

Breaking a vicious cycle

Posted by MW - 07 Oct 2008 20:53

This afternoon as I was sitting in my office with not much push to do actual work, I began browsing my favorite websites and probably for the first time in years I stopped in the middle and came to this site instead. The credit is all yours, Guard, Elya and the rest of you.

Here's the cycle that's been working me for years, I'm good and behave for a day or two, sometimes even a week and begin to feel real good about myself, then somehow I am sitting in my office a little bored or unmotivated or in a bad mood or just for the heck of it I begin browsing innocently (supposedly) with intention of just looking, then I can't pull out because I'm already looking and there is no point in backing out now, then I pull myself deeper and deeper until it's too late. It doesn't end there although it should, instead of me picking myself up and moving on with life it always gets harder after because I've already failed once so the original good feeling of motivation is gone and the yetzer hora successfully convinces me that it's not even worth the effort and it won't work anyway etc. and I end up falling multiple times. It's like a ???, every time the same story, if I would only learn to remotivate myself after each failure I would be better off.

I am proud of pulling myself away this afternoon but am pessimistic of my actual ability to pull away from this taava in the long run. Guard, in his chizuk email a few days ago says that the biggest barrier to success is believing you can't succeed, that's absolutely true, but after trying for so many years and failing time and time again, each time falling a little deeper than the time before, sometimes even after a few weeks of sobriety I have a hard time convincing myself that I can succeed. My point here is that although I have had an excellent two weeks (one and half falls, which is still sad but good for me) I cannot post a success story until I am at least two months clean. I hope and pray that that day will come and will surely let you guys know when it does but for now it's hard to pat myself on the back for the one time success a day before Erev Yom Kippur.

Wishing you all gmar chasima tova.

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Re: Breaking a vicious cycle

Posted by me - 08 Oct 2008 10:21

MW,

You must know that you are a viturtual Tzadik for having made the "choice" to come here instead, and in fact, this choice has built an unbelievably strong infrastructure for you to do it again. Once you have done it once, there is no question that you can/will be able to do it again and BUILD upon your new choice and action. I put my hat on for you!

You should know that I relate to your post 100% as I was in the same situation. I would fall, get up, and fall, and get up, and each time the yetzer just squeezed a little bit, I immediately gave in. Why? I too believed that I was no match for him and so....what's the use... I gave up-almost.

And yes, each time I would fall, I would fall a little bit deeper than the previous fall. Then hashem would remove the menuvals grasp from me, until the next time he returned. Then I would fall even deeper then the previous fall. I saw the pattern, and I knew that it was only a matter of time that I would hit rock bottom and be completely out of control. This was a big fear for me, and caused even more anxiety which in turns feed the Y"H. This animal drive somehow makes a person who is over laden with anxiety and depression, to feel as if he is alive. He is, but is all the nefesh habaheimi, not the neshamah.

It was actually the magic words of Guardureyes that helped me when he said that you must realize that this is not just a spiritual matter but also an addiction, and when you look at it as an addiction, then you can treat it. This is what changed the entire light for me. I completely understood that it WAS a great spiritual battle for me, (even more than just addiction), BUT, when in fact relating to it as an addiction, it changed my entire view of this disease-removed my helpless feeling, and allowed me to re-group and tackle it from another angle. b"H I am on the road to recovery, starting my 4th month, and I have no intention of going back to that place again.

Believe me, the menuval is still starting up with me. He flashes ideas, pictures, thoughts into my mind like bolts of lightening, and I flash them right back out. It is not easy, but it is not meant to be easy. This is our avodah. This is what we are meant to be doing in Olam Hazeh..to fight hashem's battle. He almost got me a couple of days ago, but because of my new kabbalah on myself, etc, Hashem saved me in a niflahdikka way.

The most important point here is that:

I also believed that I couldn't beat him: This is Sheker gamor. This thought is the most powerful arsenal of the menuval. Once you buy into this thought, the battle is finished before it even started.

So dear yid, I promise you that you CAN beat him, and the only thing that you are lacking is the changing of this belief that you can't. Change it now, and also make sure that you have the Ratzon (desire) to want to change.

with these 2 ingredients, nothing can stop you...I promise. But, you must WANT this.

One last point: I too use to surf the web out of boredom and anxiety etc, and I too ended up in the wrong places. I noticed this pattern and knew that I could only be on line for business or for a specific kosher goal. Once I fulfilled this goal, then I knew that if I didn't shut down I would get myself in trouble.

BTW- A computer filter (where you don't have the code) is a very very strong item to bring to Yom Hakippur. This is something that hits the menuval where it really hurts.

G'Mar Chasimah Tovah!

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Re: Breaking a vicious cycle
Posted by jack - 08 Oct 2008 13:01

dear mw, i've been there, done that, for 38 years.cycle after cycle, on yom tov, shabbos, after a night of learning on shvuos, etc. as soon as i saw this site and spoke with elya, i knew i was finally ready, because i finally found the people who were willing and able to help me. today is day #36. jack

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Re: Breaking a vicious cycle
Posted by snax - 08 Oct 2008 15:39

Dear MW

First, I'm sure you feel much better now that you posted your thoughts. Daage Blev Ish Yisachenu... the talking itself makes you feel better and especially if you get some good Chizzuk and advice.

Your story sounds familiar as I have also been there. Actually Aseres Yemei Teshuva is one of the hardest times for me. The more Kedusha there is the more Tumah to counteract.

