

Kedusha and Sanity

Posted by skeptical - 02 Aug 2013 21:48

Dov

I hope you remember that the real problem here is not lusting, but lying. Few here get it. Most think this is some sort of religious kedusha struggle or something. It's really just being a real human being. Derech Eretz kodnmah laTorah. Once we have sanity, all the rest falls into place. Hatzlocha getting some and keeping it. It's certainly not a thing you are mesugal for doing successfully, so this will be a miracle - as it is with me.

Love,

Dov

skeptical

Lying/not lying is also a religious kedusha struggle, or something.

Derech Eretz is Torah.

Dov

skeptical wrote:

Lying/not lying is also a religious kedusha struggle, or something.

Derech Eretz is Torah.

It may make you feel nice to see your own struggle to remain honest and real, as falling under the rubric of Torah and avodas Hashem, but do you see how the connection of this struggle in any way to Torah, Teshuvah, and Kedusha is poison for so many people? And if yes, do you see then that trying to be 'menachem' a person that "yes, your recovery is still Torah/kedusha," can really tempt them to run right back into the very 'holy' mentalities that have been fueling their porn and masturbation habit from day 1, 2, or 3?

Those are questions, not rhetorical, nor attacks. Just questions.

And have you read my post about "The Nuclear Reset Button"?

mayer

The answer (or rather my answer) to all of the above questions is yes, yes, and yes.

That being clarified at the outset (I have a sneaking feeling that this is gonna be a long hijacking), wouldn't it be fair to assume that the above mentioned "poison" is a distorted view of what Torah, Mitzvos, and Avodas Hashem are all about? They (Torah, Mitzvos, and Avodas Hashem) are NOT about MY oh so exalted levels of _____ (fill in the blank -Torah, Teshuvah, Kedushah, Chassidus, Mussar, etc.); that grain and perspective of humility, is game-changing. A more accurate, less "me-focused" perception and angle of Torah, etc. is indeed a (the?) (by)product of sobriety, no?

All Mr. Skeptical is saying, (I think) is that, if one truly has (something of the) the right perspective vis-à-vis Torah, etc., there is a way of looking at this endgame during the game, that's all; not removing it from the scope of Torah, without having his Avodas Hashem defined by masturbation.

As the saying goes "If the shoe fits, wear it!" Conversely, if it doesn't, (and if it's "poison", it certainly won't,) don't!

Dov

Yes, yes, and yes, Mayer. But my point is that if so, then WHY DON'T ALL THESE 'CORRECTED' JEWS HERE JUST KEEP THEIR ZIPPERS UP AND LEAVE THEIR PENISES ALONE!

But they do not.

Why?

Some of these good people (and I mean that 100% sincerely) are still searching for porn, still worshipping it, hot women, and sex with their wives, with devotion and mesiras nefesh that would be high madreigos in avodas Hashem, and are still keeping it private - so they can safely

keep doing it (hiding it and using fake names even n recovery here on GYE).

And if they are now enlightened and 'get the Torah right'...when did that sudden enlightenment occur? Did they undergo any real inner change that is a total revamping from the 'Torah' they knew and accepted back in the day (last week?) when they 'were still sinning regularly'? Or was it just a few posts they read that showed them a nice vort or chizzuk of some sort and 'now they've got it all right'? How can I have faith in quick sincerity-fixes rather than see them as gimmicks.

I have seen so many guys insist that they now 'get it', so many speeches from newbies still masturbating their brains out, spewing what they feel with their whole heart is sincere: about how "if you just trust hashem and do xy&z things, you will beat this thing!" And they 'fall' so badly they disappear in shame. This happens over and over. GYE helps a lot. But so many more than it helps, are lost to the denial of religious enlightenment.

Sorry for the rant here. But it hurts.

How is what you are saying any different than that? I just don't get it - please explain it to me, chaver.

