

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 mzf, 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 Dov - 20 Feb 2014 23:27

It's amazing that Hashem can enable *any* addict to be sober for any period of time like 190 days! So true!

But you know I could not care less about the 190 days, 195 days or whatever you or I or anybody is 'up' to. The best day of all to be sober on is always and **only** going to be today, for me. I am very grateful for that. The future and the past are always distracting...and they are also not the present reality.

Thank G-d you and I are sober today!

In fact, it is hard to find the time to be thankful for the days, months, years before today. I am (b"H) too busy being grateful for today and living it.

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by MBJ - 26 Feb 2014 13:21

I am posting this so I don't forget it. If no one gets it that is fine, I have my own cheshbonos.

My marital status is, as always, a matter of record here, and while there are subtle improvements, nothing major has changed. That is the background.

I know how to be a good husband. I may not always be a good husband, but I know how to do it, and when I put in the effort, I know I am doing my job well.

Nevertheless, I always have a huge amount of angst and uncertainty about how to conduct myself in my marriage. Yesterday I finally realized why that is. Like I said I know how to be a good husband, so that is not the source of my confusion. I realized that what I am confused about is how to get my wife to be the wife that I think I deserve. In other words, I don't know how to manipulate my wife to get her to do what I want her to do.

So I found the perfect solution to remove all confusion. DON'T TRY TO CHANGE HER. I can't change her, only she can. My trying to change her only leads to me to doubt and resentment, which are of course the deadly antecedents to lust. Instead of trying to change her, I should just work on making myself better. I should also work on appreciating her as she is, and not as I wish she would be. Lastly, I have to trust that if I do my part, the rest is up to G-d and He will make sure it all works out to my benefit.

Of course, as I have stated elsewhere, my own history proves that when I try to meddle with her to much it always blows up in my face. When I just work on being the best husband I can be, everything goes so much better.

Nothing here is new to me, I just brings me to a new level of appreciation for the motives behind my thoughts, and how I can go about cleaning them up.

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by TehillimZugger - 26 Feb 2014 20:02

Like Rabbi Shais Taub writes or quotes or something regarding a co-dependent [essentially an addict that's not addicted to anything]: Find a person that's outwardly attractive to you, create a personality for her, and STICK TO IT!

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by MBJ - 17 Mar 2014 13:11

Every time that I have the urge to do or say something that I feel will make my wife a better wife, I crush it. I say I'll do that later, next week, next month, maybe never. Not meddling with her is a wonderful thing.

Last night my wife was sitting next to me on the couch, and we were both tired after Purim, she leaned over and rested her head on me. This was the first time in I don't know how many years that she did that without any prompting or urging from me. It was beautiful. I said nothing and did nothing but put my arm over her shoulder. Millimeter by millimeter things are improving, but

only when I am not trying to fix her. Amazing concept.

In a less happy note, I was trying last week to lust like a gentleman. Never a good idea. So I came dangerously close to falling once, and had too strong urges a few other times. I have put that behind me for now having learned my lesson for now. Now I have to make sure that I don't unlearn that lesson.

So many lessons to learn, and so many of them are against my nature. Makes for difficult work. That is why it is good to stay here, it keeps me grounded.

Freilechin Shushan Purim to all the Yerushalmis out there.

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by Dov - 23 Mar 2014 10:40

We lovingly refer to them as "Sweet Kugelheads".

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by yehoshua - 25 Mar 2014 17:31

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by MBJ - 03 Apr 2014 11:21

There is something that I have been mulling over in my head, and I guess I wanted to get it out and see where it takes me.

I started this journey with the lesson that sex is optional. Lust is not like breathing, I don't need it to survive. I won't die without ejaculation. Now I am thinking that this has to go even further.

I know there have been discussions here of "el isheich teshukateich" and that it is not a sexual thing at all, though that is how I always read it. As someone who has not had sex with his wife in almost 3 years, it still rankled me though, despite the fact that it is a general yearning for closeness, and not sex.

Then I listened to Rav Lazer Brody's talk on Dovid Chaim's phone conference. He said a few wonderful things there, but one that really really stuck with me was that when a man yearns for his wife, he reverses the order, he becomes the woman in the relationship. My wife does not want to be married to a woman, she wants to be married to a man. My walking around her like a dog waiting for a pat on the head is a major turn off. So I tried to incorporate this into my life, but I failed. Like I wrote earlier, my wife has become more open to me, but I recently took it further than she wanted and it made her upset, justifiably. I let my penis do the thinking and I got in trouble. I am still craving and yearning for her, her approval, her physical touch yada yada yada.

A few days ago I was surfing YouTube and I came across a speech by R' Manis Friedman. He also was discussing the punishments of Adam and Chava. In talking about Adam he said how his curse was to provide for his family and do it with difficulty. The point he took out of it was that man, or more correctly a husband, is a giver, a provider. It is the very nature of man that he gives and THAT is how he finds his fulfillment. A woman on the other hand is a receiver. (He deliberately differentiated receiver from taker. A receiver has to open themselves up and make themselves vulnerable to accept what the giver is giving.)

Lusting is neither giving nor receiving, it is taking. It is pure selfishness. No one benefits but the luster, and since it goes against what my real nature is as a giver, I find no satisfaction in it, only an emptiness that I think can be filled by even more taking, which really just makes the hole bigger and bigger.

I can get into now what I learned from the Tanya column in the weekly newsletter, that perhaps the tayva and lust is my nefesh habehemis, and the giver is my nefesh eloki. And feeding the behemis is emptiness for my eloki. Maybe I am wrong in that, but it sounds good to me. Chassidus and Tanya is completely foreign to me.

