

making the silent battle...not.

Posted by silentbattle - 04 Dec 2009 04:12

Because isn't that why I'm here? And silent battles are always more difficult to fight. There are very few people in the "real world" (you know, the one where people lie, cheat, steal, and are) that I can talk to about this - so this is my chance, I guess.

I'm in my late 20s, single. I learned in Eretz Yisroel for a bunch of years, and had tremendous success, both in learning, in middos, and general personal growth.

When I came back to america, though, things were different. I didn't have the same social framework of the yeshiva that I'd gotten used to. Most of my friends were married, in a different country/state, or both. And the few friends who were still around were crazy busy with their own things. So there I was, lonely, without any support system to speak of, having trouble with dating, and full of the standard drives that guys have. And no real outlet for any of my emotional and physical needs.

Speaking to Uri and reading his posts, yes, I suppose I have a deeper neediness, and to me, "loneliness" includes that - the feeling of not having people to rely on, not feeling wanted, needed, etc.

So I started going to various websites - I started by using them as fuel for fantasies, but eventually ended up meeting women in real life. And while I was honest with them, and made sure they were aware that it could never become something truly serious (how ironic, that my being frum influenced me even while I was doing these terrible aveiros!), I got involved in one unhealthy relationship after another. They provided a fleeting comfort, and even some support, but nothing lasting, and in retrospect, it's no surprise that my dating wasn't very successful (even though I wasn't in any other relationships at the time of dating, I just wasn't in a very healthy place overall).

And then...Hashem helped me. I'm very close with my rebbe, but I could never bring myself to tell him about this, even though I wished he would somehow find out. Well, he did - and I was horrified, but amazingly relieved at the same time. He directed me to a therapist, and the therapist mentioned this website - so here I am.

So, the major issue I'm dealing with is not meeting people in real life - but while I'm at it, my therapist recommended trying for complete abstinence - and I thought, "why not?" After all, if I'm looking to improve myself on a ruchniyos level, then I should try to stop mz"l too, right? And, so far, so good. Clearly, Hashem has been helping me. I've been clean over a month from unhealthy relationships, and something like 11 days on the WOH.

Thank you, everyone, for being part of this group.

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Re: making the silent battle...not.

Posted by cordnoy - 28 Feb 2017 01:10

Our hero here graduates from bein' a very smart boy and changes into a man, and not stam a man:

[silentbattle wrote on 27 Nov 2011 08:51:](#)

Friend of mine mentioned this quote to me, and I like it. Maybe somebody else here will get something out of it, too (even though it's from "Rocky")

...But somewhere along the line, you changed. You stopped being you. You let people stick a finger in your face and tell you you're no good. And when things got hard, you started looking for something to blame, like a big shadow. Let me tell you something you already know. The world ain't all sunshine and rainbows. It's a very mean and nasty place and I don't care how tough you are it will beat you to your knees and keep you there permanently if you let it. You, me, or nobody is gonna hit as hard as life. But it ain't about how hard ya hit. It's about how hard you can get it and keep moving forward. How much you can take and keep moving forward. That's how winning is done! Now if you know what you're worth then go out and get what you're worth. But ya gotta be willing to take the hits, and not pointing fingers saying you ain't where you wanna be because of him, or her, or anybody! Cowards do that and that ain't you! You're better than that! I'm always gonna love you no matter what. No matter what happens. You're my son and you're my blood. You're the best thing in my life. But until you start believing in yourself, ya ain't gonna have a life. Don't forget to visit your mother.

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Re: making the silent battle...not.

Posted by cordnoy - 28 Feb 2017 01:15

And then on pages 75 and 76, there is a great discussion regardin' the issue of postin' vs. openin' up to real people.

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Re: making the silent battle...not.

Posted by cordnoy - 01 Mar 2017 00:57

[silentbattle wrote on 07 Feb 2010 02:55:](#)

OK, so continuing with my ideas for a program...please, share your thoughts about any/all aspects of what I'm writing here, I could use the input - tell me what you agree with, disagree with, can add to, enhance, modify, etc.

