

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 ur-a-jew - 20 Apr 2012 03:18

Sounds kind of like recovery. Can I never watch a movie again in my life? Sounds hugely impossible. Can I never watch a movie for the next two years? How many time did I fail that. But can I not watch for a day? That's doable. I do that at least once a week on Shabbos. Can I do 7 days in a row? Yeah that's manageable too. Even a month seems not too bad. So let me try that. Well what will be in a month. Assuming I'm alive I can deal with it then. Right now I have a small manageable and doable goal. (And its almost 2 years later already).
Thanks for the insights and continued hatzlacha.

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by 1daat - 20 Apr 2012 06:20

Hi Eye,

Beautiful story. Your kids have no idea what their Tah went through to get them to the hike. But some day they will have kids, and when they have to get up from the couch when their exhausted, they'll remember, and they'll understand what their Tatti did, and what a wonderful dad you are. They are blessed like us--I don't even know when I'm being blessed. Kol Hakovod!!!

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by yehoshua - 24 Apr 2012 06:17

How great is a man who feels strong and does good, but how greater is a man who feels week and does good.

But is form really useless, without content? If we listen to that week voice, remaing sober, then that seems to have true content.

We travel far for a smile. ;D

You rock Elya!

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 01 May 2012 20:44

I have a job now where I have to do a fair amount of internet searches to verify information. I have been unsuccessful in any attempts to block Google image searches and yet leave regular Google searches open. Especially since I have gotten very frustrated at times while getting used to this new job, I have found the internet to be very challenging.

But then I remembered YIDDLEIT, a search engine developed by GYE which doesn't have the option of image searches. I have set this as my home page in Internet Explorer and also in Firefox (which I use less frequently). It is helpful not having an IMAGE SEARCH link right there in front of my face whenever I do an internet search, especially at moments when I feel weak.

Yes, the solution is what's in my head and filters and fences are not the answer.

But still, they help.

--Elyah

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 02 May 2012 06:03

I just started this new job, which is work-from-home, but the employees keep in touch with each other via social media. Many of the other employees are women working from home. Except for when I was a kid and when there were local BBS's instead of the WWW, I have not done any chatting with anyone on-line (or off-line, for that matter). I really have nothing to do with any women in the course of my day.

And here I'm suddenly in a conversation with a whole bunch of them.

The point is to discuss work-related problems and help each other out in that respect, but I feel that it's so easy to start crossing those subtle lines into conversations more personal in nature. I definitely feel a pull, and excitement to it.

So, I need to be careful. I shared at a meeting soon afterwards, and wrote to someone on this forum for some help setting up guidelines, and I've called some other friends from recovery, and I wanted to post about it, too.

Also, I felt it was necessary to share with my wife. But, I felt it was wise to tone it down, "I'm concerned, because I'm really not supposed to be involved with social media."

I feel the whole idea has got less of a hold on me now, but I wanted to share it here, too.

I suspect that almost any guy in almost any work environment has got to deal with similar issues.

Any ideas, or chizzuk, would be greatly appreciated.

--Elyah

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 02 May 2012 11:33

I was speaking to someone the other day who would honestly be dead if not for SA. I mentioned how I am trying to find more people to contact so when I need to I can reach out for help.

He said, "I have a suggestion for you. When you feel you need help, reach out to help someone else." I have tried this, and it has been very helpful.

So, that got me thinking. As I have been moving along in recovery, I have become more aware of my unpleasant feelings at increasingly subtle levels. I have been taking the signal, earlier and earlier, to deal with them--to call someone and share what's going on in my head. This has definitely been helpful.

However, the problem is deeper, subtler--why do I have these unpleasant feelings? Because I have turned my focus too much on myself. The antidote to deal with this more at the root is, turn my focus towards helping others.

I came across something very interesting lately in a sefer Derech Hamelech (by the author of Chovos HaTalmidim). To paraphrase, as far as I understood, it said that dreams, even when they are divinely inspired, are limited in that the message is conveyed to a person through imagery he is familiar with--images from his everyday experience. So, no matter how lofty the message is in essence, the appearance will be as mundane as the person's thoughts are all day long.

