

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 ddm11219 - 09 Feb 2016 15:00

Hello eli

missed u tons

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by Shlomo24 - 09 Feb 2016 15:14

Welcome back. Missed you.

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by cordnoy - 09 Feb 2016 15:19

Great stufflike usual.

b'hatzlachah

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by MBJ - 09 Feb 2016 17:14

[markz wrote on Unknown:](#)

MBJ, I've been missing you - I still havent had the time to read one of your groundbreaking threads "Pas Besalo" :-)

What you wrote above sounds great

Is it similar to the '[minimizing pleasure](#)' thread?

Not necessarily, because apparently you're not looking to minimize pleasures in order to lower lust, rather to deal with addictions - I think

Keeo on Trucking!!

I thought about what you said and I will disagree. There is not so much pleasure in those actions anymore. Just compulsion. Sure there us some fleeting pleasure, some memory of past pleasure. Nowadays it is mostly pain and compulsion. Though to be honest I still love cheese cake. That is pleasure. But alas, I cannot partake in that either. That first "sip" or bite is so dangerous to me.

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by MBJ - 09 Feb 2016 21:45

There is one other thing I wanted to add, something that has helped me tremendously. I listened to Rabbi Shafier in the shmuz #42, called "Tricks of the Soton". **This was how I understood it, all errors are mine.** He says that there are three voices in a person. The nefesh ha'sichli, the nefesh ha'behami and the soton/yetzer hara. He says that you can tell the difference between the three as follows. The nefesh ha'sichli is about your avodas Hashem. It is the good thoughts, the good motivations etc. Then you have the nefesh ha'behami. Like an animal it is dumb. Lastly you have the very clever, very cunning and reasoned yetzer hara. He knows all your soft points, he knows exactly where to hit you.

I think of the difference thusly, when I see a pretty girl and I do a quick take and look and think whoa, that is the animal doing his thing. It is normal and expected. He is just doing what is natural to him. As soon as the talking in my head starts with disgusting thoughts and ideas, with fantasies and justifications and plans, I know it is the YH, it can be nothing else. The nefesh hasichli woud never say such things, and the nefesh ha'behami is too dumb to think them. It leaves only one option.

What I do when I get struck by them is I tell the nefesh ha'behami, "Listen buddy, I hear what you are saying, but you already have a woman, and this is not her, just calm down and in its good time, you will have your work to do, but for now you have to relax and let this one pass." The nefesh ha'behami is good, it just has to realize that my nefesh ha'sichli is in charge and it can only operate when the sechel says its ok.

When it is the yetzer Harah, I say to it "Hey you, get the hell out of my head, no one invited you to this party, so shut up you menuval. Who are you to put such thought in my head. You should be embarassed. Now get the hell out." You see I have to get him out fast before he really wakes up the animal part and I can't quiet him so easily be exerting my will over him. I know that once he gets woken up in these manners I can't control it. Then I get to the point that my sechel is begging and pleading to stop but the animal part is just too strong. If I can keep him sleeping though, and keep the YH quiet, I can have peace.

A few caveats. Firstly, I would tell the YH to go away first and then put the behaima back to sleep. The YH is the bigger threat. Second you have to really mean it. If you are telling him to go while at the same time thinking, wow that is a great idea, it won't work. You have to really believe that the voice wants to kill you and it will suceed unless you shut him up right now, After that it is always a good idea to thank Hashem for saving you this time and of course to focus your mind to other thoughts. Don't leave a space for the YH to jump in again, because he will.

Now I know that people say that for addicts it is not a yetzer hara problem, it is a disease. My answer is that firstly, it just makes sense to me because this is exactly how I experience my addictive process. Secondly I would say that it is a disease, but it is a spiritual disease that has manifested itself in my body. I have so warped and strenthed my animal part in these manners through repeated abuse that I really am sick, and an easy target. Just one well put line from the YH can set me off. It is like I am always a spring coiled up waiting to explode. And really there is two parts of this addiction the craving and the compulsion. I believe that the craving is the animal, the compulsion is the YH.

Well, even if this helps no one else, it helps me to write this out.

Good night y'all

Eli

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

Posted by MBJ - 20 Oct 2016 18:50

Been a long time. I am posting here again because posting sometimes gives me chizzuk and I could use some.

I had a rough stretch. I couldn't make it past 2 weeks without falling again for a few days. Every time the same story. I'm so sorry I'll never to it again, but I realized I spund like an idiot. If I'm sorry why am I still acting out. Many of my falls happened in the bathroom in the shower.

So I started taking ice cold showers. Hard to get into trouble when your focus is not shivering so bad tpu cramp up all your muscles. Partially it is to punish myself, but also as a daily reminder of my convictions. Before I turn the cold water on I say RBSO, I am sorry for all the times I lusted porned and masturbated. I wish I had never done any of it and with ypur help I don't plan on doing it again. Tue I tirn the water full cold and step in. It doesn't feel nice. I have been doing this for over 2 months and have been clean for over two months. I also did a bunch of fasting in Elul. Taanis until mincha most days and fasting all day once or twice a week. I know it also seems crazy to me. But it was working.

Last day or two things have been a bit rougher. I am beginning to feel list coming back in. Bad thoughts bad touches of myself.

I know solutions taken out of religious zeal seldom have long term success, and I guess that is why I am here again. I haven't felt this good and lust free for a very long time. But I feel the gnawing tugs of lust beginning to creep back. So here I am working on a more stable solution.

