

A STORY IS TOLD OF three little pigs who constructed different houses of various materials. The first pig built a house of straw. The second pig built a house of twigs. The third pig built a house of bricks. Right after their individual houses were completed, the pigs danced and sang in the street. The third pig didn't do much dancing and singing as he toiled for many hours on his house. The wolf came and the pigs ran to their houses for protection. Each pig was confident in having made the right choice of construction materials. The wolf told the first pig that he'll respiratorically dismantle his house unless he exits. The pig refused to give in, and had his house blown down. The first pig ran to the second pig's house. The wolf then did away with the second pig's house. The two heart-broken homeless hogs hastily made their way to the house of the third pig- This time the wolf was unable to blow the house down as the house was made of bricks. The pigs were saved.

This is mystifying. Who are we talking about here? Pigs! Furthermore, these weren't just any pigs; they were pigs of the highest caliber who were smart enough to build houses. Yet, the first two pigs didn't fathom that the wolf could blow down their houses. Why didn't the first two pigs perceive the obvious fact that houses made of straw and twigs can be blown down? Even harder to understand is the second pig's actions. He realized the wolf might attack, so he built a house of twigs. Why didn't his awareness of the fact that the wolf might attack lead him to build a house of bricks?

The answer is a resounding yes. The mida of atzlus, laziness, can cause people to be lazy even in cases of imminent danger, like becoming pork chops. This mida perverted the expected conclusion that the pigs should have reached, due to the time and effort needed to build a brick house. It caused them to think that their flimsy houses which required much less effort to build were strong enough to stand up against the big bad wolf. The second pig only broke through his atzlus to an extent. He realized that straw wasn't protection, but he too was blinded by atzlus, as he only built a house of twigs.

This story still requires further analysis. Why didn't the first pig, after seeing his house blown down, run immediately to the brick house instead of the twig house?

We see from here that the first pig must have been a brutally battered boar when he was younger (for blowing bubbles and biking backwards). The bricks reminded him of the time his mother absolutely refused to give him cookies a whole half hour before dinner. Therefore, this emotional feeling overcame his natural instinct for safety, and caused him to run to the second house instead.

During the course of Avodas Hashem, when a person makes a decision to refrain from performing an action, he should be aware of his real intentions. His decision might have been motivated by a touch of atzlus. One must make an honest introspection to determine the real motivations behind his decision. If he doesn't, he might end up as just another ham.