

Free Choice?!!

Posted by stillgoing - 28 Apr 2015 23:01

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Hello. I'm new here, and I was going through the handbook and I got a little bit stuck on the part about free choice. it seems from there (page 79 in case you haven't memorized it yet:) ) that when we have a huge urge to act-out, we almost don't have bechira. But in that case then what we did was not a sin, since we had no free choice about it. When my two year old is alone at the table with a piece of gooey cake and he grabs it, I don't punish him for that since I know that he has no free choice, but MZ'L *is* a huge sin. Maybe someone can help me understand this.

Thanks.

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Re: Free Choice?!!

Posted by skeptical - 29 Apr 2015 04:11

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Please pay close attention to the words there. Almost as if we don't have bechira is not the same as not having bechira.

The way I learned about this is as follows. The first time, or perhaps, first few times we do something we shouldn't be doing the Yetzer Hara has to really work to get us to do it. "He" gets us to rationalize that it's really not so bad. After we do it over and over again, and it gets to become a habit, the YH actually gets to sit back and watch, because it's become so ingrained that we do it on our own without really thinking about it. We begin to feel that we simply **MUST** do it, or we'd go crazy. Sure, if we stop to think about what we're doing instead of acting impulsively, and really try with all our might, we may be able to hold back, but otherwise it's **AS IF** we have no bechira whatsoever.

I hope this helps. Hatzlacha!

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Re: Free Choice?!!

Posted by serenity - 29 Apr 2015 04:16

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Welcome to GYE, glad you're here!

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Re: Free Choice?!!

Posted by stillgoing - 29 Apr 2015 16:07

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Thanks.

So what I think your'e saying is that when we first got that new phone or moved the computer to a more private area, or even went into a private room ourselves if we know deep down where it's going to end, then that small seemingly mostly innocent action is really most of the cause of our downfall! A lot of times we try to catch ourselves when we are in the middle of an urge/pull (which is better then nothing- just really really hard) when the real test is to work on ourselves to avoid that whole problem. it's really pretty scary, how such a small act can have such far reaching effects. I remember the first time that I drove on a highway, I was amazed at the ) just a small twist of my arm on the wheel will change my life and others around me drastically forever! Scary!

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Re: Free Choice?!!

Posted by yiraishamaim - 29 Apr 2015 16:28

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Hi! Welcome!

This small thing that leads to great things works so well in the positive

Here's just a few

thought that with the speed I was going (only 55mph in those days  
- many people(not all) would not have a developed a lust addiction to begin with had they just put filters on there devices from the very beginning

- by learning just to avoid our own obvious triggers we avoid many major inner conflicts and urges to engage in self-destructive acts

- by participating for a short time daily on the forum we gain enormously

- just by reading a little the handbook daily imparts in us enormous helpful truths
- one short call to a sponsor can catch a fall so the streak of sobriety can continue

Hatzlocho - you are a thinker - one who searches for wisdom and truth

Looking forward to your posts in the future!

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Re: Free Choice?!!

Posted by gibbor120 - 29 Apr 2015 17:00

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WELCOME! You got it. I've seen in seforim that the "main" bechira we have is to avoid triggering situations in the first place. That doesn't mean we have no bechira after that point. Only that it becomes extremely difficult (and in some cases, we may in fact not have bechira at that point).

At any rate. the ikkar is not the Medrash, it's the maaseh. So what spoke to you from the handbook lemaaseh?

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Re: Free Choice?!!

Posted by stillgoing - 29 Apr 2015 17:28

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Well, I'm still dealing with admitting to myself that I'm addicted. (see, I won't even write the word ADDICT). I mean, the fact is I know that no matter how many times I've tried to stop it hasn't worked. I got rid of the computer in my house a few years ago not because (I'm embarrassed to write this) I was viewing bad things, but because I couldn't excuse its presence anymore to myself. But then I started working in a place with access to several computers - not all filtered. After countless falls and firm determinations (and more falls) I spoke to the boss (a frum lady) if she was interested in getting a filter. B"H she was, and I installed one. That helped only so far. I still spent tons of time trying (with some success) to get around it. I felt so stupid. Here I was the guy who actually arranged for the filter to be installed, trying my hardest to uninstall it so I can

get my daily fix of p\_\_\_\_! I gotta say, that to me (at this point at least) the 90 day challenge is really driving me. My pride that I'm "so great" won't let me fall(I hope). (famous last words, probably)

Sorry for going on like this, and I appreciate you asking.

