

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 - 01 May 2013 00:09

Wow gibbor I never thought of it that way. I like that, 'the gam zu letova step'. Putting it that way makes it some how more palatable to me. I will have to work on that.

Thanks

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by MBJ - 01 May 2013 11:40

One more thing to say that should be obvious, but nothing is ever obvious when we are in the struggle.

My first clean streak of 189 days started on Yom Kippur with a heartfelt tefila that Hashem should help me this time. (The first time I asked for help.) My latest clean streak, of 6 days only started since I have been davening for His help everyday in my Shmoneh Esrei.

I may not be the kind of person who can truly let go, but I can still be the kind of person who can let G-d.

Without His help, I would not have had any clean streaks longer than a few days.

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by MBJ - 05 May 2013 22:38

I have really been thinking about my last fall. I think it boils down to this, I was frustrated / depressed about X. I let this X loom large in my life, and I just started sinking further and further, since X didn't go the way I wanted / deserved etc. Eventually I just couldn't hold up any longer and I fell hard.

The whole time I was sinking the question never entered my mind of why was I sinking, or if it

did enter, not deep enough to get an answer, all I tried to do was hold on and not fall. That kind of attitude will be as successful as my trying to dam up the Mississippi River with a toy shovel.

The point I hope I have learned is not to fall into that quicksand and hope I don't sink all the way, but rather not go into the quicksand at all.

Thanks to some helpful responses here I think I understand it is about not getting depressed when you don't get X, because if X was supposed to happen than Hashem would have arranged it. The fact that it did not happen means that it wasn't supposed to and who am I to argue with Hashem.

I have a feeling that another X might come up again soon. I hope I have truly learned my lesson or I will just end up back at 0 again.

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by MBJ - 06 May 2013 16:48

When I first started here and people talked about not living in the fantasies, I assumed they were refering to sexual fantasies. I have since learned that it is not about sex at all, but about avoidance. Even what if fantasies, that have nothing to do with sex are also a dangerous way to live. All the what ifs in the world doesn't change the world we are living in, and it is the world we are living in that we have to learn to enjoy and take pleasure from. Not what could have been, but what is.

This of course goes back to the earlier post of gam zu letova.

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by gibbor120 - 07 May 2013 01:15

A couple of great ideas MBJ!

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by yehoshua - 09 May 2013 14:34

I had a recent fall too. It wasn't a bad fall, but it was a fall. And a fall wants to get another fall... All because of those feelings you write about... And I am depressed. Darn, did you write does lines or did I?

So there are some things we can't have or do ... sounds like some things that I can't change and I need to accept that. The problem for me is though, that I don't know the difference between the things I can change and the things I can't change.

I need my X to happen too.

I can hear everyone here: ASK HASHEM TO GIVE YOU THE WISDOM TO KNOW THE DIFFERENCE.

The White Book quotes this early AA member: Find G-d or die.

Yes I need to ask Him and first I have to find Him. But are these heavy words mine? Do I live them? Am I being honest or just playing smart? Is this the depressed me? Or is it the honest me?

Well the honest me wants to hug you and offer you some coffee and cookies. Then we could cry for a minute and laugh for the rest of time.... That would be good.

But honestly we will probably never have coffee with cookies together, but hey that is not so bad... But I can wish you something really honestly, to be honest with Hashem... To the bone honest. Then perhaps you will find courage to be honest to another person...

All the best to you MBJ,

Michael

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by MBJ - 09 May 2013 15:32

yehoshua,

P.S. Hopefully I will follow some of these great ideas in my life.... Well, just today I could
I don't think that anything that I wrote will preclude you from trying to get X. If X is not a bad or
harmful thing, why should be not strive to get X. The point, at least for me, is that if I try to get X,
but X doesn't happen, that is not on me that is on G-d. And if He makes the decision that X is
not to happen, I have to accept that. I have to have faith that there is a very good reason why
He did not want me to have X. If we did our hishtadlus, and we still don't get X, nu ?? ?? ?????.

If I have that faith that Hashem has my back. That I didn't get X because ultimately that is what
is best for me, why should I get depressed?

However, it is easier said than done, especially when you really really want that X.

A little tefilla:

Hashem, may it be Your will, that yehoshua and I should will both learn this lesson. That we
learn to trust in You and accept with love all that you decide for us. Especially when we don't
happen to agree with Your decision.

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by Machshovo Tova - 09 May 2013 19:34

Amen!

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by MBJ - 14 May 2013 11:46

19 days clean.

Chag Sameach All

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by gibbor120 - 14 May 2013 20:42

gut yontiff MBJ!

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by MBJ - 15 May 2013 23:53

I like to post for the highs and lows. Today was a huge HUGE high.

My wife went to the mikvah tonight. First time she has been tahor in over a year.

I thanked her for going. I reiterated that I will not pressure her for sex, when she is ready, but not before. That I learned that lesson the hard way.

It was so wonderful that she went.

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by gibbor120 - 17 May 2013 20:43

Thanks for sharing the GREAT news!

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 17 May 2013 20:47

Good for you! great news
and your efforts are very impressive
keep up the good work
hope things get better and better

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Re: MBJ's 90 day (and more) Journey
Posted by MBJ - 27 May 2013 11:50

Sometimes I wonder if I am mentally ill. Maybe I am, heck maybe we all are and that is why we are here.

My last post I was so happy, and now I have been so low for the last few days. Yes my wife went to the mikvah, yes I was so happy, but what is the point if she refuses to even touch me.

Yesterday my wife got some amazing news, she called me and told me, I was so very happy and proud of her. I could hear her happiness on the phone. By the time I got home from work she was as sour and surly as ever. I don't get it. I gave her a hug and a little kiss on the cheek, very chaste, to tell her how happy I was about the news. I think she would have preferred if I had stuck a hot poker in her eye than me do that based on her reaction.

Something like that would have sent me to masturbate in my previous life. So while it hasn't quite got that far, I feel myself starting to despair and slip. Then it becomes a test of will power that I will eventually lose. Spinning, spinning, down, down, down.

I need progress, I need hope, I need to believe that it will work out in the end. Because right now all I see is a "marriage" where the wife would rather have a hot poker in her eye than her husband give her a hug and kiss.

I started listening to the Pamensky series again. I think it has some good points, but it doesn't work if you listen by yourself. At this point it makes me depressed listening to it. I think on some level it has made me a better husband since the first time I downloaded them a few years ago. But our marriage has not been any better.

The other day I asked her when we were going to talk about us. She pushed me off again. I need for her to tell me why she has given up on our marriage, because that is what I feel. Have felt for many years now. It is true that up until I started on GYE, having that conversation would have been pointless. I tried a few times before, but it just came out me whining. But now I feel at the point that we can discuss our problems, I have more clarity now, even if I am feeling really down. It just never seems the right time. Aliyah, kids, tests, interviews, work, health, sleep. Why does everything come before our marriage? I shouldn't bring it up now she has X next month, now she has Y next week, now she has Z tomorrow. I shouldn't burden her with this added pressure.

BUT WHY IS SHE NOT BURDENED BY THE REALLY CRAP STATE OF OUR MARRIAGE? I am offering her the opportunity to take this burden off by sharing it and trying to fix it, but she doesn't seem to give a fig.

I know that is not fair, and probably not even true, but I have no evidence to the contrary. So if it walks like a duck and talks like a duck then it sure as heck is not a cow.

So after all that venting I do not feel even slightly better. I just want to self-"medicate".

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