

Defining an "addict"

Posted by Yidyidyid - 15 Jun 2018 01:06

Hi,

I'm relatively new here...

There is lots of talk on GYE about fighting this "addiction".

From reading the posts here and talking to members, it seems like there are 2 general camps: those that view themselves as addicts and those that don't.

The addicts: They feel that they have an addiction that is beyond their ability to control. They make progress through the 12-steps (they are "powerless over our addiction...give up our will to G-d"). They seem to understand that this issue is more than just a taiva for women/pleasure...rather, they view it as an essential flaw in themselves that defines them. They give themselves the title of "addict". They go to therapy. They self-reflect. They try to understand why there is a need in their lives for these things and where those needs are stemming from. They try to fill that hole with meaning and spirituality etc.

The non-addicts: view themselves as having a serious taiva for a very serious aveira. It is not an essential flaw in their being. It is not a hole in themselves or some kind of internal emptiness that they are filling with self-pleasure. Rather, they view themselves as regular people who seriously struggle and want to stop it once and for all. For this camp, going to therapy and discussing their childhood/marriage/self esteem will not help in the least. They are simply males and have very strong drives that are hard to control. (And if they were not jewish and therefore didnt view this as a sin, they would be 100% fine with themselves).

Now, I am not certain that these 2 groups are divided up based on the seriousness of their addiction... It seems it is simply just 2 ways to go about tackling the same issue? I am not certain that the self-defined "addicts" are the ones who struggle more. I think many people have normal marriages, come from normal homes, and still struggle very seriously with this issue.

Curious what some of the "old-timers" here think.

Shkoyich,

Yidydyid

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Re: Defining an "addict"

Posted by mzl - 15 Jun 2018 01:29

I think the distinction is reflected in the halachos of the nazirite. You can be a nazirite for the rest of your life or one month at a time. Some people can regain control after one month. Other people cannot, whenever the nezirus stop they are once again 100% positive that they eventually will end up drinking again, like they know that the sky is blue.

It's something broken in the brain. The horror of the self-judgement is dressed up as desire. It's not really a desire, it's a thought that takes a wrong turn in the brain.

Anxiety works like this too, one thought ends up being expressed in a totally unexpected way, which is why to get rid of anxiety you really have to think out of the box, although in that case the prognosis is very good.

It's a disease.

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Re: Defining an "addict"

Posted by cordnoy - 15 Jun 2018 01:47

[Yidydyid wrote on 15 Jun 2018 01:06:](#)

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Curious what some of the "old-timers" here think.

Shkoyich,

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I'm an old timer but also a young timer.

I agree with some of what you said, but not with all. I'm sorry, but I am thru debatin' stuff.

Question: how do you feel? Talk about yourself, not the two camps.

God speed!

Oh, and by the way, I love lustin'. I eye the backside of almost every woman that passes me. That used to lead me to act out. I went to therapy. I went to meetings. I practiced the steps. Had sponsors. Had sponsees. More steps. Was I addicted? Yes. Am I addicted? Yes. Am I flawed? Yes. Am I normal? Yes. Do I desire women? Yes. Am I powerless? I haven't the foggiest. If I would start, could I stop? No. Do I care about the past? Not in the slightest. Does actin' out bother me, or make me feel guilty? No. Was my life manageable? No.

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Re: Defining an "addict"

Posted by cordnoy - 15 Jun 2018 01:48

[mzl wrote on 15 Jun 2018 01:29:](#)

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It's a disease.

And btw, "fightin' the addiction" is akin to suicide.

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Re: Defining an "addict"

Posted by lifebound - 15 Jun 2018 02:02

I'm definitely not an old-timer, but I don't think it's as black and white as you describe. This line particularly, I'm not too sure about:

The non-addicts:

...

For this camp, going to therapy and discussing their childhood/marriage/self esteem will not help in the least.

There are loads of old threads on here that have discussed the addict vs. non-addict thing, back and forth. I'll try to find some of them if you want.

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Re: Defining an "addict"

Posted by mzl - 15 Jun 2018 03:45

[cordnoy wrote on 15 Jun 2018 01:48:](#)

[mzl wrote on 15 Jun 2018 01:29:](#)

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Re: Defining an "addict"

Posted by i-man - 15 Jun 2018 03:55

[cordnoy wrote on 15 Jun 2018 01:47:](#)

[Yidydyid wrote on 15 Jun 2018 01:06:](#)

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Sounds like you have alot to share - you should start a thread on the "introduce yourself" category....

