

Why can't I just stop?

Posted by freedomfighter613 - 28 May 2014 04:01

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I am a 35 years old "observant" Jew. I have everything in the world to be happy. A loving wife, beautiful children, a good job, good reputation, etc. To be fair, I am a generally happy person. But the one thing that makes me miserable at times is when I fall.

Pornography is not an issue for me anymore. I mean I still watch it here and there but I'm "happy" when it's just pornography and nothing else (I started when I was young and I've never been completely sober).

The real issue is when I go on business trips. Once every couple of weeks I have to travel around the US and spend a night or two outside home in a hotel. Even though I don't want to do it, as soon as I'm on my way to the airport I'm already looking on the internet for "things to do" in that area. I'm looking for visitors to come to my hotel room...

The interesting thing is that I don't feel that I want it that much it feels as if I am forced to do it. It became a habit I guess. While browsing online I hear myself begging me to stop. Telling me nothing good can come out of this. Break Free, You can do it. You are better than that. And then for a few minutes that might stop me but then it all comes back again.

Sadly, I usually act on it when I'm traveling and it makes me feel miserable. It makes me miserable. I don't know what to do about it.

I have tried a few different things. I told myself that I would give \$300 to charity every time I fall, I told myself that I would call a friend or family member at the hardest times and chat about life, I told myself I would read a chapter of tehilim at those times. I have tried all this but it did not stop me.

Part of the issue is that I don't struggle with this daily. I feel that if it was daily I could put up a fight but since it is "just" once every couple of weeks as soon as I'm back home I prefer to forget it and tell myself that I won't do it again. but then when I'm traveling again I go unprepared and I end up losing the fight.

It took me a while to write here.. I'm still debating whether to submit or just forget about it. but I really want to stop it. I love everything I have so much and I am so grateful to Hashem for it.. I feel that if I could just overcome this obstacle my life would be soo much better since this is really the only thing that really brings me down. I mean, how could I do this to Hashem? How could I do this to my wife and children??

I will submit this thread and I ask you please help me. What can I do about this? I don't have the means to take therapy - Is this absolutely necessary? Should I share this with my wife? She ).

Please help me..

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Re: Why can't I just stop?

Posted by dms1234 - 28 May 2014 04:19

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WELCOME!!!!

would be devastated. She trusts me with all hear heart (I think that I wish she didn't

You have very good questions and i could see that you are on the right path. I know others have better answers than me but i will chime into one thing.

**freedomfighter613**

I feel that if I could just overcome this obstacle my life would be soo much better since this is really the only thing that really brings me down

Me too. But lets talk reality here. I mean unless you aren't addicted. I am so i can only talk to addicts. For addicts this isn't just an obstacle to jump over and move on with our life. Its something we have to accept and deal with AND move along with our life. So living life is definitely a step and its something we need to do. We, as addicts, have a tough time with that though. We have to learn the basics.

Its great having you here! Welcome!

Ps. check out [Skep's tips](#)

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Re: Why can't I just stop?  
Posted by jewishfiltergeek - 28 May 2014 04:27

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Hi Freedomfighter613,

I once heard an amazing story from R' Fischel Schechter Shlit"a about a businessman with a similar story. Very inspirational. Perhaps someone can share it here.

Wishing you much Hatzlucha in every aspect of your life.

Maybe you be able to overcome this one moment at a time with siyata d'shmeye.

JFG

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Re: Why can't I just stop?  
Posted by metalking - 28 May 2014 05:45

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Welcome Freeedomfighter613!

I wish you much hatzlacha. I have one question and one comment. From your short bio in your story, it seems like when youre "in-town" youre not by yourself much. Busy job, kids to run after, wife to spend time with etc. But when you travel, after the business is done, you're stuck by yourself. There is an article in the Jewish Standard this week about Rabbi Twerski who's involved with this site to some degree. In it, he mentions when he went to a spa and had to go to soak in a tub and after 5 min of "Gan Eden" relaxing, it turned into "gehinnom" as he was stuck by himself with his own thoughts. I'm paraphrasing a little but my point being is that as much as you say youre happy with your life, maybe you're unhappy with you for some reason.

And when you're in a situation where you're by yourself, you're unhappy dealing with who you are and whatever unsatisfactions in life that you have so you turn to whatever it is you're doing to distract and escape yourself.

My question is: If this is really making you unhappy, do you have the option to stop going on business trips? Be really honest about that. Is there a way you could stop setting yourself up for these tests? Because right now, as you said, you keep failing. So why not try to avoid such nisyonos right now? Until you really figure out how to deal with whats bothering you, like maybe what I mentioned above.

If I'm way off base, I apologize but I was only trying to help.

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Re: Why can't I just stop?

Posted by Pidaini - 28 May 2014 07:39

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Welcome freedomfighter613!!!

