

Marriage + Willpower = My 50 day Streak

Posted by unicode - 03 Jan 2023 23:18

Hello everyone,

I've been using this platform for some time, and honestly haven't read so much in the forums. But in case anyone is looking for Chizuk, I've found that getting married helped me tremendously. That, and my willpower.

Everyone's experience with this will be different, but let me bullet this in an attempt to condense my experience:

- Exposed at 16 by accident from a stupid advertisement.
- Fighting the urge ever since, and feeling guilty every time I succumb.
- Almost 8-9 years in with this addiction.
- Didn't own a smartphone until after Yeshiva, but that didn't stop me from finding other ways.
- I currently use NextDNS.io instead of a regular filter to block bad websites and ads (DNS-level) because I hate the slowness & inconveniences of most filters these days.
- In the past, I would limit the sin to as quickly as possible to get the feeling to go away, and have practiced trying to get only 10 mess-ups a month, then 9 next month, then 8, etc.
- Everything would come crashing down when I failed.
- Personal hardest time of week was Motzei Shabbos/Sunday.
- I tried different alternative outlets (video games, YouTube, etc.), but sometimes got triggered from a single exposed image.
- I also tried focusing less on permanent abstinence and more on 2 weeks at a time, to simulate marriage and Niddah periods.

What changed:

- Having gotten married recently helped me out extremely.
- Only needing to wait 2 weeks in theory is giving my brain practice (like developing a normal food schedule).
- Opening up to my wife about my addiction, though many will find this hard, is also very helpful to me. She is supportive and understanding, and just having that makes me feel so much better. It's that emotional connection that my brain really needed.
- Its actually quite funny because there were several points when I didn't even want Biah, I just wanted intimacy and closeness, hugging, having someone by my side and a supportive companion. That is something you will never get from a video. That emotional closeness is so valuable and priceless, no video will ever be able to come even remotely

close. This is something only an intimate relationship can provide.

I hope someone finds this helpful.

It's important to believe in yourself and love yourself. And to identify your triggers and try to prevent them. But having gotten married, paired with my will to want to succeed and to make my marriage work, has propelled me this far! Thank you Hashem for helping me reach my goal finally!

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Re: Marriage + Willpower = My 50 day Streak
Posted by Eerie - 04 Jan 2023 00:11

Wow! Beautiful! You are amazing in all that you did to get out of the issue. I especially identified with what you wrote about feeling the closeness in the meaningful relationship, something that is non-existent in all that's out there. It's such an important thing to remember, that everything they portray is sheker, totally unlike the real thing, and really missing the main component of a happy, fulfilling marriage. It's so nice to hear it from someone who discovered it! I would just add one word of caution, if I may. I truly hope that you are out of the woods and in a healthy, better place, and I bentch you with my whole heart that it remain that way forever. I would point out that many people have written in the forum how in the beginning of their marriage their issues seemed to have disappeared, only to to reappear at a later date due to some issue that came up. The takeaway? We have to take care of our issues, and not expect the marriage in and of itself to solve our issues. Now, when you are in a good place, is the best time to really strengthen yourself and get rid of the issue, just don't neglect to do that. Keep trucking, my holy friend, and let us know how you are doing!

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Re: Marriage + Willpower = My 50 day Streak
Posted by unicode - 04 Jan 2023 02:14

What is your best advice to keep the momentum going? What would entail taking care of the issue? Therapy?

Thank you!

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Re: Marriage + Willpower = My 50 day Streak
Posted by DavidT - 04 Jan 2023 17:38

[unicode wrote on 04 Jan 2023 02:14:](#)

What is your best advice to keep the momentum going? What would entail taking care of the issue? Therapy?

Thank you!

Based on the facts of many people on this forum, one of the most important points to be able to keep on going strong is to have a good steady connection with other people on this issue and stay away of isolation.