Shana tova to all of you GYEers

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

Posted by Shlomo24 - 20 Oct 2016 18:54

Wow. I really feel your pain. Sounds like it kinda sucks.

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by cordnoy - 20 Oct 2016 19:05

Yuch.

On the other hand, there is conviction here.

If you wanna talk, send me an email.

Where I am now, I have all the time in the world.

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by Markz - 20 Oct 2016 19:54

[MBJ wrote:](#)

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Shana tova to all of you GYEers

MBJ

you were missed!!!

i hold your Teriffic "Pas Besalo" post in high regard. It's in the "Free Lust Towing page"

Actually I used to fall in the shower too.

Do you not think the high of Elul and Tishrei may be wearing off, and it's time to get back to some real recovery, cos I'm worried showering won't last

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by MBJ - 25 Oct 2016 16:37

My infant daughter has been crying for last 2 hours.

Thank you Hashem for giving me a lesson in patience. Please give us and our drs the wisdom to figure out what is bothering her.

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by MBJ - 27 Oct 2016 10:15

I have had like 3 wet dreams in the last week. Crazy. My thoughts have been getting out of control. I have also been lusting, mostly for my wife, but that really doesn't make it any better.

I could blame it on lack of sleep or stress from the new baby, but that doesn't solve the problem that I am feeling strong feelings of lust.

Hashem give me strength to deal with my nisyonos for today.

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by cordnoy - 27 Oct 2016 11:43

[MBJ wrote on 27 Oct 2016 10:15:](#)

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Hashem give me strength to deal with my nisyonos for today.

Amen

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by MBJ - 01 Nov 2016 13:01

I was hyst noticing that I started this thread Nov 4th 2012, almost 4 years ago. That is kind of depressing. Sad that 4 years later I am still struggling.

True I am a few days shy of hitting 90 for the 4th time. I had a sobriety streak of almost 2 years somewhere in the middle. My marriage went from the brink of disaster to a pleasant and very functional one, and sometimes, when I let it, even a happy one.

But still I feel kind of like a failure that 4 years later I am still lusting. 4 years later I still have falls. Granted 4 years ago I didn't even know lusting was my problem and I still believed that with enough will power I could overcome it this time. Or better yet 4 years ago I finally got the inkling that maybe my will power wasn't the problem.

I remember asking many years ago if a cure is possible. So far I don't see it.

On the other hand I really have so much to be grateful for. This forum and the wonderful people on it have really helped me be more conscious of my lusting and therefore in a better position to do something about it. As well as given me tools through which I can be better.

True, I can also say I am not porning and masturbating 5 times a week anymore. But if that was all, if I was the same person who just masturbates a lot less that would be sad.

Ultimately I want to answer am I a better human being, eved Hashem, father, husband than I was 4 years ago. Sadly I can't definitively say yes, but that may be just a memory bias of mine. Sure there I things I can point to that I have greatly improved on. Mostly my patience and acceptance of whatever happens as the will of Hashem. That in turn has made me a better husband and father I hope. Maybe that has to be enough for now. Progress not perfection. Maybe that is my solace. If nothing else I can better say Gam zu letova and that is enough for

now.

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by Singularity - 01 Nov 2016 13:52

Hi MBJ. Almost at 90? Hatzlocha. Though I know personally there's an inherent danger to attributing this to a numbers game. It adds stress. But it's good to track milestones. But to see such a grand majestic number shoot down to 0. That's a hard pill to swallow. And I'm all about surface achievements. It's like a drug to me.

I think we ourselves can never really grasp how much we grow over time. My rabbi said to me, after a year of yeshiva, I was a transformed man. I asked him, "You serious? I have all my old habits, I'm still lazy, etc." But he saw through those facades. Sure, I'm lazy, but maybe 94% instead of 97% lazy. And if the Vilna Gaon's life purpose is for all intents and purposes correct, then I have another 90 or so years (amen!) to reduce about 3% each time. And I'll have successfully been *metakein* it. But have the awareness. I once commented to a chavrusa of mine, "You look around and see seventy-, eighty-year-olds who have the same behaviour patterns I do at 25, snappy, unfriendly, quick to criticize" And I'm sure (being frum) they've put in the good ol' effort to change. They've read Mesillas Yesharim. They've worked the "steps". But have they internalised it? Doesn't look like it. If some venerable old man can come up and without saying "hello", bash me that I'm not pronouncing *Shem Hashem* properly as the chazzan so much so that *he* can't even respond *amein* to my *brochas*! Oh, the *gehinnom* I must be putting him through!

I think that addiction is Hashem's greatest gift to us. I'm not saying we should all stumble and hit rock bottom and then recover. But I believe everyone is addicted to something in some way. It's a tool to work on giving it over to Him. And the ones who are *zoche* to realize this and act upon it, join meetings, find sponsors, create networks, well, it's more effective than any *mussar* sefer. And *davening* makes more sense. And all those things that are shoved down our throats in the Friday Night drosha, about talking to Hashem, feeling Him, trusting in Him, well it all becomes real.

I only fear that all the 12-step members will have a higher place in *Olam Haba* than a gross majority of *talmidei chachamim*! Even the Goyim! Gevalt!

Rabbi Elephant came to South Africa and we all had a Shabbos together. He told us that in Chasiddish circles, for each ten people there is a *chaburah* and they meet at least once a week

over a piece of herring and cake just to shmooze. So that not a single Yid is forgotten I wish this happened everywhere.

I've rambled a lot. But I hope it's useful.

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