

Connecting the days

Posted by connected - 05 May 2022 17:34

I figured I'd start a new thread under this category to help me keep track of my progress.

I had a tough day with my wife yesterday. (Actually, if I'm being honest, she had a tough day, and her mood spilled over, dragging me down.) Finally, after putting the kids to bed and having something to eat, I needed to go to the grocery. I got into the car, still upset, and as I was waiting at a red light, this attractive woman walked by right in front of me, and my eyes helpfully escorted her across the street.

Suddenly, the following hit me. And I said it out loud (all windows were closed...).

"What are you doing? You're upset at your wife, so you're ogling other women? Do you think you're somehow getting even with her? All you're doing is destroying yourself."

This helped me snap away my destructive gaze.

This is not the first time I behaved this way while being upset with my wife. But it's the first time I had this thought that helped me out of it. I didn't put that thought there.

Thank You, Hashem, for that thought.

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Re: Connecting the days

Posted by connected - 08 Aug 2023 14:29

[Hashem Help Me wrote on 08 Aug 2023 00:39:](#)

Update?

Update, you ask. Well, here it is.

Thursday: I didn't end up acting out.

Friday: I masturbated - no porn.

Shabbos: nothing.

Sunday: nothing.

Monday: Masturbated twice - both times with what could be considered porn.

Tuesday (thus far): I wanted to masturbate in the morning, but then I saw HHM's inquiry so I wanted to be able to finish this post on a high note. Thanks, ego.

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Re: Connecting the days

Posted by yitzchokm - 08 Aug 2023 15:02

Maybe reach out to someone through chat or to a mentor when you have an urge.

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Re: Connecting the days

Posted by connected - 08 Aug 2023 15:22

[yitzchokm wrote on 08 Aug 2023 15:02:](#)

Maybe reach out to someone through chat or to a mentor when you have an urge.

Y'know, I've thought about it, but I'm afraid that doing so might put a damper on the whole excitement.

Heck, I might not even end up doing it at all...

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Re: Connecting the days

Posted by yitzchokm - 08 Aug 2023 15:41

[connected wrote on 08 Aug 2023 15:22:](#)

Y'know, I've thought about it, but I'm afraid that doing so might put a damper on the whole excitement.

Heck, I might not even end up doing it at all...

If you are referring to the excitement of the urge, I guarantee you that you will feel much happier and content after reaching out to someone. Aside for overcoming the urge, connecting to other people is good and healthy on it's own. Very often a person is lacking connection to other people and directly or indirectly it can trigger an urge or make it difficult to overcome. When we are connected to others we feel fulfilled. It fills a void and helps us be more balanced. So, yes, perhaps you won't act out, but no, you won't loose excitement. Something positive and fulfilling will fill the void.

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Re: Connecting the days

Posted by connected - 08 Aug 2023 16:06

[yitzchokm wrote on 08 Aug 2023 15:41:](#)

[connected wrote on 08 Aug 2023 15:22:](#)

Y'know, I've thought about it, but I'm afraid that doing so might put a damper on the whole excitement.

Heck, I might not even end up doing it at all...

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Hey, as long as it comes with a guarantee.

Thanks, Dad. (Can I call you that?)

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Re: Connecting the days

Posted by yitzchokm - 08 Aug 2023 23:41

[yitzchokm wrote on 08 Aug 2023 15:41:](#)

[connected wrote on 08 Aug 2023 15:22:](#)

Y'know, I've thought about it, but I'm afraid that doing so might put a damper on the whole excitement.

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I don't mean by this to reach out on the chat merely to chat with a friend. My intention is that reaching out to someone on the chat or to a mentor about the urge, aside for dealing with the urge will also take the person out of isolation. This in turn, will make him feel much happier and content and something positive and fulfilling will fill the void of isolation. Aside for reaching out during an urge, a person should reach out to a friend or someone they know and have a general conversation but the chat isn't designed for this. As a rule the chat is meant to reach out about something directly related to GYE.

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Re: Connecting the days

Posted by connected - 09 Aug 2023 14:47

[yitzchokm wrote on 08 Aug 2023 23:41:](#)

I don't mean by this to reach out on the chat merely to chat with a friend. My intention is that reaching out to someone on the chat or to a mentor about the urge, aside for dealing with the urge will also take the person out of isolation. This in turn, will make him feel much happier and content and something positive and fulfilling will fill the void of isolation. Aside for reaching out during an urge, a person should reach out to a friend or someone they know and have a general conversation but the chat isn't designed for this. As a rule the chat is meant to reach out about something directly related to GYE.

Gotcha.

Question: what if I want to be in isolation? (Hello darkness, my old friend...)

What if I'm comfortable playing in the mud? (Ah, the sweet, filthy, warm mud...)

What if I know - cognitively - that porn and masturbation are messing me up, but I say, "Hey, it's a price to pay for immediate enjoyment"?

What I'm saying is that I know what can be done if someone wants to recover, but right now, I'm not in that place.

Hence what I wrote yesterday:

[connected wrote on 08 Aug 2023 15:22:](#)

Y'know, I've thought about it, but I'm afraid that doing so might put a damper on the whole excitement.