I think that every program, whether it's therapy, or 12 steps, or GYE, or...well, anything...is going to have two basic focuses (focii?): sur meira, v'asei tov. Which I see as (asei tov) focusing on the person you want to be, the person you really are, and the values that you have; what you truly think is important; living life; improving, growing, being happier. And (sur meira), remembering what's dangerous, and just how dangerous it is - and staying far away (or as far away as possible); being honest about tests, dangers, triggers, and feelings, with oneself, and ideally, with someone else.

So, my thoughts are as follows: Keep going with GYE. This helps me focus both on how I'm growing, and also makes me examine where my tests are. And makes me admit to them, we're I've succeeded, where I haven't.

Keep in touch with a partner/sponsor, eventually via phone. I may have found someone to do this with, we'll see how it works out.

Be in touch with my rebbe and friend, both of whom know and understand my issues.

Continue to grow - learn, work, schooling, make sure that I feel like I'm moving forward in life. I'm looking into starting to go to a shiur, with the possibility of getting closer to the guy giving it, having a rebbe that's local. Not going to be the same as my rebbe in Eretz Yisorel, who knows me incredibly well, has been with me for YEARS, and everything - but he is here, and that has definite advantages.

Please, add to my thoughts?

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Re: making the silent battle...not.
Posted by silentbattle - 03 Mar 2017 03:44

Nu? So, are you going to add any thoughts??

As for me, I finally got a notebook to do my step 1 inventory...and I'm seeing from my behavior how much of an attention addict I am.

Someone at a recent meeting shared a reminder to himself that all of these actions are a twisting of the desire to connect with God - and that he CAN replace these things with God.

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Re: making the silent battle...not.
Posted by cordnoy - 03 Mar 2017 05:01

I don't view the workin' of the steps as a sur meira and aseh tov. Yes, one is doin' good by changin' himself, but I have found that this will only be effective to the core issues if he has done a step zero, meanin' that he has nothin' under his mattress and he will not be in lust mode. So, in essence, like the sfas emes and many others say: the sur meira must come first.

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Re: making the silent battle...not.

Posted by Singularity - 03 Mar 2017 08:22

[cordnoy wrote on 03 Mar 2017 05:01:](#)

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I agree. But I use my *asei tov* to ensure a *sur meira*. Don't think they're independent.

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Re: making the silent battle...not.

Posted by silentbattle - 05 Mar 2017 17:25

[cordnoy wrote on 03 Mar 2017 05:01:](#)

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Hmmm...I was under the impression that step 0 was a willingness to take the steps?

When you talk about "nothing under the mattress and not being in lust mode," perhaps I'm misunderstanding you...

On a hashkafic level, many say that the only way to be *sur meira* on a real level is to bring in an *asei tov*.

From a 12-step perspective...yes, you have to get the poison out of your system, and surrender it to your Higher Power. But if you stop there, it will not be a lasting recovery. you have to get ALL the negative stuff out of your life and replace it with real connection with yourself, with others, with God. That's what the stuff I've read (the little bit I have so far) keeps saying, again and again.

I look forward to hearing your thoughts. On that note, I was listening to a speech by Scott and Bob (of AA fame), and one of them commented that he likes when someone disagrees with him - because it's an opportunity for one of them to learn something.

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Re: making the silent battle...not.
Posted by cordnoy - 05 Mar 2017 17:38

I love when someone disagrees.

It's what makes the world go round.

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Re: making the silent battle...not.
Posted by cordnoy - 06 Mar 2017 03:25

[silentbattle wrote on 05 Mar 2017 17:25:](#)

[cordnoy wrote on 03 Mar 2017 05:01:](#)

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In the white book page 63, there is step zero. Yes, the gettin' involved in the program, but in middle it states: We stop practicing our compulsion in all its forms. We can't be "sober" in one area while acting out in another. There can be no relief from the obsession of lust while still practicing the acts of lust in any form.

"I can be masturbating to the image of a blank wall, and I'm still resorting to my drug."

We stop feeding lust. We get rid of all the materials and other triggers under our control. We stop feeding lust through the eyes, the fantasy, and the memory. We stop relishing the language of lust, resentment, and rage. We stop living only and always inside our own heads. One of the fringe benefits of going to a lot of meetings is that it gets us out of ourselves.

As we become aware of other addictions that are part of our lives, we pray for willingness to surrender each one.

