

some basic issues that I am struggling with  
Posted by toraschaim - 29 Jul 2013 07:17

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1) How do I know whether I am an addict? What is the dividing line between compulsive behavior that demands a 12-Step type program, and behavior that's a 'yetzer ha'ra' remediable by a 'Torah approach.' (I see Dov talking a lot about the differences between the approaches on each side of this line.) Is the dividing line the same for everyone? Am I impartial enough to determine whether I'm an addict, or do I need to see a therapist or some other professional?

2) If I'm not an addict, what ideas and methods from the 12 Steps can I (or should I) appropriate to help my journey to recovery? On one hand, I've seen some chizuk e-mails and pamphlets say the 12-Steps can actually be *harmful* for non-addicts. On the other hand, I've found that many ideas derived from/based on the 12 Steps have been extraordinarily helpful for me.

Thanks for the advice!

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Re: some basic issues that I am struggling with  
Posted by inastruggle - 29 Jul 2013 07:24

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I'll let someone else answer the first one, but for the second question I think that what the emails that said the 12 steps are harmful for a non addict meant, was actually go through the 12 steps, not taking and using certain ideas from them.

I personally do not do the 12 steps, as I don't think that I'm an addict, but I've found many useful ideas and attitudes from them. Many of them seem to fit directly into chaza"l and into common sense.

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Re: some basic issues that I am struggling with  
Posted by cordnoy - 29 Jul 2013 07:24

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there were two recent threads regarding this issue, plus this topic is discussed in the midst of

other threads as well.

here is one:

[guardyoureyes.com/forum/1-Break-Free/212438-am-i-an-addict](http://guardyoureyes.com/forum/1-Break-Free/212438-am-i-an-addict)

here is the second:

[guardyoureyes.com/forum/1-Break-Free/212143-Am-I-an-addict-Does-it-really-matter](http://guardyoureyes.com/forum/1-Break-Free/212143-Am-I-an-addict-Does-it-really-matter)

b'hatzlachah

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Re: some basic issues that I am struggling with  
Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 29 Jul 2013 22:10

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someone asked me to post this correspondence with R' AJ Twerski

I was wondering if you could help me out with these two questions (which have a few more in between the lines) that were asked today on the forum,

1) How do I know whether I am an addict? What is the dividing line between compulsive behavior that demands a 12-Step type program, and behavior that's a 'yetzer ha'ra' remediable by a 'Torah approach.' (I see Dov talking a lot about the differences between the approaches on each side of this line.) Is the dividing line the same for everyone? Am I impartial enough to determine whether I'm an addict, or do I need to see a therapist or some other professional?

2) If I'm not an addict, what ideas and methods from the 12 Steps can I (or should I) appropriate to help my journey to recovery? On one hand, I've seen some chizuk e-mails and pamphlets say the 12-Steps can actually be harmful for non-addicts. On the other hand, I've found that many ideas derived from/based on the 12 Steps have been extraordinarily helpful for me.

Thanks for the advice!

Would it be possible for you to write something up that can be posted for everyone's benefit (and if it's not too much of a bother, can you elaborate so that there is no misunderstanding)?

Answer:

If I had to formulate a program for recovery from addiction based on sifre mussar, it would be word for word the 12 steps. Anyone who says the 12 steps are harmful for non-addicts is like saying that mussar is harmful. In my book "Self-Improvement? I'm Jewish" I show how the 12 steps are mussar.

If a person has as desire to do something that he knows is wrong and can't stop himself, that is addiction. If A torah approach works, that's fine. I'm saying that the 12 steps are a torah approach. How the goyim got it is a mystery.

I've had bnei Torah well-versed in mussar who are addicts, and the 12 step program helped them. When a person in sincere recovery leaves a 12-step meeting, he feels, "If I deviate from this program, I die." We say, "ki heim chayenu" but I don't know of people who read a mussar sefer and say, "If I deviate from this I die."

Hatzlacha

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Re: some basic issues that I am struggling with  
Posted by MendelZ - 30 Jul 2013 06:42

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[ZemirosShabbos wrote:](#)

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Hatzlacha

Where is the **like** button?

I think it is interesting to note that "Ki heim chayeinu" is for all Jews, not just the addicted ones. I mean to say that 12 steps could be Torah, but Torah isn't 12 steps, and yet, the feeling of "if i don't I will die" is the feeling every single Jew should have. Imagine how a person in sincere recovery leaves a meeting. He knows, "If I deviate from this program, I die." What if the average Yid felt that way about Torah and ratzon Hashem, with the same conviction and clarity of purpose? If I deviate from this program, I die. Wow!

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Re: some basic issues that I am struggling with

Posted by Lizhensk - 30 Jul 2013 12:40

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[MendelZ wrote:](#)

[ZemirosShabbos wrote:](#)

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Hatzlacha

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we stay far away from facebook, over here there is only a "thank you" buttom, located on the bottom left of every post

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Re: some basic issues that I am struggling with  
Posted by MendelZ - 30 Jul 2013 16:00

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You're right. Thanks for the mussar. The emmes is I never used Facebook but the existence of a "like" button has crept into the everyday vernacular. I even recall ads using them in creative ways in "frum" magazines and sites. Go figure.

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