

Kedusha and Sanity

Posted by skeptical - 02 Aug 2013 21:48

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

There is but one difference (and although it may 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 enlightenment, 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 skeptical - 23 Aug 2013 02:41

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*There are some people on here who think that I am at war with Dov.*

*I'm not. I have learned a lot from Dov and I consider him a friend.*

*I'm just trying to understand, and I think that it will benefit others who, instead of engaging on the forum to ask, are just turned off.*

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tryingtoshteig,

Thank you for your clear post.

It still does not answer the questions I asked though.

To me, and to Rabbi Twerski, it seems that the 12-Steps mirror the Torah approach. Yet, Dov and some other 12-Steppers on here seem to think that the Torah approach is just the same old same old and is dangerous for addicts.

I am trying to understand how the 12-Steps differ from the Torah approach.

If you want to say that people have a skewed vision of what Hashem is and what it means to "fight" their yetzer harah, I don't think that is a problem with the Torah approach. It's a problem with the person and how he was taught.

I have seen people on here who think they can just give away their problems to their higher power and life will be peachy. Obviously those people are not doing the 12-Steps properly. They need someone to explain it to them better, so they can work them properly. If I were to tell such a guy, "Hey, you tried the 12-Steps and failed. There must be something wrong with the program!" or "Following the 12-Steps is dangerous for you because you keep failing!" I'd be wrong. The 12-Steps does work if it's worked properly.

In any case, my questions to chaimcharlie were not defining anything. They were simply asking him to clarify the differences he has found in the 12-Step program that has helped him as opposed to what he found to be dangerous in the Beis Medrash.

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity

Posted by Dov - 23 Aug 2013 03:24

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I just posted a big, fat post elsewhere on exactly this...anybody here know how to copy or move it to here?

Thanks Skeptical!

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity

Posted by Dov - 23 Aug 2013 03:26

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Well, lots of ideas can be helpful to non-addicts...but then what do you call it?

Recovery?

'Recovery' refers to recovery of sanity, as the 2nd step clearly sets as the problem and goal. But non-addicts truly never lost their sanity. And even if you say they are recovering their self-respect or whatever, that's just not what the goal of the 12 steps is: Recovery of sanity through a spiritual (not religious) experience as the result of working these steps. That's just a simple reading of steps 2 and 12, not any 'drosho'.

So again: why bother calling it the 12 steps at all, or recovery? I just don't see it.

The label, '12 steps' is being used to mean what, exactly? I don't get it.

Why would a non-addict ever want to divulge the exact nature of all their wrongs (relating to 'addiction' or not) to any other person as step 5 recommends? That really seems like overkill for most people and is debatably wrong to do (for them). Why go to these lengths if they are not really sick people?

And besides, people who are not really sick will simply not do these things, I think. Do you really think they will...or will they adopt a 'conservative judaism' method of 'using' these ideas...? Is that 12 step recovery at all, or just liking the label?

And why would they need to learn - or even want to learn - how to only ask G-d for the knowledge of His Will for them and the power to carry that out as step 11 recommends, rather than for all their daily needs and stuff? That's just not normal. Clearly Torah does not teach



everyone to do that. Yes, there are many sforim that do speak of living this way and there are many tzaddikim who were noheig exactly like this...but normative, party-line yiddishkeit clearly does not sell this path for the average Jew...and the 12 steps of AA is mostly selling it to goyim who are among the biggest losers on the face of this earth: drunks, heroin, sex, gambling, and pill addicts!

Yet these extreme ideas and practices are mainstays of 12 step recovery for pretty much all successfully recovering addicts out there.

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And regarding the 'black hat' comment, I think the above is exactly the same issue I'havdil, with insisting on calling it Torah:

Calling these 'Torah ideas', or as you asked that guy, "Why do you say it was a lesson from the program that you were not G-d - why couldn't you find that in Torah?", is just all about labeling it Torah...but how is good sense 'Torah'?

All good chochma is Torah? I think not.

Bear with me here, OK? ...

There are plenty of frum Jews who R"I go through an amputation of a limb, a terrible illness, a spinal cord injury, or any other tragic loss, and become more mature people, as a result. Deeply changed people, in their approach to Toah and avodah, childraising, loving their spouses, tefiloh, and even to just sitting on their porches. They do those things differently now. A higher consciousness fills them. They gained an new flavor and perspective on life while meeting with other heart transplant recipients who were goyim and JUST LIKE SOME OF THEM, gained some new perspectives on life. And they being frum, become better Torah-yidden, better ovdei Hashem.