In the same way, we receive little signals, little spiritual awakenings, throughout the day. However, they are cloaked in whatever thoughts we usually occupy ourselves with. If a person is full of worry and despair, then whatever Divine sparks are revealed to him will appear as yet more worry and despair.

I never understood how my lusting for women is actually a sign that I am yearning to be closer to Hashem. But, this explains it--since I obsess about women all the time, so whatever spiritual awakenings I have, will appear to me as these same sort of thoughts. The same is true of my fears and resentments, and any of the emotions I experience.

And, in a different sefer (B'nei Machshava Tova, and perhaps elsewhere in Derech Hamelech), this same author writes that, if a person accustoms himself to think in this way all the time he may be mistaken about many of these feelings--thinking they are tiny sparks of Divine revelation when really they are not--but at least once in a while he will be correct, and it is worth it just for that!

--Elyah

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by mifatfait - 04 May 2012 07:20

Elyah, You never cease to amaze me wiht your'e constant perseverance.

Gut Shabbos.

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 04 May 2012 08:21

Yesterday I got totally angry. I felt that, even though I tried to let go of the anger, I kept going back to it. I was furious.

I stopped last night and did some writing about it. I realized that it has been too long since the last time I had done such writing (last file was about a month ago). A lot of things have been building up, even even little things left unattended to will add together and result in lots of anger.

I tried not to get too upset with myself about it, I am moving forward, and I need to write more often.

I think, despite what I wrote before (the need to turn our focus on other people), it is also important to keep tabs on what's going on inside of ourselves. In fact, this has basically been the basis of my approach for as long as I've been here and it has been working. So, I could add that I should also try to focus on helping other people, but I don't think I should forget about myself entirely. At least not at this stage in the game.

--Elyah

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 04 May 2012 08:26

Regarding the social media, I was confused and excited with the new experience. After talking about it with a bunch of people, I have come up with clear guidelines.

Basically, I have no need to use this social media unless I have a technical question that is job-related.

I should not have any private chats with anyone in the group.

I deleted one contact which I had accepted an invitation from, and just said I thought it would be better to communicate only through the group chat.

I feel that I'm in a much safer place about the whole matter now. But still, I need to keep tabs on this situation--if I see these guidelines aren't sufficient, I will have to take more severe measures.

--Elyah

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 10 May 2012 06:03

Today I am eleven months and one day clean, one day at a time, thank G-d.

--Elyah

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by jewish jew - 10 May 2012 07:22

WOW!!!

I don't think you need my support after going clean for so long, but KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!!!

JJ

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by Blind Beggar - 10 May 2012 08:40

[Eye.nonymous wrote on 01 May 2012 20:44:](#)

I have a job now where I have to do a fair amount of internet searches to verify information. I have been unsuccessful in any attempts to block Google image searches and yet leave regular Google searches open. Especially since I have gotten very frustrated at times while getting used to this new job, I have found the internet to be very challenging.

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--Elyah

Check out this Yiddle! It is powered by Google which is the best search engine in existence and you can have links *on the page* for Gmail, Google Docs (or Drive) etc. And you can raise money for GYE by using it.

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by yehoshua - 25 May 2012 07:22

How is it going Elya?

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 28 May 2012 15:34

[yehoshua wrote on 25 May 2012 07:22:](#)

How is it going Elya?

Thanks for asking. I've been around, but just spending more time on the "Additional Tools for recovery thread."

I've been extremely busy lately. Started a new work-from-home job, which is a good work experience for me in being responsible and disciplined. It's not exactly my dream job, but I see it as at least being a start.

It's actually kinda routine and doesn't involve that much creativity and individual expression. I thought I would hate such a job but, ironically, I find that I am enjoying it. Just being routine and getting the work done. It takes a lot of pressure off, and gets rid of a lot of the ego involved, in just doing something that is basically mechanical in nature.

I think it's a very good and healthy step as far as recovery goes (and my wife is equally surprised, but is equally in agreement about the benefits of this).

--Elyah

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