

Self sabotaging

Posted by mount... - 03 Nov 2023 00:09

Hi, I've been struggling with P&M for many years now. In the past I've had times when I've done really well (abstaining for months), but for the past few years I've been really struggling to get anywhere past a few days.

Recently I went to therapy to try to get to the bottom of it, and after working through many things, I came to the realisation that I am self sabotaging. I noticed that I get enthusiastic about quitting and come up with new plans and work on therapy / engage with GYE etc, but then when I start making progress and quitting begins to become more "real" I sabotage it and let it all slip. I think I try to quit enough to calm my conscience that I'm working on it, but I never allow it to progress far enough to actually quit it properly.

After thinking about this, I think that the reason I self sabotage is because deep down I really don't want to stop for the following reasons:

1. I enjoy it (it gives me enjoyment, excitement, and satiates my curiosity) and I don't want to give up the pleasure for good.
2. I don't want to be restricted for the rest of my life by having to always hold myself back from my desires.
3. P&M helps me regulate my emotions and clear my head, and I don't know if I can cope without it.
4. It's familiar and a comfort.?

Because of this I feel that I'll never succeed unless I work through the self sabotaging first, and help myself get to a place where want to quit more (not just intellectually).

Has anyone else had this issue, or does anyone have any suggestions to help me make myself want to quit more?

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Re: Self sabotaging

Posted by ainshumyeiush - 03 Nov 2023 00:31

I saw that someone once posted that they kept failing to quit until they got comfortable with the idea of long term sobriety. Do you think you can commit to 90 days? Or a different amount of time? i know what you mean about not wanting to stop, but the benefits outweigh the losses by a ton

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Re: Self sabotaging
Posted by mount... - 03 Nov 2023 13:44

Did they say how they got to a place of being comfortable with long term sobriety? Because that's exactly what I'm struggling with - intellectually I'm desperate to quit, but deep down I don't want to...

In the past I've managed periods of time without P&M, but I always ended up back to where I started, and I think that this is the reason why. So I really want to try and fix the underlying issue first so that I have a better chance of success next time.

Any suggestions or recommendations will be greatly appreciated!

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Re: Self sabotaging
Posted by davidt - 03 Nov 2023 15:07

[mount... wrote on 03 Nov 2023 00:09:](#)

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If I may share some insights that might help you...

"1- I enjoy it (it gives me enjoyment, excitement, and satiates my curiosity) and I don't want to give up the pleasure for good."

If we give ourselves the choice of either enjoying the pleasure of lust or not giving ourselves the pleasure, we are in for a struggle: Enjoy or don't enjoy? A plate of ice cream or an empty plate? Instead, what we have to do is realize the positive benefits of guarding our kedusha, the tremendous zechus that we can gain from it. If we do that, now we have a choice between one pleasure and another pleasure, between a plate of delicious treife ice cream which will eventually make us sick, or a geshmake seudas Shabbos with our families. That is a much easier choice to make.

"2- I don't want to be restricted for the rest of my life by having to always hold myself back from my desires. "

When a person can't control his actions, he becomes a slave to the Yetzer Hara. But if we break free from lust, we will find real FREEDOM from all our obsessions and be able to serve Hashem properly. A person can lose his freedom and be a slave to himself, to his habits and negative character traits. When I am a slave to my desires, it FEELS like I am happy - but it's only a dimyon - an artificial image of the true happiness. Who doesn't feel good to sin? "Ain adam chotay v'lo lo". But it's not the REAL happiness. The real happiness is when I am what Hashem created me for - and we can ONLY reach that stage when we become subservient to Hashem. That's when we become truly free, truly happy, and truly who we are.

"3- P&M helps me regulate my emotions and clear my head, and I don't know if I can cope without it."

Addiction teaches us to rationalize and justify. Over time we get really good at making excuses for ourselves to act out and we keep buying into our own lies. Be smarter than your brain. We all need to vent at some point, so do it positively. Slipping back into harmful habits when times get tough is only going to make things tougher. Look around at your life to find the excuses you are using. Make a list and keep it with you. When one of these rationalizations creeps into your thoughts, you will be able to recognize and dismiss it. And remember, thinking of these things doesn't make you perverted or bad. In fact, as we start to sift through thoughts and rely on the ones that support our recovery, we will find more trust and confidence in ourselves.

"4- It's familiar and a comfort.?"

Addiction can build seemingly normal routines into our lives that can be really hard to break. Sometimes our triggers are based on a time of day, a location, or even something as simple as a sound. It might sound crazy but there are things in our lives that inadvertently become related to our addiction. These types of triggers are powerful and can easily turn into part of our daily routines. Recognize the difference between a normal, healthy routine and one that your addiction has created. Also try to learn to live with discomfort, it won't REALLY kill you, even though it will FEEL like it's killing you. A real human being always has a little discomfort - in staying away from what comes natural to him, but is really bad for him.

Be patient with yourself - these things take time. But at the same time, don't fool yourself - **you know** if you're progressing or not.

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Re: Self sabotaging
Posted by iwannalivereal - 03 Nov 2023 16:59

Hey mount...

Being that about 50 days ago I spoke on the phone with a number of chashuva GYE members complaining to them how although I know I must stop, deep down I know that I really don't want to I can definitely relate to how you feel. For a number of years, although I had put in a decent

effort in trying to stop nothing ever seemed to work long term and I somehow knew that this was because honestly - I didn't want to stop. The desire was too strong, and pleasure is so much fun. There seemed to be no good strong reason that I could use to weaken the desire, and so I continued acting out sliding deeper and deeper into the "fun". I can now say that although I'm by no means free from my struggles, I am a different person than I used to be as I have gotten a real taste of what it means to want and to desire to stay clean.

What changed by me was my mindset. I read and internalized the lessons in the book "the battle of the generation" by Hillel S (you can download from the gye website). The basic idea that changed by me was that instead of pornography and masturbation being an opportunity to get this massive physical pleasure, and thereby making it that when I don't act out I am fighting with all my willpower and strength against an opportunity for pleasure, I now view the incredible draw of pornography and masturbation as Hashem's way of giving us an incredible opportunity to reach tremendous heights and draw incredibly close to Him. By shifting my mindset I have accomplished that instead of fighting against the pleasure, I use the desire as a tool to feel good about myself that I was able to withstand the temptation. When I now overcome desire, instead of feeling like I missed out on an opportunity to have fun, I now feel proud of myself and I feel awfully good and happy with who I am and how much I have accomplished by being able to say no to the strongest temptations known to mankind. I feel good because I know that I am doing something that is unique and rare. I feel good because I know I am making Hashem mighty proud, and because I am using my struggles as an opportunity to serve Him.

I'm nervous that someone reading this will think that hey nice perspective, but this only works for someone who doesn't have super hard struggles. Someone who doesn't really struggle much can feel happy about passing his nisyonos because they weren't really that hard in the first place. So, granted this might not work for everyone, but I struggled pretty hard. I've been struggling since for the last 15 years since I was 12. Over the last year I started sliding deeper and deeper, and I was watching porn daily. I probably had quite a streak going of days in a row that I watched pornography. I went from struggling really really hard and never wanting to let go, to where I am now which is (atm) 55 days clean and being super happy and enthusiastic about being clean.

Check out my post called "Raboisai - I'm Living Real" in the introducing yourself part of the forum, and feel free to reach out to me with any questions.

If I could do it, so can you!

Hatzlacha

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