

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 kodn mah 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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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 Dov - 26 Aug 2013 21:51

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I also hope you understand that I am not interested in polemics here. All I am trying to do is my part to save the lives of the many who want "Torah first," from themselves. The tragedy of that well-worn *derech* is shocking. GYE is all fine and good, but to pretend that the problem is really just 'internet porn'? Please. This great website only exposes the (respectable) tip of the iceberg, friends.

Surem there is a huge internet porn problem among b'nei yeshivah who are doing nothing else than that and having lots of sex with themselves - and GYE helps to address that problem! Yet under the surface are the many posters (and many more *silent observers*) who are wrecking their lives with compulsive sex with themselves, with online sex chat, with online searches for 'relationships', with parlors, prostitutes or affairs, with anonymous men in bathrooms, and worse. When people from this forum open up to me, half the time hear my story coming from their mouths. And that is often after posting here for months or even years about their 'falling to internet porn' problem. The shame hides a great deal, till it hurts too much.

So the 'struggle' is not nearly as respectable - or religious - as the posts here make it sound it is. And for that reason, I feel the luxury of getting *only kosher derech erez*, is often just that - a luxury that many cannot afford. And there are many who run headlong into wrecking their families, all because they insist on 'kosher recovery only, of course'. But I see this as exactly

what the **Chofetz Chaim** said we need to do for kiruv: *When the house is on fire, you do not clean the water - you use whatever water is at hand, dirty or not. It will work just fine.*

We are the dirty water, and these issues being brought up are filtering attempts that allow the houses to burn down.

I have met lots of people who are far cleaner water than I am who are useless in this - it seems dirty water works best. I think that worrying about getting the Derech Eretz we share here cleaned up, is just a mistake - unless you really believe we are teaching apikorsus. If that's the case, I suggest (before arguing about that like people did on the forum in the good-old days) we need to just see if many frum addicts who use 12 steps end up not frum any more. It's just not so. (Just as the chassidim had to show the early misnagdim who were sincerely afraid of the chiddushim and weirdnesses of chassidus: the derech of chassidus was proven OK by history simply because their decedents stayed Jewish and frum, unlike those of the Haskolah.)

One of you chatted with me:

I understand where you are coming from. My only point of contention is that instead of stripping away everything as SA and AA tend to do, is to show people where they are going wrong in their view of yiddishkeit and how to leverage that to then go ahead with the Steps or whatever other methods they want to use.

But do you see that such a path is very likely to pander to the very desires of the many among  
There is a  
dangerous romance we frum hiding masturbaters have with 'yiddishkeit'. We learn chassidus, RMCh"l, and the very best sifrei mussar...and we twist it without realizing it and it feeds our addiction. And we are probably actually even *worse* off now than before we learned them! To me this is mamesh *v'al tizr'u el hakotzim*. And when we get a few days freed of our desires (because we shocked ourselves with our own acting out itself!) we soon really think it is a bit of Torah enlightnment that we are being 'inspired' with...oy vei. But it's not! It's just our Nuclear Reset Button, yet again. Our problems in Yiddishkeit are *way* more basic than we can see, and more scary...so we do not see them. We typically only see them **after** we are clean for a year or two, and not before. It's opposite of what we want it to be, that our superior clarity would lead us to actually behave better. Instead, our sobriety brings clarity later on. Yes, we are unworthy. Hard to accept...

I think it is naive to assume most of us will really overhaul things. We won't. We will fool ourselves as we always have. That is, unless you found the ingredient that really seems to have helped you the most: pain from sexually acting out enough. Like Hashem said, "I gave the Yidden 48 neviim and 7 nevios - and they didn't listen to me until Achashveirosh gave Haman the ring." Pain works better than nevuoh does.

And I personally feel it would be very dangerous and arrogant for me (or any of us recovering pervs) to go and try to be the one to teach other yidden how to 'do yiddishkeit right' - as though we have figured it all out like the RMCh"l's guy on top of the maze. Puleez. The 12 step program is about sharing experience - this would be teaching, period....very dangerous.