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Re: Free Choice?!!

Posted by yiraishamaim - 29 Apr 2015 17:57

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Tons of time looking desperately for a little filth - and then feeling like a fool - asking myself "and what in the world was I thinking"

Yeah Yeah - that's all part of the nature of this beast - unfortunately I know it all too well.

filters and learning to avoid triggers are very important but what is even more vital is - true subservience to G-d - internalizing it - davening for his assistance - total hisbatlus and reliance on him as well understanding yourself - what is it about your personality than is drawing you for these quick fixes - lust and curiosity may have drawn us originally to P\_\_\_\_\_ but routinely acting out until it became a compulsion? - by now there are different emotional/psychological buttons that have taken over

Find them - understand yourself well.

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Re: Free Choice?!!

Posted by stillgoing - 29 Apr 2015 18:47

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Re: Free Choice?!!

Posted by pischoshelmachat - 29 Apr 2015 18:56

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Yirai, I cry when I read your post, especially since your 175 is a real inspiration. I started watching myself to understand what causes my compulsion. First just looking for patterns of time, situations, moods until i found the time I usually act out.

Now I beg the RBS"O to help me deal properly with the triggers which as a bonus has drastically improved my life.

So STILLGOING, no need to read palms, just stop floating aimlessly through life watching it float by while you are almost trancelike, GET ALIVE and AWARE of your every action, emotion, and urge and DAVEN DAVEN DAVEN and you will see some type of pattern. It took me over a year of literally crying out loud and begging HKB"H until I got this clarity to know what I need to ask HKB"H for.

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Re: Free Choice?!!

Posted by serenity - 29 Apr 2015 19:20

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Stillgoing, I hear a lot of powerlessness and unmanageability in your post. What has helped me is to take a step back and say I have an issue, illness, disease, compulsion or addiction, whatever you want to call it. Whatever I have been doing until now isn't working. My best thinking leads me no where good. Take a deep breath and start taking suggestions from people and continue with your honesty in these posts.

Hatzlacha!

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Re: Free Choice?!!

Posted by TheBigX90 - 29 Apr 2015 19:59

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I think I might have an answer to this seeming contradiction. On the One hand, as someone previously said, we have bechira before we started looking @ inappropriate material. However, once wev'e already started, the yetzer hara gets us to think that all is lost & we are hopeless. Therefore, I think it's a matter of one's mindset, If he knows that he's vulnerable to it, yet with syiata dishmaya he can beat it, that's a tremendous step. However, this same person should realize that at the same time he is vulnerable, therefore, @ all costs he shouldn't put himself in a

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Re: Free Choice?!!

Posted by yiraishamaim - 29 Apr 2015 20:15

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Pischo - thank you for your post

I am in turn inspired by you. The point is that you never gave up. You made a true hishtadlus at the same time you knew/know that only by Hashem's intervention can you have sobriety. It's no wonder that you are in a better place. Bless you buddy!

stillgoing - your name itself means perseverance. when we are living in the circular lifestyle - acting out - teshuva - falling - teshuva etc... it's frustrating beyond belief. Who on this forum has not been there.

Keep on posting - keep on being honest as serenity has already suggested. It's therapeutic in so many ways - and someone's suggestion's will hit the spot

You will find what form of action works for you in time.

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Re: Free Choice?!!

Posted by Bigmoish - 29 Apr 2015 23:10

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Sorry I'm not really following this thread so carefully. Just stopping in to give a warm welcome to TheBigX90.

Why don't you start a thread and introduce yourself?

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Re: Free Choice?!!

Posted by stillgoing - 29 Apr 2015 23:27

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Yes, A big welcome to TheBigX90.

Your answer was very good. If I understand you correctly you are saying that technically we still have free choice when we are involved with the yetzer harah, he just makes us think that we don't. If that is what you are saying, do you mean even when the pic. etc. is practically staring us in the face?

And I take it Bigmoish, that you were welcoming me too. (I'm already here 3 days, so I guess

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that makes me an old timer.)