

Charlie's change

Posted by mifatfait - 20 Jul 2012 12:17

I used to be Mifatfait Biyitzro, now I'm Charlie. I changed my name, on this thread I explained why: www.guardyoureyes.org/forum/index.php?topic=5489.0

(I don't really know how to hyperlink, I just did copy/paste and hopes it works).

My basic desire to change is that I'm realizing more and more that I simply have to change my outlook on this whole issue if I don't want to spend the next 20 years (or more) struggling to sometimes barely stay sober.

It's so obvious that I need to take on the 12 step attitude and feel powerlessness and start relying only on Hashem and work harder to avoid triggers and...., but somehow the Y"H manages to stop any effort after a short time. His most successfull tactic is convincing me that this is all the wrong haskofoh and I should stop all this monkey buisness and simply fight him head on until I win, of course all this starting right away after one last juicy acting out....

On of the biggest pro's here told me to just do powerlessness even when I don't feel it, little by little it'll sink in (like the mesilas yescharim says about zerizus and humility). I tried it several times and was blown away by the immediate effect, but somehow each time after a week or so I burnt out. I guess after several hard days of not feeling what I'm doing it maybe stopped working?

But now I'm determined to give it one last do or die shot. 8 days ago I decided that until Elul I'm doing powerlessness with no ifs ands or buts, even if I'll feel it's the worst thing in the world for me I don't care. Since then I've been perfectly clean, I beg Hashem every day to help me continue recoveing - one day at a time. After these 5-6 weeks are up I'll see if this works, maybe I'll need some additional help to get sober? Only Hashem knows.

I love all you fellow GYE chevra, thanks for all of your unbelievable help.

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Re: Charlie's change

Posted by Dov - 04 Dec 2012 05:44

It's not you CC, at all.

What I meant was sad but funny, was this:

That nederman still clings to - and tells other people - the myopic view that openly sharing sobriety dates in 12 step groups is about shaming oneself into not acting out. And he has implied that this shaming is a mainstay of the group dynamic of AA/SA, etc.

It's sad, mainly because GYE is primarily about the problem, not the solution. So many here view the function of 12 steps as preventing wasting of sperm, or not looking at porn, etc. But the 12 step groups themselves do not work that way. The 12 steps are not a way to *get* sober, at all! They are a tool for *remaining* sober. There is no mention of drinking/lusting - or not drinking/lusting - anywhere in the steps except in the admission-ticket step: #1. It is understood that the alkie/sexaholic who is willing to come to meetings and work these steps will do whatever it takes not drink at all while he works the program. In fact, the only real healing value of the steps is ***through using them to deal with*** the pain of real life - pain that an addict does not feel fully (nor even realizes *exists*) while he or she is drinking/lusting! And if he/she should drink/act out again, the steps will be restarted - and then continued. For any addict who acts out has simply *forgotten* that he/she is powerless over the drug...*And "powerless" means he does not successfully drink/use lust the way that a normal person can....*which is the 1st step again.

....so he needs to redo step 2, as well. And that means some real work. Work that a person who values honesty cannot just do by himself.

But in fact, all the steps are all about is *gaining sanity*(steps 2&3) and a proper relationship with ourselves (4-7), with the people in our lives(8-10), and with our G-d(11), so that life continues without the kind of inner pain that would probably lead to needing our medication of choice (alcohol, heroin, erotic stimulation). It is a process of more and more deeply letting go of old ideas that are essentially unsound (insane), as the Big Book puts it. In a way, it is *growing up*.

So unlike much of this forum and website (practically all of it, actually) the whole focus of the average healthy SA meeting is ***the steps*** - growing up, and not about *not drinking*. Sure, the topic comes up, and sure, many of us share our sobriety date. But that is the fruit of recovery, not the cause of it.

My heart tells me that those who see the whole idea of group sharing as a *shaming tactic* - see it that way because they have too much shame about it themselves! They only have that hammer, so they assume everyone else must be swinging it, too. But my sponsor told me that he thinks it is quite natural for a sexaholic to act out his lust, as it is quite expected for an alkie to keep drinking. The fact that I am sober today is great, a miracle, a reason to be grateful to my G-d. So there is never any sense at all in me looking *down* on any addict who loses his or her sobriety! I love and respect them all - the drunk ones and the sober ones.