I prefer davka what is **uncomfortable** and **unpopular** to us frum. I also believe that recovery has to be that way - if it fits well, then it is probably not right at all. I have heard lots and lots of fantastic thunderbolts of understanding coming out of the mouths of new guys coming even into meetings....hearing and reading it here is even more likely to be meaningless, I think. Just

And I believe so far as to say that if any derech can be found that seems to us to 'fit really well with Torah' right from the start, it is probably rife with the same old self-lies and misrepresentations that got us and kept us in the same mess to begin with. And a non-addict will mostlikely never even come close to seeing exactly what we are screwing up!

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity

Posted by Dov - 27 Aug 2013 00:44

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Wondering if anyone with working brain cells will actually have the patience to read that last post of mine...it probably would require the patience of a dead person. That's a bad joke.

OK, smartypants pdaini...well, really 2 things:

cheap talk. It's certainly nothing to put our hope in about something that is about chiuvei koreis!

1- I am not a chabadnik, so - unless you meant the number 770 was *bad* luck - why would I

2- If I *were* a chabadnik and *did* desperately want to keep that number, I would not have stopped posting anyhow. I would have changed my name to Sue (thanks Johnny Cash), or something, and kept right on annoying people and highjacking threads...

Nice try.

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity

Posted by skeptical - 27 Aug 2013 03:35

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Dov,

Beyond this post, I'm going to stop arguing, because to you, I'm just an anonymous newcomer, who has only been working on things for 8 months, and therefore, my words don't carry any weight. That's fine. I completely understand.

I do think that we agree on many points and that the part we disagree over is really very minute.

I understand that you are afraid people will put off getting real help, and instead will go back to their failed "Torah approach" that they are used to. I can agree with you on that.

Now, I would like to point out the title of this thread is not "Kedusha vs. Sanity". The title is Kedusha *and* Sanity. It was worded that way purposefully. I believe that a person can learn to live a sane life and have a life of kedusha as well. If anything, the kedusha part should aid one in having that sane life.

I have zero problem with people learning from the 12-Steps how to live, or even to learn how to have a proper relationship with Hashem. It doesn't matter to me that it seems to be a goyish source. I never had an issue with that. As long as it conforms to Torah ideas, which the 12-Steps do, it doesn't bother me. (That's not to say that I wouldn't be interested in how a person learned the proper way through the 12-Steps, but couldn't seem to get that in the beis medrash. My question earlier wasn't, "How dare you learn about G-d from the 12-steps?" It was, "How did you come to see it differently there and why can't you apply it to fix your Torah life?")

So kedusha to me and kedusha to you seem to be two very different things. To me, kedusha is my relationship with Hashem. Hashem is taking care of me. Every breath that I take, is given to me by Hashem. Every situation that I'm in, I'm in it because Hashem wants me there and He knows best what is right for me. By acknowledging this, I am in effect giving everything up to Hashem. Something happened that I don't like? I need to be happy anyway, knowing that this is part of Hashem's will, and it is therefore good for me. This is Torah, and this also happens to be what the 12-Steps advocate.

Your definition of kedusha seems to be all about how I feel. You bring up the nuclear reset button many times. Maybe I'm different from many others on here, but I don't relate to that at all. I never felt holy for doing the things I've done. I couldn't stand the feeling I would get after I would do them. I definitely didn't do them in order that I would have something to do teshuvah for. Maybe everyone else is greater than I am, but I have plenty of other things to do teshuvah for!

A big part of kedusha for me, is doing what Hashem wants from me, putting aside what I may want to do, to do the will of Hashem. This is more than just living a sane life. Sure, many of the mitzvos or halacha may be common sense, or just being human, but as Jewish people, we do it because this is what Hashem wants from us.

The first Siman of Shulchan Aruch begins, "Shvisi Hashem l'neged tamid - I place Hashem before me always," is a major principle of the Torah and for the paths of the righteous who proceed before G-d."

If I eat food because I'm hungry, I get no s'char. If I eat food in order to have the strength to do what I must to serve Hashem properly, I get s'char and I raise up the food to kedusha, as well.

Derech erez kodmah l'Torah, was brought down in Pirkei Avos, where it tells us how a Yid

should act. All of that is Torah, including the derech erez. So yes, it may be common sense (or simple humanity) and it may come before Torah, but if done because this is how I'm supposed to behave as a kiddush Hashem making Jew, I am fulfilling my Torah obligations and strengthening my connection to Hashem.

If my desires are for one thing, but I refrain from it because this is what Hashem wants from me, I get s'char for that, too.