MendelZ

Dov is just keeping us real, as he is wont to do. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Dov for his super-valliant efforts to help us all realize that unless there is some serious paradigm shift occurring in the way we see life itself, we can be pretty sure that we've got a lot of work to do. Not to discourage us, chas v'shalom, but real recovery requires real realization. The misguided Torah lives we all live/lived is not the real Torah. We live/lived it because we thought it was about us. Its not. If we could see that as true, more true and real than whatever pleasurable feelings we had when we acted/act out, we would be able to make a little more room for the true and real Torah to have its glorious and uplifting effect on our lives.

mayer

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There is but one difference (and although it mat be dismissed as mere semantics by some, it drives others up the wall) and that is the insistence that for some people who are deeply mired and entrapped in porn, masturbation, etc., Torah is NOT the (an) answer.

Yes - certainly, their Torah ain't - real Torah is. I think we all agree on that one.

The point of divergence is whether one can begin to live that while still entrenched in the dirt. Just as saying "I'm powerless", without truly recognizing it is merely a lesson in self-delusion, so too is the " sudden enlightenment" of "get the Torah right"; Torah is not a lesson in mental gymnastics or enlightment, but in action. Just as any other mode of recovery is a process, so too is this. One must be honest - difficult, very difficult.

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity
Posted by cordnoy - 06 Aug 2013 00:20

actually, studies have really shown that chocolate, mango, almonds, (oysters) and other stuff increase testosterone in women and help reduce stress in general.

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity
Posted by skeptical - 06 Aug 2013 00:41

Doc,

I'm sorry, but I'm having a hard time following your posts.

You say that porn is just something you do for relaxation. You can do with it or without it. It has zero effect on your life. It's just something you enjoy.

You also say that you don't have withdrawal symptoms. Are you sure about that?

Have you ever seen a heavy smoker when he can't have a cigarette? How does he act?

When you hear the clopitty clop of women's shoes going past your window on a Shabbos afternoon, why can't you hold yourself back from looking?

When you're out with your family, are you enjoying your time with them or are you checking out all the girls wherever you are? Are you looking forward to getting back to the computer and are you irritable if there are delays?

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity
Posted by Pidaini - 06 Aug 2013 00:43

I would just like to add one more thing,

My life was not unmanagable, just as yours, doc, but I want to get better, just like you.

Now I know about %1 of the 12 steps. But the 12th step is to use the 12 steps in *all* aspects of life!! are we addicted and powerless to ALL dificulties in life?

I think the answer yes, I wrote it in [my ladder](#). but even if the answer is no, then the 12 steps itself says that it can help for things that we are not addicted to, and therefore we can also use the 12 steps.

so why not give it a try?

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity

Posted by Dr.Watson - 06 Aug 2013 01:01

@sketpical, the thing with hearing the women's shoes and going to the window was just this shabbos. I wrote it because i felt particularly bad this shabbos, it doesn't normally happen.

Sometimes i do look at women when i'm out with my family, sometimes i don't.

I often go a few weeks without so much as peeking at any erotic pictures, let alone naked ones. I don't suffer withdrawal symptoms during that time. My internet connection often fails and I find it a bit irritating when I'm busy, but i only get irritable if it happens while i'm actually in the middle of browsing naked pictures, or if my wife interrupts me.

The relaxation thing makes sense to me. A couple of weeks ago i posted from holiday saying i was totally clean and didn't even have the urge to look at pictures, but my shmiras einayim could have been better. Now I'm back from holiday and under a lot of stress from work and i look at pictures for about 45 seconds several times a day. I think that to say it's stressed related makes a lot of sense.

@pidaini, yes i think i could also benefit from the 12 steps

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity

Posted by skeptical - 06 Aug 2013 01:20

All I'm saying is to be honest with yourself.

Try to examine what is really your motivation. When you feel the urge, try to figure out where it's coming from. When you can't satisfy the urge, try to figure out what your real feelings are.

Is it really just recreational? When you're feeling the urge, can you just shut it off if you wanted to, or do you just simply have to have it?

Is it really not having **any** effect on your relationships with your wife and family? Is it really not affecting your work **at all**?

After you take a good honest look at yourself, try to figure out what has worked and what hasn't worked for you in the past. What do you need to do from this point forward?

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity
Posted by tryingtoshteig - 06 Aug 2013 16:37

[cordnoy wrote:](#)

actually, studies have really shown that chocolate, mango, almonds, (oysters) and other stuff increase testosterone in women and help reduce stress in general.

