

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 (Elyah) official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 04 Jan 2012 07:33

I just wrote someone a recap of my story. I thought it would be nice to include it here, too:

I joined the forum around 2 1/2 years ago. Joined the Duvid Chaim calls about 2 years ago. And, about 1/2 year ago, I joined live SA meetings.

I became religious in mid-college. Now I am married with 5 kids, living in Israel, learning in kollel, and looking for work.

I discovered M*sturbation as a little kid, and when I hit bar mitzvah I learned from a shul youth group director that I should stop this. He talked to me lots and lots about these issues, and made the comparison to a drug addiction, but I didn't quite understand the full depth of that comparison (I don't think he did, either). It all helped me to slow down, I think, but I couldn't stop. I was in a turmoil of emotions at that time, and I think this youth group director very well may have saved my life by giving me time and attention and respect (I thought often of killing myself).

Back to the lust: I thought I had scattered problems with different triggers and I was always trying to find techniques and tricks and strategies to stop. I was relieved when I came to GYE and learned that it all stems from one source--a LUST addiction. That made the struggle much easier; I just had to be on the lookout for LUST instead of fighting against dozens of different behaviors.

I started to become aware of the thoughts in my head, and seemingly unrelated bad feelings, which drove me--eventually, to lust. I learned from Dov on the forum, "Live in the solution, not in the problem." I grappled with that for a week or two until I figured out what it really meant, and how to apply it to life.

I realized, in time, more and more subtle bad feelings which were driving the lust. The more I discovered, as it's easier to deal with uptight-ness than it is to resist a p*rn sight just one click away, my falls became much less frequent. I was battling my emotions, not p*rn.

When I joined DC's calls, a lot more things fell into place. He goes through the AA big book, and shows EXACTLY which feelings are cropping up that feeds the lust, and PRACTICAL TOOLS for how to deal with these feelings--the 12 steps, a precise plan of recovery.

At that point, I felt I was really starting to change as a person. My wife even said, "When you were on the forum, it was helping, but these phone calls are REALLY helping."

I fell after 7 months of sobriety (twice). On the last fall, I realized that I didn't have a strong enough support system; if I had been in more regular contact with real live people, I felt it would have made a difference. So then I joined the live 12-step program here in Israel. It took me a while to get used to it. Duvid Chaim walks everyone through the steps on his calls. The live meeting work totally differently (at least the ones I have attended). You go to meetings more for that sense of fellowship, and you work the steps with a sponsor.

On this Friday, G-d willing, I shall match my longest clean streak ever-211 days. (Hopefully, on Shabbos, I will surpass it). But, one day at a time.

I have grown up a bit as a result of the steps. I still am equally unemployed as I have basically been for way too long. But, I am calm, and I am seeking to change my life and to find real employment.

I am much more able to help out my wife and children. I can be more flexible about things, an about my goals and expectations in general.

I feel much more comfortable around people. Not nearly 100% yet, but much better than I've ever been. I speak regularly to family members, calling them without a second-thought, whom I used to agonize before picking up the phone for fear I would have nothing to say due to our differences and their limitations. Many rifts have been closed up.

I still have a long journey ahead, but I feel I am in a very good place today and that I am moving in a very good direction.

--Elyah

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by KiviYVY - 04 Jan 2012 14:58

R' Eye,

Just wanted to say that I've been quietly reading your posts on this thread and this last one with your recap is a work of art. Your life is a work of art, B"H. It's so clear the RBSH"O is present in your life. His miracles are obvious and ever present. May you continue to live with Him always!

YVY/Kivi

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 04 Jan 2012 16:10

thank you Elyah for sharing. your journey is truly remarkable. wishing you much continued success

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by obormottel - 05 Jan 2012 16:41

I, too, read all your posts, here and elsewhere. Thanks for giving us the history behind your remarkable input on this forum.

I plunged into live meetings within three months of finding the GYE, and it has been a blessing.

Thanks for all the inspiration.

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 06 Jan 2012 08:08

211 days today, one day at a time.