Was that a 'Torah' experience?

And by the same token, was it a 'christian' experience for the goy there, who goes to church more now, or cries when he reads his religious stories?

Sure, it is comforting to label things the way we like. But I suggest to you that it is small of us to do that.

I think the reality is that it is a human experience we can share, and interpret each in our own way - but it is still human and if we experienced it together, it connects us no matter who we are. This is Bills comparison of all the members of AA to the survivors of a shipwreck (in the book, AA). They do not ignore each other based on race, religion, socioeconomic status, or anything else for their connection with each other is not based on those. They are humans and they survived together, period.

Does a real ben Torah cry together with the goy husband of the woman next to his wife in the hospital who is a new breast cancer amputee and grow immeasurably as a human being - but then discreetly deny/ignore a relationship with any sheigetz as soon as he is with his frum yeshivish friends? Is he embarrassed afterward to get a call from an African guy named 'Phil' on the phone at home in front of his kids? Or does he stand proud to say, "Kenny is a special man. I met him at the hospital when his wife was dying. I understand his pain and fear - and he understands mine"? I know of many tzaddikim who did this way, simply because they were genuine. And genuine comes first, even before Torah. It's the floor it stands on. There is no need to be so small as to 'kick the goyim off' that floor!

Is it 'the Torah way' to call the growth the yid had in the hospital 'Torah'? Well, I can call them Torah ideas becs a mishnah or vort mentions it...so? This is what I wrote a long time ago, "I don't particularly care what lav suicide is - I am not interested in it for other reasons!" Let's not pretend that all good sense is Torah. And it would not be the Torah way for the Yid from the hospital to later shun the man who was there crying with him, as a sheigetz - for now that he is out of his hospital gown and into his good levush he can say: "how could a sheigetz possibly understand the pain and fear of a good chissidishe man who's wife is in surgery for breast cancer R"! I mean, that guy is not even a yid!"

Ridiculous. Disingenuous. Fake. And all based on comfort with labels.

Labels are what makes frum life in Eretz Yisroel so hard for many people - a denial of Jewish unity because that guy wears a spodek, not a shtreimel/is a 'sroogie' not a normal black hat yid/is a litvak/is Hungarian...(ok, I understand the problem with the Hungarian - but the others? - Just kidding! )

This is why I maintain that recovery is just plain Derech Eretz - humanity. A thing we (holy masturbating yeshivah guys) share with the (very unholy masturbating) goy exactly. There are: 1- those who resist calling The Big Solution anything but Torah and so, rebel against any recovery and stay on the sidelines sick - and then there are 2- the ones who 'agree' to use the 12 steps...but 'conspire' that as soon as they get well (using the tool of those goyim) they plan to deny that it was ever anything but Torah and develop a 'Torah-framework for recovery'! Why bother? Gevalt, why? Is it that bad to just admit you are human? Human is OK. It does not deny our Jewishness. Once an addict gets some sanity back, he can use it to be Jew just fine! Or he can be in these two groups and stay holy with the rest of the holy masturbating Yidden.

And I am not denying other tools than the 12 steps that can help a person. I am just talking to those who are vying with the 12 steps, now.

Self-honesty is the key, and it is forfeit when faking is done - even if it is 'lishmoh'. Faking is worse than treif. Midvar sheker - tirchok: if I fake or lie, I will become separated and far from others, from G-d, from myself. It's numero uno.

There is nothing and cannot be anything 'holy' or 'Jewish' about the core of sobriety, at all: honesty, surrender, and connection. These are just human. Derech Eretz is kodmah laTorah in time and for a reason: it's the first priority and must be in place before Torah. Sakantoh chamira me'isura. And I think that the guy who needs to label it Torah will end up denying the humanity of his recovery experience go right back to the bad old days when he was 'struggling with the yetzer hora'. He will 'make it holy'...and be masturbating in the shower again, eventually anyhow. But will deny it because it would be such a chillul Hashem or something like that...

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity

Posted by skeptical - 23 Aug 2013 04:28

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Dov,

Your post has so much in it, it's difficult to decide what to tackle first. B'ezras Hashem, I will pull it apart when I have the head for it.