There can be no true recovery from addiction if we allow it to persist in any area, whether in our thinking or in our acting out.

What we are really saying when we start meeting with others is, *"I have to stop; please help me."*

But we need some demonstration of trust, and hearing the stories of other members, we begin to let our guard down. Before we know it, we've crossed that line of doubt, mistrust, and fear, and have put down our drug.

The program doesn't tell us how to stop—we had done that a thousand and one times—it shows us how to keep from starting again. We had it backwards; before, we always wanted the therapist, spouse, or God to do the stopping for us—to fix us. Now, we stop; and then, in our surrender, the power of God becomes effective in us.

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Re: making the silent battle...not.

Posted by cordnoy - 06 Mar 2017 03:27

And similarly:

Recovery from sex addiction means there is no turning back. The conquistador Cortes provided a model for sex addicts wanting to recovery....that is to burn the boats on the shore and ensure no way back. This makes the expedition or journey succeed or go down trying. They had no other option but to fight to the death. The same is true for beginning recovery from sex addiction. There can be no remaining "stash." There must be a full "burning" of all prior addiction materials, including all magazines, DVDs, affair partner's email or phone numbers, hidden cell phones, or unrestricted access to the internet that could end up in a relapse.

As the Sexaholic Anonymous books states, "We stop practicing our compulsion in all its forms...We get rid of all the materials and other triggers under our control" (p. 64) You must fully turn away from your past habitual behaviors and "burn" all porn magazines, porn DVDs, letters from affair partners, or phone numbers of past partners from your cell phone. Burning the boats may also mean canceling cable television, internet access, magazine subscriptions or any other material that could be a threat to your sobriety.

"Destroying", deleting, or throwing away all the old acting out materials can be scary because that is how you coped with life. The key to recovery is not to stop the addictive behavior (you probably did that thousands of times) but the key is to keep you from ever starting again. You have rationalized, minimized, and justified your addictive behaviors for so long that it is best to eliminate even the materials that seem tame (i.e., fashion magazines, certain R-rated movies that have sexually explicit scenes, websites with models, etc.) You may even ask your spouse/partner for advice about what may be a trigger for you.

This task is a great way to begin your recovery and demonstrate that you are serious about changing the way you live. This action may cause withdrawal symptoms but you will discover that you won't die without the fix. Instead, you will feel better and develop confidence that there is hope. Don't forget to also cleanse your place of work, your car, or wherever you may have access to your old tools of addiction.

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Re: making the silent battle...not.
Posted by cordnoy - 06 Mar 2017 03:37

Don't see much of a disagreement here.

Continued hatzlachah

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Re: making the silent battle...not.
Posted by silentbattle - 12 Mar 2017 02:06

First of all, Freilichin Purim everyone! Have a big ol' glass of Woodford!

I definitely agree that getting of rid of old materials, options, etc, is part of being willing to work the program. I'm not sure if that's step 0, I think that's probably more of step 3, no? Though I'm a n00b to all this, so I'm definitely aware that I could be missing a lot.

When my wife found out, and I started working to have a real recovery, I deleted the email accounts I'd used for this purpose. There were actually a few erotic stories that I'd written that I'd wanted to save (I said in my mind that maybe my wife would enjoy reading them at some point)...but the truth is I was just fooling myself into hanging onto them. I'd invested time and effort into writing this stuff, it was well written, and I didn't want to give it up. And I had to.

So I just did - went to the other email I'd sent them to and buried them in, and deleted them.

Thank you!

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Re: making the silent battle...not.

Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 12 Mar 2017 05:00

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Re: making the silent battle...not.

Posted by silentbattle - 14 Mar 2017 16:53

Thanks! Hope you had a great Purim!

I find it interesting that we read about, we announce each year, the mitzvah of erasing all memory of Amalek. Isn't that kinda counter-productive? I'm sure there are lots of much better explanations, but this fits with something my sponsor, along with the White Book, recommend: Don't just turn away from lust. face the feelings that you have, be aware of them, and then surrender them, give them up, pray for the person, etc. Trying to pretend that lust (or amalek) isn't impacting you doesn't work. What does work is realizing their attempt, and giving them away, surrendering them to Hashem, asking him to remove these things from our lives.

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