

Help With a Shift in Perspective?

Posted by workingonme - 11 Jun 2012 22:28

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i've been fighting this battle for a few years now with little success. Not much has changed in terms of my reactions to a test in this area or my desire to kick it. i know i want to fight and be successful in this area, but i dont know how to nurture that idea so that it moves from a simple concept to something that i live every day.

i've stumbled across a possible source for why i dont think i'm growing in this area: i dont think of looking at pritzus or being mz"l as an aveirah or as an inhibitor to my connection with Hashem. I guess i'll elaborate a bit. I'm 20 now and come from a non-frum family and background (getting religious over the past 5 or so years). While this is not an excuse by any means, it has affected my avodas Hashem in many ways, some good and some bad. For instance, i certainly feel an excitement about avodas Hashem that i might not have if i was raised frum. But my background also leaves me with stark lack of education in regards to perspectives on certain issues, especially this area.

The more i've thought about it over that past few weeks, i realized that until now i havent thought of being mz"l as an averah, but i do see something wrong with it. However, i think this is more a product of western society's viewpoint on sexuality. In my early teens, i didnt look at porn on the internet or at all because it was taboo. it was a subject no one *ever* spoke about with me and i never spoke about with anyone. That worked fine until the hormones of teenage life kicked in and then i started looking around. But as i got older and more religious, this area just stayed as taboo and the mindset of "as long as you dont affect anyone else, its okay" stayed with me and besides for a sense of guilt, i just continued on my way down this destructive path...

i know that this is an aveirah but *knowing* information and **living** based on that information are two completely different things. so i guess what i'm looking for is just some feedback on how i go about shifting my perspective on this area and i guess connecting with Hashem in general....

i know its gonna be work, but what else are we here for?

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Re: Help With a Shift in Perspective?

Posted by Machshovo Tova - 12 Jun 2012 14:25

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[WorkingOnMe wrote on 11 Jun 2012 22:28:](#)

... so i guess what i'm looking for is just some feedback on how i go about shifting my perspective on this area and i guess connecting with Hashem in general....

... and connecting with the guys out here will iy"H go a long way to help shift and shape your perspective. Try it, you may like it. I tried it, and I love it.

Hatzlacha - and Bruchim Habo'im

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Re: Help With a Shift in Perspective?

Posted by alexeliezer - 12 Jun 2012 15:46

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[WorkingOnMe wrote on 11 Jun 2012 22:28:](#)

i just continued on my way down this destructive path...

Only you can motivate yourself, and you have plenty of reason not to. Why give up the sweetness of porn when I'm not hurting anyone? But myself. You do know that somehow you're hurting yourself, as evidenced by the quote above, but you can't quite put your finger on just what the danger is. I'm not sure I can help you. The ones here who are the most successful at sobriety have addictions that have taken us further and deeper into the darkness, to the point where we were disgusted with ourselves, our thoughts and our actions. We realized we couldn't go on like this. Read through a few threads. Notice the misery. The double life became too great a burden. So we chose to surrender our lust to Hashem, in exchange for the sweetness of real life.

Welcome to the forum. I commend you for opening up this dialogue, and for choosing Torah-true Judaism. I hope you find the motivation and guidance you're looking for.

Alex

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Re: Help With a Shift in Perspective?  
Posted by Dov - 12 Jun 2012 17:51

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**"The Green, the Blue, and the Orange"** - a spaghetti western of recovery!

[WorkingOnMe wrote on 11 Jun 2012 22:28:](#)

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i know its gonna be work, but what else are we here for?

Gorgeous post! Thanks for your honesty and *please* continue - it's catchy, and I, for one, always need more of honesty and openness.

Re: the green:

Please correct me (everybody else does), but it sounds like what you are reaching for is primarily **reacting** differently *to* temptation. In other words, it's not masturbating to porn or even searching porn that is your problem. It's *wanting to so badly* that is your main concern, in this post.

Is *that* what you mean?