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity

Posted by nitzotzeloki - 23 Aug 2013 14:42

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[skeptical wrote:](#)

*There are some people on here who think that I am at war with Dov.*

*I'm not. I have learned a lot from Dov and I consider him a friend.*

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thank you Dov and skeptical.

being as since at least the time of Mattan Torah us Jews have been pulling apart, discussing, arguing, thinking etc about the Torah (and everything else!) i really appreciate the richness i see in this discussion.

that being said, naaseh comes before nishmah. i have some experience for a few years now with 12 step groups (not SA but its the same steps) some particularly unpleasant experiences. ask any of the OINKERs about my rants. so lets say im right. congratulations! ive earned the right to sit alone in my room with my escape of choice and be right. alone and miserable but right. i need help and this is something that helps. so i go to meetings. sometimes i will walk out of one. it happens. getting frustrated is a part of being human. i dont like many things about the program. but i go. i have a sponsor. im doing the steps (again). i also philosophize (i.e. complain. usually) and dissect, discuss, argue etc. all the gishmak things Jews have been doing for 2 thousand years. i dont think its possible or right for me not too. but i as much as i may sometimes not like to, i have to take action. i know this. i have proved this to myself by slipping and falling over and over and over. when i do what i need to im okay.

so Dov and skep, please continue your discussion. i enjoy/need it. im gonna go call my sponsor now

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity

Posted by Dr.Watson - 23 Aug 2013 16:06

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I agree with nitzotzeloki. I try to understand different points of view and different approaches and I do get involved in debates sometimes, but the only thing that actually matters to me is am i doing the right thing today or not.

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity

Posted by cordnoy - 23 Aug 2013 16:16

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ultimately it is up to the individual to forge his way

if, however, he finds himself falling along the way, he must re-evaluate and take stock

the method and the mindset is extremely important to help one's actions

mindset without action is useless debate

action without mindset may help for a while and it may not

action with mindset....ahhhhh....b'hatzlachah

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity

Posted by Dov - 23 Aug 2013 18:31

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[Dr.Watson wrote:](#)

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Can someone here - anyone - teach me how to say anything as complete as this...in so few sentences?

Please?

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity  
Posted by gibbor120 - 23 Aug 2013 22:41

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[Dov wrote:](#)

[Dr.Watson wrote:](#)

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Copy and Paste.

Re: Kedusha and Sanity

Posted by inastruggle - 23 Aug 2013 23:24

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If I'm understanding this whole (long and headache inducing) discussion correctly then no one is arguing. Dov is maskim that if one chooses to then he can see the 12 steps in torah. Therefore if one chooses to, he can call the 12 steps a torah approach.

However just because it is in torah does not mean it must be called a torah approach and Dov doesn't want to call it such since he feels it engenders fakeness because it can make a person consider this a holy fight when it should be regarded as a necessary thing to live regardless of it's relationship to holiness and religion.

The people who are saying that they tried the torah approach and it didn't work for them and then the 12 steps did, are simply saying that they used the parts of torah normally used for aveiros and it didn't work for them. They aren't saying that the torah doesn't have the solution because the 12 steps can be found in torah which means that they were just using the torah incorrectly until then.

I do realize that I may not of said this with all the nuances but unless I missed the boat (not a far fetched idea at all) then this is the basic idea.

Please everyone agree to this so that this thread can end and we can go back to the holy work of the just having fun section.

Thank you

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity

Posted by tryingtoshteig - 23 Aug 2013 23:30

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Thank you  
I can buy that.

Just having fun section, here we come!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity  
Posted by skeptical - 24 Aug 2013 01:40

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I pretty much agree with inastruggle, so I'll leave it at that.

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity  
Posted by Lizhensk - 25 Aug 2013 00:17



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Dov? youre the only one left on the other side... coming to join us?

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity

Posted by Dov - 25 Aug 2013 08:56

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Thank you

Thanks for the invitation Lizhensk!

I invite anyone here to do the following:

Try speaking to any one of more than 25 former GYE guys with whom I have posted and spoken, who are now sober and leading much better lives because they finally recognized that they were not resh'o'im, but just sick in the head. Each one of these guys finally got clean when they went and sat down with their peyos and yarmulkes in SA meetings[i] Just tell them that "you are using Torah - you simply found the aspects of Torah that you were not 'using properly' [i]until you got that sober goy (or yid) with a few years of real sobriety to open up with and learn about really trusting G-d instead of your penis for a change."