Enjoy, and have a stress free day!!

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity
Posted by gibbor120 - 06 Aug 2013 22:35

Maybe you just need some good relaxation techniques. Maybe close your eyes and listen to some music. Learn meditation or something.

I don't think the 12 steps are only for addicts. It's about self-honestly and letting Hashem into your life. Everyone needs that - no? It's just that addicts are the only ones willing to try it (usually) because they have no choice. They hit bottom and they are desperate.

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity
Posted by tryingtoshteig - 06 Aug 2013 22:53

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I'm no 12 step boki (bookie?) but it would seem to me that the first step, realizing that your life has come to a screeching halt due to your problem, is only for addicts.

But I agree that the other 11 steps, which are just letting Hashem into your everyday life, are for everyone.

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity
Posted by MendelZ - 06 Aug 2013 22:55

That is more or less how I see it as well. Everyone *should* replace themselves with G-d. Addicts, however, *need* to.

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity
Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 06 Aug 2013 23:51

[tryingtoshteig wrote:](#)

[gibbor120 wrote:](#)

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But I agree that the other 11 steps, which are just letting Hashem into your everyday life, are for everyone.

i had similar experiences.

a few years ago I joined a gye phone conference and started doing the steps. actually the call was up to step 4 so i started from there. step one was not 'clicking' for me either. probably because i was doing the steps out of choice, rather than necessity. i did not feel that my life was unmanageable or that it was spiraling out of control. i tried convincing myself that my life was unmanageable but that felt manufactured and not real.

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity
Posted by MJB - 07 Aug 2013 00:57

I had a similar struggle when I began here as well. While I concluded I was not an addict, the crux of the matter is so what. What is really important is are you getting the results that you want. If you are not than you need to change your approach. Maybe that approach is SA, maybe Shaarei Teshuva. You need to find that for yourself. No one can give that to you. We can only share our experiences and hope you learn from them.

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity
Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 07 Aug 2013 23:41

someone asked me to post this correspondence he had with Rabbi A.J. Twerski

question:

I can't say that my life was unmanageable, I was hiding it really well, no one had found out. It was just that I wanted to do something more to stop.

Also, do I need to know for certain that I am Powerless and without that I will not be able to continue the rest of the program?

answer:

The gemara says (Kedushin 30) that the yetzer hara is powerful and increases its power every day, and without the help of Hashem, we could not possibly resist it. That is the first step. Without help of Hashem we are powerless. AA made me realize the truth of the gemara!

You are fortunate that your life had not become unmanageable. Addictions are like cancer. For a long time, they are silent, but when they produce symptoms, it is disastrous.

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity

Posted by Dov - 08 Aug 2013 02:53

With all very due respect to the good Rabbi, many recovering addicts have learned that 'unmanageable' does not necessarily mean arrested, fired, divorced, or whatever. Changes brought onto us, in fact, are often NOT seen by addicts as proof of unmanageability, precisely because they were done by others to them. So we tend to blame those things on them, and not on ourselves or our behavior.

So , having experienced the living hell of being an addict with nowhere to turn, I am much more comfortable understanding 'unmanageability' as a thing that is *inside me*. As in: *I cannot possibly tolerate life this way any more or ever again - but there is no way in hell that I can ever stop living it!*. In other words, every addict I know who is sober, describes their problem as being living hell.

One man's hell is not the same as that of another man. Some of us simply have far greater pain tolerance than others do. I figure that is the only difference between the low-bottom drunk and the high-bottom one. If it is repetitive, progressive, and drives you mad to the extent that you are ready to do anything to stop - even though you cannot believe you could let it go and really stop doing it cuz you need it so badly - then you are quite possibly an addict. Sorry.

And not a '*low-level*' addict'. An addict. I do not accept at all that there are different levels of addiction. I see addiction as you see pregnancy. A woman is no more pregnant in her ninth month than she is a day after conception...she just shoes more. Same exact deal, here.