Awesome move, clicking that submit button, it may have been a changing point in your life!!!

When I first came to GYE, because I was falling to pornography, I thought that my only problem was that...pornography, and that's what I wanted to stop and all I needed to stop. But then I got my first welcome, from AlexEliezer (may he blessed, wherever he is) and that changed. He asked me how my shemiras einayim was on the streets.

Now, I live in an extremely observant area, and there are rarely any "assur" sights, but what he so kindly explained is that there is something called lust, and that lust is fed by any sort of sexual pleasure, even looking at completely clothed women!!

So everything changed, it *is* a day to day battle!!!

(not to mention the fact that the reason that we lust boils down to day to day things)

Stick around here, we're all struggling with lust, and there is tons to learn!!

**Make sure to see the 12 suggestions on the [First Time Here page](#).**

**Also, check out your [Personal Home-page](#). It will guide you through each tool/task that we suggest, one by one, and help you track your progress in recovery.**

Keep On POSTING!!!!!! (KOP)

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Re: Why can't I just stop?

Posted by cordnoy - 28 May 2014 08:16

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I also wanna welcome you.

Great move!

May it be a start of recovery for you.

I have written about your issue a bit and it is somewhat relevant to my issues (of the past.....perhaps?...I don't think about it).

I call it: opportunity.

We act upon it.

Our heart begins to race when we pass by these clubs and we can enter.

When there's nobody around, we contemplate all sorts of stuff.

But then, as Pidaini said, "What are we doin' or thinkin' when we are busy? Are we totally clean? Do we have shemiras einayim issues?"

If the answers are in the affirmative, then we need to think that it is more than opportunity.

Either way, there is work to be done, but we can get a better understandin' of the issue with these questions answered.

Don't be a stranger.

b'hatzlachah

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Re: Why can't I just stop?

Posted by freedomfighter613 - 28 May 2014 09:24

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Let me begin by saying - WOW!! Everybody here is so amazing. I'm struggling with something and I share my story and well.. you can't imagine (or maybe you can) how great it feels to be part of this forum and see that there are people who care and who can help. So from the bottom of my heart - THANK YOU SO MUCH!

dms1234 - You put it loud and clear which is good. I'm probably an addict. Probably I'll have to fight it all my life (uh-oh...). I guess it worries me more but who said life is easy? What bothers me is that I'm the one who started all this. I wasn't born this way. So intuitively, it seems that if I could just undo what I did wrong after a lot of work I could completely get it out of my system.

but I guess that's not the case. Once I've tasted the sin there is no going back.

The link you gave me really helps. I like and agree what he had to say about 90 days. The fight is not a period of time. It is day after day after day.

Jewishfiltergeek - If you find this story pls share

Metalking - What you said is really valuable! Am I unhappy? Meaning, when I look deep into myself and try to just be with myself how do I feel? I find this a difficult question to answer. I'm the type of person who likes to be on the move all the time. I like social life, I like watching a TV show, I like playing sports. So when by myself I might feel some emptiness but is this something doing nothing but is this unhappiness?

How can I find out more about this? Is there some questions to ask? How can I find if I have some deep issues inside me that are part of the problem? As a child BH I was never molested, I don't come from a violent family or anything of the like but who doesn't have some type of issues, right?

With regards to your suggestion - It is a valid one and one that I expected. I contemplated to do this and I have two problems with it. First, I would lose my job. Financially, it would be difficult and put me through some struggle. (Additionally, what would I tell my wife? But I guess I could find some excuse). But you know what, I would be able to make it. I'm like to fight and I would be willing to do it if I knew this would be a solution but here comes my second concern - Who said that this would help? Who says this would stop my behavior? What if I change job, I go through a hard time financially and after four months I fall again when my wife traveled for a friend's wedding or something? This is my fear and the reason I haven't left my job. I feel it's me and not the job.

Pidaini and Cordony - You are absolutely right. I'm not a saint in the streets or in other places. This might be the root. But it got to a point where I feel controlling my eyes in the street is a battle I can't fight. I mean, if you have the option of living in a extremely observant area then fine you can escape it. But for me it's just not realistic. But at least, when I see a girl who is dressed improperly depending on day/mood/who's near me I might glance/look and even enjoy a little but then I just move on.

So, what should I do? Should I fight something that I know will be impossible to completely win?

I guess the ideal would be to fight it without trying to win all the way but just minimize the damage.

Again, Thank you for taking your time and reading the story of somebody you don't know. I am so happy I decided to share my story with you! your answers gave me already much strength needed. I'm not alone anymore!

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Re: Why can't I just stop?  
Posted by cordnoy - 28 May 2014 09:33

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nothin' is impossible!

One day and moment at a time.

One improperly dressed woman at a time.