This is what kedusha means to me and I think we should strengthen this instead of telling people to forget it. Kedusha is about my relationship with Hashem. Hashem gives me so much. What can I do for Him?

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity

Posted by skeptical - 27 Aug 2013 03:39

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And by the way, I guess I have the patience of a dead person, for I read every word in your

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity

Posted by sonoftheKing - 27 Aug 2013 06:05

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Hi friends. Im not saying anything innovative or what wasnt said yet. This is about what our dear friend Dov is apparently trying to say but its not being expressed satisfactorily to some of us. The concept in the Torah of - Mitoch shelo lishma bo lishma.

The Torah concept of doing the right thing without the most proper intentions in order to eventually get to the right place one way or another by hook or by crook, and eventually iyh with the most proper intentions. So, of course when one is still struggling to be sober, after trying what is the most noble approach - doing gods bidding - he should resort to the next level of intentions. So of course he should try methods such as - my life is falling apart if I wont improve. My sanity is disappearing, if I dont do things differently, I have an addiction that I need to treat differently than with Torah thoughts etc.

This Torah concept might have confused Dov a bit. Dov seems to think that when one is

embarking on the mitoch shelo lishma route.- be it a case of an addict etc, or otherwise, - that this is a new route that is not affiliated with Torah or its Torah words and concepts. One that is not affiliated with Kedusha. One that does not have hebrew words such as - cheit, mitzvah, hashem, Krisus, Kedusha, but one with only different concepts, namely, honesty, integrity, self honesty,self integrity, openness, openness with self, no fakeness(which are all great things) etc. etc.- Dov is afraid that by incorporating the holy words- that that will be detrimental for the one on the Shelo Lishma path.

Of course this is not the case, as its the Torah itself which tells us to revert to concepts and methods that dont involve Torah, hence the Mitoch shelo lishma concept. Hence, the concepts that we have just mentioned- sobriety, lake of fakeness, self integrity etc. So Our good dad in heaven(via his Torah) advised us to use these non-Torah concepts for addicts etc. with the knowledge of course that it emanates from God himself via his Torah. As there is no existence other that God and Torah - aka, Ein od Milvado. That goes for stuff like addictions, addicts, lack of fakeness, sobriety etc, and everthing and anything in between or for that matter, not in between.

I advised Dov to clarify this wth a wiser party than he, as thats always the best and only idea to sort stuff out. Maybe he did not get around to that yet.

Whenever a holy jew like Dov - whos involved with this most tremendous mitzvah of Kedusha is doing wonders with other yidden and bringing moshiach closer (and we all envy his amazing holy work)- the yetzser hora goes berserk and will throw anything and everything in Dov's and all of us holy sweet yidden's path- to confuse us- so as to try to confuse the one innocent yid that goes onto GYE, with the hope that at least one good holy jew will log out of the website when he sees stuff that is confusing him. Its just a signal to all of us to redouble our efforts. A happy sweet year to all of us

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity

Posted by sonoftheking - 27 Aug 2013 06:27

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I also think that perhaps every time we see stuff posted that seems confusing, and theres always a chance that a newcomer or veteran will think that this is the voice of GYE,

(As I thought when I first started logging on)

we should try perhaps to help that indivudal realize that that is not the case at all.

As always. the seforim always write that we accomplish far more by delving in the light of Torah

which dispels darkness - far far more than by trying to engage and tackle the darkness itself. So when we learn a daf gemoro- it will bring light to the entire world, and definitely the yid that is struggling- far far more than even the greatest post would. Obviously, we still should try to deal with him directly too, but as a whole, the above foundation is stressed over and over again in all the seforim.

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity

Posted by chaimcharlie - 27 Aug 2013 09:10

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i struggled tremendously with the issues of this thread for around a year, and could have thought myself into oblivion as a result. eventually i understood why i must seperate these 2 things of "kedusha" and "sanity" if i would like to have either of them, that is that it seems that the "kedusha" thing requires me to forget about him and focus only on "sanity" as shown by the experience of SA 12 steppers.

around then i posted the following, and for me this is not just a nice idea, but also something that works, because since then i haven't found it necessary to return to this topic and debate anymore, it's settled by me.

here is that old post (in charlie's change):

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 Rebbi 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: Kedusha and Sanity

Posted by Dov - 27 Aug 2013 11:13

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Dear sonoftheking,

I am glad for you that you can find the safety of dogma - I cannot. There is no dogma - even Hashem's - that can save me from my own ego, and should I become too smug, proud, or 'superior', I will fall. You seem to think you are safe to assess my frumkeit or kedusha-perspective. I pray you are right.