**Or** (if you do not mind me being so blunt) are you still actually searching porn and masturbating, and is *that* the main problem that you are trying to change. I understand that desire and thinking lead to the acting out of it...but I also know what putting the cart before the horse looks like. And I also know that we like to imagine that Hashem wants us not to **feel** any temptation. But that is clearly wishful thinking (until you are about 80 years old and even *not* a gadol baTorah!).

Re: the blue:

It sounds like you *always* struggled to *some* degree against your use of porn and masturbation - like you knew it was a problem - even before you were religious. And that it is just that it became a *more serious issue* as you became more religiously committed.

Is *that* right?

And finally, Re: the orange:

You are so right. It is sad that so many see no gap between *knowing* the truth and *living* the truth. They see their crazy behavior (like the schmutz and masturbation) as a confusing problem. They try to attack it with the Torah. More confusion. Then they wonder why they have 'emunah problems'. They wish they'd quit so badly - yet would be truly **terrified** if they suddenly became *unable* to use porn or masturbate themselves any more.

Continued hatzlocha opening up and finding the true relationship with Hashem that you know is at the root of this.

- Dov

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Re: Help With a Shift in Perspective?

Posted by workingonme - 05 Jul 2012 01:58

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thanks for the very helpful responses everyone. things have been same old same old this past

month. things aren't getting worse, but they're not getting better. being at home with a part time job leaves over a nice bit of free time and staying active (mentally and physically) has its ups and downs, but it seems like more downs (though i'm sure this is a yetzer hara to think like this).

my goal is to post here at least every other day as a form of extra cheshbon hanefesh. and just as a little reward system to get me motivated, if i post in this thread at least 7 times in the next 2 weeks, i'll buy myself a book off of amazon.

things have been rough partly because of my morning routine, which is very sub-par. i don't have a minyan to go to b/c it's too far of a drive for even a few times a week, and i don't always have a car. and this means i sometimes sleep through alarms etc....it's a terrible start to a day and doesn't help with creating an atmosphere of inspiration and productivity. so for now, that's going to be my area of work. if i can start by being productive in the mornings, i know it's one step in the right direction in avodas Hashem, especially in this battle.

b'ezeras Hashem i'll be able to report back with good news tomorrow.

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Re: Help With a Shift in Perspective?

Posted by addictioncounselor - 05 Jul 2012 07:33

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[WorkingOnMe wrote on 05 Jul 2012 01:58:](#)

being at home with a part time job leaves over a nice bit of free time and staying active (mentally and physically) has its ups and downs, but it seems like more downs (though i'm sure this is a yetzer hara to think like this).

we all know that certain people for us may be a trigger, or certain websites, or certain places, etc.

what i found fascinating to loearn was that.....FREE TIME is also a trigger! because "free time" makes us feel that there is no accountability.

example:

charlie is addicted to pornography. he has a ride to work that will pick him up in ten minutes.

charlie's stinkin thinkin starts saying "well, my wife doesn't need me now because she's at work, the kids are now at school, and i don't need to anything now because my bag is already packed upfor work.....and my ride is not for another 8 minutes, so.....LET'S look at porn

it is the feeling of not being accountable at that time to anyone that let's us think this way.

what is funny is that of all 24 hours of the day and amongst all 7 dqays of the week, there is NO TIME for PORN.

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Re: Help With a Shift in Perspective?

Posted by Machshovo Tova - 05 Jul 2012 14:34

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[addictioncounselor999 wrote on 05 Jul 2012 07:33:](#)

what is funny is that of all 24 hours of the day and amongst all 7 dqays of the week, there is NO TIME for PORN.

I just read last night about a tzaddik who never in his life got angry, because he didn't have time for such things. I guess it's all a matter of priorities (or "perspective").

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Re: Help With a Shift in Perspective?

Posted by workingonme - 06 Jul 2012 01:57

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just wanted to check in for the day and also respond to dov's post. (sorry for the delay)

[dov wrote on 12 Jun 2012 17:51:](#)

Re: the green:

Please correct me (everybody else does), but it sounds like what you are reaching for is primarily **reacting** differently *to* temptation. In other words, it's not masturbating to porn or even searching porn that is your problem. It's *wanting to so badly* that is your main concern, in this post.

