

Perfectionism and Addictions

Posted by chancy - 15 Feb 2023 20:35

Hi Everyone,

I want to write an article about something that's bothering me very deeply and i think a lot of GYE members have the same problem, so hopefully some good will come from this article.

There is a famous saying "dont let the perfect be the enemy of the good" What that means is in short, dont stop doing something that you know is good just because its not perfect or what you wanted it to be. The question is why? why not? If its not perfect whats the point? Thats called perfectionism.

Perfectionism can come from a lot of different places, ill talk about my own experience, please note, im in a lot of pain now hopefully pain of growth. So dont think too badly of me when you read this.

I had a difficult childhood, maybe not compared to a lot of people here, I was never abused or physically neglected BH, but i had a very very sad youth, lots of different reasons for that, one of the main reasons is that i was surrounded by death, from when i can remember, i lost a family member every year sometimes an uncle, aunt, cousin, close family friend, boy from school i knew, etc.... so i was both terrified of death and very sad, i didnt have many friends or close siblings, so i was alone and sad, a very bad mixture. I believe that is what caused me to turn to sex as a coping mechanism that was my only outlet that i could forget and be happy sort of.

As i grew up, i started blaming myself for everything that would go wrong, everything was my fault because i didnt listen to my parents or i wasnt a good enough boy, etc. When i started realizing that masturbation is a big problem, that increased my guilt feeling a hundredfold. **Of course bad things are happening, its my fault!** This was ingrained into me the older i got, when i realized that in order to be safe from punishment you need to be a good yid and do everything hashem asks me to do, i came to the realization that why would people wait untill they are middle age and have a midlife crises and then start behaving? **Ill start behaving now and therefore avoid all the pain!** But as we all know, addiction cant be just switched off, so i suffered thru my teen years using my coping mechanism masturbation and porn plus feeling guilty as heck.

Every time I wanted to stop was for this reason, so i can finally feel safe and know that i will be protected from all bad things because im a good boy.

Sadly, this is what actually got me to where I am now, my longest streak since probably the age of 9.

You would think this is good? **No! Im a perfectionist**, because if im not perfectly serving Hashem, then im still not safe, and of course this has no end, there is always that i can improve on need to improve, there are always people that are greater then me and make me feel guilty

why im not more like them, etc... So on and on i went trying to make myself perfect and burning myself out, **but its impossible to be perfect!**

What happened to me is that got very sensitive to hearing bad news especially to other yiden especially of ones i considered to be good yiden, Because if even good erliche tzadikim suffer, then whats the point of me? its still not safe!

This is the cause of a lot of perfectionists, the need to feel that im good enough either to be safe or loved or worthy, so you burn yourself out and then the good that you do stops meaning anything and then you stop doing that.

Thats the point of the saying "**Dont let the perfect be the enemy of the good**" *if you focus on perfectionism, you will ruin the good.*

So if you are in the beginning stages of your journey, learn how to accept every little win and focus. Dont be pulled into being perfect, tell yourself" Im trying my best, giving it all i can, Hashem sees that and will have mercy on me"

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Re: Perfectionism and Addictions

Posted by No Mask - 15 Feb 2023 21:25

[chancy wrote on 15 Feb 2023 20:35:](#)

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Wow this is a big pekel to schlep around

But let me tell you, you are not shleping alone, I'm schlepping the same pekel, [but I don't think it's the type that gets easier when someone helps you shlep]

But I do think that there are two factors in what you wrote

1. The way we look at the relationship we have with Hashem, is it someone who loves us, like a (health) father loves his kids, when he struggles, he sees that he is in pain, and tries to get him help etc.

Or is Hashem a BIG strong bully, and he says if you do the what I want then good, but if not I have big stick and it's going to hurt, I could kill people like hostages, and it's all gonna be your fault.

[I know the rambam]

2. Perfectionism, that we think we need to be perfect. I think its another problem

[but for some reason a lot of people have both, it looks like they are related]

You're an inspiration

All the best

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Re: Perfectionism and Addictions

Posted by Eerie - 15 Feb 2023 22:29

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@chancy, I love your posts. You write very toichendige stuff, and so clearly. I couldn't agree more. We have to see the Hashem that loves us and appreciates every drop of hard work we do for him. He does not expect or demand perfection, He demands that we keep trucking!!! Keep posting and inspiring!

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