

Powerless

Posted by waydown - 31 Aug 2015 19:05

Can someone please explain the concept of powerlessness in laymans terms. If Cordnoy or Avraham from the 120 call is reading this I'd love to hear your explanation.

Here are my questions;

So we keep on saying that we are used to two choices either give in or fight but there is a third choice that we are powerless. What does that mean practically?

Say we are in the pizza store, at an amusement park, work etc.. and we are faced with lust. Ok so now we say we are powerless now what? I realize I don't want the lust but I am powerless. Ok so now can we just look and lust at the attractive female? After all hey we are powerless. It sounds like a feel good thing to me. It sounds like ok yes we don't want to do it so we just say he we are powerless then we can do what we want. Don't we still need to have the altitude that no we must fight lust? I just don't get what feeling defeat mean? Now what?

Unless you mean ok on the granular level when faced with a challenge yes we must fight. But our altitude about the fight must be that we can't win the fight alone. We must be part of a group reach out to others, reach out to hashem most importantly. So before we fight the battle we have to have a mindset that we need air power together witha our own gorund forces because we are powerless. But of course when faced with a challenge we must say no we are in power to stop us form falling. I am not so sure this solution is what you guys mean though.

Also you guys keep on saying "till now we thought we can't survive without our lust. But once we realize we are powerless we see we don't need the lust and we won't die." Well why is that connected to the powerless factor. Say I think I am powerful and I say lets declare war and go by a perido of time without giving into my lust, I will still realize that I don't need the lust and won't die. I don't see why admitting one is powerless is a key to realizng we won't die without lust.

Basiclly I need someone to explain the powerless rule in laymans terms because I just don't get it. Note I am not against that whitebook or SA handbook but please I don't relate to physcological jargon. I need it more lamasa. I just don't understand that lingo. Please explain

this in simple terms. I am not knocking at all that approach, I just don't speak that language and don't get it. So I need some help for us simpletons.

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Re: Powerless

Posted by waydown - 01 Sep 2015 21:38

yes like I said if we take hashem into the equation it works totally different. hashem made lust and he can take it away.

(Although if the line between lust and love is obviously defined then I will throw out a question. During the churban bais rishon anshei knesses hagdola were able to ask hashem to get rid of the yetzer for avoda zora. When they tried doing that for gilo aruis chicken's weren't matting so they had to bring it back. Why not take away the lust yetzer but leave love in place. People would still mate because they love each other? OK its really a side point.)

Furthermore as I said before hashem wants us to teshuva and with a little push on our own he will surely help us. (peschu li peschi shel manat vani eftich lcha pesach).

So yes with hashem the concept works. But Cordnoy vehemently disagrees with you guys. He says leave g-d out of this. Just believe in some higher power and we will be helped. Perhaps since I am a frum yid, I should stop dwelling on whether g-d is that higher power or some other mystical being. Perhaps if I can't understand that higher power without connecting it to g-d I can recover too? Cordnoy, please help out here. Is it Okay to approach this higher power aspect as I can't fight this alone so I need two higher powers. 1) the inner kocahs that I never believed I had. 2) The help of hashem. Or must I say no there is some higher sepheric thing in this universe that helps those that want to help themselves?

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Re: Powerless

Posted by Bigmoish - 01 Sep 2015 21:46

Have you read it yet? I think most of your questions are answered in the text.

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Re: Powerless

Posted by waydown - 01 Sep 2015 22:06

Yes I read it. And to sum it up. it sounds like yes that higher power is g-d. The writer is only suggesting that one (C"V) doesn't have to totally believe in g-d in the sense as us yidden believe. Rather he must simply acknowldege some type of g-dly presence. This all circles me back to my orginal argument. As a frum jew it would seem to me that beieving that hashem will help me and turning to him for assistance is defintley the way to go? And thats the higher power I should turn to? Is that the correct approach?

Oh Big Mosh as to my level of observance, I am a former kollel guy and a pretty well respected ba habais. (Which makes this struggle even more embarassing)

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Re: Powerless

Posted by Bigmoish - 01 Sep 2015 22:16

[waydown wrote:](#)

Oh Big Mosh as to my level of observance, I am a former kollel guy and a pretty well respected ba habais. (Which makes this struggle even more embarassing)

Hey! Are you me?

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Re: Powerless

Posted by waydown - 01 Sep 2015 22:18

LOL!

If I am and you are you then I am not I and you are not you!

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Re: Powerless

Posted by MJB - 01 Sep 2015 23:15

[waydown wrote:](#)

Well the not die thing I totally don't get. Why is that connected to powerless.

Read what I wrote the not dieing is about surrender. My concept of surrender means that I surrender the right or expectation to lust. I can do that because it is optional. If it were not optional, i.e. my life depends on it, I could not perform that surrender.

Those of us who thought oh we had power fought and won some battles realized that the we won't die without lust either. I recently fought the idea that I can't fall asleep with masturbation and realized that I don't masturbate to fall asleep. So yes I won't die without it. Why do you need the feel powerless to come to the realization that we won't die without it?