Of course it hurts to admit that we acted out - or lost our sobriety. But it is clear that we are as sick as our secrets. That is not a cute motto - nor is it another clever shaming tactic. It is

obvious. *For the greatest obstacle to recovery (growing up) for the sex or alcohol addict is **not** porn, sex, or Jim beam - it is our **lying and faking**.* That is what group dynamics can heal, that doing it alone cannot. Reading the best self-help book in the world - even the Torah itself - cannot liberate a man from lying to himself. Christians the world over read the Torah - even with Artscroll! - and remain believing and doing all sorts of things they want to believe k'neged emess. And l'havdil, we frum porners and masturbaters did, too!

So many GYE guys have so much terrible shame and pain! So many are terrified to even use their real *first names* in their posts! As if using the name "Yaakov" will give them away!! Gevalt. It's just shame - painful, frightening shame and more hiding and isolating. I feel that when such fellows read nederman's words that '12 steps groups utilize self-shaming as a tool to keep people sober (like a k'nas)', I believe that it resonates with many of them - even though it is not true. It sounds to them like just a nastier 'TaPhsic method'! And that misrepresentation of AA/SA may turn people away from a beautiful gift that could work for them. And that is the real sad part, as far as I am concerned.

We frum porn users are all accomplished liars. We fake our 'good' identity wherever we go...and hate ourselves when we sneak our desperate drug in secret. The more stubborn and self-assured the liar is, the harder it will be for him to see that he has not really changed. Humility is so easy to 'assess' in oneself....but it is of course an irrelevant assessment. It all boils down to Captain Kirk. real people are precious. As Rabbi Yochanan said: "O chavrusa, o misusa!" - a friend (someone who is *not you*) is the 'ticket' to life itself. A mirror (or a self-help book - even the Torah itself) is *sorely* limited as a tool for teaching self-honesty to an accomplished liar! asei lecho rav, uknei l'cho chaver...just to have what the Rebbe R' Meilech taught in #13 of the Tzet'l Kotton - freedom through honesty. Honesty and integrity are not 'fear of getting embarrassed when you openly admit the truth'.

And finally, a good friend in recovery (who I just met this evening at a nice SA meeting) put it very well: "the main credentials that a sponsor has that makes him so valuable is that he is *sober*, and **not me**"!

Sweet!

So alei v'hatzlach chevrei!!

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Re: Charlie's change

Posted by chaimcharlie - 04 Dec 2012 07:58

Wow, Dov. Thanks.

Just to get you even madder, last night I really wanted to act out and got up to a hairdsbreath away, and I think the only thing that saved me was the shame of having to tell the group. I think in a way that Ned is right about his claim to shame.

But who cares, I'm not in SA to avoid acting out, I'm here to enjoy the things life can give me that I can't have when acting out - to recover. So what if one time a last resort is my pride, but another dozen times when I'm feeling weak I write a fear and gratitude list and read it to a friend, or maybe just pick up the phone and make a call, or maybe do some journaling to get my feelings out in the open, or maybe close my eyes and remind myself that I'm not God and God is not me - I think that's a real dose of letting go some of the lifetime of garbage I've accumulated. And I try not to control my life anymore with all the pain that includes, to actually live the basic tennets of our religion, not just learn and philosophize/fantasize about them.

It's scary to unravel my Holy Self, but I know several million have done it before me and survived, so just perhaps it will work for me too.

Thank you for listening.

(I think I'm gonna sign off for a bit, I feel that all this virtual whatever this is, is starting to affect my grip on reality, I'm shirking real responsibilities in order to get that powerfull feeling of "wow, what a post I just wrote, I wonder how many guys will apprediate my wisdom, Dov's a good guy and will probably give me a compliment or two, Some other guys will simply watch with gaping mouths at the new insights sailing across GYE, they will probably be so astonished at my eloquent pro-SA message that they won't dare respond for fear lest they damage the Ultimate Truth.....".)

Chaim

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Re: Charlie's change

Posted by chaimcharlie - 15 Jan 2013 01:50

Have had recently some talks with old-timers.

the message I managed to give across was only my problems and troubles with recovery.

this is my disease. wrong attitude. sick thinking.

Recovery is cool, is awesome, is enjoyable, makes life calm and serene at last.

