

This is it - 90 Days here I come!

Posted by NOYA - 16 Nov 2009 02:07

Hey everyone,

My name is NOYA and I'm here to perform a mind dump.

I am 20 years old and a good boy overall. I discovered pornography and masturbation at about age 13 or so. I got very into both of those things and etched those neuron pathways good and deep. I found out that both of these things were sins at age 14 but couldn't stop. It's been that way ever since. I've tried to stop, but just couldn't.

When I was in Israel I met a mashgiach from a yeshiva who claimed that if you stop masturbating for 40 days then you will have stopped the habit. I made it to 40, but it didn't work.

I made it to 40 several more times, but every time I failed I got depressed and guilty.

This year in yeshiva is my strongest year ever. So far I've had a 42 day campaign, followed by a 33 day campaign (which was on the GUE list), and now I'm on Day 6 of another campaign. And now that I'm on the forum, I hope to get lots of support from my holy brothers here, and to give lots of support to others as well.

Although I have not made it to Day 90, I've assembled a list of things for other people to learn from that work for me. There are 3 categories:

Physical

The base level of trouble with regard to masturbating is by physically stimulating the milah. Obviously touching the milah in a sexual manner, deliberately to excite is problematic, but even just casually rubbing or flicking or whatever can be problematic. Therefore my first rule is never to touch the milah ever under any circumstances. Also, if a certain body position is associated with masturbation you must avoid it. For example, I psychologically associate lying on my back with this aviera, so I make sure to never lie on my back.

Visual

The handbook talks about this and it's pretty poshut, but you have to do your best to stay away from any and all inappropriate visual contact with anything. Thank G-d I don't have an issue with the internet because I have a great filter, but one glimpse at an attractive woman can set me haywire sometimes if she strikes me a certain way.

Therefore, one must avoid woman in general and if you must go out, make sure to enter "low-scan mode." That means to lower your gaze so you can see in front of you about 5-10 feet, so you don't see woman from far away. And this way you might see legs, but since it's winter time that's not so bad.

Mental

Hirhurim come and go even to the greatest of people. You can't feel bad about the fact that you get hirhurim because everyone does. The aveira is to continue thinking about it. The way to deal with hirhurim is to distract yourself with other things.

THE BIGGEST YESOD IN FIGHTING THE YETZER HARA IN GENERAL IS TO REALIZE THAT HE IS STRONG AND YOU ARE WEAK. How does one win a battle like that? By running away. Every time you feel a battle coming you MUST distract yourself immediately. For me, learning or reviewing math helps distract me a lot.

Now then, I'm here to make it Day 90, but I find the following problem comes up every time. The way I see it there are essentially two levels of taivah status - Level 1 and Level 2.

Level 1 taivah is the status you get in when a thought goes into your mind and you casually think about it a little, or you might see something that excites you, but you're not "gone." You can still control yourself and distract yourself, and all that. I have no problem with dealing with Level 1 intrusions - All you have to do is distract yourself and you win (as mentioned before)!

But when I get into higher numbers, like in the high 40's, I get something that I call Level 2 taivah, or "structural taivah." I feel like my whole body is locked into taivah "mode" and no

matter what I do, and I think I've tried absolutely everything, I just can't shake it.

I've distracted myself for hours to no avail, I've begged Hashem to help me and to take away the taivah, I've called Rabbeim to help, but it always gets me in the end after I'm Level 2. I still don't really know how I'll deal with it when it will come around day 45 or so, but I have 40 days until I have to gear up for that.

Anyway, I've blabbed forever. Wish me luck everyone and hatzlacha to all of you!

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Re: This is it - 90 Days here I come!
Posted by sci1977 - 25 Feb 2010 14:41

Hey Noya, I was thinking about your comment about opening up. I think opening up is the best way to fight the addiction. It makes your will power stronger by writting or talking it out.
KUTGW!!

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Re: This is it - 90 Days here I come!
Posted by NOYA - 26 Feb 2010 03:15

Yeah sci, it's definitely good for the soul. I had a pretty good fast day today, kept busy well. It was a fairly uneventful day without much learning or accomplishing anything useful, but hey, it's a fast day. I'm still pretty zonked and am in one of those philosophical moods. I was thinking about how much I want to be a lamdan. I really want to be something. Rabbis I know talk about it as if it's something that you just "get" one day after enough time has been spent knocking yourself dead at the gemara. I want to be that guy. I want to be someone who can really learn and who loves to learn.

Well, NOYA, if you want to get there, you're in the right place, because I can tell you one thing: You ain't, in a million years, ever going to get there with closet habits of masturbating and pornography viewing, that much I can tell you. And that's right. Duvid Chaim's call was so nice today - so therapeutic hearing all these other voices on the line of fellow addicts workign against the yetzer like I am.