As far as the facts about me, most of my learning and focus in avodah since about my 5th year sober in SA has been in sifrei chassidus - mainly Sfas Emes, B'nei Yisoschor, and m'or eynayim, and now, Tanya; since about my 10th year sober in SA I have been zoche to get as close as I can to R' Tzvi-Meyer Zilverberg Shlit"a and learn his sforim. I see many recovery ideas in his derech and that of the Bilvovi Mishkan Evneh, Rav Schwartz, too. It puts life into me! About 7 years into sobriety and SA recovery I started to feel a netiya to Kabolah and made some chavrusas in the Pischei chochmo v'daas of the RMCh"L and after that, the siddur of of R' Yaakov Koppel, be"H. I have been giving a chaburah in a major work of a great early tzaddik for a group of men on and off for about 5 years now, and slowly growing a good deal with Hashem's sweet help in these areas. All the while, the tzet'l kotton of R' Elimelech pulls me back to chumash, novi, halocha, and good old *Sha*"s...doing a weak job with all of it, but still it is something, b"H.

I am not a reformer, and not a 'modernisheh', and do not see avodas Hashem as something that is a really nice 'compartment' of my life. I do not think that you judge me rightly and not my ideas, either. For an addict, the ikkar of avodas Hashem is often not what you would see as such. It's self honesty - a thing that the years of desperately masturbating ourselves beat out of us with gusto. And it always 'wants' to dress up in 'inspiration' and 'kedusha' so that we can pretend we are 'good', now, and be comforted. I believe this becs I have seen it again and again.

Directly because of my recovery, I have been moved to start wearing Rabbeinu Tam's (bli neder) about five or six years ago and with Hashem's help also to take on more and more things that put the stuff I learn about *into practice* in daily life. Many of my practices have changed over these years. I use the mikvah, as well - and refuse to fol myself that doing so will 'finally make me holy and above all this recovery stuff'. My program has made avodas Hashem into a more

sincere thing and tolerates less and less *insincerity*. Other people who do not do these things or learn and work on these things *do not need these things*, so they do not do them. I have nothing over them at all!

But way above any and all this, stands my sobriety and recovery. It comes before all Torah and mitzvos (except for gilui arayos, shfichus domim, and avodah zorah). It comes before my marriage and my children, and everything else I have - for I will lose all those anyhow without sobriety. Many poskim have agreed with this assessment in practice (and exactly how to apply that, is another matter). For me, I see recovery as the one thing that opens the doorway to being a better Jew - the only **chance** I have at being and staying a good Jew till I leave this planet.

I have no need to show off to you or anybody - and there are plenty ways my avodah is truly poor! All I wrote here fills me with shame for the weak job I am doing living up to these brachos. I am a very poor example of a Jew. But all I am trying to do is show you that you may not be judging me accurately, at all. I believe that you do not understand what I am even *saying* about all this recovery stuff and that you are impervious to any of the reasons I clearly outlined in above posts that talking of kedusha and sforim to porn and masturbation addicts can often be a grave error and destructive. Do you hear any of that? Yet you just go on with the 'follow the tzaddikim' advice.

Furthermore, it is precious to me that I realize and admit that whenever I close my eyes instead of carefully checking out some lady's pretty body or face, *I am not being mugdar here because I am a kadosh. No lust addict really is. Rather, quite to the contrary: I am being mugdar because I am too sick to examine her. As all lust addicts are.* And boruch Hashem for that! Honesty about this fact is paramount. I have observed that I can make really good speeches here about the immense beauty and kedusha of guarding the eyes, or resisting temptation and fantasy...you would probably love it! As far as I am concerned, all that would be good old nahrishkeit'n. Or in plain English: good old BS (I forgot: What does the 'S' stand for again?). It would be 100% Torah emess - and BS just the same. For it is not the truth of my motivation. Lying to myself about that - even for the sake of 'bringing my recovery in line with the sforim teach us about my Neshomah' - is poison of the soul, nefesh sichlis, or whatever you like to call it. It's gayvoh in religious clothes. The fact is that most guys here *would* keep right on porning and masturbating if they really could - and see? So many of us here do just that! They call it 'a fall' - really they just do not want freedom badly enough. They just have not hurt enough yet to take the measures they *really* need to start really getting well...

