

MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey

Posted by MBJ - 04 Nov 2012 13:48

My heart is pounding out of my chest right now as I put these thoughts on "paper". This is the first time I am being completely honest about my problem, and it is very scary.

I am writing this mostly because I think getting these feelings and thoughts out of my head will be cathartic and if by chance I can help someone else, that would be wonderful.

I have been struggling with this problem for better than 20 years. I started with these thoughts and actions at a very young age. While I can't remember exactly how old I was I am sure I was not yet 10 years old, I think that 8 is a closer approximation. When I got my first computer at age 16 with an internet connection, it got a lot worse.

I went through up and down periods sometimes falling "only" once a week, sometimes everyday. I am still not sure if I would consider myself addicted to p***, but I sure as heck am addicted to m*****. For me the p*** was always a means to an end and not an end itself. As soon as I finished being mZ"l, I would turn off the p*** because I found it disgusting. I only wished I had found it so disgusting 5 minutes earlier.

I tried to stop many times only to fail after a week, two weeks even three weeks. Maybe when I first got married I was able to hold off a little longer, but even that did not stop me forever. It is funny I never davened to Hashem to take away my urge for lust. For some reason I felt that if I didn't stop on my own my Teshuva would be imperfect and I would not be completely forgiven. This past Rosh Hashana I realized that this line of thinking was getting me absolutely nowhere. They say by Neilah, you should take on one Asei and one Lo Ta'asei to work on the coming year. Like a broken record year after year, my Lo Ta'asei was always the same. Clearly my thinking was flawed. This year I davened to Hashem to help me kick this horrible habit. So baruch Hashem, since Erev Yom Kippur I have kept myself pure. I have had 41 clean days now, and I can't believe how easy it has been. Not to say I haven't had temptations, but nothing a small slap in the face and telling myself, "I am not doing anything stupid today" hasn't stymied. In the past my hands would literally start shaking two weeks into my trying to stop with the need for physical relief.

I think I wrote enough for today, hopefully I can update more tomorrow with my 42nd clean day (6 weeks).

Kol Tuv,
MBJ

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey

Posted by MBJ - 11 Nov 2012 08:18

Shavua Tov,

There has been another important factor in my approach this time around, and I think this one has been even more fundamental.

It has been a while, but I remember as a youth thinking, If only I could get married, that I could have all the sex I want and I wouldn't have to mb anymore. Everything would be better if only I could have sex. So then I got married and it did "get better" but not really. Because when you are married, you can't just have sex whenever you want. There are issues like nidda, babies, and of course your wifes interests. So whenever I desired sex, or thought I deserved sex but didn't get it I would act out. Then, as one child became 2, and 2 became 3, and my wife became more tired and drained by the events of the day and I became more and more selfish, she would pull back even further from me. So now we are at the point that we have not been intimate for a very long while. But I am not a complete jerk, so I figured I will give her time. I put a time limit on her at which point I would confront her about her "selfishness". (BTW, that time has not yet arrived)

During this time, almost everytime I felt the urge to bother her I stopped myself. It saved me from pressuring her and it saved me from feeling rejected when she would inevitably reject me. (Which always led me back to p*** and mb.) And I think, that this excersize in self control with respect to her over the past few months has in turn given me that strength and self control this time around. It has also to some extent taught me that I can survive without sex.

48 Days and still breathing.

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by MBJ - 12 Nov 2012 07:53

I had probably my biggest nisayon so far last night and it wasn't from my eyes. It was my nose. A young woman walked past me, I didn't even really see what she looked like, but the smell of her perfume went from my nose straight to my you know what, and it took me a very long time to get myself to calm down and get it off my mind.

Is there a sister site for shemirat ha'af? That YH is one tricky dude. I am coming to grips with my eyes, but my nose I wasn't prepared for.

49 Days

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey

Posted by LookingForwardToChange - 12 Nov 2012 16:04

Thanks for your post!