Now to sum up. I am a husband. My wife's desire is for me. If I desire her I am reversing the natural order of things. The constant search for her affection is nothing for me. It will not fulfill me at all. It goes against my very nature. The only thing that can really fulfill me is my giving to her. Lusting is antithetical to who I am as a person. Lusting is not me. Desiring is not me. I am the husband the person who gives. I provide for my wife, I provide for my family. I keep them safe, I provide order in the house. On some level it means I have to maintain an objectivity, an aloofness, because I have to see what people need on their terms, not on my terms. After all the best way to give is to give as they need it, not how I think they need it.

Really, I see this as true, because when my wife and I used to be intimate, all I really wanted was for her to enjoy it. I just wanted her to enjoy it like I thought she should, i.e. what I learned from porn. But I was trying to give and lust at the same time. That doesn't work.

What I am trying to learn now, is that lust is anathema to me. Any form of lust and desire is not just dangerous, not just an allergy, but actually undermining me as a person. The lesson now is not just that I can live without lust, but rather I can't live with it. It is not an option at all. There is no such thing as lusting like a gentleman, since lusting is the polar opposite of what a gentleman is.

So what I am trying to do is give my wife what she desires, what she is open to receive, not like before with the hope that she in turn will give back, but because that is who I am, a giver. It has given me a new attitude, even better than before, when in the back of my mind, was always when will it be my turn. Before GYE my attitude was, it has to be my turn, then it was I can wait for now, but eventually it will be my turn, now I am trying to learn that I don't get a turn, but that is OK, because I don't need one. In essence, when she has her turn I get mine too, since we are like two pieces of a puzzle. I give she receives. A symbiotic relationship, where we both get what we need all the time.

Similarly, all lust from the outside, all foreign women, have to be completely shut off not because it may lead to bigger stuff, it is more basic than that. My chasing after foreign women is directly undermining myself, something I never appreciated before.

This has been pretty long winded, I don't know if people agree with me or not, but I am curious to see where this takes me.

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

Posted by MBJ - 23 Apr 2014 14:18

I am posting this because I don't want to forget it.

After a week of not cutting her nails due to chol hamoed and chag, my wife was sitting on the couch two nights ago cutting her nails. Now for me that brought memmorys of her getting ready for mikvah. It is getting to that time again, though I doubt she will go as she hasn't gone for quite a few month now.

So the last two days has been filled with fantasies of her and me. Last night I was sitting with my son putting him to bed when I was being completely assaulted by fantasies of her and I couldn't push them aside.

So I started thanking Hashem. I thanked Him for giving me such a wonderful wife. I thanked Him for her not having sex with me for 3 years. I thanked Him for helping me stay clean for over 8 months now. I thanked Him for a few other things. The fantasies when away, the frustration went away. b"H I stayed clean for another day.

[REMOVED CONTENT DUE TO BEING EXTRANEIOUS]

One more time. Thank you Hashem for my life, my wife, my family, my job, my sobriety, my health, my everything.

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

Posted by TehillimZugger - 23 Apr 2014 18:48

WOW

WHAT A HEILIGE YID

WHAT AN INSPIRATION TO ALL OF US SEX CRAZED LUNARTICS

THANK YOU

YYASHER KOACH

MAY YOU CONTINUE TO RISE IN AVODAS HASHEM FOR MENNY MENNY YEERZ TO
COME

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by ddmm11219 - 23 Apr 2014 19:12

Wow E.

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Keep it up, in ur zchus, we who are much smaller ?????? pushing thru another clean day.
what a ??? ??? u are making for our Holy ?????? ?? ?????.

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Your Real Friend

A.

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by cordnoy - 24 Apr 2014 09:06

A true inspiration for us mortals.

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

Posted by Pidaini - 25 Apr 2014 01:13

Thank You for sharing!!

I always need a reminder of all the privileges that Hashem bestows upon me. I had a real insight into that over Yom Tov, I'll write it in y thread (sometime soon).

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

Posted by MBJ - 30 Apr 2014 16:02

Full disclosure and honesty are important here so here I go. My last post had two big achievements of maintaining sobriety in them. The first which was my fending off fantasies by thanking Hashem was a wonderful moment for me and I wanted to share it. I wanted to remember and wanted others to see the power of reaching out to Hashem for help. When I started composing that post, that was all I intended to write.

However, when I was typing it up I decided to add another "feat" of mine as a last second addition. (I have since deleted it.) At the time I told myself that I just wanted to illustrate another point of the power of thanking Hashem.

People responded very favorably to my post, and I was flattered. However, since I wrote that post, I was in a bad state. I was horrible with my shemiras eynayim. I was getting frustrated with my wife. I was very short tempered with my wife and kids.

So yesterday I sat down to talk to Hashem to figure out what was going on. Something was

nagging me about my last post, and with Hashem's help I figured it out. I legitimately wrote the first part of my post to help myself and others. The second part however was only written for my kavod (honor). People called me Yosef Hatzadik, a Malach, an inspiration. Oh it was beautiful, I was running after kavod and I caught it. But what does a lust addict like me do when I get the honor that I want? Well, I want more. After all I am such an amazing human being, better than anyone else, I deserve it all. I deserve my wife's affections, I deserve the girl on the street, I deserve anything I want. So I started to spiral out of control.

Thank you Hashem for teaching me another beautiful lesson. Thank you Hashem for letting me learn the lesson before things got too far.

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by cordnoy - 30 Apr 2014 18:15

There are some fellows runnin' away from kavod with their head turned backwards to see if the kavod is 'taka' runnin' after them; you, my friend, are not one of those.

May God continue to be with you and provide you the strength to continuously be an inspiration to all of us.

b'hatzlachah

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