My Clean Days Log
Posted by ??? ???? ???? ??? - 27 Jan 2020 01:01

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Hello GYE Forum.

I will mark my progress in this topic called, "My Clean Days Log." Thanks for any and all support and encouragement.

I will attempt to post a meaningful text (most often religious, but maybe secular as well) to accompany my journey. Comments on the texts are appreciated as well.

Day 1:

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My translation tonight: G-d does not bring down humanity with clever ploys (Avodah Zarah 3a).

Namely, the *mitzvos* that we must keep are doable and are not impossible tasks. As hard as they may seem sometimes, the *mitzvos* of *kedusha* are not clever ploys to trip up humanity, but rather they are achievable *mitzvos*. I believe in the eternity of the Torah and its applicability and relevance to every generation, most importantly this one and my life. It would then follow that I can accomplish great growth in the area of *kedusha* and that I can work to push back against the *yetzer hara*.

Thanks for reading!

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Re: My Clean Days Log
Posted by DavidT - 27 Jan 2020 01:37

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Thanks for reading!

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We hope that this is the last time you're counting "day 1"

The Ramban explains that the purpose of challenge and adversity is to force a person to bring his strengths min hako'ach el hapo'el — from potential to actuality. In other words, the job of the yetzer hara (which is the satan) is to say: "Let us test him so that he can actualize his potential." This is not malicious. It is pushing man to achieve in the world. The yetzer hara may set up roadblocks in our path, but he, too, is a malach, a messenger of Hashem, and he wants us to overcome the roadblock and grow from the experience.

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Re: My Clean Days Log
Posted by ??? ???? ???? ??? - 28 Jan 2020 00:47

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Day 2:

I made it to Day 2. Hurrah.

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My translation tonight: Rav Kahana said [the source is] from here, "and you shall keep my protective fence,"? make a protective fence around my protective fence.

This is my current story: I have two devices: laptop and smartphone. I have GenTech Solution filtering on both. On the smartphone, I can't access any browsers. On my laptop, I can use a browser, but I have many categories blocked including all streaming websites (such as YouTube). I also have a photo filter that either doesn't load the photo or loads it distorted if it detects a person in the picture. Left to my own devices (pun intended), I cannot access pornography. That is awesome!

Problem is that my wife doesn't want any filtering software on her devices. She doesn't see why she needs them if they are her devices. My solution has been to demand that she has a lock on her smartphone and laptop. A password that I can't know. She isn't very sensitive to me seeing it and I will ask her to change it if I see what the password is. There are still times where she unlocks her computer for me. Sometimes, I will have a legitimate excuse to use her machine and then...

She saw me watching videos on YouTube on her computer at a ridiculous hour in the morning the other night. Good thing she saw me at that time and not... The next day we spoke about it and I told her from here on in you cannot allow me to use your computer. "I end up wasting so much time." She agreed. We've tried this in the past and it hasn't worked. There will always be some reason for me to fix her computer or do something where I end up using her device unaccompanied.

I want to tell her that I have used her devices to look at pornography. I am not embarrassed to say it to her. If the *Ribbono Shel Olam* knows, she can know too. It's not like it's a secret. I'm willing to be vulnerable and I know that once she knows, she'll never let me use her devices again or she'll actually get a filter. Problem is that it's a huge risk. Who knows what her actual reaction will be? She may feel hurt. She may believe that I am not sexually attracted to her. She may feel that I have not been loyal. She may not understand and who knows what that will do to our marriage.

A few years ago, I told her in graphic terms that having unfiltered access to the internet is like having a *zonah* on your couch every night tempting you more and more and more... She got it, but she still doesn't get it all the way. I'm not sure she really understood that I was trying to tell her my own struggle.

Anyway, that's my story. As long as I stay off of her machine, I'm fine. If I am home alone, I can't access her machine. If she doesn't open it for me and sticks to her word never to let me use her devices again, I have no access to pornography. It's not perfect, but I hope with the support that I have already gotten from GYE and this forum, that I will be able to get to 90 days and beyond.

Thanks for reading!

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Re: My Clean Days Log
Posted by DavidT - 28 Jan 2020 02:21

Just a quick note about telling your wife, according to to Rabbi Shafier on theshmuz.com/series/the-fight/ , it's generally better not to tell the wife because they will not understand and the consequences might be devastating. Unless telling them is part of the recovery plan and you know your wife's nature and the status of your relationship is very strong.