Like a soldier in the field, which doesn't know what's going to happen next, we have to stay focused and adjust to what ever pops up,

And yes there is a "Nose Clip"

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey

Posted by Dov - 12 Nov 2012 22:32

Beautiful posts and thanks so much for sharing all that, MBJ (whatever your real name is, chaver). Consideration is precious to me and needs work. It means working on loving, and that's where it's at obviously in any real marriage. Sadly, many of us do not participate in real marriages. We play the roles in order to get stuff - so real honest communication is lacking so badly. If we'd really be honest the relationship would fall apart, we reason, because (and this is sensible:) we'd have to say, "I am doing this for you (smiling, complimenting, working, paying attention, etc.) mainly **because** I want you to give me peace, sex, love me back, go shopping without whining, do homework with the kids so I don't have to, etc, etc,.." Nu. This is normal and takes a lot of growing up...which it sounds like you have already done. Boruch Hashem for these things, no?

I want to say it is not your nose, of course, that was your problem, but your lust. That's in the brain, body, whatever you believe. And it is both emotional and mental. We do not succeed when we ignore either. Thinking and figuring it out will not help - for the body knows (awareness which is *da'as*) without any need for thinking (and so, *da'as* is in the neck for it is sort of a middah and sort of a moach).

Continued loving for you and your family, and hatzlocha!!

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey

Posted by MBJ - 15 Nov 2012 11:50

[lookingforwardtochange wrote on 12 Nov 2012 16:04:](#)

Thanks for your post!

Like a soldier in the field, which doesn't know what's going to happen next, we have to stay focused and adjust to what ever pops up,

And yes there is a "Nose Clip".....

You are pulling my leg right?

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by MBJ - 15 Nov 2012 12:06

I have to say dov, alot of what you have said about interpersonal relationships have been 100% on the mark. Over the course of 10 years of marriage, I have tried to be more patient, and more considering with regards to my wife. I think in the past I have made strides in biting my tongue when a sharp retort would only make things escalate like they used to, or to not point out something that bothers me, because really, it isn't worth the fight.

But my recent abstinence, has given me a new level of perspective. It has made me embaressed at some of my past behaviors wrt her. Like I said in my earlier post, I was always upset by her selfishness, now I realize that it was I was being selfish, with my irrational thinking that she owed me anything. The truth is she owes me nothing, it is I who owe her everything. Not to say everything is roses and she doesn't get on my nerves sometimes, but realy life never is so simple.

I just hope one day I have the courage to say sorry to her and that she can actually accept that I am sincere. I mentioned earlier that my relationship with her is not the best it could be. I have been searching for why that is, and I came upon my problem as a possible cause. I have never not wanted to be close to her, but my mb problem I think has made me not understand what it means to me close to her. A big part of me hopes that my successfully quitting porn and mb will fix these problems. I just hope I am not setting myself up for a big fall.

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 15 Nov 2012 15:13

I have to say that I relate alot to this discussion. I have also come to see how my selfishness has affected my Shalom Bayis, and I am working on being more patient and less self-centered with my wife and kids. In the times that i make some progress on it the difference is noticeable. And I have also noticed that when I get lax with my Shmiras Einayim and start slipping, it immediately spills over into being impatient and selfish with her again. Because I am focusing on my own needs and desires again, and acting like a taker instead of a giver.

Oh and BTW.... ;D

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by Dov - 15 Nov 2012 17:03

[MBJ wrote on 15 Nov 2012 12:06:](#)

I have never not wanted to be close to her, but my mb problem I think has made me not understand what it means to me close to her. A big part of me hopes that my successfully quitting porn and mb will fix these problems. I just hope I am not setting myself up for a big fall.

You struck gold, I think. In SA we refer to masturbating as: having sex with ourselves. Can you see that this explains exactly why masturbating yourself creates walls and confusion between husband and wife?

You said it, not me...

PS. And worrying about the future is actually even riskier than 'setting yourself up for a big fall'. So just flow with it, amigo.

