

90,000 ways to Live without Escaping  
Posted by Shteeble - 11 Aug 2023 08:46

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This thread is for tips and discussions on the subject of living life without escapism.

How do I not lust when I hit a roadblock?

How am I expected not to turn to YouTube (for entertainment purposes) when I'm bored?

How do I live without playing Minecraft, Simcity, Etc.?

How do I deal with life's challenges without escaping into the void?

[Note: Escapism, for the purpose of this thread, refers to the tendency to seek distraction and relief from unpleasant or mundane aspects of daily life.

Lusting definitely qualifies.

Watching TV, Movies, YouTube for entertainment definitely qualifies.

Playing Video Games or Games on your phone qualifies.

For the purpose of this thread, healthy hobbies in moderation (i.e. taking a walk) will not count as escapism.

Sleeping when you are tired will not count as escapism.]

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Re: 90,000 ways to Live without Escaping  
Posted by chaimoigen - 11 Aug 2023 11:29

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Awesome topic.

For me, one key point is to find small positive and productive things I love, that I am good at. So that doing them are easy for me, and fulfilling.

The things that are more difficult don't work when I am in pain/difficulty and looking for escape.

Here are a couple of things that work for me. These aren't the big fulfilling things in my life. They

are the small escape-fillers.

1. Writing down Divrei Torah that I have already said and formulated. Writing is productive and enjoyable for me. And this is the easy one.
2. Returning calls [that I know won't be taxing but] that will provide me an opportunity to help others.
3. Taking a walk with my wife.

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Re: 90,000 ways to Live without Escaping  
Posted by retrych - 11 Aug 2023 11:48

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Time.

I was a complete passive entertainment addict for years. Spent any available moment on the computer doing nothing even remotely interesting. Didn't hang out with friends, or even learn to drive, nothing.

I didnt think it would be possible for me to go even a day without long periods of computer or other equally vapid distraction. SHabbos and Yom Tov were hard enough. Nothing else could hold my interest. And during lust, frustration, etc, forget it.

After the whole painful and boring withdrawal period, you eventually gain an interest in other things, and they can even work in the situations you describe. Right now it feels like nothing short of one addiction or the other can relieve your mind, but that does change.

Also, sleep.

Daydreaming worked for me to, but that's just another version of the same addiction.

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Re: 90,000 ways to Live without Escaping

Posted by DavidT - 11 Aug 2023 15:38

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Suppressing or distracting ourselves from negative feelings doesn't help us move through them, it can actually make them stronger.

One of the keys for real change is called "acceptance". It's the cornerstone of change. Before you can change something, you must see and accept it for what it is. It's the necessary precursor to understanding, planning, and taking action towards our desired impact.

To heal, we must feel and validate the weight of our experience, so we can come to terms and begin moving forward mentally, emotionally, and physically.

Acceptance isn't about avoiding growth or resigning ourselves to the thought that things won't change. On the contrary, it allows us to see and accept what is, so we can take appropriate and effective actions to meet reality where it is and carve our path forward from there.

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Re: 90,000 ways to Live without Escaping

Posted by Shteeble - 11 Aug 2023 16:40

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[DavidT wrote on 11 Aug 2023 15:38:](#)

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Is this similar to the approach of

1. imagining the worst possible outcome,
2. making peace with it,
3. and working to improve on that outcome...

found in the book "How to Stop Worrying and Start Living"?

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Re: 90,000 ways to Live without Escaping  
Posted by connected - 11 Aug 2023 16:45

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(I think "escape" needs to be defined; otherwise, we'll be escaping the escapism.)

IMO, the only way to live without escaping is by becoming comfortable with being uncomfortable.

It is being okay with boredom, emptiness, fear, and all other glorious sh\*t that reside in us.

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Re: 90,000 ways to Live without Escaping  
Posted by Shteeble - 11 Aug 2023 17:08

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[connected wrote on 11 Aug 2023 16:45:](#)

IMO, the only way to live without escaping is by becoming comfortable with being uncomfortable.

So if you're tired, do you sleep, or do you get comfortable with being tired?

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Re: 90,000 ways to Live without Escaping  
Posted by connected - 11 Aug 2023 17:15

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[Shteeble wrote on 11 Aug 2023 17:08:](#)

[connected wrote on 11 Aug 2023 16:45:](#)

IMO, the only way to live without escaping is by becoming comfortable with being uncomfortable.