Of course we can win battles. But if you are always waging battles with an addiction you will lose the war. Surrender means to me that I stop waging battles, I just walk away.

Powerless to me is a realization not about the need to lust (that is surrender) but rather about the futility of waging endless battles that you will inevitably lose. That is what powerlessness means, that eventually you will lose, despite the exhausting fighting. Therefore you need to try a different method.

Re the general powerlessness, I totally get how after the first drink we powerless. Once it kicks in its like we passed by a devil. Or as R shayis Taub explains thats where our obsession kicks in. But you guys seem to argue that no even that first drink we are powerless. And this notion of leaving it to a higher power makes zero sense if you are an atheist. Athiests believe there is no higher power so what and whom are you leaving it to? And logically what the heck is the whole thing suppose to mean. Say I sit near a pretty girl in work. Every day before I come in I say oh some higher power will help me. Now when she flirts magic I won't lust any more. This whole

higher power thing just defies logic. Why should it help? It makes no sense. Unless you go with an emuna or bderech shroztim lelch molichaim asiu. But without judiasm its all just mush physiology feel good stuff. Sorry I don't mean to knock it I just don't get it.

First off I clearly said we have the power to not take the first sip. Though I think my view of the sip may be different. I am also starting to rethink that position anyway in light of recent petsonal events.

Second, are you an atheist? If not then why are you getting distracted by the dynamics of an atheist in a 12step program? If you have listened to R Taub's lectures you will heat how he addresses this issue.

Lastly, I have to admit that I struggle between the line of my power and G-d's power. Because I do have bechira and therefore some power. But I also know that when I was only using my power I got nowhere fast. When I started to ask G-d for His help because I was clearly not up to the task myself, it really was magic. A miracle. I have no other explanation. Even now with the help of hindsight, I still have no freaking clue how I went 180 days clean (not sober) after the first time I really reached out to Him. This is after 20 years of lust, fantasy, porn and masterbation.

Yes it is a miracle. I have no other answer but that.

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Re: Powerless

Posted by waydown - 02 Sep 2015 01:28

Thanks for your clarity.

And yes I htink we are on the same page re a higher power. At the end of the day use g-d as the higher power I seek.

And yes once you come onto hashem there is no need to have rational answers. G-d works in irrational ways. Henceforth near ike miracles can happen

I also hear your point that if the altitude is fight we will eventually loose. (Although I am not 100% sure about that but I get your point)So we must surrender to hashem.

The only thing I still differ with you is, that I don't think realizing we won't die without lust has to do with surrender. When I fight I also realize I won't die without lust. After all I won some battles and didn't die. I don't need to surrender to realize that.

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Re: Powerless

Posted by cordnoy - 02 Sep 2015 02:42

[waydown wrote:](#)

yes like I said if we take hashem into the equation it works totally different. hashem made lust and he can take it away.

(Although if the line between lust and love is obviously defined then I will throw out a question. During the churban bais rishon anshei knesses hagdola were able to ask hashem to get rid of the yetzer for avoda zora. When they tried doing that for gilo aruis chicken's weren't matting so they had to bring it back. Why not take away the lust yetzer but leave love in place. People would still mate because they love each other? OK its really a side point.)

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That's not what cordnoy said.

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Re: Powerless

Posted by MBJ - 02 Sep 2015 05:46

[waydown wrote:](#)

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Firstly, I said that knowing your life does not depend on frequent ejaculation is a prerequisite for surrender not vise versa. In fact I have know that for 3 years now, but surrender is fairly new to me.

And last point, please don't dissect my words like it is Gemara. I am not that learned or precise. I am just a schlub with an opinion. And you know what they say about opinions. But perhaps my experience can be of some value to you. At the very least writing these posts keep the ideas in them sharp in my mind. Don't let the detail interfere with your recovery.

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Re: Powerless

Posted by cordnoy - 02 Sep 2015 10:25

[MBJ wrote:](#)

[waydown wrote:](#)

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MBJ...well said....like usual.

Keep on sayin'

Keep on truckin'

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Re: Powerless

Posted by waydown - 02 Sep 2015 14:58

Ok guys so just tell me if I am in the right track.

Here is my take on this whole thing being that I am who I am as a frum jewish addict;

The key is that we are powerless and can't win the war on lust. Thus, we say ok hashem our life is unbearable and we can't continue living like this. We want to stop and we hand it over to you to help us. Since hashem wants people to do right he will help those that want to get help. So as long as we have the will power and we are willing to take measures to avoid flirting with lust (IE filters, throwing out our old habits, magazines, contacts etc...) the higher power/ hashem will do the rest.

Did I get it right???

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Re: Powerless

Posted by cordnoy - 02 Sep 2015 15:09

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The key is that we are powerless and can't win the war on lust. Thus, we say ok hashem our life is unbearable and we can't continue living like this. We want to stop and we hand it over to you to help us. Since hashem wants people to do right he will help those that want to get help. So as long as we have the will power and we are willing to take measures to avoid flirting with lust (IE filters, throwing out our old habits, magazines, contacts etc...) the higher power/ hashem will do the rest.

Did I get it right???

The Amazin' Rhythm Aces would be proud!

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