But to say "No, Dov, it is their body that is drowning out the screams of their neshoma who wants only kedushah! Their problem is that they don't want *kedusha* enough yet! And we need to show them how great kedusha would be!", is not accurate. For it is obvious that Kedusha

does not sell, sex does. We addicted masturbaters truly worship the pretty woman we chase. It's a religion of it's own, not just a 'problem' or a chit, for an addict. And for us, 'Torah' does not even come **close** to replacing her - until we **must** give her up. And that hurts like hell. For addicts, it is not about enough inspiration from following Rebbe Nachman (zy"a!), but enough pain from lehavdil, following Hugh Hefner. Addicts that I refer to do not just 'choose' to drop their god/goddess because they'd 'really like' to. That is just not done, as Yirmiyahu taught us - and as you see guys keeping falling. We hang into it with emunah peshutah - until it hurts too much. yes, there are a few exceptions - but only a rare few.

All the thinking and Torah in the world does not help an addict. As it says right at the start of *Sha'arei Teshuvah* referring to similar phenomena called Teshuvah: *Tov vyoshor Hashem, al kein yoreh chato'im baderech*. Hashem is so good to the choteh ('mistaken one', literally), that He violently throws him (yoreh means 'to cast down hard', as in "yaro yiyareh" by har Sinai and "yarah bayom" by yam suf) onto the path he needs to go on. Screwing up life causes us pain that eventually becomes unbearable, so we are forced to our knees and to surrender to Hashem for help. And we usually do not really let go until we are forced to. Hashem is so good to us that He does not let us mess this gift up!

Can you understand me a bit better and can we still be friends?

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity

Posted by Pidaini - 27 Aug 2013 12:21

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[chaimcharlie wrote:](#)

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.....

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.

Seems to me like a stirah a little bit. First of all, the name Torah comes from the fact that it leads us on The Path. Anything that will lead us on the right path is Torah. So much of Torah is Torah Sheba'al Peh, not written, and since we do not remember Matan Torah how can we know what was said there and what was not?

Second, You write yourself and I agree "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".

If that is true then it **IS** (part of) Torah, the p'sak that you received was because there is nothing wrong with it, there is no apikorsus, it is exactly as you wrote "simple facts and basic Torah principles" why do you need a psak to learn that?

We have to realize that the Torah will work when it is built on good yesodos. We have twisted those yesodos and therefore the rest of the Torah is twisted as well. Our old "torah" is

dangerous indeed, and we need to straighten the bare yesod and then we can return to a true Torah.

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity  
Posted by Dov - 27 Aug 2013 20:59

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Yes!

And all I blathered above can be summarized in this:

I can't use my own distorted Torah to fix my *own* broken Yesodos.

...Maybe to fix someone *else's*, but not my own. We have an easier time being great Rabbis and theologians when it comes to someone *else*, even though we are still running to the bathroom to

The work that needs to be done is far too basic for many to even *think* of it as 'Torah' - regardless of whether it is, or not. And that requires religious humility (or humiliation). It is rare among us. Holy rollers will just not stomach the admission that the actual avoda at hand is far below what they find respectable. Below (kodmah)Torah. But Hashem is in their Derech Eretz as well - and *it is still just derech Eretz, before Torah*. We just *have* to call it 'Kedusha' and infect it again, nebach.

We just refuse to see that our broken yesodos are far, far below our religiosity, and that there really is a thing before Torah called *spirituality* that underlies yiddishkeit and that all humans share. It's the capacity to be truly religious that no active addict of any kind can have. The tempting shochad of 'feeling my deveikus now', my olam haboh, me being of the Am Hanivchar, and greatness of being a tzaddik that awaits us - are just too great to face the bland music of recovery...but really it is just our shame that is stopping us.

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity

Posted by kutan - 27 Aug 2013 23:14

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Dov,

A good friend shot me an email recommending that I check out Dov's latest post in this thread.

And he was right.