True, it's not my Own Holy Power that's giving me pleasure, but that shouldn't make everything a kvetch.

Gotta get used to that, it's not mine and it's not another expression of my Control Over My Life and the Whole World.... but it's still feels good and happy.

This is new to me, thank you Hashem for helping me get to here.

For not living all day in dread of the next fall, and of the excruciating pain of not being able to have sex now with every good looking female object I see (although the pain still is there, but it's markedly reduced, with some spaces in between).

For being able to more accept my wife and her family for all they are and aren't, to more love my wife for all she is - which is a ton. Things are sometime rough, for example today was hard for us together, but I know that there are ways to get passed the impossible obstacles in my heart, to let Hashem in, to let Him help me let things go...

To see my part in my problems, the relief of admitting that I am not as perfect as I thought, that I need help to live my life happily and not have to resort to deadly lust drugs in order to soothe the aches and pains of being in a world that I am not it's sole monarch.

For being sober 90+ days, after almost a year of gazing wonderously at all those on the fourm that did it, and telling myself with a sigh that I don't have a chance. I may fall again, there's a pretty good chance, cause I'm pretty sick, but recovery is about recovery, not about masturbating and sex. When left to my own devices I'm finished, hopeless, but there is a program to help me, life's good, the sun is shining, the wind is blowing, etc.

Gotta run,

Chaim

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Re: Charlie's change

Posted by Dov - 17 Jan 2013 23:47

ki b'simcha seitzei'u

Thanks, CC!

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Re: Charlie's change

Posted by chaimcharlie - 18 Jan 2013 18:34

Thank you Dov.

I am posting now something that I wrote recently, it is so good and brilliant that I keep on rotating fantasies about my great perceptions etc., then read it over a few times and add a few fancy words and make a few small corrections to my eloquent message. Therefore, I would like to post it just to get it out of my head and relatively into reality, this is something that has helped me and may or may not help others, and that's that. I do not need to overdo the whole thing, just to try to do the next right thing, and ask Hashem to save me from myself and from lust. I think it's unfair that woman can walk in the street when I am there, for me a pretty dressed up woman with a shaitel is like a naked prostitute in a dimly lit hotel room, my disease does not allow me to see the difference.

Either way, this is a brief synopsis of where I am holding today with the help of a Power Greater than myself:

1. Why do I want to be part of SA and work the Steps and live my life in their way?

Because when I am in control of my life it is unmanageable, I am possessed by a self-destructing power which is stronger than me – I am completely powerless over lust. The unfulfilled cravings only get more unbearable and impossible to satisfy, my inner turmoil and inability to face life's struggles only gets worse. I want to live and enjoy life, not to continue suffering and deteriorating until my life will be ruined or maybe even finished.

I am allowed to recover from the Steps, because my Rebbe said that one who is desperate may join a group run under Jewish auspices.

2. Why must I be part of SA and work the Steps and live my life in their way?

Because there are many mitzvos that with my own willpower alone, I cannot perform or will certainly transgress, and many middos tovos which I cannot possess or work to possess.

A. The mitzvos which I certainly cannot possibly fulfill as a result of my addiction are:

????? ??? ?????, ??????? ??????

B. The mitzvos which I perhaps cannot possibly fulfill, and are certainly greatly enhanced through the program, are:

????? ????? – If I have the opportunity and think I will not get caught, I will probably (if not certainly) engage in illicit sexual relations.

??????? ??? ??????????, ??? ??? – I may die directly from STD's, or indirectly from violence, irresponsibility, or even suicide – addictions are deadly.

????? – I cannot honestly feel the existence of a Power greater than myself.

????? – I cannot rely on a Power greater than myself

????? ??? ?????? – I have missed hundreds (or thousands?) of ????? "?" ?????? through my acting out, and in general I lack enough motivation to wake up and serve someone other than myself. I cannot concentrate even on the simplest meaning of the words, the minute I put on my tallis my mind automatically starts a non-stop cycle of intense daydreams, all focusing entirely on myself, either on my power or resentments or fears.

????? ????? – Much of the time my mind and heart are completely occupied by lust, preventing me from keeping any consistent learning schedule. Furthermore, I am internally distracted and cannot properly concentrate on what I am learning, and also I cannot learn for as much time as I should be able to. Finally, my main motive in learning is to display my vast intellectual powers, this prevents me from getting a broad and honest understanding of what I learn.

