

Are Video Games forbidden?

Posted by DesertLion - 06 Sep 2010 22:08

Hey Guys,

This question may not seem directly relevant to our struggle to attain moral purity, but I need to know whether it is forbidden to play video games in Judaism. The reason I'm asking is because I realise that without a total character transformation, I'll never be totally free from this addiction. Initially, I used video games as a substitute for porn and masturbation, but all I've done is replace a lethal habit with a bad one. My mum keeps telling me that the effects of playing games are similar, but I still don't fully feel the conviction inside.

I've been struggling to quit games for an entire year. Sometimes I managed to delete them totally and go without them for a month, but the temptation would always return and I would succumb and reinstall them. I've deleted them all again today and I will proceed to sell them, but that's still not enough. Until I'm fully convinced in my mind that they are wrong I'll always be a 'dry drunk'.

My mum keeps on telling me that games are an evil way to enslave and destroy the youth (like pornography), and they're nothing but spiritual drugs. Btw, I did read somewhere that the Nazis flooded E Europe with porn in order to weaken the youth of the occupied countries. Why is it that I know that games are not beneficial intellectually but can't seem to feel this spiritually? It's just like quitting pornography. We all know it's wrong and say we'll stop, procrastinate and procrastinate and sometimes think that things like soft porn are acceptable.

Anyway, sorry for the ramble guys. I will push on with the character transformation (a) cos I have no choice and (b) bc I'm trying to genuinely want to do it.

Thanks for all your help again guys. I hope all is well.

BW,

DL

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Re: Are Video Games forbidden?
Posted by Me3 - 07 Sep 2010 00:04

According to the Torah jews are forbidden to waste their time because they could be studying Torah instead. Both Jew and non jew are likewise forbidden to waste time because they could be involved in doing constructive activities (yishuv haolam). If there is a constructive purpose to playing video games such as to relax you so you can be more productive then it would be permitted.

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Re: Are Video Games forbidden?
Posted by DesertLion - 07 Sep 2010 07:09

Dear Me3,

Lol, I do indeed play games to relax. However, there are far more constructive and healthy things I could be doing to relax, so I basically don't have an excuse not to do them after what you've told me. It feels like being forced to finish one's vegetables at the dinner table before one is allowed to leave.

I'm just looking forward to the day when I'll love eating them lol. Being disciplined is tiresome.

Anyway, thanks for your time and help.

BW,

DL

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Re: Are Video Games forbidden?

Posted by sonicReducer - 12 Sep 2010 17:09

Hi DL,

Personally, I do play video games to relax. Not a huge amount of time, and I avoid any with overt sexual or violent content, but I don't see anything wrong with coming home after work and learning and playing something to chill out. Other things need to take priority (learning of course, davening, exercise, whatever), but I don't think theres anything wrong with using a video game to chill out. Would you think twice about listening to music, reading a novel, playing monopoly?

Could be that for the future it's something to think about phasing out (this is how I feel), but for now, and knowing if I stopped my free time would be become boring and frustrated - and from experience very likely of being nichshal, I think it's ok.

Think about why you're playing them. And if they truly help you with your learning / davening / whatever because you're a bit more relaxed, could be a good thing.

Just food for thought

sR

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Re: Are Video Games forbidden?

Posted by DesertLion - 17 Sep 2010 08:22

Hey SonicReducer,

Thanks for your post. The trouble with me is that I start off using games to relax, but very quickly they become semi-addictive, so I'd rather play safe atm. It's true I do feel 'withdrawal' symptoms after deleting them, but no pain no gain.

I never used to consider 'enjoying myself' a waste of time, but the more I thought about it, the more I realised I was just postponing life by escaping into my game.

Anyway, I hope all is well.

TC,

DL

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