KUTGW, rebbe!

for everyone else, I'm kutan shel hachabura, and I was active on the forum in the old days when it had just started.

Dov is my Rebbe in these inyanim, and I am trying hard to reach down to his madreiga. 'down' was not a typo.

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity

Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 27 Aug 2013 23:16

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Kutan!

baaaaaaaaaaaa

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity

Posted by Dov - 28 Aug 2013 00:28

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Woah! Blast from the paaaaast! And ZS wearing a new hat, too!

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity

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Posted by cordnoy - 16 Jan 2015 15:46

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[skeptical wrote:](#)

Dr. Watson,

I think you've pinpointed Dov's problem.

An addict is one whose mind is consistently preoccupied with his drug of choice. We may see something, hear something (clip clop), or smell something, and that urge is there. We can't take our minds off it. We're so wrapped up in it that when given the chance, we're all over it, or desire to be all over it. We may give ourselves time limits, but time kind of disappears once we start. Before we know it, hours have passed and our close family and friends are neglected by us while we waste our lives away.

I can be clean for a long time, but if I slip up and let my mind go the wrong way, that same strong urge will overtake me. There is no allowing myself to do it **just** once or twice, because once I do that, I want more and more. I need to search for more, I can't let it go. I. NEED. MORE.

I think what Dov's problem is that although we keep falling into this trap over and over, rather than admitting that we have a problem - no matter how many times we try and fail - we insist that we just need to keep fighting the Yetzer Harah, harder and stronger.

I don't think this is a Torah issue at all. It's an addiction issue. People generally don't want to have problems associated with them, especially not an addiction.

When I was a kid, I was allergy-free. As I got older, we realized that I had seasonal allergies. I didn't want to have allergies. I felt broken. It's kind of silly, but that's how I felt. But I had to accept it, because this is what the doctor said and the doctor is smart about these things, so I took whatever medication was given and it helped me.

So, we in the Torah community call it a battle with the YH. Non-Jews may call it willpower. This is not a problem with the Torah approach. It's a problem with an addict not wanting to admit that there is a problem that he can't handle alone. So he goes into battle against his desires, could maybe hold out for a bit, but if his mind is still preoccupied with the desire, it's only a matter of time until he's going to give in. It just simply can not last.

The word "Powerless" scares us off, because powerless means that there's something I can't control. But what it's really saying is, "I've tried so many times to stop in the past and no matter what I've tried, it hasn't worked. I need help. I **want** help. I can't do it alone."

"Control" is a key word in this entire discussion.

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Re: Kedusha and Sanity

Posted by Watson - 18 Jan 2015 03:17

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Embarrassing as it is for me to read through again I think it is a very important thread, if somewhat difficult to follow.

It's important because a lot of members come here saying the same thing I did. I understand it, I'm not sure even I could put my own mind at ease over my questions from back then.

It's difficult to follow because now I read the responses I got through different lenses, and the responses are not the same as they were a year and a half ago. I read the same words but different answers. I couldn't have connected with it back then.

I think that my problem ran so much deeper than I ever imagined back then. I didn't even realise how uncomfortable I was, how much I was running away, hiding, self-medicating.

For those who don't know, I was staunchly against going to SA at the time of this thread. I continued fighting and had ups and downs until I got fed up. I was fed up of fighting so hard and still losing. There had to be a better way. More than that, I felt that if I really cared about any of this I would bite the bullet and try a meeting.

I've been an SA member for about a year now. I have come to realise that I am powerless over my addiction. I can prove that because for years I was doing everything in my power to stop masturbating and I could not. I wouldn't even mention here some of the more extreme methods I used. But it is simply beyond me.

So I admitted I was powerless and began working the steps and going to meetings. I have still not got to the 'magical' 90 days but b"H things have been better in so many ways. Sobriety has been better and I feel better. My wife commented that I've become happier, calmer, nicer to be around. I feel more connected to Hashem. I learn much more now than before. I've even lost a little weight! People at work have commented that I seem so happy all the time, what's going on? I said "nothing, I've always been like this." "No you haven't, you're much happier now, what is it?"

I think that everyone has their own path and Hashem will lead us down it if we let Him. Progress is slow, changes take time. I love the bit in the Big book about spiritual experiences: "Most of our experiences are the 'educational variety' because they develop slowly over a period of time."

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