

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 Workingguy - 12 May 2017 13:43

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[stillgoing wrote on 12 May 2017 12:13:](#)

Thanks Sing, (are you Chinese?)

For all of the scores of people who are now counting (and just forgetting to post....) I just wanted to add that to count a trigger does not have to be something you saw. It can be a thought, a smell, a feeling (like the itch that our friend waydown would talk.about) anything that you know will often lead you down, can count as a trigger. The point is to cap the trigger/feeling/whatever right where it is, give it a name (a number) and we can then move on.

We all count, so count!

Count sg XIV

I totally hear that, but there is a flip side which is to pay no attention to the small little things and ignore them and not make them a bigger deal than they are

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Re: Free Choice?!!

Posted by yiraishamaim - 12 May 2017 14:26

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Workingguy's approach speaks to me. Why give triggers so much attention? Generally, when a thought or scene raises it's ugly head, try just softly but firmly to push it away. In the course of time they become less frequent. True, you will not have the exact stats but the difference in quality of life -less triggers- is obvious. I have tried it and it works.

Sometimes, I play a mind game where if the situation is particularly alluring I picture wrapping my nisayon in a package and putting it on the mizbayach. Which in reality is what is being done when we don't fall for the foolish filthy lure that is set in front of us.

But generally, I do the flippant ignore deal as I explained in the first paragraph.

By counting, are we not anticipating the trigger and almost waiting for it to happen. Could it in of itself cause triggering?

Hey, If it really works for you guys, why not?

But I personally relate to Workingguy's approach.

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Re: Free Choice?!!

Posted by Markz - 12 May 2017 17:07

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There are multiple reaction to triggers

I believe one should not dismiss them

The question is what is our reaction

- 1) Discard each
- 2) Count each
- 3) Swear each one off
- 4) Share with a partner
- 5) Act upon it with P&M (was that supposed to be in a spoiler?)
- 6) Consider the white book
- 7) Consider therapy
- 8) [Add your own idea here]

They say "do what works"...

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Re: Free Choice?!!

Posted by stillgoing - 12 May 2017 17:21

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[yiraishamaim wrote on 12 May 2017 14:26:](#)

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I completely agree, which is why I wrote "don't harp on it, don't dwell on it, just add a number and move on."

For me, there is no such thing as 'too small' of a trigger. They are all big because they all lead to big places. So, I agree that we absolutely should not give it more attention then it deserves. I add a number and move on, whereas in the past when I had a 'small' trigger it would linger and fester in my mind until it was a full blown motion picture.

I have no problem If you want to disagree with me, but it seems here you are disagreeing yet saying the same thing. I'd like to understand how (if any) we differ.

Perhaps I didn't understand your post, or perhaps you didn't understand mine.

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Re: Free Choice?!!

Posted by stillgoing - 12 May 2017 17:25

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[Workingguy wrote on 12 May 2017 13:43:](#)

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- 8) [Add your own idea here]

They say "do what works"...

Mark, I've tried all of those (yes, even #5). I'm counting for the sole purpose of discarding them. Similar to Yeri's korbon on the mizbach, my numbers are to show Hashem how I'm reacting to the challenges that He is sending me. But the main advantage that I have had (so far) in counting is that it helps me forget it. Yeri wrote "gently push it away" I'm still looking for the instructions for that, Cords says "lust melts in the light" maybe I don't do it right but I haven't found it to work for me. Many say "surrender" after two active years on gye, I still don't know what that means practically. So I count. Its easy, iit's straightforward, and so far (for me) it works.

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Re: Free Choice?!!

Posted by Workingguy - 12 May 2017 21:56

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Just to clarify a little bit the idea of what I'm saying – in meditation there is an idea that you aren't your thoughts and they also use it to deal with anxiety, OCD, and the like. So you're supposed to notice your thoughts and realize that you aren't them and often we can't control our thoughts we don't have to take them seriously.

We can observe them as a casual observer and see how interesting that I'm having these thoughts and move on. I've done it not so much for Lust but for other damaging thoughts and it often works; it's amazing to see how when you don't view your thoughts as who you are they are so much less powerful or relevant.

i'm actually not sure that I'm saying anything that different than anyone else

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Re: Free Choice?!!

Posted by yiraishamaim - 14 May 2017 02:13

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Hi Stillgoing,

First of all may I just say how much I respect your courage for taking on the SSA struggle. I need not tell you how so many have given in to this particular challenge and taken this to another level - embracing brazenly what secular society calls simply "an alternative lifestyle". You on the other hand are not backing down from this formidable challenge.

This expression of respect for you is long overdue.

I have no doubt that Hashem is so proud of your efforts.

KOMT!