C. The middos tovos which my addiction prevents me from possessing or working to possess:

????, ??????, ???, ????? ?????, ?????, ?????

3. Are the Steps based on Torah? After all, they are a path to spiritual experience, which should render them a work of religion, so we must know if they are part of our religion or not, no?

No. Torah is the words that Hashem told Moshe Rabbainu at Sinai, it is His will as He directly revealed it to us, the methods through which He Himself said we should connect to Him. The Steps are a man-made – or maybe man-discovered – program that was found through the bitter experiences of a group of non-Jews, and influenced by what they learned from the Oxford Group. Therefore, even if many of the principles of the Steps may or may not be found in the Torah, they are not at all Torah, and the study of the Steps does not classify as Torah study.

Although it may be interesting to explore possible connections between the Steps and Torah, this is not a very constructive endeavor, because the Torah does not need the endorsement of the Steps, and it doesn't really make much difference if they were already known to Chazal. Perhaps if I come across something during my learning that through recovery I can understand in a new light, it may be worthwhile to jot it down to bring both recovery and Torah further in to my daily life, but nothing more than that.

Only an objective study in Torah sources to decide if the Steps are really the Torah-true treatment of addictions and the proper attitude to life can classify as Torah study (like any halachic question), but as my life and happiness depends on complete acceptance and working of the program, I certainly lack the open-mindedness for such a pursuit and will only be trying to enter my preconceived notions wherever I can. Furthermore, since the content of the Steps are not much more than a specific arrangement of simple facts and basic Torah principles, and working the program in its entirety is crucial for my performance of so many mitzvos, my scholarly ability to honestly question the program is very small.

Lastly, for me working on this topic has been counterproductive to my recovery and the performance of all the mitzvos involved – I must work the steps with honesty and humility, not control them with my deep perspectives. I need not worry that it is forbidden to work the Steps, because as I previously mentioned I received a psak that permits me, and as previously explained the Torah obliges me to do whatever I can to recover from my addiction and to abstain from anything that can hinder my recovery.

So for me the Torah perspective on the steps is to simply do them with all the honesty, humility, and fearlessness that I can muster, nothing more and nothing less.

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Re: Charlie's change

Posted by Dov - 18 Jan 2013 22:28

Wow, CC, nice.

I share your feeling about how troubling this issue can be for people and how important it is to help them get over it, as we did. And yet, I also hear why you would want to "get it out of my head," as you wrote. I feel that this issue bothering sexaholics is only one thing: doubt for the sake of doubt. We all have faith crises min Torah, our 'flavor' of yiddishkeit or Rebbe, our fathers or mothers, about ourselves...and they are rarely because of true philosophical issues. Everybody knows that - no chidush there.

For me, Torah can only add to my program, not take away. For I believe that recovery is simply my portion of Hashem's Derech Eretz that he gave the world for ~ 2000 years before Torah started. It is not Torah. Rather, it is like breathing and eating - if I do not do them, I die and cannot keep any mitzvot, at all. Is breathing a mitzvah? No, it is not.

No one of us ever truly breathed *in order to do Hashem's Will*. Right? We breath to stay alive - an overpowering instinct, period. Nothing wrong with that. But as incredibly precious as breathing is, we do not deserve a medal for it...it's not a thing we celebrate - because it is like Malchus: the bottom nekudah that everything has life from, but really not much itself. Leis migarme klum.

Same for *staying* sober (which requires recovery). We deserve no awards for 'not screwing our lives up today' any more than any normal person deserves a prize for 'not drowning himself' today. Getting *to be alive* has to be 'prize' enough.

Being a mentch - sanity - is something I can learn from anyone. Ants (leich el nemola, otzel) are even good teachers...for it's not the teacher, but hearing and living the truth that matters.

Torah only *adds* to my recovery because it gives my recovery a much, much higher purpose than just 'me feeling better about myself'. Gevalt, I just do not see how I'd be a Jew at all if my emotional comfort were all it was about. In fact, as a man who aspires to be a good Jew, I see *everything* I do as being for the sake of bringing me to better avodas Hashem.