You'll see....if you try that is.

Take action.

b'hatzlachah

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Re: Why can't I just stop?  
Posted by shivisi - 28 May 2014 10:49

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[Pidaini wrote:](#)



Now, I live in an extremely observant area, and there are rarely any "assur" sights, but what he so kindly explained is that there is something called lust, and that lust is fed by any sort of sexual pleasure, even looking at completely clothed women!!

Very good point, Pidaini.

I would just like to make one technical correction, and one "hoisofa":

You wrote that in your area there "are rarely any 'assur sight'"

Yet, Considering the point which you made right after that, I would correct that and say that ANY sight which might be a trigger to bring 'hirhurim' IS an 'assur sight' for that particular person.

[Yes, I did understand what you meant to say,- but I think this "he'ara" might change the way we look (or better yet DON'T look at those mistakenly you would call 'non-assur-sights.)

*Ulefee zeh nire'h l'hoisif*,: We also must realize that sometimes the job of 'shmiras haeinayim', and resisting the lust is harder in "an extremely observant area, where there are (assumingly)rarely any 'assur' sights", as opposed to a place where one can expect 'assur sight'.

This is like the idea of someone needing to be more alert to dangers of certain negative hashpo'ohs from others when he lives in an all-frum area, more than when he lives in a non-frum neighborhood or goyish one, because in such neighborhoods he knows to what to expect and what the problems are.

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Re: Why can't I just stop?

Posted by millety613 - 28 May 2014 17:50

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Hey, In one of your posts you ,

. Probably I'll have to fight it all my life (uh-oh...). I guess it worries me more but who said life is easy?

Just because you have this "allergy" to lust it does not mean you will have to *fight* it all your life.

I wrote this somewhere else on the forum, but will repeat it here for you to help you understand this problem with a new perspective:

We have an allergy, we are allergic to lust. Let's say I go to the doctor and he tells me I have a peanut allergy. This allergy will most likely stay with me for life. Now you might be asking how will I ever lead a normal life if this will stay with me forever? The answer is that I may not be able to go near the peanuts, but I **can still live a perfectly normal life**, and many people do. Nobody's cutting off any of our limbs. We're still complete people and can live happy lives - perhaps even happier lives than "normal" people, because we're learning how to deal with things rather than escaping from them. Case in point is people who drink alcohol. Some people can have a drink once in a while and it's not a big deal. They're able to say they've had enough and stop. Alcoholics can't get enough once they start, because they crave the escape that the high gives them. They can't take the first sip which is what they have to try and avoid.

In reference to us, we can avoid lust up to a certain limit. Sometimes however, it is out of our control. Like for someone walking down the street. This is why we have to work on dealing with the situation correctly. This takes work and time, everything in recovery takes work and time. But the result is worth it!

Sometimes the reason why we lust after things is to try and escape from the world of pressure and stress. Consequently, by working on ourselves- step by step - we will be able to address the situation in a healthy way, instead of just acting out which makes the situation worse and is purely just fake relief.

Good Luck ! Looking forward to hearing from you...

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Re: Why can't I just stop?

Posted by gibbor120 - 28 May 2014 19:19

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WELCOME FF613! You have come to the right place. Thanks for sharing your story with us. Many good points have already been made, but I'll add my 2 cents.

There are 2 types of triggers - physical and emotional. The physical ones are the ones we generally recognize very easily (and usually blame for our problems). Often the more important ones are the emotional ones. Boredom, loneliness, and as you describe so well, simple opportunity.

I remember my heart pounding, and the feeling of being forced if I knew I was going to be home alone with the computer. Even if I wasn't having any lustful urges beforehand. So I hear you loud and clear on that one. I don't travel for business, so that is not an issue for me.

I'm not sure how to direct you on that one. It is a tough situation.

Do you have a Rav or someone you trust that you can confide in? As you have seen already, getting the problem out in the open is VERY helpful.

I would encourage you to take stock and see what your triggers are. How big is your problem really? Is it only on trips? You say you still view pornography on occasion. Could you stop if you tried? Does your wife know about the pornography?

I would definitely NOT tell your wife. At least not at this stage. At this point it will just be cruel to her. She will have no way to deal with it. Once you have worked on yourself and have reached a certain point, then MAYBE you should tell her, but you should consult someone like a rav or therapist first.

Many women are very shocked, much more than we think they will be. We don't see it as such a big deal. They, for the most part, are shattered.

CAN be a good thing in the long run, but it is very tough in the beginning. ). It

I think you are on your way. Reaching out is a HUGE first step.

Keep posting and sharing your progress with us!

Now, many people here have told their wives or been caught by them (I'm in category B  
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Re: Why can't I just stop?

Posted by Dr.Watson - 28 May 2014 22:26

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Thank you for sharing all this with us. It helps you and it helps us as well. Every time you post about your own struggles you are helping other people.