Anyway, there's one thing I'm not really sure what to make of. Duvid Chaim and other people on this forum talk about "being in pain" in context of the disease, and suffering from it or something. Can someone tell me what this means because I don't really have that in my experience? I think that my addiction is just a chemical one mostly - that started out with teenage experimentation and turned quickly into addictive behavior. But I don't know what the "pain" is.

Day 34: Doing well!

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Re: This is it - 90 Days here I come!
Posted by Ano Nymous - 26 Feb 2010 03:36

I wasn't on the call today (slept in, I know, I know...) but here is what I think is meant by being "in pain." It's definitely not a physical pain. It's painful because it hurts to act all day; it hurts to present yourself to the world, to your friends, to your wife, to your rabbeim, etc. as one thing, but to feel inside that you're really a completely different being. It prevents the "real" YOU from shining through because your mind is not with you. It makes you unable to connect with people, and to feel for them. It makes you insensitive, robotic, unfeeling, and certainly not in a position to be anything Godly. That, to me at least, is the pain I feel from this. Is it painful to watch porn and masturbate? Umm...if that was the case, there wouldn't be any need for this site :D

It's the repercussions that are painful. I don't know if I understood your question, so I could be totally and completely off, but there ya go!

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Re: This is it - 90 Days here I come!
Posted by silentbattle - 26 Feb 2010 07:28

I'm with Ano on this one - and the longer it goes on, the more energy you have to invest into making sure it stays secret, so you spend more and more energy focusing on this issue, and not living your real life. I always picture it as if I was holding something to my chest or stomach that I didn't want anyone to see - to do that, I'd have to bend over, and the more I want to hide it, the more I have to contort my body - and the more I do so, the less I'm able to do anything else, or even think about doing anything else! Until eventually, I'm lying on the floor in a fetal position, unable to even move.

Just a pointer - be careful about feeling that you're in control with hashem's help. You might mean something different, but if I thought that way, I'd be running the risk of trusting myself in situations that I shouldn't be. Of toeing lines I shouldn't be even close to.

And by the way - thank you very much for mentioning your appreciation that I'd stopped by - it's nice to know that you enjoy it when I do. Thank you for making me feel wanted and appreciated, it really means a lot!

KOT!!

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Re: This is it - 90 Days here I come!
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 26 Feb 2010 08:05

I think it's pain, or frustration, or dissapointment that we have that drives us to act out.

The acting out isn't the real issue.

If we were truly happy and truly satisfied, why would we be doing this?

For me, I felt much more successful when I realized--the problem is REALLY the hours or days of brooding, depressing thoughts, or frustrated thoughts. THIS is what was always pushing me to act out. By the time I was saying "DON'T ACT OUT!" it was already way too late.

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Re: This is it - 90 Days here I come!
Posted by NOYA - 01 Mar 2010 03:08

Hey Ano,

Thank you for sharing that with me. So it's the pain of not being able to really live honestly you're saying. I guess I can relate to that. SB, thanks for stopping by again and keep on stopping by! I love reading your comments, really. And thank you Eyenonymous too for your insightful point.

It really is all about being happy and satisfied with life all the time, and not ever giving the yetzer a pesach. I have to incorporate this idea into my life more because I find whenever I am not accomplishing in a positive way or doing something productive, trouble is soon to come.

Like today, for example. Last night I partied at a yeshiva until 1:30 AM. I had a great time. Then I couldn't fall asleep until 3:45 because I was still too inebriated to be sure I could wake up without a hangover. I miraculously made it to Shacharis today and took care of all the mitzvos of Purim, but I wasn't really so into it this year. I just came back from a great seuda that was really fun and spiritual, but because I wasn't so good today I wasn't able to fully get into it.

I was so lonely this afternoon while I attempted to nap in order to get my sleep back from the previous night. I called Ano and he helped me get out of myself for a little while. But I missed my girlfriend so much and wanted to contact her again. And that got me thinking all sorts of inappropriate things and I was in a bad space for a while today after that. I wanted the buzz of pritzus so much today and did those "little lusting" things that I spoke about in earlier posts, thought of old fantasies, it wasn't good, but I was saved from mamash falling by a friend calling me in the middle of my daze, and talking to me about the seuda tonight that was upcoming. Now the seuda is over and I'm back, a little lonely still, without much to do.

This is so hard, everyone. I want pritzus so much.

Day 37: Somewhat difficult day. I need some chizuk!

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Re: This is it - 90 Days here I come!

