

Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count

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

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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 (Elyah) official count

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 09 Aug 2011 19:40

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"My imagine came up with a new way to act out" AND THAT'S WHAT I DID! (Sorry for not being clear).

It DID involve zera l'vatala. But it happened so fast I thought I could excuse it as just a slip. I thought I wasn't really at fault. After going through the details with a sponsor, the conclusion was that it truly was a fall. I did intentionally touch myself in an inappropriate way, though brief as it may have been.

On the other hand, I had an incident recently which also involved zera l'vatala, but, after consultation with my sponsor, it did not constitute a fall. I had not done anything intentionally to bring it on; I was reacting to a sudden, and strong external stimulus over which I had no control. But it was actually this incident that made me want to come clean and admit the earlier incident.

I have a very low tolerance, and can sometimes go from a slight inappropriate thought or touch right to zera l'vatala without any time for it to register.

--Elyah

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count

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Posted by Dov - 10 Aug 2011 01:11

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Dear Elyah,

This response will be short because I am very hungry and checked the site before eating. (my stomach is a lot faster than my brain!)

Funny, I have such a low tolerance that I do not even need to have an erection - if I actively lust, then I will get to zera levatola very quickly anyhow. The tolerance I used to have was looking at schmutz for hours and going to dirty places for hours, before 'doing the deed'. During my first year or two sober, I started to become unable to actively lust for more than a minute....I'd feel myself getting to that point of no return sooner and sooner.

Over the ensuing years, my ability to actively lust has grown even shorter. Now I cannot generally even tell a lie without feeling 'something down there' - and it is not sexual, just dishonest. I assume that it my program working the way Hashem intends it. For it is bringing me farther and farther away from acting out.

Incidentally, I say "actively lusting", because it seems to me that a parade of sluts in front of me will not do anything to me now. I cannot be **made** to lust. Lusting is not seeing nudity - it is **lusting**, and I can surrender that whenever I want, and be free with His help...if I really want it.

I am very conscious to avoid being mekasheh atzmi l'daas. But id that happens not attached to any lust that I am aware of, I have no problem with it, at all, and do not 'wish it away' - it is obviously physical and not sexual or lust oriented. If I were guilty about *that*, I'd be in the toilet long ago. It would be playing into the hands of the YH, my addiction, or whatever you'd like to call it...

And incidentally #2, I can still function completely normally with my wife in a sexual way. This, it seems, is because being with my wife is interpreted as something entirely different to my body and heart.

Hey, we are growing. We do not need to understand and explain all this stuff. But it is clearly a

brocha from Hashem, for our sensitivity keeps us that much farther away from lust.

Boy, am I hungry....

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count  
Posted by Back on Track - 10 Aug 2011 02:04

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Elyah, now I understand more clearly. You are a man of integrity to admit your fall here.I wish you only more serenity and piece of mnd in sobriety.

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count  
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 10 Aug 2011 12:07

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[Back on Track wrote on 10 Aug 2011 02:04:](#)

Elyah, now I understand more clearly. You are a man of integrity to admit your fall here.I wish you only more serenity and piece of mnd in sobriety.

...and I'm going to have to admit it in person at the next meeting I go to.

--Elyah

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count  
Posted by Back on Track - 10 Aug 2011 12:10

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All the more then that this adds to your 'living the solution'

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count  
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 18 Aug 2011 05:42

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I'm on bein hazmanim now, and so are all the kids. So, we're busy doing family activities (fighting and yelling and screaming and various contact sports, such as hitting and smacking and wacking and potching).

I'm not using the computer much, and, it's hard to believe, but I don't really miss it all that much either.

--Elyah

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count  
Posted by Back on Track - 18 Aug 2011 12:59

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Keep it up elyah

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count  
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 22 Aug 2011 17:54

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...seriously, my wife and I have been very bold in planning our vacation activities. We've been less afraid to try new things--to travel to new places with the kids, less paranoid about spending a little bit of money on things other than groceries, and less worried about "what will happen if we're off schedule and all the kids go to bed a couple hours past their bed-time G-d forbid!"

We've been trying to do a little something every day--even just a hot-dog barbeque, and we also planned a couple of nature hikes with the kids, and yesterday we went on a trip somewhere just because "the kids wanted to ride the train." We ended up in a nice park with a little lake and paddle-boats and pony rides--which was all a nice bonus to the train ride and, overall, we all had a great time. We are giving our kids some really good memories, and also showing them that their parents care about them and want to spend some time together and enjoy it.

I think this is all possible only because of recovery. Even a year ago, or even six months ago, I would have just sat around waiting for vacation to be over, kvetching that everything costs too much.

--Elyah

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count  
Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 22 Aug 2011 18:06

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great to hear you doing well, Elyah, thanks for sharing that

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count  
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 22 Aug 2011 18:25

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I'm been treading on some new territory lately, regarding my wife and I. I think it's a good development.

Just as a preface: I'm not trying to focus on her faults and her problems and what she does wrong. I am trying to focus on my part in things, and what I need to do in order to be less selfish and more considerate.