I stay sober **for me**, be"H. And I appreciate how it allows me to grow, live a great Torah life with the people in my life and get a relationship with my G-d (just as my breathing does). Torah is *not* the thing that allows this stuff to happen - it *IS* this stuff. So trying to find sobriety and recovery in the Torah is like trying to find breathing or going to the restroom in the Torah. Are they both sakanas nefashos requirements for living? Of course they are. But that does not make doing them 'Torah'.

Thank G-d!

And someone saying that since they *devote* themselves totally to Torah, then their breathing, sleeping, sex, eating, going to the bathroom are mamash *Torah*(...after asking them (tongue-in-cheek) why they'd be allowed to use the bathroom *in a bathroom*? Isn't it assur to bring Torah into the bathroom?) - I'd suggest that it is just silly for people like ourselves to pretend this is true for us. Though deciding it might just make one feel great about himself. And if reality is not an issue for them, just feeling great...then I guess ignorance is bliss. May Hashem always help me pick the truth today, and not fall among them.

I agreed with 99% of everything you wrote above, CC and found it well-written and clear. I just wanted to bring out a different perspective on the question and why for me there is no issue.

- Dov

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Re: Charlie's change

Posted by chaimcharlie - 22 Jan 2013 04:07

Wow, thanks Dov. I wish I was as sober as you, maybe one day I'll have enough sanity to just take things simple and not make mountains out of mohills.

Today's feelings:

I want to explode, to kill someone or something. I am sick of recovery, I want to have sex right now with 10 different women each one right after the other, to finally feel what it some enjoyment in life, to worship the holy god of the orgasm. Nothing is better in life, there is nothing more powerfull, nothing comes close to the intnese pleasure of all the hard core sex that I have denied myself my whole life.

I am sober for 3+ months, and am sick as ever. I don't have anything to do to get out of this insanity, nothing at all, I am hopeless. Today I tried journaling, instead I ended up with a deep philosophical explanation of how I cannot beat my addiction, because the more that I do for my recovery, the stronger I feel that look how cool I am and how recovered I am and how awesome humble and honest I am, and then I'm back to square one.

I think that this was a good realization, that I am as powerless over my fantasies over all the great achievments that I'm gonna do as I am powerless over the insatiable cravingsto have sex right now with a pretty woman-like object, it's all the same, I'm stuck and need serious help. But even this I'm feeling powerfull about, look how powerfull and cool I am that I figured out that I am powerless over feeling powerless and my powerfullness makes me powerless over thinking that I am powerless so therefore I am really powerless!!

So I am pretty stuck, this makes me spin around dizzily, and then when I get on the bus and see all those skinny women, and know that I hopefully will neve have sex with a woman as pretty and sexual and skinny and welldressed and all sorts of other things that I shouldn't write here, well then I feel like I simplt cannot go on living, I want to just die and have a lot of people praise me ant the funeral about how I was such a special tzaddik and that my neshama was so high that it simply couldn't stay stuck to my guf and therefor I went to shamayim like ELiyahu Hanavi, then in my SA group ther willl me some murmurs about all the recover y work I did and how there is so much to learn from me and how everyone should accept upon themselves to do practically in ther daily lives one of the many great teachings that I brought to the shores SA...

Gotta run,

love you,

Chaim

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Re: Charlie's change

Posted by chaimcharlie - 22 Jan 2013 12:25

Last night I was pretty negative and in a rather bad mood, spewing all sorts of stuff.

So just to be clear, I love recovery and this is the best thing that has happened to me in my life, I have posted about that several hundred times in a more sane fasion. One of the best things that recovery is giving me is the constant emphasis on expressing to others my feelings that I am feeling at this moment, whether through a phone call or a share at a meeting or posting all sorts of garbage on this forum.

So when I feel like if I don't have sex I will die, I no longer fight with myself, I will only lose and the craving will get bigger and bigger until I will truly die, rather I try to surrender the feelings, to let them out in the real open, now to be ashamed that I feel that way.

For example, I just say a fat neighbor of mine, and my first thought was that I want to have sex with her, even though I am not really attracted to her. The skinnier the female object and the better the shape, the more I crave to have heavy sex with her right now, and I cannot go on living without it. That's plain crazy, and I'm glad to admit that this is me, and if anyone has a problem they can let e know about it. I don't thing it's just a misunderstanding, think it's more like a serious short-wiring in my very essence that only a Power greater than me can do anything about it.