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey

Posted by MBJ - 15 Nov 2012 21:55

[dov wrote on 15 Nov 2012 17:03:](#)

PS. And worrying about the future is actually even riskier than 'setting yourself up for a big fall'. So just flow with it, amigo.

Good advice. B"H my not mb has never been this easy in my life. My lack of urges is surprising. I just don't know if that means that I am getting better, or if this is some calm before the storm. I keep waiting for the other shoe to drop. I am afraid that I won't be able to handle it and everything that I have learned or think I have learned about myself and my problem is wrong.

Of course this line of thinking is just going to create a self fulfilling prophecy, but I just can't shake it.

I have to work on not worrying about tomorrow, like you said.

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey

Posted by Dov - 16 Nov 2012 02:11

Worrying about the future is one of my favorite ways out of living in reality: that is, one day at a time. Out of really living **with** Hashem. Dovid Hamelech asks, "Onoh eileich meruchecho, v'onoh mipanecha evrach?" - The answer is: *out of the present*. We frwquently escape into the future or the past...actually, we can live there for years! Gevalt, what a machloh for me.

I used to be a huge worrier. I went to a therapist about 20 years ago because of my porn use, lying and double-life torture and the terrible worrying I was stuck doing came up. He took it very seriously, b"H, and made a suggestion, which I followed. He said to designate a period in the middle of the day as my worrying time. Not a game - for real. Any worries that came up during the day I would decide to worry about only in that period. I could even write them down in a notebook in my pocket and save for that time (it was a 15 minute slot) - but under no circumstances was I going to worry about it at the time it came to mind. I was not surrendering the worries (they were far too precious for me then to give them up) - just postponing them to a real, guaranteed time. I kept that time, b"H, and worried well.

It worked for me very well. I had the luxury of worrying to my hearts content - yet it no longer invaded my day. It was really just a matter of growing up a little. Just a little. Eventually, I could not fill the 15 minutes with pure worrying, and decreased the time to 5 minutes. I really seriously worried then, though. But imagine - **me** worrying *only five minutes a day!* Amazing how good we can get at worrying when we put our minds to it!

I am not joking in any respect, but dead serious about all this.

Just a tool you may choose to use. So here it is.

Hatzlocha!

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by Machshovo Tova - 16 Nov 2012 15:12

Nice piece of advice, Dov. I think the Tanya says something similar (Ch. 26) - to designate a time for worrying and to be besimcha the rest of the day.

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by Dov - 16 Nov 2012 17:25

Not being a Chabadnik I can't claim much knowledge abt that but I do recall reading the michtovim somewhere in the back of the sefer and seeing advice to spend a time before davening to pour out all my sadness and regret, cry as I feel like crying and have no fear of marah shchorah at all...then when it's all out of my system, to come to davening (on time, of course) and let myself be happy and focused on the siddur instead of on myself.

It's a great eitzah, from a great man. **But** Boruch Hashem I never need the advice of a Rebbe/Rebi about recovery. I can learn from the drunks who don't drink. They know far better what really works. And I need to do what works, period. Any other 'research' method is just playing around acting religious, nothing more. Been there, done that...

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by Machshovo Tova - 16 Nov 2012 17:53

ok, ok, calm down...

Have a nice Shabbos (your own way - the 'real' way)

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by MBJ - 17 Nov 2012 21:05

Gut Voch,

I started going over next weeks parsha, and there is a Rashi there that I have read many times, but this year has a new meaning for me.

When Yaakov has his dream and Hashem comes to him as Elokai Avraham and Elokai Yitzchok, and Rashi notes that only because of Yitzchok's blindness does he get that distinction, because he is nichshav k'mais, being he is blind, he has no Yetzer Hara. For the first time I am really sensitive to what a tremendous yetzer hara come in through my eyes.

But the other thing that is so important, how someone without a yetzer hara is k'mais. It is this struggle that we go through everyday to not act like an animal, but rather like a human being that makes us alive.

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