*I did not say you **are** an addict, mind you*. I just said you *may* be one. There is evidence. I NEVER tell anyone they are an addict. Ever. I am not any expert or anything like that. And clearly **not everyone who masturbates or uses porn, is an addict** - just as not everyone who gets drunk sometimes, is an alcoholic. Even Jews can do those things and not be addicts - last time I checked there is a thing called the Yetzer Hora, you know. If that is your problem and you think you are not an addict (or maybe just 'a *little* addicted')...then talk to your trusted rabbi. But if you use silly terms like 'I come to zera levatola c"v', or 'I have troubles with tayvos', do not expect to get any real help. It does not work that way (even if he has a clue what to advise, he can't do much with nebulous data and half-truths).

Addicts need real help. Their problem is as real if it is 'just' with a computer and their privates, as it is if it is with a prostitute. Virtual recovery does not work - *unless the problem itself is just a virtual problem and not real!* But the last time I checked, what goes on in the mind, heart, hands, and body of a hiding from masturbater, is real...not virtual at all. They are really desiring it, not just '*virtually* desiring it, right? They are not *virtually* masturbabating, are they?

No. It's real.

So help needs to be real. Define that however you want, as long as it is really *real*.

That is how I am experiencing this thing, with at least five new guys calling to talk this week and last week and about fifty newbies over the past year. Each one terrified, each one frum, most married with kids, and almost every one of them desperate to get away with fixing this issue in the comfort of their own skull...except for the five or six who were already suffering enough that they were really ready to do whatever it takes and had no desire to hide anything at all any more. Whew, what a hard place to be.

I never want to go back there....

So I share this recovery that was given to me by addicts in SA, who Hashem loves so much just as He loves all of us.

- Dov

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity

Posted by Dr.Watson - 08 Aug 2013 04:14

Thank you Dov for your post, I always appreciate what you write and the perspective you bring here.

I'm still a little unclear. Not everyone who has ever done this aveiroh is addicted to it, that seems obvious. And yet every yid who has ever done it must do teshuvah for it. So clearly there is huge scope for people who are not addicted but want to stop entirely just because it is an aveiroh, not because their lives are unmanageable.

So the question becomes how do these people help themselves to stop this aveiroh entirely. I don't know how to do that or I probably wouldn't be here at all. You keep talking about being real, I'm still not sure what you mean by that. Do you mean speaking to a Rav, my wife, being

honest on GYE? Would it be a different story if you knew my real name, even if you wouldn't actually know who i was? If it's not (always) an addiction, why does the method of teshuvah have to be different for this particular aveiroh?

Truth be told, I have never described my problem as a living hell, nor have i felt my life was unmanageable. But i want to live a life the way Hashem wants me to live it, and feel clean from any aveiroh as serious as this one. That's what i'm working on, nothing more, nothing less.

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity

Posted by chesky - 08 Aug 2013 04:22

Dov. There is not a lot for me to say after your post but I can share my experience.

After trying for two years through GYE to "beat my Y"H", I started going to SA meetings. I went primarily because I realized that on the one hand I did not have any control whatsoever when it came to acting out, on the other hand i was fed up of fighting. So I went to SA assuming that it would solve my problem the easy way. (As far as I was concerned the only hard thing was exposing myself and going to meetings).

I also felt like many of you guys. My life was technically fine, and very manageable; wife, kids, job etc. Since as far as I was concerned, having an unmanageable life was the entrance ticket to SA, I was stuck. On the other hand, I knew that nothing else had helped me yet. So I was pretty stuck and messed up.

But with HaShem's help I continued going to meetings even though I hated going and often felt, what the hell am I doing in meetings with a bunch of addicts? and very very slowly started becoming aware of and sharing (admitting that there are) situations and emotions which I have no control over. And slowly I became more aware of what being powerless is.

For me today, not being able to function as a result of obsessing over resentments, fears, excitement, frustration etc is why my life is unmanageable. And when i am in an unmanageable situation i have a choice; either I run away (masturbate or porn etc) or I admit (to someone else) that I just cannot do this on my own (powerless).

I have thankfully come to believe that my Abba CAN help me stay sober and sane in the most impossible situations and emotions and i ask Him to stay with me. And when Abba takes care of me, life may not become easier or better, but it does becomes manageable again!

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