. Things got worse when I was 10 or 11. My sisters had a "facts of life" book with indecent pictures and crooked ideas, and I found it. It described Mast... as a fun thing to do, and so I followed the instructions. I've been stuck ever since.

I was a member of a shul youth group around the age of my bar-mitzvah. The youth group leader gained my trust very early on, and I could discuss anything with him. Luckily, I learned early on that mast... is wrong. I've been fighting it ever since, sometimes more successfully and sometimes less so. I think now I go two or three months clean, and then I tend to trip up a few times close together. I always feel that the yeitzer hara tricked me, and somehow it's strategy was different than last time. Also, I view it as tripping up for one "phase," instead of multiple times. So, I manage not to get too depressed about it, and can pick myself up again pretty quickly.

I would like to be able to stop altogether. But, I am more concerned with controlling my eyes. I feel that it is impossible to walk down the street without taking a look at every woman along the way. I think the trickiest part is that, in my neighborhood, everyone is dressed so tznius that it's hard to feel that I'm really doing anything wrong.

Besides that, I slip up every once in a while with the internet--probably a few times a year. But then, I feel that I was somehow outsmarted again by my Yeitzer. I wasn't looking for indecent pictures... I was just curious about such-and-such an actress... I wasn't expecting to find such indecent pictures...

I see the progress is still very slow on my own, and that's why I decided to become more involved in this forum.

But, I find this is also a challenge. I think my own situation is rather mild, and I find that by seeing other people's stories which are more involved than my own, I end up getting thoughts instead of getting rid of them. Any advice on this point would also be helpful. Thanks.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 13 Jan 2011 19:49

Hello. A lot has happened since my last update. Life feels like a roller coaster lately, ups and downs, and dramatically so.

On my last report, I mentioned that I was machine-gunned by my wife and I felt hopeless. During that conversation with my wife, I actually tried to keep in mind, "I'm trying to be humble. I'm trying to listen. I'm taking this to heart. It's good to know what's really bothering my wife; now I know what I need to do differently." And it was fine. I actually felt a big relief, in a funny sort of way.

But then the next morning, Friday morning, I went over it in my head. It seems that everything I do, from the moment I wake up, until the time I go to bed, is wrong! I'm supposed to change everything! That's what got me feeling really down.

At some point I mentioned to my wife, "I feel like everything I do is wrong, no matter what." She responded that, the problem wasn't really so big. "Just, if I happen to wake up five times during the night with the kids, you should be flexible enough to stay home and watch them in the morning and go to a later minyan." It was this, just when the need arises, under those extenuating circumstances, I should be on the look out and be able to be more flexible. She's not really asking for nonstop superhuman help.

I think, before that comment, on Shabbos afternoon, I had a realization. I tried talking to Hashem--it's something we're supposed to do more of as part of our recovery. But, for me, talking to Hashem in the past has always felt like I'm reciting a grocery list. What exactly am I

supposed to put on this grocery list? And then, how often can I repeat this grocery list without feeling like an idiot? Or, at best, talking to Hashem has felt like I'm really trying to talk out a problem to myself in hopes of coming up with some sort of solution. And I would call this "talking to Hashem."

But, talking to Hashem, we're supposed to put our focus outside our heads. It's supposed to feel like there's someone outside ourselves, and we're talking to that person. What do you say? An honest request for guidance--I have no idea what's best, please let me know what I should do. Also, we can daven for other people's well-fare. We can daven for the strength and the resources to carry out Hashem's will--whatever that may be and I have no idea yet!

So, after all that, two things came to mind. One, even if I have to radically change my whole self, I don't have to change my entire life right now. I only have to change for today, to start with, and I think I could handle that. Secondly, I was walking to mincha, or back from mincha, on a nice sunny Shabbos afternoon. I got the feeling--well, today has been pretty good. I haven't been delinquent, I haven't neglected my wife's needs, and I have been helpful today in some of the ways she has asked for. So, I just got a feeling of simcha, feeling that, even though it seemed like an overwhelming demand, life was, in actuality, going well.

So RID was disarmed.

Briefly.

Two days ago I was working at the computer. The computer started to malfunction. I got really angry, and slipped right away. A big slip. I was searching desperately for images on the internet but, due to my filter's high security settings (among other things, "search" is a blocked keyword again), I didn't find anything that qualifies, officially, as p*rn. I assumed I slipped because of my frustration with the computer. But, I thought it was strange I slipped so quickly and so badly. I had absolutely no resistance.

Later that day, I met with a friend (we've been meeting regularly and working through the white book). I just opened up to him, and admitted my slip, and poured out all the emotions behind it. In doing so, to my surprise, lots of other sources of RID came to the surface. Aha! No wonder I slipped so fast. Not only did the computer malfunction. I was RIDdled with resentment, as I was working on a job that I would rather not do but felt obligated to do it. And I was RIDdled with fears, after a long stretch of not finding work, I finally got a project which I'm quite happy

about which is as good a project as I could hope to get (except it's really short-term). I've felt for such a long time--if only I found some work, then our financial situation would stabilize. But, here I am with such a job, and when all is said and done the pay doesn't seem worth it. Like I finally got to the end of a long road, like I-95, and realized it was a dead-end. So, this was a big source of RID.

