

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 eslaasos - 17 Nov 2015 21:32

Hi MBJ,

Are you asking for advice or just venting?

Either way, I wish you siyata dishmaya and success.

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

Posted by MBJ - 18 Nov 2015 20:52

[eslaasos wrote:](#)

Hi MBJ,

Are you asking for advice or just venting?

Either way, I wish you siyata dishmaya and success.

Just venting. I know what I have to do.

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

Posted by MBJ - 30 Nov 2015 18:21

0 days clean. Feeling very pathetic and despondent. I hate who I am and what I do. But I have no strength to do anything about it. I hate being out of control. Sobriety was so sweet, and acting out just leaves me cold, but I still can't stop. So very frustrating.

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

Posted by Shlomo24 - 30 Nov 2015 19:40

Wow, I feel your pain. Keep coming back... I can almost feel the powerlessness. All we can do is stay committed and ask God to help us. Stay in there my friend.

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by cordnoy - 30 Nov 2015 19:55

Eli,

My heart goes out to you.

Saw this:

Thought some of it might be relevant.

If not, simply disregard.

From what you write, it is apparent that you really do know what to do. You are asking Hashem to show you the way, and you already know that you need to focus on loving yourself - because that's where it all begins.

What does loving yourself mean?

1. Loving yourself means trusting your intuition. Don't silence your inner voice that tells you what's right for you and what's wrong for you. Your neshama is the truest guidance - it will lead the way, so pay attention and follow your inner cues. If something gets you down, then that path is not for you at this time. If something brings great inner joy, peace and serenity, that's for you. So in my work in avodas Hakodesh, I stopped doing things which felt draining or not right for me - despite the fact that I am very talented in those areas, and turned to other things which give me much energy and joy. And I love myself enough not to allow what others expect from me determine what I should be doing with my kocho's.

2. Loving yourself means feeling worthy of all good.

Because your neshama is a piece of Hashem, and your body is the one who actually enables you to serve Hashem, that means that you are worthy of all good : you are worthy of self care - carving out parts of the day to eat well, fill up on spirituality, exercise, unwind etc. - and a mother, the nurturer of her family, needs more self care than anyone else - in fact, to do do less is selfish! You are worthy of not being judged, of being treated with respect, of being appreciated, of being supported emotionally, physically etc. You are worthy of the most loving, caring, compassionate, responsible, trustworthy. spouse on the planet - it's what Hashem wants for everyone, if only they felt worthy of it!

A big part of my healing has been to affirm that I am worthy of all good. So when someone behaves disrespectful towards me, I verbalize "I am worthy being treated with respect" over and over again, until my neshama feels uplifted, and the pain of the interaction is gone; because the only reason I am attracting that kind of interaction is bec. on a subconscious level, I feel unworthy of it. And the amazing thing is that when I do that, I actually attract healthy interactions from the very same pple. that behaved negatively before. And if it happens again, it means that I have not fully healed that aspect of myself, and I need to affirm it again.

What is so powerful about affirmations? Just like we can't just think of the things we daven for - we need to physically verbalize it, bec. it brings down the brachos b'gashmius, and it also affects our neshama on a subconscious level - it is the same with affirmations of worthiness.

3. Loving yourself means stop judging yourself period. Even if you made a mistake and lost your cool, tell yourself " I love you anyways". Notice that harsh voice inside that constantly criticizes you and counteract it with positive loving affirmations. So if you are getting ready for something and feel you are taking too long, and the critical voice says "you're so slow, you take too long " , you say "I am doing a great job and I am worthy of taking as long as I need to do whatever it is that I need to do". (not talking about always holding everyone up while we take our time - talking about the self critic that is doing the best he can, planned ahead as well - and things are just taking longer than expected)

4. Loving yourself means complimenting yourself for every good thing you do (to yourself), and telling yourself I love you.

5. Loving yourself means allowing yourself to be vulnerable. If something is too overwhelming for you, admit it and gracefully accept help (or get more help). You are not less than just because you need help. In fact, you are more than when you accept help bec. then it frees you up to "be" - rather than to perform.