As for our issue at hand. I remember Dov writing that when a person finds himself obsessing over someone it is wise to daven for that person. I think it is to make the person more human and less an object of desire. At the same time Dov suggests it is not wise to daven frequently at very situation, for that is really a way that your fooling yourself so you can focus on the lust a bit longer. ( I hope I understood Dov correctly)

Again we are not all the same. For me to count triggers would be giving the trigger too much importance. I would end up focusing on it a second or more than I should. To do that would be counter productive for recovery.

I have come to realize that even the mizbeach mind trick I do, should be done only sparingly. Only if its's a little bit stronger of a nisayon than usual should I employ this method

So I have three levels of dealing.

- 1)usual simple - push away
- 2) intermediate - mizbeach mind game
- 3) obsessive - daven for the person

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Re: Free Choice?!!  
Posted by stillgoing - 14 May 2017 14:09

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[yiraishamaim wrote on 14 May 2017 02:13:](#)

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Thank you Yerai,

I appreciate your chizuk as I always have the past two years (even during your long absence).

We both have the same goal. Deprive the trigger of as much attention as possible. Perhaps you are on a higher level of sobriety than me. You write for a 'small' trigger you just push it away. I have no idea how you do that. I can't just say adabra kdabra and the thought will be gone. Perhaps you have developed a method in your mind to 'push it away' because for me, it's the pink elephant syndrome. Try to push it away and it comes back double.

I've found that by simply saying a number I am able to move on. I can't simply ignore it. I am addicted to lust. I can't pretend that I'm not.

Again, perhaps you are in a better place than me and you are somehow able to simply 'push the thought away' we both agree that we want the thought gone as fast as possible, and I'm happy that you are able to do it instantly.

I need about 1 second to acknowledge that I'm lusting and then I can move on.

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Re: Free Choice?!!

Posted by GrowStrong - 14 May 2017 14:25

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[yiraishamaim wrote on 14 May 2017 02:13:](#)

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I need about 1 second to acknowledge that I'm lusting and then I can move on.

I was speaking to my sponsor about this last night.

In sobriety there is a kind of hyper awareness of all the triggers that are out there.

The disease craves to crave is what he said.. I believe its an AA statement.

We don't have to participate in it, or give it any power, he said.

It can take years for the hyper awareness to get to a point of neutrality...if ever. And we are not transcending into pure light any time soon, is how he put it.

There are 18 'tricks' in the white book, How we overcame lust... have you checked them out?

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Re: Free Choice?!!

Posted by yiraishamaim - 14 May 2017 14:44

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I don't know anything about levels but this I can tell you. I can tell you how I feel about the whole struggle .

I WANT TO LIVE! Do you hear me? I WANT TO LIVE.

If I could scream it any louder I would. I want to have my journey in this world with great relationships. I want to make a comfortable living. I want to smell the flowers and take a deep breath. How about a leisurely walk in the park? Learn Torah and be mezakeh others in a variety of ways.

Now what place does an obsession with lust have in all of this?

It makes life unmanageable and deters from happening all the wonderful things just mentioned.

When a person wants to on a diet he needs strong motivation, both negative and positive.

He should strip down and look at his unattractive pot belly and really study it. It's disgusting. Besides being not healthy.

Then think how it would be if he was in shape. He'd be more attractive and healthier. People coming over and complimenting him. Many might even ask for advice. Such thoughts , really emphasized I believe could be very helpful.

We say we hate the way lust is taking over our lives. We must do the same as with the diet mashal. Lust, at least how we have it in our lives, is evil and ugly. Those moments when an addict has clarity of mind are the times he must seriously meditate on these things to form the right attitudes.

These attitudes are not enough for sobriety. However, they are very powerful tools to get us motivated to follow the programs that indeed have proven to be effective.

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Re: Free Choice?!!

Posted by stillgoing - 14 May 2017 14:46

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Hi GS the second.

To be perfectly honest, I didn't really understand most of what you just wrote.

(Except for the crave to crave part.)

Can you explain it in a simpler words? On lag b'omer I'm so busy delving into the mystical writings of the zohar that I didn't get your post.

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Re: Free Choice?!!

Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 14 May 2017 14:59

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[stillgoing wrote on 14 May 2017 14:09:](#)

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Re: Free Choice?!!

Posted by tzomah - 14 May 2017 16:43

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i think we need to learn how to think to be able to control our thoughts there are seforim that teach ways of thinking

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Re: Free Choice?!!

Posted by lionking - 14 May 2017 16:56

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[Gevura Shebyesod wrote on 14 May 2017 14:59:](#)

[stillgoing wrote on 14 May 2017 14:09:](#)

I can't just say adabra kdabra and the thought will be gone.

Try "Avada Kedavra"

According to JK Rowling, casting that spell damages the soul of the person casting the spell.  
Not sure if I would want to say that.

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