Besides uncovering this RID, my friend gave me a concrete plan of action, steps I can take to move forward. This was very helpful.

Later on, I reached a few other fellows from DC's 12-step calls. They helped me talk out the issues with my wife some more, and also drew on their own work experience to give me some pointers for my own work.

Now, I called a few different people and couldn't reach them. Afterwards, I was able to reach one of them. In the past, I've had this feeling, "NOW I HAVE THE SOLUTION, IT WOULD BE STUPID TO KEEP ON DISCUSSING THE PROBLEM." But, you know what? These are big problems. It doesn't hurt to run through it again with someone else, to dig it up again, and gain from their perspective, too. In fact, if this problem has been such a big source of RID, I probably NEED help from a few different people to fully overcome it and move on. So, though I already spoke to someone, I called back those other fellows whom I had left messages with.

Since then, I have started to feel some more urges, quite strongly. Just when I thought I got to the bottom of something, it seems that I was overlooking something else, something just as significant.

Lust enters the mind so quickly, and it seems like such a pleasurable solution. It's reliable, it's familiar, and convenient.

I need to fill myself up with true, healthy sources of pleasure. But, it seems so awkward. Such an effort. It feels like my mind's default setting is LUST LUST LUST.

My mind easily wanders to lust, to acting out. Yet, it takes such effort to think of positive things. I keep coming up with the same stupid flower or sunset. It feels so cliché. For some reason, I don't feel like I get nearly as much pleasure from observing all the natural wonders packed

within an orange or a flower as I do from forbidden flights of fancy.

Besides all this, my wife and I got a little playful very recently. As far as I can tell, she started it, but I got carried away. I ended up having Z.L. I feel like I should have known better, and this has got me really confused again. I feel like I'm still searching for stuff on the internet, and still having Z.L. I sort of feel like, despite everything, I haven't really gotten anywhere, and like I'm not getting anywhere.

--Eye.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 13 Jan 2011 20:23

wow, Eye, lots of stuff going on.

you mentioned a very important idea and strategy. living for today, not trying to 'fix' my whole life right now. just live better right now.

even if we sometimes stumble and fall and we wonder if we made any improvement at all, the truth is that you have a beautiful chunk of time in which you lived clean and more importantly you have the tools and techniques to help yourself. You have the friends and support. You have the program.

you made lots and lots of progress. of course you didn't hit perfection yet, but that wasn't the goal.

thanks for sharing all that, it helps me and i imagine it helps you to write it down as well.

zemms

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by ur-a-jew - 13 Jan 2011 20:43

[Eye.nonymous wrote on 13 Jan 2011 19:49:](#)

I sort of feel like, despite everything, I haven't really gotten anywhere, and like I'm not getting anywhere.

Eye, if all of us would make on a consistent basis the chesbon hanefesh that you've made in this post (and many prior ones), the world would be a far far better place. You're climbing very high and it would be a shame to think otherwise.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by yehoshua - 14 Jan 2011 08:02

Hey Dude, feels like you are on the right track. Digging deeper and deeper in search of the solution for today. And that is a good reason for l'chaim!

Yeah and maybe Bards can give out some free icreams also ;D

Man, I know it might sound macho like, which I am not. I am a wannabe. I am truly blessed with my wife and man I would take a bullet for her (as the Americans say), she is worth it. But just yesterday she was nervous, tired, helpless and she made it seem like it's all my fault. So of

course I gave her some of her medicine, then she started to cry and I was so sorry. I understood right on that spot, she just needs my help. She is strong all day long and now she just needs my smile and my words, that it will be ok and that I will do everything in my power to make her happy and help us out. So I did, Hashem did. Baruch Hashem.

Man, would you believe the smile.

Love, even though we are just small little human beings, our love can move worlds. I saw it yesterday, man I sure would like to see it today.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by yehoshua - 17 Jan 2011 08:47

Hey, Eye how are you doing?

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 17 Jan 2011 20:14

Busy, thanks for asking. I try to write here a bit whenever I get a chance.

--Eye.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 19 Jan 2011 21:15

After working on the computer, it may be 11 at night or later. That's when I usually turn to the forum (if I managed to get right to work and not use the forum beforehand). And, I've got K9 set

to turn off internet access at 11:30.

Anyways, lately I've been opening up the forum. Then, I realize, "Hey, I really ought to go say hello to my wife while we're both still awake."

So with that, I haven't posted the past few nights, and I'm not going to write much more now either.

--Eye.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 19 Jan 2011 21:20

good, wise and important advice

thanks for sharing that

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by ToAdd - 20 Jan 2011 12:20

So basically, you're human too.

One step at a time.

The climb isn't a constant one. We're treading up a mountain with plateaus and steep gradients.