Several times, Hashem repeated, "It is good" in the creation of the world story. Do you remember what broke his streak? When he saw man alone, he said, "It is not good." Sure enough, man got in trouble when he isolated. You need to surround yourself with a few friends, a recovery group, and an accountability partner.

The opposite of addiction is not sobriety - it's CONNECTION. Addiction thrives on isolation! Find someone that you can share your pain and struggles with. And finally, have someone who can cheer you on and celebrate your both big and small wins with you!

As it states in the "Tzetyl Kattan" of the Noam Elimelech:

Find yourself a Rabbi or a good friend that you can share all of your evil thoughts and imaginations that go against the Torah. Don't omit anything because of shame. This breaks the power of the Evil Inclination from influencing you. In addition you will receive good advice from your friend. This is highly worth it.

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Re: Marriage + Willpower = My 50 day Streak
Posted by Eerie - 05 Jan 2023 02:09

[unicode wrote on 04 Jan 2023 02:14:](#)

What is your best advice to keep the momentum going? What would entail taking care of the issue? Therapy?

Thank you!

Hi, my friend! First of all you have the words of our friend DavidT to follow. I want to clarify that I don't know you and maybe you are doing the right things to change your inner landscape, I'm just pointing out the danger in thinking that marriage will be the cure to our issues. How do we cure the issues? 1-there are many useful tools on this website. 2- For me the greatest game changer was reaching out to someone who understood me, understands the issues here, and getting direction. The connection to someone live that you know cares for you, that you can speak to, that gets you, that's a game changer like none other. And someone like that can direct you on how to change your inner landscape. If you'd like some ideas, PM me and I'll share/ hatzlacha, my holy friend, keep trucking!

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Re: Marriage + Willpower = My 50 day Streak
Posted by Markz - 05 Jan 2023 03:27

[DavidT wrote on 04 Jan 2023 17:38:](#)

[unicode wrote on 04 Jan 2023 02:14:](#)

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David, very few people come on asking if therapy is a good idea. When a brother asks and is already interested, I personally believe the right answer is to support and recommend it.

Of course connection is good, but that's one of the things a professional can provide on a regular basis and is one of the core benefits of a therapist (granted it costs, but worthwhile), which isn't always easy to find with trying to partner on gye...

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Oysh!! I'm gonna be in violation of long posts here

Re: Marriage + Willpower = My 50 day Streak

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 05 Jan 2023 12:35

Not disagreeing with Markz, but would just like to point out that recently, a number of the popular therapists dealing with stuff have reached out to some GYE mentors and requested their help with clients, recognizing that therapy often is not enough for guys that need real connection and handholding as they go through this. Having a GYE chaver who is much more available in a tough moment or for daily accountability is something therapists appreciate their clients having. For many guys, knowing they can have a 3 to 5 minute conversation (or sometimes a few texts back and forth) with a chaver on an almost daily basis, is a massive game changer. I believe in a video given out by GYE very recently, a top therapist actually admits that GYE chaverim accomplish things that therapy cannot. So, having a therapist is wise and beneficial, but along with it, some good GYE chaverim can really propel one's hatzlocha to a higher level b'ezras Hashem.

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Re: Marriage + Willpower = My 50 day Streak

Posted by DavidT - 05 Jan 2023 17:58

To add to Rabbi HHM's comments, I once heard from Rabbi Shimon Russell, LCSW that in his practice he found it most beneficial that in addition to therapy, the person should have a Mentor (or partner etc) and a connection to an *Adom Gadol* to assist and guide along the way...

Also, Rabbi Dr. Avraham Twerski once said the following:

In my 40 years of psychiatric experience I can testify that ***traditional psychiatry and psychology are not effective on their own.*** GuardYourEyes provides a variety of anonymous tools, counseling and support for affected people, allowing thousands of Jews to get help. I get an average of five calls a week about this issue, and before GuardYourEyes was around I didn't have where to send people. Their success rate is phenomenal. I am personally aware of many, many people that have been saved.

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