Is *that* what you mean?

**#1Or** (if you do not mind me being so blunt) are you still actually searching porn and masturbating, and is *that* the main problem that you are trying to change. I understand that desire and thinking lead to the actioning out of it...but I also know what putting the cart before the horse looks like. And I also know that we like to imagine that Hashem wants us not to **feel** any temptation. But that is clearly wishful thinking (until you are about 80 years old and even *not* a gadol baTorah!).

Re: the blue:

It sounds like you *always* struggled to *some* degree against your use of porn and masturbation - like you knew it was a problem - even before you were religious. And that it is just that it became a *more serious issue* as you became more religiously committed.

Is *that* right? **#2**

And finally, Re: the orange:

You are so right. It is sad that so many see no gap between *knowing* the truth and *living* the truth. They see their crazy behavior (like the schmutz and masturbation) as a confusing

problem. They try to attack it with the Torah. More confusion. Then they wonder why they have 'emunah problems'. They wish they'd quit so badly - yet would be truly **terrified** if they suddenly became *unable* to use porn or masturbate themselves any more.

Continued hatzlocha opening up and finding the true relationship with Hashem that you know is at the root of this.

- Dov

#1 - my problem is that I'm still searching it out. I'll go for a few days and then when I feel like it's too much (or when I don't think about it at all), I give in. I know that for the loooooong foreseeable future, the temptation will be there. I just have to learn/teach myself to say no and/or avoid it as much as possible.

#2 - even before I was religious, it wasn't so much of a struggle. Like I said, the taboo component of it instilled in my mind the image that if a desire came up, I'd shove it away. But over time, the desire overcame the initial taboo and welcomed in the notion that if I'm not hurting someone else (so I thought....) and it's done in private, then it's okay. But yes, it definitely became a more serious issue and one that I saw that I needed to fix as I became religious.

and thanks again Dov for your post. It clarified a few things in my own hashkafa and opened up new questions as well.

Today went alright. Woke up late again (gotta fix nights as well) but the rest of the day went okay. Did physical activity which helped me burn up some energy and has helped me in the past. Gotta work on my learning during the day but I have a long day at work tomorrow so between that, learning and Shabbos prep, I should be booked.

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Re: Help With a Shift in Perspective?

Posted by Dov - 06 Jul 2012 11:09

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Good to read #1 - so you recognize that having desire - even for 'very bad' things - is not an aveira at all. That's important. So many are fighting, fighting, fighting....and they do not realize that their greatest enemy is **the fighting**. For it keeps lust and schmutz on their front burner...so they are *guaranteed* to eventually lose.



As AC999 pointed out - either there is time to porn out, or there is time for living. They are mutually exclusive, aren't they. There is no real 'vacation' from real life and 'accountability'. That's what **integrity** means.

You are on a good path so far - now trash perfection and consider keeping your eye on honesty and progress with G-d's sweet, loving, and powerful help.

But remember, there is no aveirah called "being tempted" or "having real desire", at all! So fighting that is childish - yet we do it all the time...gevalt. What misplaced energy.

The aveirah is *maintaining and feeding* desires we have, feeling and enjoying them like a fine cloth, and also of course, acting them out.

So keep up the real relationships and keep getting and staying real, amigo.

Have a nice day!

- Dov

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Re: Help With a Shift in Perspective?

Posted by workingonme - 08 Jul 2012 03:33

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[dov wrote on 06 Jul 2012 11:09:](#)

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So keep up the real relationships and keep getting and staying real, amigo.

Have a nice day!