Sometimes we get a view of where we've come from

And sometimes we can't see anything at all.

Sometimes we get hit extra hard because we're about to gain new ground

Other times we're feeling growing pains after having found new insights.

Sometimes we feel we aren't moving at all, but in relation to what?

We can sit down and rest or we can move.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by yehoshua - 20 Jan 2011 15:18

Well taking a rest isn't quitting! ;D

I have been to one very big mountain one time (ok, not so big, areound 2700m), but high for me cos you gotta klimb too.... Anyway, we stopped many times before we got to the top and then we had to come down also!

You know what I mean.

I mean, you work so hard to achieve something and then finally you achieve it. YEEAAAH. But then there is still the road back home. It's no biggy, in mountains it's normal, but here in daily work (struggle), we sometimes forget to go home.

Hope you are in a gewaaaaaaaaaaldiger moooood Eye the Man!!!

All the best!

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 20 Jan 2011 20:51

My wife once said that it's not the dishes she needs my help with. It's my time, to figure out how to manage and organize the house better. I foolishly assumed this means that, if I do the dishes, it doesn't matter to her. Lately I've started, the few minutes before breakfast, or a few minutes after dinner, to help out with some of the dishes. I feel different about it now. It's not a little task I'm doing to pay off some sort of debt or so that my wife should appreciate me. I'm doing it as a little token to show I appreciate my wife and would like to help. It has become a part of a larger change in my attitude, trying to be overall more helpful.

Last night we made a little T"U B'shvat celebration. We were supposed to eat dinner at six, finish off with a little T"U B'shvat fruit, and then get back to schedule, back to work. Instead, my wife had taken two of our kids to the doctor. I was going to make the DC call, and we were going to reconvene at 8 for our T"U B'shvat celebration. I hoped everything would be ready. So, at 8, everything wasn't ready. Instead of getting frustrated, I asked if there was anything I could help with. I accepted that I might not get a chance to work much this evening, and that's okay. I was patient. Instead of grumbling and complaining, I felt very inspired. I thought of all sorts of divrei Torah for the kids related to fruit and T"U B'shvat, and thought of a few songs, too. We had a really nice time. I got to work about 9:30 and didn't get much work done, but I felt satisfied knowing I had done the right thing.

Not too long ago I started a discussion after one of the DC calls about guarding our eyes on the street (DC had a substitute that day). I was wondering if it has become a habit, and we need something other than the 12-step tools to overcome it. People had a lot of ideas to offer. One was, work on becoming more aware of Hashem as you walk down the street. One fellow said that he realized "Why am I interested in this woman? Because I'm not thinking of my own wife." And, by thinking about his own wife, appreciating her, he didn't feel a need to look at the women on the street.

I'll add another point. At a teacher's meeting a few weeks ago, I found one of the teachers really attractive. Since then, I have seen her on a couple of other occasions. At the teacher's meeting, she was all dressed up in shabbos clothes and a shabbos sheitel. Since then, I have only seen her in plain weekday clothes with a snood on her head. I don't even recognize her. I

have taken a good look, and I can't believe I found her so attractive before. Where is she?

So, this is an interesting way to look at it. These women that I find so attractive, if they were just wearing something tacky today, I wouldn't be interested.

--Eye.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by an honest mouse - 20 Jan 2011 23:16

great work EYE! I know what you mean about the teacher story - I sometimes remind myself that the attractive women in the street are only attractive because of the clothes they are wearing, the sheitel or the makeup.

Hevel hayoifi means beauty is smoke, it's not really there, it's just an appearance without mamoshus. It's an important yesoid to remember while walking the streets - thanks for the reminder!

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 30 Jan 2011 12:45

I've had a few more thoughts about those women on the street.

I have tried to fathom the absurdity of it, of what's going on inside my mind. Without much eggageration, what's going on in my subcouncious, is that these women **MUST** be getting all dressed up in the morning with only one thought on their minds, "What should I wear today so that Eye. will think I'm attractive." And, that's absurd.

In truth, they really don't want to be looked at, and certainly not by me.

How can I think of them as human beings. I have tried, "realize they are human beings," but this doesn't help much. But, I have tried thinking, "What if this person were a man?" I wouldn't be staring, and that's obvious. OKAY, so why am I staring, because of lust. This helps sometimes.

Also, when I was a kid there was an episode of Jeopardy in which one of the questions, or answers, or however it works, "A gentleman looks t THIS part of a woman." The question was, "What is, her face." I guess it was something from some novelist or something. I was maybe in 7th grade. So, I really took that to heart, and thought I was somehow above all my low-life peers. BUT, I heard someone say recently, that looking into someone's face, into their eyes, is a HUGE breach of boundaries. And, maybe, perhaps, it's a bigger violation of privacy than looking at anything else. So, I took this to heart. What Jeapordy had taught me was "gentlemanly" is really really really the utmost violation of privacy. Which is also a low-life thing to do.

--Eye.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by sci1977 - 31 Jan 2011 15:33

Hello my friend. KUTGW!!

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