Just try it, see what he says. His experience will tell you that "all that is nice. Now - are you still masturbating yourself? If so, would you like to come to a meeting with me?"

1- Sincerity is not *Torah*.

Honesty and integrity are not *Torah*.

Even the real decision itself in the heart of a man to **be** a ma'amin or boteach baShem is not *Torah*, at all.

It may be what the Torah *recommends*...but the **doing** of it is not using 'Torah' any more than making the decision not having sex with an animal is not Torah - even though bestiality is a befeirusheh lav in the Torah. We do not say that the decision itself not to mess around with the animal is 'using Torah' - and I see no seichel in insisting that the recovery in the heart of a man or woman who is addicted to heroin, or gambling, or even sex, is 'Torah'.

2- And if he or she is a goy - then recovering from alcoholism/sexaholism/whateveraholism is called *Torah*, too? How can it be? *He is calling on Yoshkeh*, for crying out loud(and it works)! How could we call that *Torah*? Yet suddenly if he is a Jew on GYE and 'calling on Hashem', then it *is* Torah? Why? Why the need to label it bichlal? Cuz it makes one feel like a tzaddik? Cuz then it 'fits'? If he is an addict, then he is a nut (like me). The entire labeling of it as Torah

makes no sense to me.

But there is more to it. It is actually *poison* for addicts, and I will explain.

Yes, I know that we frum guys are romantic about the Torah fixing everything (hafoch boh vehafoch boh dekula boh!) and would like so much to believe that the tzaddik/the Torah can fix any problem - especially one that is even *remotely* moral (like an aveiroh habit)! But **Torah simply does *not* work (and is not *expected* to work) for crazy people, period.** Yes, yes, it helps many people here who are sinning - but *it will not save an addict who is sinning, because he or she is **sick**.* Yes, it may help (even) addicts with the sinning 'part' of their problem a bit - but not with the sicko part....so they will (and do) remain sick and sinning, nonetheless.

A sweet, great, white-kneesock-chassidishe guy once told me on the phone (after I shared my story with him and he opened up and admitted what was going on with him): *"I just got honest with myself, Dov, and realized: I always thought I was just a rosho. But what kind of Rosho is it that regrets his sin so much that he cracks the porn video he just spent \$30 on, then goes out to buy a new one, and then breaks it again after watching 5 minutes of it, and knows that he will he go out and buy another one soon...? What kind of rosho is this? A very strange rosho. Obviously I am mainly sick in the head. Whether I am a rosho too, is not my business. My business is to first get straightened out in the head."* He is now sober about two years and his wife is 100% with him in his recovery, he has no secrets, and his life is entirely different than it was cuz it's on an honest basis. **All because he realized that his ikkar problem had nothing to do with yiddishkeit and the solution has nothing to do with getting frummer.** Yeah sure, if he quits somehow, that would mean living frummer...but that did not fool him. He was missing **exactly** what they goyim addicts are missing, nothing different at all: sanity.

So I maintain that calling it Torah and calling the issue in the addiction Torah, is perhaps the greatest obstacle to recovery that a frum addict may have.

And **none** of this applies to frum guys who are sinners that are not addicts. For them, Torah should indeed work, and I recommend them to open up to their rebbis, rebbes, or whoever...as R' Elimelech of Lizhensk recommended almost 250 years ago in his Tzetzl Kotton (#13). After all, the Torah is certainly the antidote to the YH...not to addiction.

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity

Posted by cordnoy - 25 Aug 2013 10:08

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Reading thro some of the older posts from years before, one can see that this and similar issues have been discussed and debated.

I found this from ur-a-jew or blind beggar regarding the remedy for addiction and a mekor.

I've been meaning to post this for a while just haven't had a chance. This should get the posts rolling. I recently came across this Chofetz Chaim and it blew me away:

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Applying the Chofetz Chaim's words linyonanu.

All the mussar I've given until now is great for someone who isn't addicted to this but for the addict that's a different story. An addict has to approach this like a sickness.

"All illness of this sort—and we have come to believe it an illness" Big Book, Chapter One

Now how does one treat this spiritual illness. He looks to the source of the disease.

"Our liquor was but a symptom. So we had to get down to causes and conditions" Big Book, Chapter Five

The source of this spiritual disease is our anger, our pride, our laytnos, depression, etc.

"Resentment is the number one offender. It destroys more alcoholics than anything else. From it stem all forms of spiritual disease, for we have been not only mentally and physically ill, we have been spiritually sick."

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