

trying to stay sober.

Posted by rebdovid - 31 Aug 2012 14:09

dear friends,

i have been in and out of sobriety, bh i have been clean for almost 2 weeks till last night. i am dying to stay clean through today.
i am not new to this whole parsha, i cannot go to a 12 step program not sure if i believe in some of the ideas.

but i am trying to incorporate some of what's written here.

i know i need help, my life is like a roller coaster between being up and down.

when is this hell going to stop.

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Re: trying to stay sober.

Posted by jack - 31 Aug 2012 15:40

it will stop when you take the steps necessary to make it stop - and not before.it will not happen by itself.and you can't do it by yourself - you need other human beings who understand you to help you and pull you up - but you have to be willing to be pulled up.if they pull and you resist, then you will stay down.

(by the way, i love you, in case you got the wrong idea that i don't).

jack

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Re: trying to stay sober.

Posted by nederman - 02 Sep 2012 03:22

[rebdovid wrote on 31 Aug 2012 14:09:](#)

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I can offer you an alternative approach. If you dig into it you will find that it's really just the Mesillas Yescharim, but you cannot learn this from that book alone.

There is a theory of psychotherapy called the abc theory. It says that for every stimulus your mind has a program, a conditioned response that was learned over time. Your mind selects a feeling based on the stimulus and the latest version of the program. The key is that the feeling can be altered by having conscious thoughts. In other words, you argue with yourself. You feel something, e.g. fear, and you are not aware of the thought that caused it, but if you have a relevant conscious thought it actually dispels or alters the feeling.

According to this view of the world what happened to you is that as you gave in to temptation you told yourself that you are powerless over it. Now this is your unconscious thought. It's automatic.

This is why the 12-step program would help you, because you would be aware that you have this belief of powerlessness and you would modify your behavior to compensate for it. Since you can't do the program you can pursue an even better approach which is to hypothesize that your beliefs can change. In order to start believing that you have power over lust you have to prove it experimentally. You have to choose not to lust, and record the choice you made somehow (mentally, on a piece of paper, on your smart phone etc.) and eventually you put the lie to this irrational belief.

In practice this is what you have to do:

1. Write down the pros and cons of believing that you are powerless over lust. For example, one plus is that when you sin you can tell yourself that it's not your fault. Another advantage is that if you are in recovery for a few years and then you really need it you'll have the right to masturbate again, so to speak. A disadvantage is that you will always think of yourself as an addict (and correctly so.) The purpose of this cost-benefit analysis is that when you forget what you are fighting for you go back to this paper and you get your motivation back. Be thorough, you are going to need this to be a solid analysis.

2. When you feel the need to lust, remind yourself that you are not powerless. The mechanism is that your mind tells you are powerless and you believe it and you cave and lust. If you don't cave your lust cannot grow. And if you just move on, so to speak, eventually the feeling down

there is going to go away. So when you get the feeling think to yourself (don't say it) "I cannot get aroused more if I don't think of something lude. It does not grow by itself. If I start doing something else before I know it I will turn around and the feeling will be gone.". Note that if you "surrender" you feed your belief of powerlessness. Rather, you have to act (like an actor) as if you are totally unfazed. Nothing to see here, basically.

And read Feeling Good by David Burns. I keep it in the bathroom so I read a few lines every day. It's proof that people really can change.

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Re: trying to stay sober.
Posted by jack - 04 Sep 2012 12:30

i'm sorry - but i did not give my complete answer when i responded last week. the hell of the addiction, if you are a true addict, will NEVER stop.once an addict, always an addict.at least that's how i feel now, after 4 years in the 'struggle'.maybe as time passes, it will get less - but then again, maybe not.i was addicted for 38 or more years.for me, i am still plagued by thoughts of lust.

what i meant last week was the acting out can stop - not an easy task, by any means.and it takes determination, surrender, keeping in contact with the group, and a few other things which are relative to each person.

jack

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