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Re: Defining an "addict"

Posted by i-man - 15 Jun 2018 03:56

[cordnoy wrote on 15 Jun 2018 01:47:](#)

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Re: Defining an "addict"

Posted by i-man - 15 Jun 2018 04:59

Hello yidyidyid

If I may share what I went through when i was around gye for 2 months

guardyoureyes.com/forum/17-Balei-Battims-Forum/261374-n

the link is to the bb forum but the basic premise was that my wife was upstate whilst i was alone and I started a thread to get through it ,at that point i went with the "strong taivah" route , others were not approving , and I was indignant as you can see from this post :

I'm not sure what you

are implying MBJ, but I don't think I have any major illness over here, just a pretty normal pull toward inappropriate material etc. not everyone with this problem needs SA, 12 steps, etc, last week I was in a specific situation that normally doesn't take place, but on the average day things are going just fine.

....and than 2 years later... I finally looked deep inside to my core and admitted I have a big problem and I cant help myself - so I turned to G-D and started figuring out how to live .

I am NOT suggesting that this is your case - I Am saying that anyone asking the type of question you mentioned should

A-look into yourself with brutal unbiased honesty .

B-be open to think about what, people who have been through this stuff ,suggest .

I didnt do those two things and managed to turn two fantastic years into a time filled with alot of pain.

wishing you tremendous Hatzlachah

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Re: Defining an "addict"

Posted by cordnoy - 15 Jun 2018 05:42

[mzl wrote on 15 Jun 2018 03:45:](#)

[cordnoy wrote on 15 Jun 2018 01:48:](#)

[mzl wrote on 15 Jun 2018 01:29:](#)

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It's a disease.

And btw, "fightin' the addiction" is akin to suicide.

I don't know what you mean.

The short explanation is that an addiction is a pretty powerful emotion or pull and generally speakin', one does not have the ability or power to fight and win over the addiction. It is a losin' proposition.

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Re: Defining an "addict"

Posted by Yidyidyid - 17 Jun 2018 02:59

Rabbosai,

Scenario #1: I have a bunch of bottles of alcohol in my home (wine, whiskey, scotch, vodka, you name it...). I enjoy having a drink here and there. When I am home by myself, the thought of opening up the cabinet and getting plastered does not even cross my mind. It is not a struggle that I even contend with. I've never had that thought in my life. However, there are a minority of people with an *illness* and they fight that fight every single day, possibly every single moment of the day. Those people are addicts.

Scenario #2: I have taken narcotic pain meds before - prescribed by my doctor. In fact, I never finished the pills and the bottle still sits in my medicine cabinet with about 20 pills left over. When I am home alone with nobody watching, I have never ever had even a thought about taking those pills. They just sit there and never even cross my mind. However, there are people who struggle with that exact thing every single day, possible every single moment of the day. Those people are addicts.

Scenario #3: Now, put a healthy, straight, male home alone with a *prust* magazine lying around. I've never taken a poll, but Im pretty certain that *every single* healthy straight male with struggle with that desire. Some may win the fight, and some may not --- but they all will have that desire. Is the entire male population composed of addicts?

Case closed (?)

-Yid

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Re: Defining an "addict"

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 17 Jun 2018 03:08

Could be that most would pick it up, but most would also be able to put it down..... Some would not....

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Re: Defining an "addict"

Posted by Markz - 17 Jun 2018 03:25

Rabbosai,

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Case closed (?)

-Yid

The case is open...

Now where do we go from here?

Dear brother, what are you seeking to discover?

by the way, just for the record, when I'm living life (which happens often BH) a prust magazine is not a struggle. So it's not fair to make broad assumptions. Secondly that's not what addiction means

How is life by you?

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Re: Defining an "addict"

Posted by mzl - 17 Jun 2018 03:46

The answer is that if you look at it from the outside as an experiment you cannot tell from one data point.

The real distinction is in how it seems to the guy and what he thinks as a result. If he thinks "oh no, I'm going to look at it..." he has an addiction. If he thinks "yum" he's just a healthy male.

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Re: Defining an "addict"

Posted by lionking - 17 Jun 2018 04:04

[Markz wrote on 17 Jun 2018 03:25:](#)

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Git Voch, It is good to hear your are living life, and that it happens often. Keep it up!

I identify very much with Markz, Twice I had such a scenario on the street. Once with a porn magazine, and once with a dvd which I found on the street. Both times the street was deserted. I picked it up and immediately tossed in the nearest garbage. The thought to look at it didn't cross my mind.

I have lesser type of situations on a daily basis, either on the street, or on the subway. In general, I don't think twice about not looking.

I fooled myself for years to think that I don't have a problem. Lately, I'm learning that my problem is not lust, porn, masturbation or sex. My problem is not living life. My struggle is with negative feelings, guilt, stress, depression, feeling zero self worth, etc... I happen to use lust and it's associates as a relief method.

Does that make me addicted to wrong stress relief methods? Perhaps.

Just my two cents.

Hatzlocha Rabba!

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