Duvid Chaim said last week that he was brought up just fine, in a frum, loving supportive family. Nothing terrible happened to him, he wasn't abused in any way. So why did he become an addict? Because despite the comfortable life he had, *it was empty*.

That may or not be the case for you. You may or may not feel spiritually empty. My point is that addiction is not just for people with difficult histories.

IMO do *not* tell your wife at this point.

I never found penalties helped me at all. I'm now in SA and that has helped me a lot.

Stick around and keep on posting. This is not something that can be done in one or two posts, it is a process.

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Re: Why can't I just stop?

Posted by cordnoy - 28 May 2014 22:48

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[Dr.Watson wrote:](#)

I never found penalties helped me at all. I'm now in SA and that has helped me a lot.

Doc, read some of your old posts.

I think you mentioned that they helped a bit.

It wasn't a cure ultimately, and it sounds like SA is havin' a very positive effect.

Keep it up!

b'hatzlachah

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Re: Why can't I just stop?

Posted by metalking - 29 May 2014 06:03

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[freedomfighter613 wrote:](#)

Metalking - What you said is really valuable! Am I unhappy? Meaning, when I look deep into myself and try to just be with myself how do I feel? I find this a difficult question to answer. I'm the type of person who likes to be on the move all the time. I like social life, I like watching a TV show, I like playing sports. So when by myself I might feel some emptiness but is this something doing nothing but is this unhappiness?

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IMO, as others here will tell you, a lot of this disease/sickness/addiction comes from a lack of closeness to Hashem. You may be observing the mitzvot, davening etc, but if its alot of going thru the motions and not a true journey to build Emunah, humble yourself and bring you closer to Hashem, then you are most likely still very far away from Him. Most of your current time you have all these distractions (social life, sports) to keep your focus off of that fact, but when you're alone, and the lack of closeness to Hashem can be focused on by your soul, it then manifests its way out in the addiction.

try reading books like "the Garden of Emunah", pretty much anything by Rabbi Shalom Arush. Give Emunah and looking to find Hashem in your life a try. If that helps, great. If it doesn't, and you keep continuing to fall, then you may have to consider that you're unable to work the Emunah angle and will have to try a more potent, regimen such as SA.

As for the job question, as you said, quitting your job doesn't really solve anything. And if its going to cause anything marital stress, etc, its definitely not the right choice. But I wanted to get you started on thinking of ways to minimize your chances of falling. None of these strategies to minimize falling work in their own right, but they help serve to humble you. Any move to make you farther from sin is a statment that you are too weak to fight the temptaton. That you need help, His help. It shows Hashem that you desire to change. To grow closer to Him, to better yourself. Hatzlacha!!

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Re: Why can't I just stop?

Posted by freedomfighter613 - 29 May 2014 21:02

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Thanks again for all the responses. This is very helpful!

Following everybody's posts I'm not telling my wife. and FYI she doesn't know that occasionally I watch pornography although it would probably bother her bus she would probably see it as something that has less to do with her and more with me.

I like the analogy with the allergy but as you said, we can't control or even express to others about our allergy. Imagine a kid who is allergic to nuts and is forced to live surrounded by them and can't tell anybody about it (other than posting about it in the "guard your skin forum"). How would he feel?

From all the points mentioned above two of them are the most relevant to me

1 - Emotional triggers might be the biggest source. Is it emptiness?

2 - I lack closeness to Hashem.

I'm not sure if this is an emotional trigger but I could really relate to the how Gibbor120 felt when he knew he would be home by himself. something similar happens with me. The moment I find out I'm going on a business trip my mind automatically begins to wonder about which places I'm going to visit, I ask myself whether I'm going to make it this time or not, I pray to Hashem "please help me" (but maybe I don't really mean it?), but then while booking my hotel or while

browsing the web I slip and google for all type of clubs in the area, I close the browser, I open it again, and so on. During my business trip even if I didn't google anything before, I'm already thinking what is it that I'll do at night. these thoughts are triggered only by the fact that I'm alone and far from home.

So I think what triggers my behavior is being alone in a far away place. It doesn't matter if I'm bored or if I'm working - I still think about it (yes, if I'm in a business meeting i might think about it but not act on it beacuse it isn't practical). What I still need to figure out is why is it that when I am alone I feel a real need to do these things?

With regards to getting closer to Hashem, when I slip I do feel very distant. I can't pray, I can't ask for forgiveness. I'm not capable of asking Him to help me in business meetings. I know one is not supposed to think this way but for the 24 hours after I act it just feels wrong.

Let me finish by telling you that it was an eye opener to realize that there might be something in my subconsciousness that is bothering me and it comes out in all kind of ways. I never thought about it but it just might be the case.

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