6. Loving yourself means being in touch with all your feelings as they arise. Every time a negative emotion arises in the form of a feeling or even a backache, headache etc., stop what you are doing and be with that feeling - bec. feelings need to be acknowledged - otherwise they take us downhill .

So if I feel a pain in my heart - then I know that it is doubt (it took a while for me to identify what the name of the pain in my heart was - would come and go on and off since the beginning of my journey in healing myself - until finally, I asked Hashem to tell me what it is, and that very same day, I was speaking to someone, and when I said the word "doubt", I felt the pain uplifted) So I take the time to focus on the pain, and I say "You are feeling doubt - and it is safe for you to feel the doubt for as long as it wants to be felt". I stay with it and within a minute, it breaks up and leaves. Sometimes need to do it often bec. I the doubt is quite strong. Affirmations are a must in counteracting doubt - followed by action when needed. So even if I told myself I am worthy of exercising three times a week, I actually must put that on the top of my list - not leave it on the bottom and take care of everything else first.

What is my doubt? I doubt my worthiness. Constant struggle - slowly but surely healing all aspects of feeling unworthy - but there are so many, and so it is quite a journey - and also, need to get stronger and stronger, even in the ones I have come to accept by now.

7. Loving yourself means being your highest self, no matter how others around you are behaving. Why? Because you can't be behaving negatively and loving yourself at the same time, as negative behavior is hurtful to you! For example, if I am angry at someone, that anger is hurting me. I feel horrible inside. And especially when the other person doesn't even know I am angry - then really, I'm only hurting myself - and I can't be hurting myself and loving myself at the same time. So I need to choose - and loving myself is the path to healing, so I will choose to love myself.

That doesn't mean accepting bad behavior. It just means that I leave that understanding at the level of discernment - and I make adjustments accordingly. I evaluate what I will do differently so that I am no longer going to be at the receiving end of this negativity - without allowing it to get to me emotionally.

Should be enough food for thought for now.

May Hashem give you the kochos to persevere - you can do it - and you will BEH.

Besuros Tovos, lot's of love,

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by Dov - 01 Dec 2015 02:44

[MBJ wrote:](#)

0 days clean. Feeling very pathetic and despondent. I hate who I am and what I do. But I have no strength to do anything about it. I hate being out of control. Sobriety was so sweet, and acting out just leaves me cold, but I still can't stop. So very frustrating.

That was very beautiful, sir.

I hope you can appreciate each part of your post separately for it's reality, honesty, and well, just plain beauty. There is a uniquely *human* character to sharing real frustration. Yes, it's a bad situation we are in and sharing of it does not change the facts - but the sharing of it in an honest way is precious. So until things change, at least there is that. I hope you do not lose it due to shame...another great enemy of mine and others that you are turning your back on right here.

Anything I can ever do or share about w u, just let me know by PM or email or phone....

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by MBJ - 01 Dec 2015 17:29

I feel better now of course, magically my craving is lower, I wonder why?

I feel like such a failure. I am a good father, husband, employee. But as an eved Hashem I feel like a waste of space. G-d gave me a precious life and I feel like I am just squandering it, going through the motions, wasting my time with ??????. I feel very disconnected with my higher power. And that is just because I am too lazy to reach out to Him, even though is He right there waiting for me. So many times I won't start something because I have the notion that what is the point. I will either do it wrong or just stop in the middle. I have that feeling because it happens that way most if the time. I have big grand ideas and plans and they never happen.

This last fall has all but convinced me I need to go to SA or at least seriously join a GYE phone conference, I am just spinning my wheels by myself, but I am afraid of the fight that will ensue with my wife. I just dont have the strength. I guess I will just have to bite the bullet and do it.

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by cordnoy - 01 Dec 2015 17:45

[MBJ wrote:](#)

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It would be an honor for us if you would grace us with your presence every once in a while on the afternoon call - 1:20 - 1:45 EST. Today is step 3/4.