Also, it's suggested that you consult a Rav or Rebbetzin that know your wife and can guide you in the best way to tell her, and how to explain to her what all these changes going on in your life are. But two things need to happen before that:

#1) You must be clean for a long period of time so your mind can be somewhat clear when talking about these matters, and the change that you're making must have been noticed by your wife. You will see that as you get less selfish & think more of her, she will open up & become a different person, and then you can actually have this discussion.

#2) You need to find either a Rav, Rosh Yeshiva who your wife respects & who is well versed in today's nisyonos, or a therapist if possible, so they can be a little 'eye opener' for your wife.

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Re: My Clean Days Log
Posted by ??? ???? ???? ??? - 31 Jan 2020 14:35

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Still clean. Day #5.

It has been a very busy week for me which has been greatly helpful!

????? ????? ???? ???? (?????? ??:)

?Idleness leads to licentiousness (Kesubos 59b)

I don't want to suggest that if we keep busy, that will take away all of our struggles. That would be the *yetzer hara* speaking. But it certainly helps and we can all relate to this Chazal. There have been so many times where we had no intention of looking at pornography or masturbating, but we were bored or unoccupied and then one thing leads to the next.

Thanks for reading this.

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Re: My Clean Days Log
Posted by ??? ???? ???? ??? - 02 Feb 2020 14:58

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Still clean. Day #7.

I am proud to say that there were a few times this week where my wife's unfiltered devices were left unlocked and I immediately locked them or put them in sleep mode (which would then require a password which I don't know).

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Rabbi Eliezer says: Repent one day before your death. Rabbi Eliezer's students asked him: But does a person know the day on which he will die? He said to them: All the more so one should repent today lest he die tomorrow; and by following this advice one will spend his entire life in a state of repentance. And King Solomon also said in his wisdom, "At all times your clothes should be white, and oil shall not be absent from upon your head." (Shabbos 153a)

What a powerful statement of Rabbi Eliezer! The way that I relate to it is the following. If I would be on my deathbed right now, what would I be thinking about? What would I be proud of? What would be my "if only..." statements? Would I be feeling guilty? Ashamed? Having the frame of mind that that day could be tonight or tomorrow is quite powerful. There is no waiting to get these struggles in order. The time is now.

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Re: My Clean Days Log
Posted by Fightingaddictionnow - 02 Feb 2020 18:36

So inspiring to follow on your journey. I'm having a really difficult day and came on here for some inspiration. This was it!

You're doing amazing and it's incredible to hear how serious you've been in setting up fences for yourself. May hashem help you and all of us to continue following your example!

Keep us updated ??

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Re: My Clean Days Log
Posted by Mark18 - 02 Feb 2020 19:53

??? ???? ???? ??? wrote on 02 Feb 2020 14:58**:**

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I dont know if you can fully appreciate it but 7 days is huge for many/most of your brothers here who can sometimes struggle hour by hour myself included. This is far from a small accomplishment! Keep strong our brother and give us all a brocha to stay strong as well.

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Re: My Clean Days Log
Posted by Mark18 - 02 Feb 2020 20:00

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I dont know if you can fully appreciate what 7 days clean really is. This is huge may/most of us struggle day by day and hour by hour like myself to stay clean. The malachim in shomayim are cheering you on right now and Hashem himself is saying how proud He is of his son for staying clean this past week. This is no joke. Keep strong our brother and give us all a brocha to be strong as well despite the struggle.

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Re: My Clean Days Log
Posted by ??? ???? ???? ??? - 03 Feb 2020 00:18

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Fightingaddictionnow wrote on 02 Feb 2020 18:36**:**

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Mark18 wrote on 02 Feb 2020 20:00**:**

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I have been dealing with these issues for at least 12 years. I have had successes and failures. The loneliness and shame that I have experienced around these issues is immeasurable. Fightingaddictionnow and Mark18, you holy brothers just undid a lot of that. I am forever grateful and I wish I could embrace you both for real.