Have a great day.

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Re: Charlie's change

Posted by chaimcharlie - 22 Jan 2013 23:58

Made a whole bunch of phone calls, did some simple meaningfull activities, and feel much better. It's not about figuring it out, that I did my whole life and just got sicker and sicker, but rather like my sponsor loves to say "the stupid, simple, things that work".

I still think I will die if I don't get all the sex that I want, but perhaps I can survive just one more day and then I'll jump off ship, I sould like to stay sober for the rest of today and then I'll see...

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Re: Charlie's change

Posted by Dov - 23 Jan 2013 03:31

Sweet, thanks. I'm terrified that sweet, very new, clueless, well-meaning Breslover guy will read your above vomiting bouts and - clutching his copy of the Tikkun Klali - faint.

OK, enough about 'the great untoiveled'. (That was very funny, actually, for anyone old enough

A helpful little note about your holy grail of great-skinny-person-sex, CC:

It won't save you.

At all.

But I do **not** know any of that because I was told it by Mishlei, Rav Wolbe, or the Ba'al Shem Tov! No way! The only reason I truly KNOW it is because I found out from my own bitter experience that all the things I did *never* satisfied me. And when I tried really hard to 'let loose and really go for it' - I ended up feeling even *more* empty. It's a curse, I tell you. The curse of the addict! Aye! to 'get' it...)

And no, I did not need to try all the dirty things in the book (there's a book?) to know they would not satisfy me. Cuz I did enough, tried hard enough *for me*. Thank-G-d for humility. Shockingly, I am humble enough to admit failure at lusting - just as I was humble enough to admit failure at 'Teshuvah/mussar'. The poor guy who lacks humility ends up trying every single new tool, derech, and gimmick that comes along...till they eventually are forced out of life by being too old, I guess...life passes us by, eventually.

Thank G-d I started sobriety and recovery when I was only 35 years old, when some of my kids were still to be born into a sober household! All because I was able to admit failure after just 20 years of trying my intelligence, therapy, Teshuvah, rabbonim, and marriage. My neshoma is probably saying, "Phew, that was close one."

It turns out that the god we make of orgasm, sex and whatever, is really powerless to save us from ourselves. It is powerless to fill us up. It just knows how to drain us out. It's the power [that we make] greater than ourselves that restores us to INsanity.

Yow. I'd *never* write a 'mussar schmooze' to try to convince anyone not to act out or to pretend I can 'save their poor neshomas'. You know that's just ego fantasy in religious clothes...and of course that's not why I am writing this, here.

I am *only* writing here so that when *you* witness this for yourself in your own heart(which you probably already have) and not just 'philosophically', it may give you nechomah that *you are not alone*. That you are not a 'sex-failure'. Yes, not a sex-failure. Funny: Through the obviously overwhelming *sweetness* of porn and fantasy, we are led to believe that sexwithskinnypeople stands powerfully and confidently as a viable, competing option to real life: Derech eretz (family, honesty, real relationships) and Torah. But then (in acting out) we find out to our dismay that it is a paper dragon. The king is wearing no clothes! (oh, no, that was a *bad* choice of words,) Wooh, what a sad thought that was.

No, we discover that we are not sex-option failures just cuz we couldn't even do *that* right....we are like the alkies, who sadly discover that they just can't drink right. The sex-option is the one clear way we lustaholics can be failures at everything - life **and** sex. For we as addicts successfully cannot do the sex-option right! Maybe some normals can...but we just don't. The sex-option has failed *us*. It was churban for us, not 'the good life'. Even when we get it, it only ruins us in every department of life. So, have we really failed? I don't see it that way.

And how amazing it is when we discover that Hashem does for us what we cannot do for ourselves, and grants many of us satisfaction in sex in marriage, at least some of the time. A miracle of sobriety and recovery. Sex that does not empty us out, but connects us. Sheesh...the strippers never offered us *that*. I wonder why...

Hey - hatzlocha!! Stay geshmak!

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Re: Charlie's change

Posted by reallygettingthere - 23 Jan 2013 03:56

ChaimCharlie,

Your honesty is refreshing.

I've been slowly learning that without being brutally honest with myself (and gently honest with others) I will be ~~cycling~~ snowballing through the falling/pseudo tzaddik routine (a miserable experience).