Posted by silentbattle - 01 Mar 2010 14:59

You can do this, man - and remember - you don't want pritzus, the y"h wants you to want pritzus.

Besides, as you mentioned - it's not pritzus we want, or our old girlfriends, or any of that - we want to feel whole, complete, happy. Anything we're doing is just a drug to cover up that need.

Instead, let's work on making ourselves better able to accomplish the things we really want!

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Re: This is it - 90 Days here I come!

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 01 Mar 2010 19:44

Yeah, you're on the right track.

It's work, but we need to separate our self-worth from our accomplishments and from our moods.

We're OK, even if we don't succeed.

We're OK, even if we feel in the dumps.

We're OK, and that's a constant. Everything else that changes is just like the changing scenery on a road trip--the ride of life. Don't confuse the foliage with your own self.

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Re: This is it - 90 Days here I come!

Posted by struggla21 - 01 Mar 2010 19:54

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Re: This is it - 90 Days here I come!
Keep up the great work buddy
Posted by NOFA - 01 Mar 2010 20:38

Hey silentbattle, I'm not so sure about the statement you made. You said that I don't want pritzus, but rather I just want to feel complete and happy, and pritzus is the medicine that I would use to try to attain those feelings.

I feel as if what you say is partially true; sometimes I really do want pritzus because I long for a life companion to be emotionally intimate with, not just physically. So then I understand what you're saying in that I would use pritzus to try to simulate that feeling, to try to attain a feeling of wholeness through something unholy.

But im timtza lomar that I don't always have desires triggered from such things, which is what I feel, then I disagree. I feel that sometimes I just get horny for no particular reason, not because I want any emotional intimacy, or because I miss any particular person, or desire any emotional state. I just get horny because all men and women do, and since I'm an addict who has changed his mental condition unfortunately, I get cravings for pornography and masturbation in a more extreme way than a non addict. Is there a deep psychological underpinning? I really don't think so because a lot of the time I feel as if I'm not craving intimacy or happiness or whatever - I just get horny.

And Eye, thank you for your insight about feeling okay no matter what. It is important for me and everyone else to internalize that and thank you for reminding me. And struggla, where have you been bro?! Thanks for stopping by! What are you up to, everyone?

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Re: This is it - 90 Days here I come!
Posted by sci1977 - 02 Mar 2010 00:24

Keep on trucking Noya. Every day is a great day when your clean!!

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Re: This is it - 90 Days here I come!
Posted by NOYA - 02 Mar 2010 03:52

With Hashem's help I was able to get back in the driver's seat. I have to remember there is no more funny business. No more lusting a little bit. No more exciting yourself a little bit and stopping. It's feeding the monster - survival rations maybe, but rations nonetheless. I had a problem over Shabbos and over Purim with this issue and it officially has got to stop. The problem was that I got complacent with lying on my back because I thought it had ceased being an issue with me. I thought that I was beyond fantasizing while in bed and touching myself. I thought wrong. Now I know better, and know that the shulchan aruch knows better than me about this topic and I have to lie on my side even if it's less comfortable. So we're back and had a very good day BH!

Day 38: Very good!

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Re: This is it - 90 Days here I come!
Posted by silentbattle - 02 Mar 2010 04:06

Glad to have you back - and since oyu were already here, that measns that now you're SUPER-here! ;D

Weird...I thought I'd responded to your post already...and I wasn't drunk today! Really!

Anyway - there are times when we lust as a direct result of our neediness, but to a certain extent, the neediness for other things has already just created a hole inside us - and it hurts. And at this point, we don't care why it hurts, we just want to put a band-aid on it, we want to numb it somehow, anyhow. But that's like putting a band-aid over a huge, gaping wound. It doesn't help the wound at all. And in this case, it's a band-aid covered in dirt, which will only make things worse.

Keep on rocking!

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Re: This is it - 90 Days here I come!
Posted by NOYA - 03 Mar 2010 00:41

Today was pretty chilled out. I wish I got more work done and wasn't as spaced out and unproductive as I was today, but hey, we all get days like that every now and then. At least I wasn't lusting today, Baruch Hashem. Duvid Chaim's call was pretty good today - we talked a little about how someone's addiction can be fed whether he is climbing success after success or if he is alone, lonely and despondent. It doesn't matter because the Yetzer Hara has a line for every customer. "Hey champ! You were great out there! Straight A's, good mark on a super hard exam, winner of all these challenges, etc. You deserve to contact your old girlfriend to tell her how you're doing! She'll be so proud of you and it'll be so nice to hear from her!" Or maybe, "Oh man, what a hard day. You need to relax in bed." He plays the field, that yetzer hara.

Anyway, today was satisfactory.

Day 39: Keeping it real.

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