You wrote, Mark18, that you don't know if I can fully appreciate being clean for a week. The answer is that I can't. In all of my years struggling, I have never appreciated and felt good about the days, weeks, months, years free of these *aveiros*. I have always placed my trust in the reward that waits for me after I die, but I never have felt good. Plain and *pashut*. Being real. However, reading these two posts made me honestly feel good for the first time for this 7-day period of no inappropriate activity. Thank you so much for this gift.

For the text:

??? ?? ???? ????? ?????? ???? ??? (????? ??:?)

Man will help his friend, and to his brother he will say, “Be strong!” (Isaiah 41:6)

Please keep helping and saying "be strong" and I will do the same. *Hashem* should bless us all with the strength needed to meet all of the *nisyonos* in our lives.

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Re: My Clean Days Log
Posted by DavidT - 03 Feb 2020 02:19

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??? ???? ???? ??? wrote on 02 Feb 2020 14:58**:**

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Your posts are from the best in my opinion. I hope other people who struggle are reading them and growing along with you. My feeling is that you're on the way to true full recovery and one day you'll be one of the top mentors here...

keep it up!

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Re: My Clean Days Log
Posted by Fightingaddictionnow - 03 Feb 2020 23:10

Once again back here for inspiration and you don't disappoint. Beautiful words and definitely right back at you.

Keep at it ??

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Re: My Clean Days Log
Posted by ??? ???? ???? ??? - 05 Feb 2020 02:09

Day #10. Still clean.

??? ???? ??? [??????] ?? ???, ?? ?????? ????? ????? ???? ?????? ???? ???? ?? ??? ???? ????? ???? (?' ????? ????? ?"?):

?If he will find evil among [his deeds], using his mind he should ponder and determine which method he will employ to turn away from the evil and purify himself (Mesilas Yeshorim, Chapter 3)

For me, the greatest method for these issues has always been to ensure that I don't have access to pornographic or otherwise erotic material. I mentioned in an earlier post about my use of GenTech Solution for my cell phone and laptop. I think it is a great program. I'm sure you all reading have your own greatest methods and ideas as well.

The point I am thinking about today is that, for me, there has to be a method. Early on in my dealing with these struggles, I would "act out," feel ashamed and then simply resolve to not do it again. That didn't work for me.

Blocking access has been my method for many years. My success rate increased greatly. I hope that with the 90 Day Chart, posting on this forum and, of course, your support that I will be able to achieve even greater success.

Hashem should bentsch us all that we should find and utilize our methods to meet all of our nisyonos.

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Re: My Clean Days Log
Posted by ??? ???? ???? ??? - 06 Feb 2020 03:18
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Day 11. Still Clean.

I want to share another element of my story. Perhaps it is relevant to some of you as well.

In the mid-90s, my parents bought me a Game Boy (the retro big gray one!). I then got other video game consoles as well. I watched hours upon hours of television in my childhood. And, of course, the internet. I have spent way, way, way too much time on the internet.

All of the above are tools. Tools for entertainment. Tools for work, research, etc. The problem for me is that they became more than just devices and tools. Being in front of a screen became more like a zone for me. A familiar space and place to spend time.

In my adult life, I don't own any video game consoles (still sometimes wish I had that old retro Game Boy for nostalgia), I don't own a television, and the internet on my laptop is heavily filtered. Yet, I still find myself in front of my laptop clicking away way too much (I am referring to things that are not forbidden and may even have value). I fall into this old rhythm of being in front of the screen.

That is definitely one of the dynamics at play in my struggle. When I do get access to an unfiltered computer, I almost never start looking at pornography. I just enter the familiar place of in front of screen. The screen zone. Then, nebuch, the rest follows.

While I won't count spending a great amount of time on the internet as a fall, I do want to commit myself to using the internet much less than I have been. I will attempt to post about this as well.

???? ???? ????? ???? ??????? ???' (???? ?:??)

Arise, cry out at night in the beginning of the watches... (Lamentations 2:19)

With a heavy heart, I mourn the loss of so much time, specifically at night, that could've been spent productively. I could've been crying out to Hashem in song, in prayer, and in learning. Alas...

Thank you all for reading. Hashem should bentsch us all that we should see time as a precious gift and utilize it to reach our potential.

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Re: My Clean Days Log
Posted by Dave M - 06 Feb 2020 20:07

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Beautifully stated!

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