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by TalmidChaim - 01 Dec 2015 18:32

[MBJ wrote:](#)

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I know this feeling all too well. It's part of the reason that I have sworn off exuberance, as weird as that sounds. I've been too often scorned by optimism, and grand designs. But I haven't given up, not even close. I've just calibrated my happy-meter a little. Success is great, and you should celebrate it privately, or with the guys here. But, like most things in the addiction realm, there's an *over-doing it* point. For me, that point is where I see myself as somehow more victorious, or a little closer to completely sober, than I was yesterday. It's an indication that, instead of taking things one day at a time, indefinitely, as I should be doing, I've opted for a wider perspective on things.

This pattern, I believe, is responsible for a lack of success in other areas of my life as well; but it is especially pernicious with addiction. In fact (and I'm telling myself this more than anyone else), if you're demoralized, it just means that you're focusing too much on the big picture; otherwise, you'd be right back where you were yesterday, trying again. It's the standard of

success we're using that brings us down emotionally, not the act of failing itself.

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by Lizhensk - 01 Dec 2015 18:33

[MBJ wrote:](#)

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Ahh... the things I have sacrificed for fear of fighting with my wife.

However I can share this, the second I left my wife out of my recovery, I really was able to start working my program. It annoys her, and she likes to show it, but I don't ask her if she's ok with me having a Skype meeting with my sponsor. I know she's not ok with it, and nothing I say will make her ok with it. So now, I just TELL her that I have a Skype meeting. That's it. Its what I have to do to stay sober minute by minute, hour by hour and day by day.

Simple, but not easy. Its difficult not to be sad, angry, resentful, fearful (Thatts a big one for us, FEAR) etc when we are getting the silent treatment for trying to be better people. But it must be done. And the sooner we are able to get past that, the sooner we are able to really start LIVING.

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by eslaasos - 01 Dec 2015 18:35

[MBJ wrote:](#)

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Been there, done that, still getting that d**n T-shirt. I'm sorry that you're right there too.

Whether it's true or not that you're squandering your life I have no idea, but one thing I know is that it's the YH that is telling you so.

MBJ, how about we join davenforme.org - we both need to lose the conviction that we're not succeeding with our life mission, that we can't even be successful. Daven for me and I'll daven for you, as the ~~song~~ Gemara says.

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by yehoshua - 02 Dec 2015 06:30

Holy macaroni, this is the same thing I am struggling with. I can't believe it. So many have this same issue and do it anyway.

I am starting to feel the same way (really the experience - you know what experience means, right). I feel like I have no choice but to join a group even though my wife and child will not like it. All the shame. A psychiater would be normal, but SA? Vow

MBJ you are not a waste of space in my life. Thank you for your honesty, it helps.

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

Posted by Dov - 03 Dec 2015 06:16

I've been sober one day at a time for 18 years thank G-d, and even *my wife* still knows that if I drop my program eventually she won't really have a husband and my children won't really have a father. The sad fact is that culturally, appearances are almost everything to us. So the "really" part means little, and we are too ready to sacrifice our sanity and serenity for hanging onto the respect of the people we are dependent on. Our comfort and convenience win. Nu.

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

Posted by MBJ - 09 Feb 2016 13:53

Hello everyone. Hope you all have been doing well.

I have not posted in a while. I was in a bit of a roller coaster. My last few posts were pretty low. I had some ups and downs. I got going a bit but then fell again. I am back to a better place. I listened to a joe and charlie lecture on youtube. It was really good. I also listened to an OA speaker Lawrie give a big book study and that was also excellent.

I have known for some time that I also have an addiction to food in addition to my lust addiction. I also have an addiction(?) to wasting my time with videos and games. What I have come to understand (again) is that I can't treat the lust and ignore the rest and call myself sober. So I have given myself an eating plan that removes my destructive eating habits. I also erased all my addictive games from my phone. I still watch a bit too much tv alone.

I feel so much better now. I wrote above that I felt like a waste of space. I still do when I waste my time with shtuyot. When I can say that I worked like I should, be a father and a husband like I should. Learn Torah like I should and take care of me like I should then I feel great. I don't walk around hating myself for being full and still eating. For lusting over women. For wasting my time and therefore my potential.

I can really say that today I am sober. It is not so pleasant to walk around hating yourself. It is much better to be happy in my skin and thank G-d for putting me in my skin.

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