I just matched my longest clean streak.

This morning I had a very unpleasant exchange with one of the neighbors regarding a matter that has been over our heads for a couple of years. We are nearing a resolution to the problem, but we need this neighbor's cooperation. He agreed at first, but now is becoming less cooperative.

I admit I am angry about this whole thing. But, it's not throwing me completely off-balance like it definitely would have before recovery. I would have been ranting and raving and fuming all day, probably for a couple of weeks straight.

I am trying now to patiently take the next logical step. So this won't be resolved as soon as I would like it to be; it will take longer. Perhaps it won't be resolved. I'll try to accept this one day at a time.

--Elyah

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by Dov - 08 Jan 2012 00:38

streak, schmeak.

Trouble with neighbors: this (real life) is where the ikkar - scratch that - *the **only*** stepwork is really done. Go to it, bubi. Start writing a bit, sharing a bit, praying a bit, and taking action a bit.

All it takes is a little bit or two, or three...or four..... 8)

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by Blind Beggar - 08 Jan 2012 11:08

Streak shmeak, schshmeak; 211 clean days is awesome! Well done, Elyah.

You, me, Dov and (lehvdil) the Ribono Shel Olam want you to get to 2011 days clean, one day at a time.(Is there any other way?)

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 08 Jan 2012 13:55

I DON'T BELIEVE IT!

Regarding that neighbor, I reached a certain peace of mind by deciding to place my judgements

aside for a week (one day at a time). I decided to let G-d deal with my neighbor, and that I would just try to deal with myself, and make whatever civil hishtadlus was called for.

I also called a friend from the program and he helped me to get a new perspective on the situation.

The neighbor came to our door this afternoon completely willing to do whatever we needed.

I added a word of apology for any unpleasantries there may have been, and now that story is history.

Thank G-d.

--Elyah

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by Dov - 08 Jan 2012 19:18

Day 2011 is worthless and meaningless if I am not sober today. It doesn't matter how many years and years I ever have - the only day that matters and will ever matter, is today. That's what I mean by "streak, schmeak." Sure, it's wonderful! But that's all. It doesn't come even close to being sober **today**. And that's still true even if **today** is my very first day, after terrible years and decades of painful and stupid acting out.

Not an argument - just a way of looking at what I've been given.

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 09 Jan 2012 07:39

That is true, Dov.

I do think, though, there is SOME corrolation between length of sobriety and quality of sobriety, and between the quality of sobriety and length of sobriety, and vice-versa.

Streak, shmeek.

--Elyah

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by Hashem Yaasfeni - 10 Jan 2012 19:58

Streak, shmeek, squeeeeck...

One day at a time, how about make the next goal from 211 to 248 (negative commandments) then to 365, of course as Dov says, one day at a time.

One idea that has been grinding away at me the last few months is the concept of compounded interest, meaning doing very small things but repeatedly, adding a tiny bit at a time, next thing you know its a huge pile !! (could be good like a brimming and growing bank account with tiny deposits, happens rarely, or more usually, its small debt or credit card bill that now is too big to deal with.

in any case lots of small good acts and small growth adds up to big stuff.

For example I am studying only one pasuk with my 12 year old each day. But by the time his bar

mitzvah comes around, he'll be ready for TWO parshas, not one, and so forth...

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by Dov - 10 Jan 2012 21:10

Eyeball dude and Hashem Yaasfeini! You have both been given so much progress since you started here. Just reading your posts from a long time ago...then now. Whew.

Things definitely really change over time and the days do add up to something good. It's just that I need to see that in *hindsight only*, never in foresight, that's all....

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 11 Jan 2012 07:13

[dov wrote on 10 Jan 2012 21:10:](#)

Things definitely really change over time and the days do add up to something good. It's just that I need to see that in *hindsight only*, never in foresight, that's all....

Thankyou for clarifying.

--Elyah

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by yehoshua - 11 Jan 2012 09:40

Elyah

you gave your story in a nutshell and I feel the essence, humility. Thank you for that post!

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