However, some recurring things come up which really pushes my buttons. I think it's even more significant because, as the wife of an addict, my wife probably has some co-dependant tendencies. There are a few things she does which makes me feel like I just got an undeserved major slap in the face, and makes me want to crawl away into the darkness and escape life.

I remember in my chosson pre-marriage classes, one thing that I was taught was "how to have a good fight"--as my chosson rebbi put it, "it's inevitable there will be some fights; what matters is how you handle them."

Basically, if something happens that you're angry about, DON'T SAY ANYTHING ON THE SPOT. You're too angry and you'll over-react. Wait until you're calm, and then bring up a discussion. But, there's another danger--after a couple of days go by, we start to think, "Hey, it was really no big deal. It doesn't bother me anymore. I'll just forget about it." But, it really DOES bother us, so when it happens again, and again, and again, we then BLOW UP way out of proportion, because we're reacting to a dozen times we were upset, instead of just the one current incident. SO, make sure to bring up the discussion. THEN, keep the discussion local, in the present, and don't involve other people, either. DON'T mention ALL the times YOU NEVER squeezed the toothpaste from the bottom (just for example), AND BY THE WAY you can't cook either, AND A FINAL THING... you're mother's ugly too! Talk ONLY about now, the one thing that just happened, between the two of you. Another rule was, if the discussion starts going around in circles, call it quits for now--it's a sign that one of you, or both of you, have had a temporary cerebral shut-down; continuing the discussion won't be productive. (There were a couple of other guidelines, but I forget them at the moment. I think I've mentioned the main ones.)

So, following these guidelines, I thought I should mention to my wife that I'm upset.

I was successful today, I think. I was out of my head, flexible, and willing in an instant to do something with the kids which they had been wanting to do for a while. The opportunity arose and we seized it (I was inclined to take a 3-hour nap this afternoon instead. We were out late last night, and tonight I have to pull another late night). I thought this was a good accomplishment. I mentioned to my wife, "well, the kids have been wanting to do this for a while." Her reply was, quite sarcastically, "WELL, THERE ARE A LOT OF THINGS I'VE WANTED TO DO; AND YOU HAVEN'T DONE THEM." She was referring to home repairs, and

all sorts of other technical things, I assume. I was hurt. Instead of being happy for managing to get out of my head and spend some time with the kids, I was suddenly feeling doubly-guilty. I davened for Hashem to remove my resentments and self-centeredness (I've been using this tactic quite a bit lately, especially asking Hashem to help me surrender my lust to Him).

Should I ignore this? After all, considering the facts, it IS true. But, I really felt this back-handed insult is really not healthy in our marriage. I really think it may very well be an abusive, though subtle, dynamic. I wanted to tell my wife, "THIS IS ABUSIVE; YOU'RE ALWAYS GIVING ME THESE BACK-HANDED INSULTS AND IT'S TIME YOU STOP. WHATEVER I DO IS NEVER GOOD ENOUGH, AND NEVER DONE QUITE RIGHT. I'M FED UP. YOU'RE SICK AND YOU NEED HELP!" I was fuming.

But, after I davened for Hashem to remove my anger, and after I remembered the guidelines for how to have a good fight, I decided I really should still say something. But, it was like this, "I felt really hurt by your comment this afternoon; I think it was a back-handed insult and I think it was completely uncalled for. What you said may very well be true, but I think you can find a way to make your point without knocking me down."

My wife said she was sorry right after that.

I think it's a good development, being able to express feelings, even negative ones sometimes.

And, I do think, although as addicts we are usually the culprits, in some ways we are also victims (as our spouses may actually have co-dependent tendencies, which is a sickness unto itself), and I think it's okay to keep an eye out for those moments and speak up (but, again, I wouldn't go overboard with this.)

--Elyah

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count  
Posted by gibbor120 - 22 Aug 2011 18:38

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Elyah, very well articulated. You may or may not feel it, but you are a GIANT. I can relate to a lot of what you said.

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count  
Posted by gibbor120 - 22 Aug 2011 18:40

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Elyah, I also find that when I just let go and don't stress so much, I can have a great time.

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count  
Posted by Back on Track - 22 Aug 2011 20:11

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elyah i also havent done a million things aroundmy house that my wife wanted me to get done. i think it has more to do with our being males and not much to do with addiction. Males ahve a tendeny to procrastinate on the home expenditures that ladies like.

on the backhanded comment note: i know how you feel. I dontthink my wife puts it quite like that, but I am at times really hurt feeling like whatevre i do is not enough.

you seemed to have put it into the right context though in expressing it to her. I think that learning to verbalize your poit of view is not only a part of recovery, but a part of life. it is impossible to never be disatisfied with something. Though we strive for taht ideal (and we should always seek to improve on it) it is part of being human to learn to express our dislikes appropriately.

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count  
Posted by the.guard - 22 Aug 2011 21:22

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You may have been right in mentioning this to her... but... see this piece and you might decide

[www.guardureyes.com/GUE/Images/galanti.gif](http://www.guardureyes.com/GUE/Images/galanti.gif)  
against it next time

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