- Dov

this post was amazing, so first of all thanks! to be honest, i think that i might've thought that it was an aveira to even **have the desire**. just thinking about the psychology, i feel like i looked at the situation from the lens that because even *wanting* it was wrong and I would never fully be able to control the desire, then why try? (its a terrible thought process, i know)

but after reading your post with the perspective that wanting it is not an avierah and thinking about it a lot over Shabbos, i've felt like someone took a weight off of my chest (literally). Chas V'Shalom that i think this is "the one thing" that will change me and is that magic ingredient for success, because i've seen enough disney movies to know that life doesn't work that way. but this perspective change will certainly be a catalyst to growth.

i'll have to do a lot more thinking, posting and cheshbon hanefesh-ing to hash out the

otherwise, things have been strong. had a few minor urges yesterday but just focused on what I was doing and that allowed them to pass. Shabbos was eh because my attitude towards it was eh. I'm not doing nearly as much learning as I could be and being at home (without anyone else being shomer shabbos) has been tough in allowing me to grow on Avodas Hashem. so i definitely have plenty of areas to work on. I hope everyone else's Shabbos went well.

Shavuah tov.

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Re: Help With a Shift in Perspective?

Posted by Dov - 08 Jul 2012 21:58

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just passing along what I've been given through experience the hard way, not 'yesodos' from sforim. Book knowledge already failed for all of us, apparently. I guess that's why you are posting on GYE. ). I'm

So if you *use* it and it *works* for you, then pass it along, too!

Shalom!

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Re: Help With a Shift in Perspective?

Posted by workingonme - 10 Jul 2012 01:16

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back after a long day at work. B"H this week is going to be incredibly busy, which will keep my mind busy as well.

Thanks for the chizzuk, working on me (whatever your real name is, I am talking to you

its been 5 days since my last fall, which is a recent record for me, which is embarrassing to see written down, but i'm trying to treat my lack of a streak just as a simple fact. In the same way that the sky is blue and the yankees have 29 world series :o, my streak is a piece of information and i can do with it what i want. And at this point, i'm not too concerned about it, because as i've learned on the forums, today is the only day that i have to work with and thats a huge beracha.

On the other side of the coin, i feel like i havent had any big tests in the past few days so i know to keep my head on straight and wake up with a modeh ani that focuses on just serving

otherwise B"H things are well. Still working on wakeup but its been getting better and tomorrow i'll look to keep building momentum.

Hashem for that day (though obviously subconscious plans for the future)

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Re: Help With a Shift in Perspective?

Posted by Dov - 10 Jul 2012 17:04

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Sweet!

i hope everyone's Yom Sheini b'Shabbos went well

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Re: Help With a Shift in Perspective?

Posted by workingonme - 11 Oct 2012 20:41

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its been a while, but i need to say a shalom aleichem.

things have been status quo since this summer, with things getting worse this past month with added stress of classes and the chagim. Not much has changed in my life in changing how i think about this area or how i react to a test/trigger. but here are a few thoughts:

1) much of why i feel so trapped is because i feel like i dont know how to react to a triggering situation. i know that i have to "let go and let God" or "give my lust over to Hashem" but i really dont know how to relate to them or what they mean. without an action to do or a plan of evasion (not attack), i dont see much changing for me in the future. after seeing that written out, i realize that i have to have a plan of evasion etc. but i'm not sure where to head. any tips?

2) i know i need to connect with real people more, as many people on the forum have suggested. i signed up for a partner with whom i hope to communicate frequently. also, i want to find an incentive program for me to post on the forum everyday because i know that whether or

not the results will be there in terms of shmiras habris, even posting and talking about the issue gets me thinking and will only help me in this area of getting closer to Hashem.

3) i signed up for the 90 day chart but i'm not too sure where to go from here besides updating it daily.

well, i hope i haven't bored anybody too much and getting back on the forum has tremendous potential for growth. so now i just have to act.

hatzlocha.

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Re: Help With a Shift in Perspective?

Posted by nederman - 11 Oct 2012 22:40

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You don't have to "let go and let G-d". You can do that, but it is not synonymous with recovery. You can use cognitive therapy also.

Check out Feeling Good by David Burns to see what it's about. The book is about depression, but you can use the same methods for addiction as well.

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