Thank you for sharing

Eli

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Re: Charlie's change

Posted by Dov - 24 Jan 2013 23:25

Re the term '*brutally* honest':

I was at a good first step in an SA meeting earlier this week, and in the feedback, one member used that term. Another member shared later on that and said that he sees some people being brutally honest in a way that makes it seem they are *brutalizing themselves* with shame and self-disgust.

His point was surprising to me in it's simplicity. Even if opening up to the people that we really need to open up to to get better *is* painful for us - it is really only being kind to ourselves, not brutal, not mean. Being non-judgemental **to ourselves** is a precious skill we learn in real recovery. I believe that many who fail or have a very hard time staying sober in early recovery discover that they still **hate** themselves and batter themselves ***even in their way of opening up to others!***

Telling it like it is without making bitter value judgements is just growing up, that's all. For, no matter *how* loudly I slap myself or how viciously shame myself for what I did, it does not fix anything and will not restore my integrity. It may be useful - but the self-hatred that is being held onto, will poison the recovery. Ultimately, we blame G-d for things we are bitter about and cannot let go of. How will we gain a loving relationship with our G-d that way?

We have to change, now Him. And this brutality is one way we can do that.

Another problem with the brutal approach, is its partnership with our beloved *all-or-none thinking*. Black and white extremism and oversimplification. For so many of us this is knee-jerk. We see a failure or a lroplem and it becomes a huge failure of terrible problem...but it is really just what it is. Accepting what it really is - just the facts - is the first step in any first step.

Seeya!

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Re: Charlie's change

Posted by chaimcharlie - 25 Jan 2013 01:34

Beautifull, dov, thanks.

I had a whole deep reply and addition formulated for your previous reply about the heart and reality vs. philosophy and fantasy etc. I realized the sublety that I had wanted to convey after an incident yesterday in the falafel store, then proceeded to turn it around in my mind for the rest of the evening, each time increasing just a bit more the greatness of my perception and how lucky SA is to have me as one of it's talented new members.

As I was continueing to ponder the depthness of how true it is that I have a phisical allergy coupled (not coupled in a sexual way, if such a thing is possible, just 2 things together without a naked man and woman) with a mental obsession, and how I am truly the best first stepper fur sure in my group and probably in the country.... yeah, so I stepped on the bus and saw a woman and promptly started wanting to have sex with her right now or else I would die, I thought that was strange to be having such feelings just after I had had such an enlightment on how powerless I really am, so I continued to think and ponder about how I am really such an addict and am so powerless and am so special that I haven't had one fall since I joined SA and how I will very soon say that to 10000 people and the international SA conference, and how the sponsees are already starting to line up to ask me to be their sponsor and I will tell them that there is a waiting list and they will just have to wait (I don't remember if these were the exact visions that I recieved then, but it was somethign of the sort).... and then, I kept on looking and lusting and wanting to have sex with every nicely shaped woman object that got on the bus... and more and more....

Then this morning I went surfing on the net, pretty quickly decided that if I will find that certain picture of a man and woman having sex that sometimes I am able to slip through my filter, I will act out. Why?, oh, becaues as I realized last night I am powerless over lust, and this whole sobriety buisness is getting to my head and I'm feeling really high and special and arrogant, gotta have a fall or to to get back into recovery mode.

Why am I writing all this buisness and not just saying the brillian insight which I understood to reply do Dov's post? Well, the insight didn't really help me nothing, it only got me even more wrapped up in myself, and practiacallyt made me lose my sobriety. This is what understanding and "figuring it out" does for me - nothing. The only reason I am now feeling sober and happy is cause I spoke to a bunch of guys and went to a meeting - all actions with no deep beautifull significance...

Gotta run....

maybe will continue some other time.....

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Re: Charlie's change

Posted by chaimcharlie - 27 Jan 2013 13:50

I've been hanging around here for a half hour now, running away from life into the virtual fantasies of my Holy Recovery. I have a place I am supposed to be at alost 2 hours ago, but I don't want to go, so every day I do my best to avoid going and avoid the reality of life. Not good. DOn't no what should do with situation, because I truly lack the patience to go. Gotta get off the computer and leave the house and then I'll see what to do, before I end up searcing for bad things (or sick things?).

Bye bye.

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