

Whiteknuckling Vs. Breaking Free

Posted by Fightingaddictionnow - 09 May 2014 21:05

I'm having a real issue with the whole 'You're only whiteknuckling and not free' thing.

Right now I'm sort of struggling with this idea of whiteknuckling vs breaking free. What can I do except force myself not to act out? Yes, I do it by means of inspiration and talking to people etc, but still - it's a fight. Isn't that whiteknuckling? What is the ideal then - not to desire it at all? HOW?

Please help!

Good Shabbos.

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Re: Whiteknuckling Vs. Breaking Free

Posted by cordnoy - 09 May 2014 22:45

Workin' the steps helps a bit.

It is still a struggle though, but it sure makes it easier.

b'hatzlachah

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Re: Whiteknuckling Vs. Breaking Free

Posted by Machshovo Tova - 09 May 2014 23:14

IMHO, whether one is working the steps or not, if he keeps focusing on lust, whether with his

eyes or in his mind, he will experience a craving which will require white-knuckling to overcome. If however, he keeps training himself to avoid all forms of lust and to focus instead on healthy & kosher living activities (e.g. learning, hobbies, his job, helping at home, etc.), he will find himself craving less, and will find it much easier to overcome his craving without much white-knuckling.

MT

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Re: Whiteknuckling Vs. Breaking Free
Posted by cordnoy - 09 May 2014 23:21

I think IMHO it is somewhere in the middle.

Yes, if he is focusin' all his attention on lust, he will probably end-up white-knuckling.

However, if he "trains" himself to be busy with other things, that can only help for so long (if one is somewhat addicted to lust). There will be triggerin' sights on the street; there will be computer images; there will be a spouse, etc.

One needs to learn the tools to overcome the lust, and at the same time focus on livin' a healthier life.

Agreed?

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Re: Whiteknuckling Vs. Breaking Free
Posted by Machshovo Tova - 10 May 2014 00:01

Well, there are many tools to overcome the lust. One tool is mentioned in Chazal and in the GYE handbook: The more you feed it, the more you need it. The less you feed it, the less you need it. If one trains himself to avoid all intentional sips of lust (a day at a time), then the sights on the street, the computer images, or the spouse, will be less of a nisayon for him.

B"H I encounter sights on the street, computer images, and a spouse; but I am learning slowly but surely how not to let it ruin my life.

It should be noted that each person is wired differently, and what works for one may not work for others. So that's why we have this forum where we share different approaches, so that each person can decide what works for him.

Hatzlacha

MT

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Re: Whiteknuckling Vs. Breaking Free
Posted by Pidaini - 10 May 2014 23:02

Eiloo V'eiloo divrei Elokim.....Chaim

The ikkur is to live life!!!

My life has become so much more enriched since coming to GYE, and that is because stopping goes hand in hand with living life, it is the supreme example of sur meira v'asei tov (IMHO), both are necessary, we need to cut off, and we need to get into life. Getting into life without stopping is extremely difficult as is vice versa.

Keep on Trucking!!! KOP!!!

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Re: Whiteknuckling Vs. Breaking Free

Posted by Dr.Watson - 11 May 2014 03:04

Imagine a room with a huge elastic band that's firmly attached to the ceiling at one end and the floor at the other. There's no way to dismantle it. Now, if you want to get rid of the elastic band you can try pushing it away. The problem there is that the more you push it the more it pushes back. You can push as hard as you like, fight all day, get chizzuk, learn, daven, stay busy, whatever you want, but that elastic band's not going anywhere. So you keep pushing and you can manage to not get pushed over as long as you can keep up the equal and opposite force, but the second you slip, the elastic band will push you to the ground.

So acceptance is in order here. Accept the elastic band for what it is, and the fact that it's there for good. It's part of the room. Yes it's annoying, but as long as you leave it well alone it won't make you fall.

IMO that's what surrender is. Most people see it as a fight, like a bully's attacking you. So yeah, if you surrender the bully's gonna beat you up. No-one wants that, who would want to surrender?!

I see it more as a debate. Some guy wants to win an argument with me. Nu nu. How about rather than arguing with him, I just say "you know, maybe you're right" and just leave it there. Suddenly surrendering does me no harm and it leaves the other guy stunned. Rather than beat me up, he leaves it there too. No point in carrying on, he's surrendered already!

The y'h looks like the bully, but in reality he's the debater. It looks like surrender will allow him to do whatever he wants and you'll lose permanently. But that is not the case. He's a debater. If you just leave him alone and admit that he's a better debater than you, he'll leave you alone. No point trying to push the point at you, you've already given up. We give it up to win.

Say I'm walking down the street and suddenly a good-looking woman is walking towards me. I can walk past thinking "don't look don't look don't look" and maybe I won't. Once. Twice. Three times. But how many times? Not enough. Instead I can notice the woman, notice the urge to look and think "yeah, I have urges. I am an addict, I have urges and I have a desire to look. Doesn't mean I need to look. I can't push this elastic bank away, I won't fight it, I won't try to get rid of the urges. Please Hashem help me to not look at this woman." Suddenly it doesn't seem so difficult.

"Ki ani Hashem elokecho machazik yeminecho, ho'omer lecho al tiroh ani azarticho"

"For I Hashem your G-d am holding your right hand, saying don't be scared, I'll help you"

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Re: Whiteknuckling Vs. Breaking Free

Posted by kilochalu - 11 May 2014 03:27

Thanks doc for beautiful meshalim about the importance of surrendering.

As far as the earlier posts about the steps just want to clarify, if i understood correctly the oilam (everyone) is saying living properly will help to lessen the lusting and craving, and for most/many of us here the cause may be various stresses /tensions/fears etc for which using the steps is really just a proper way to deal with these situations and thereby 'live life'.

We also find that we have to 'open up' at some level or another to be able to face the **reality** of our situation.

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Re: Whiteknuckling Vs. Breaking Free

Posted by TehillimZugger - 11 May 2014 06:13

Gevaldigger thread everybody. Thanks for sharing.

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Re: Whiteknuckling Vs. Breaking Free

Posted by MBJ - 11 May 2014 11:25

WOW Doc, that was amazing. So many times I have had that same thought. Thank you for putting that experience into words for me.

Many times I find myself noticing a pretty girl and instead of panicking and trying to force away all thought of her, I say "yes she pretty, but I don't have to lust after her just because she is". I don't deny the lust, I just refuse to engage it head on.

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Re: Whiteknuckling Vs. Breaking Free

Posted by Moshe Avenue - 12 May 2014 01:27

I would like to suggest a similar way of looking at this, and I agree completely with the sentiments of this thread. Seems to me a lot of guys give the impression that they are in a kind of 'neutral' state and they get triggered and go on to act out and fall.

For me, it's a little the opposite. Acting out is the trigger and that leads to lusting and fantasising over a woman in the street for example. That is, I'm in a perpetual state of wanting to act out and that leads to improper thoughts about a billboard or a woman etc.

B'H, I am enjoying nearly 80 days sober and really feeling like all the heartache of acting out is dissipating - with the help of HaShem, GYE and some chevra to speak to.

So now even if I look a second time at a woman in the street, it goes no further - no triggers, no fantasies. There there are times I will look away.

I guess what I'm saying is that if you're in a 'good place', you can enjoy walking down the street like a mentch!!!

Kol tuv

Moshe

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