So if you're tired, do you sleep, or do you get comfortable with being tired?

Hence the need to define "escape."

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Re: 90,000 ways to Live without Escaping  
Posted by yitzchokm - 11 Aug 2023 17:25

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I think DavidT is referring to acknowledging our failures, accepting our shortcomings, validating our emotions, thinking about the good qualities within our personality and about our successes, devising a plan for the future and moving on. When we escape our failures instead of acknowledging them we are falling deeper into the mud.

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Re: 90,000 ways to Live without Escaping  
Posted by Shteeble - 11 Aug 2023 17:41

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[connected wrote on 11 Aug 2023 17:15:](#)

[Shteeble wrote on 11 Aug 2023 17:08:](#)

[connected wrote on 11 Aug 2023 16:45:](#)

IMO, the only way to live without escaping is by becoming comfortable with being uncomfortable.

So if you're tired, do you sleep, or do you get comfortable with being tired?

Hence the need to define "escape."

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Re: 90,000 ways to Live without Escaping

Posted by yitzchokm - 11 Aug 2023 18:02

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[Shteeble wrote on 11 Aug 2023 17:41:](#)

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For the purpose of this thread, healthy hobbies in moderation (i.e. taking a walk) will not count as escapism.

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So I guess this thread is about healthy practical ways of dealing with negative emotions instead of taking the bait and escaping into negative behavior.

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Re: 90,000 ways to Live without Escaping

Posted by yitzchokm - 11 Aug 2023 18:53

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There are strategies for when negative emotions are intense and a person feels desperate for an immediate solution, short-term strategies that can be used when a person recognizes and

labels a negative emotion that will eventually lead to negative behavior, even if only after a few hours or days, and long term strategies that resolve negative emotions from surfacing. The third category, often but not always, includes psychology which isn't meant to be discussed on the forum. Which ones of the three strategies are you referring to in this thread?

There are also general strategies that work for every negative emotion and strategies that are specific to certain negative emotions. I think someone reading a post should evaluate whether the post works for the negative emotion he is experiencing.

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Re: 90,000 ways to Live without Escaping  
Posted by Shteeble - 13 Aug 2023 01:41

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[yitzchokm wrote on 11 Aug 2023 18:53:](#)

Which ones of the three strategies are you referring to in this thread?

All.

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Re: 90,000 ways to Live without Escaping  
Posted by chaimoigen - 13 Aug 2023 14:20

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[DavidT wrote on 11 Aug 2023 15:38:](#)

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I think that there is an important distinction between using escapism to avoid doing work that needs to be done to heal one's emotional pain and deal with emotional spiritual and psychological challenges and difficult experiences, and the simple desire to escape boredom and the annoying vagaries of life.

Escapism to avoid dealing with internal work that needs to be done stands in the way of healing and recovery. Escape in the latter case isn't necessary as harmful. But it frequently leads to falling , as has been commented about so much in these forums.

And it leads to a lifestyle where a person is passive and full of avoidance, which is unhealthy, in many ways.

I understood, maybe mistakenly, that Shteeble was asking for tools that can be used to avoid going for mind-numbing escapes from boredom and annoying roadblocks in life.

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Re: 90,000 ways to Live without Escaping  
Posted by Shteeble - 13 Aug 2023 14:58

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From the Handbook:

[Shteeble wrote on 17 Jun 2011 04:46:](#)

Overhauling our character traits

If we continue to experience falls again and again, then something far more fundamental in our character traits may be absent.

The emotional maturity of an addict can often be at the level of a two year old.

When we don't get what we want, we feel like crying, kicking and screaming.

We never learned how to deal properly with pain, anxiety, resentment, stress or anger.

We have always used the addiction to hide inside ourselves,

and we refrained from mature emotional interaction with others.

While **our peers were growing up and learning about L I F E** from the world around them,

**we were zoning out** into our fantasy worlds of self-pleasure and escape.

And so we often remained as emotionally immature as a little child.

When one has transformed one's character and has become a different person,

one will find that this "new person" can accomplish things that the old person could not.

(Attitude Handbook Attitude #18)

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