Heck, I might not even end up doing it at all...

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Re: Connecting the days

Posted by connected - 10 Aug 2023 15:26

Alright, after spending a couple of days in the deep end, I'm at the point where I'm ready to get back up.

Many times in the past have I been here, but this time is different. Of course, every time I say it's different, but this time it's different for another reason.

You see, in the past, every time I'd get disgusted with my behavior after a deep dive, I'd say, "Okay, this time, I'm stopping for good!". I'd start counting; sometimes, I'd last a week, sometimes even more, till I inevitably took another plunge, which would again strengthen my resolve to stop. I'd start off high, get past the first few tough days, and start sailing, and then remember how good it feels, and all nice excuses start coming up, and the next thing I know, I'm at it again. At first, I'd enjoy it and say, "See? This is good. This is doable." Day two has a bit less enjoyment and a bit more dullness. By the time the third day comes around, there's nearly no enjoyment at all; just trying to get myself excited. This is usually what turns me off, and I make the decision to quit, and the cycle continues...

Now I just see the cycle for what it is. I am at this point now.

Will this time be different? No clue. I can assume that not.

The only difference, so far, is this knowledge.

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Re: Connecting the days

Posted by richtig - 10 Aug 2023 17:41

[connected wrote on 10 Aug 2023 15:26:](#)

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Now I just see the cycle for what it is. I am at this point now.

Will this time be different? No clue. I can assume that not.

The only difference, so far, is this knowledge. Knowledge is power.

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Re: Connecting the days

Posted by chaimoigen - 11 Aug 2023 11:17

[connected wrote on 10 Aug 2023 15:26:](#)

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You are making a critical point that I thought about a lot in my own struggles. I will put it into other words, if you don't mind. Talking to myself, about what I am learning on your thread.

A person can have a lot of different desires inside of them.

If I **want** P&M because I like it and it serves a certain function in my life, and I also want to feel clean, and I also hate feeling dirty: This conjunction of differing desires creates a set up for a neat cycle of fall, regret, resolve, return.

For change to last, it's not enough to muster the resolve to hold on. Because when the excitement of resolve wears off, as you say, and the feeling of immediate regret and disgust fade, what's countering my genuine **desire and want** for the cozy mud? **For the function it fills in my life? Behavior has function.**

What I have to figure out is not just **how to hold on, but how to change**. How to change the internal desire for the cozy mud, how to find a different way to get what I need, so I can actually **not want it**. How to fill the hole in my heart and the void of the pain in me, how to manage the difficulties in me - with something better or other than the cozy mud. That's hard. But that's what I have been working on.

One day at a time - but small **changes**. Not merely **days**.

Hatzlacha, my friend. Your honesty is refreshing. You are a good man.

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Re: Connecting the days

Posted by mailer - 11 Aug 2023 14:08

connected, chaimoigen, these aforementioned points are so vitally and crucially important!

As I hit 50 days today for the first time, (applause!) I can actually feel the excitement of resolve fading. So true!

Then, slowly, boredom, anxiety or loneliness kicks in. Anger. Frustration. At whatever life brings you. Suddenly, the pros of being clean shrinks, the allure of the mud is magnified.

I will share with you something that even further illustrates this point.

Prior to my recent joining GYE fifty days ago, I did indeed struggle mightily with p and m. But I did have a full 6-7 year clean streak.

Why the tragic relapse after such a solid period of time?

Because of the exact point under discussion! I never CHANGED how I deal with my inner emotions. The clean years were actually because I was accountable in this inyin with a toxic mentor, who did not give me the tools or knowledge to change. He never shared with me that change was possible from within MYSELF. He was happy to have me under his control, and be dependent on him for the rest of my life, with the shame and humiliation that if I would fall, he would know it, and the shame and humiliation of a "confession" did indeed reign in my behaviors. But internally, I was a MESS and craving P and M more powerfully then ever! When I

finally broke free from this religious relationship, the floodgates of pent up desires broke free. Six years of being clean down the tubes.

So hearing you guys talk about this gives me tremendous chizuk, and I hope this little story will give anybody reading this the insight to realize, the cycle will continue if we do not put in the massive effort to change from within. We can do it, it is indeed possible!

I do hope that I can. I haven't done it before, and as I mentioned, this morning my resolve is weakening... but I look up to all the great Warriors who share their wisdom on this site!

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Re: Connecting the days

Posted by DavidT - 11 Aug 2023 15:16

[mailer wrote on 11 Aug 2023 14:08:](#)

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Hi "mailer" - you're bringing out one of the most important points about true recovery. As Rabbi Avraham J. Twerski Z"L repeated many times what he heard for an addict in recovery "The man I once was drank, and the man I once was will drink again." Successful recovery requires emergence of a new person.

You can do it, it is indeed possible!

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Re: Connecting the days

Posted by connected - 11 Aug 2023 16:12

[mailer wrote on 11 Aug 2023 14:08:](#)

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Dang, mailer that sounds like one heck of a messed up relationship.

Happy to hear that you're out of it, and I wish you much success in growth and healing.

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Update:

Yesterday was pretty much a breeze. As expected.

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