

Striving to win the battle

Posted by sprightlyzebra29 - 02 Apr 2025 19:30

This is my first post here and was encouraged by my mentor to post so thanks to him and hope to gain chizzuk from this community.

I've been struggling in inyanei kedusha for around about 12 years since I was around bar mitzvah age. I stumbled upon it, got into the habit and it developed into a release for a lot of other issues realised had going on. I've been making this my top priority for the last few months and realised it needs to be if I'm serious about it, this is the most motivated I've ever been. I am 26 and want to have a family but know I need to move past this once and for all. I started this cycle from my insecurities and let it continue being a release for other emotions and lifes struggles. I am a busy person, and bh have been matzliach in different areas of life juggling work, degree in engineering, chavrutot, exercise and since the start of the war in Israel been active serving as a reservist fighter on the northern front for many months. Lots going on and bh I manage to juggle but I am learning I can't continue to use this as a release anymore for difficult emotions and lifes struggles.

For the first time in 12 years, even though I've only been fully clean for about 20 days, I feel like I'm in the right direction and not shooting with my eyes closed.

I've been trying even since I was around 15 to stop, I knew even when I got into the habit it was bad news for my future and wanted to stop. I tried lots of techniques but realise looking back I was never really putting in the necessary work to drive meaningful long term change.

A filter is crucial, setting up solid gedarim, tonnes of stuff that are useful tools but Ive recently realised I never invested and took the time to try dig really deep and get to the roots of the problem; to understand myself, the emotions I'm feeling just before I'm acting out. To try understand what specifically is triggering the urges. To understand which childhood emotions that lead me to become out of control in this issue.

I did a lot of reflection in first understanding the initial cause. I realised it's insecurities for sure, popularity, being noticed by girls, self image. So the inappropriate things on the screen and acting upon urges became my release. Eventually I've realised I just associated it as my release for difficult emotions I was feeling. A lot of those emotions that lead to the insecurity I shouldn't be insecure about anymore as certainly not the same person back then, but the issue I feel is rooted there and still relating to myself in that way.

The reason I said I feel I am really moving forward in finally moving past this even though I haven't been clean for so long (I have had stints of being clean for more time than I just had), is based on work I've been putting into dealing with this issue and exercises recently. I realised I have successes in other areas of my life, why not try to apply my expertise in what allows me to be successful in my work life to this issue? I also started to relate to certain urges in the way we related to certain threats when serving in reserves during the war, the moment the threat was identified we would need to act accordingly, sometimes the threat was immediate and required instinctive reaction, sometimes there was knowledge ahead of time so had time to prepare. Either way I will explain a bit further but the point I feel like this helped me is it allows me to understand this issue in a context I am familiar with and has been matzliach. Don't know if this kind of thing, approach has helped anyone, but feel like I am gaining clarity and setting up better next steps from this.

For my career I deal with helping companies and their system operations, a type of consultant and strategist. A company will want to drive revenue by selling their software, so to begin selling they need to create leads of potential customers for their sales team to engage with. The way these people come into their data base is from numerous places, marketing, events, webinars, form fill out from a paid ad etc. The company in order to really understand how to move forward and where to invest need it to be crystal clear for each potential customer how did they come into their data base, where did it come from. Was it from that event? Which event? That marketing campaign? Knowledge of that allows the company to know whether what they invested in to bring in potential customers was a good investment or not. It also allows them if they then become a customer to understand not just which source drove the most potential customers but which of them actually converted to a paying customer. Also it allows the sales team to contextualise the customer and mark their level of intent to buy and strategise differently.

Why am I explaining this? As this is what I did for myself in understanding everything going on in myself that leads to an urge and subsequently acting out. Trying to spot the themes. I mapped a lot of things, for example an emotions branch that usually came before a fall. Digging deep in understanding the emotions I was feeling has been critical in understanding when I have an urge as I recognised what was going on when it came and took next steps, I called my mentor, I used a strategy I learnt in a book. I added the sites I know although aren't strictly innaporiante I know from the past 99.9% of the time it's that specific social media page that leads me to the next step and the total fall. I noticed how whenever I leave a shavua to be updated right before it's meant to expire it's a big nisayon. Was trying to flag what the really serious threats were and how to relate to them.

I have a long way to go but am proud of these steps. I feel like really mapping what I am calling

my "urge sources" has given me a lot of visibility and understanding in myself, kinda treating myself as my own client, allowing me to more accurately understanding the urge I am having, where it's coming from. With that recognition I have had already a bunch of times with urges an easier time moving past them because I am more in tune with what's happening and what lead to it. With a lot of Hashem's help really want to put in the work to finally push through this. Hope wasn't too long, thanks for reading.

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Re: Striving to win the battle
Posted by simchastorah - 02 Apr 2025 19:42

Welcome Mr. Zebra!

By moving so quickly into uncovering the inner causes of acting out you've shot forward towards cleanliness in a truly impressive way.

The resourcefulness you've shown by taking your well honed skills from another area of your life is bound to help you climb out of this mess in many ways. There's a lot to learn from you - everyone has skills from some other area in life that can be employed in this battle, and seeing you do it so well is an inspiration to do the same.

Hatzlacha!

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Re: Striving to win the battle
Posted by cleanmendy - 02 Apr 2025 21:05

Welcome to the Mishpacha here,

First of all please stay safe up there. I give you a bracha to get beck to regular life Bkarov you and all the other guys with you.

I love the way you took on the challenge, Taking a step back finding your triggers and planning for them. It really is just that, another area in life that we have to work on, were not different cuz we struggle.

Hatzlacha, we hope to hear more great ideas from you.

KOMT

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