After years of ups and downs, last year I finally managed to go for six months straight clean. I blew it in Aseres Yemei Teshuva. This year I'm up to seven months and the yetzer horah is trying with all his might to get me but he has no success – Hashem should help us further.

What is this year different? GuardUrEyes. It's was very hard to fight by myself. This year I have friends who are helping me out in the fight. The first site I visit is GEU to see if there is anything new and this gives me much strength. One thing I keep telling myself. If heaven forbid I will slip (I'm still only human) I will not let it drag me down.

You too are not alone anymore. We are all here for you and this time we will prevail. What you write

"I'm good and behave for a day or two, sometimes even a week and begin to feel real good about myself"

you have good reason to feel good about yourself. For every minute you refrain from doing it you can pat yourself on your back. Get yourself an anonymous partner and every time you feel a little giddily email him.

A Gmar Chasima Tova – Remember a good year is coming Bezras Hashem.

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Re: Breaking a vicious cycle

Posted by the.guard - 09 Oct 2008 18:25

The fact you stopped yourself recently is not a "won" battle yet, BUT, it shows you are READY for change. There is not much I can add to what these beautiful, precious Yidden have written. One theme you will notice in all these posts is that - WE HAVE ALL BEEN EXACTLY THERE. What you describe is precisely how the vicious cycle of addiction works. My advice to you dear Yid is, to get a partner, join the [Jewish Healing Group](#), get a [fool-proof filter](#), browse [the tips](#) and [chizuk e-mail databases](#), read the [recovery stories](#), and you will see that there is truly hope. **But most importantly, you have joined this holy community.** You are no longer alone. You have the Koach of this whole Tzibur of mighty spiritual warriors. Together we will prevail!

P.S. Without a strong filter though, I must warn you, there is not much hope. No matter how much chizuk you get from us here, or from the website, there will be times in the future when you are weak and vulnerable again. And to have it within hands reach, so easily and so accessible - it just won't work. You can't leave an x-alcoholic alone in a room full of alcoholic beverages for days on end. It is not just a spiritual disease. It is an addiction. And as such, it must be treated appropriately and with wisdom.

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Re: Breaking a vicious cycle

Posted by BentleyJunkie - 10 Oct 2008 23:07

Amazing! We all know how hard it is to pull away right in the middle....

Please, take what guardureyes said about filters with the seriousness it deserves. Don't let the YH tell you that you don't need a filter for any reason. There is no reason that I can think of to not have a internet filter on your computer. I recommend K9 (www.k9webprotection.com/). Its simple and easy to use.

At first, i tried to convince myself that I didnt need a filter, that I could look without going all the way. It just doesnt work like that. Its an addiction, just like guardureyes said. I wouldn't even have access to the filter password. I guess it would be like giving an alcoholic the keys to a locked fridge. The lock isnt much of a barrier when it can be opened whenever the alcoholic wants a drink.

When i didnt have my filter, i could only go a couple days before failing. When installed a filter, but had access to the password, i could go a week at a time before failing. When i gave up access to the password, my first streak was 18 days (chai!) and I'm on my way to breaking that soon enough.

It gives me peace of mind to know that its nearly impossible for me to view the stuff that normally would get me to sin. Imagine how an alcoholic who is 100% committed to overcoming his addiction feels when all around him is alcohol. Its stressful and leads to so much anxiety...because he so desperately wants to overcome his addiction, his mind cannot be at rest unless the alcohol is outside his reach.

Please let us know your views on installing a filter. I hope that you decide to get one...just imagine how far you can go if you didnt have such easy access to that filth.

Good Shabbos! Off to shul!

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Re: Breaking a vicious cycle

Posted by Mevakesh Hashem - 17 Oct 2008 04:16

I am late to this post, so let me just say that reading all of your holy words gives me incredible strength and Chizzuk to persevere.

Mi K'Amcha Yisroel!

Chag Sameach and Chazak V'Ematz my dear and lofty brothers.

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Re: Breaking a vicious cycle

Posted by crakerjak - 20 Oct 2008 13:19

MW,

Your struggle is all too common amongst the contributors to this site. I started using this site when it was launched and have been a different person ever since. Yes, I have had slip ups and have not always had the best of weeks but prior to this site, all I had was myself and my very own gloomy guilt.

The thing is, everyone of us without exception has thought to themselves at some stage right after sinning that when time for reckoning comes we will stand before the Aibishter and say 'you gave me a battle that you knew i couldn't win. Dont blame me G-d, blame him the yetzer hara'.

Those very thoughts are the fine art of the the Yetzer Hara. He knows very well that we're bound to think that way -that why he makes it so easy for us to sin cos we'll not even blame ourselves!

One of the first steps in recovery of any sort is to recognise that what you are doing is wrong. Repetition of a bad thing makes it easier to stomach the next time you do it.

I applaud you for taking the first steps in rectifying the past and starting out for a cleaner purer future. The Y'H is depressed that you got in touch with this site because now your part of a caring family that only want you to be a better person.

All of us here want to see you beat the addiction that we're all trying to beat. We all want to help each other when the going gets tough. We all appreciate that sometimes when we dont post for a while it's because we're embarassed cos we've been acting out. It's not fine to act out. No-one here will tell you its ok to sin. We'll all tell you that slip-ups can be expected but no-one is giving it a hechsher!

by the way, ive been clean from before Rosh Hashana!

Keep up the good work,

Menachem

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