

Seeking Help-A Crisis of Meaning

Posted by time2win - 20 Feb 2025 19:40

Hi Holy Chevra.

This is going to be a long post(s), but I need help. Please share your thoughts.

I want to cut through all the superficialities and talk tachlis. **Why do I turn to P and M?**

Because I have a crisis of meaning. I feel like my life doesn't *really* matter. There is a gaping hole deep in my soul, my consciousness that I can't seem to fill. All I can do is dull the gnawing emptiness with P & M. (In theory, it could be with drugs or alcohol, but P is free and more easily accessible and side effects are less noticeable.)

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Adam the accountant. Ed the electrician. Joe the engineer. Carl the computer programmer. **Me.** In essence, people who have a small circle of positive influence.

To elaborate-It's not that my life is totally meaningless. After all, I have a wife and kids who love

me and need me. I find meaning in supporting them and helping raise our children. I pay taxes and give some tzedakah (not as much as I wish I could), am a contributor to the economy/productive member of society. I give a smile to my coworkers, the cashiers at the store etc. and try to make the world a little better however I can.

Nonetheless, despite my best efforts to be big and accomplish something great in life, **I feel so, so small. And that is deeply, excruciatingly painful.** So I turn to P to numb the pain. Until I can fill the hole in my heart, I will never achieve true sobriety from my addiction. (Not incidentally, this is the root cause of my fallout with frumkeit. I have a hard time believing in a God, or at least relating to a God, who created me to be an absolute nobody.)

There are a lot of wise people on this forum. Please share your thoughts. Hope to hear from you soon.

With thanks from the bottom of my heart,

Time2Win

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Re: Seeking Help-A Crisis of Meaning
Posted by time2win - 20 Feb 2025 19:44

To save some of you the time composing a response, I want to preemptively share some possible replies to my dilemma and why I find them unconvincing.

Potential Solution 1: You are confusing fame with meaning. Just because someone gives a lot of tzedakah, that doesn't make them a big person. You who give less tzedakah at personal difficulty may be more beloved to God than the mega wealthy guy who gives millions to tzedakah every year and still has money left over to waste on his luxury car, pesach vacations in Greece and charcuterie boards.

It's true you are not a singer or a comedian bringing smiles to people's faces, but that's ok, because God didn't give you those talents, so he doesn't expect that from you. God wants you to do your best in life. You are doing your best, so be happy!

Response: You may be right. God may like me more. The problem is, I don't care about being

beloved to God. God doesn't need me. He was doing just fine before I showed up and will be fine after I die. What matters to me is that I matter to people. And right now, outside of my very very small circle, I am an absolute nobody.

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Re: Seeking Help-A Crisis of Meaning
Posted by time2win - 20 Feb 2025 19:44

Potential Solution 2: You are viewing the world superficially and ignoring the very hidden, personal and difficult work of tikkun hamidos. The wealthy entrepreneur may give a lot of tzedakah, but is an arrogant buffoon who is obnoxious to his employees and those around him who he views as less than him. The accomplished scientist and inventor may have brought some useful technology to the world, but he is a philanderer who cheats on his wife. What really matters is who you are inside.

Response: I am not disregarding the difficult and important work of tikkun hamidos. After all, that's why I am on GYE, to improve my self-control. My frustration is that achieving mastery of my middos is necessary, but not sufficient for me to be fulfilled in life. I need to feel accomplished as well

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Re: Seeking Help-A Crisis of Meaning
Posted by time2win - 20 Feb 2025 19:47

Potential Solution 3: Your life is meaningful because you do mitzvos. Every Amen, every time you put on tefillin, make kiddush, learn Torah, sit in a sukkah you are gaining olam haba the greatest pleasure imaginable. Additionally, the spiritual ramifications of your actions reverberate throughout the Daled Olamos.

Response: In all honestly, and I don't mean this sarcastically, I couldn't care less about Olam Haba. The concept always came across as kind of selfish. Like, you just sit there for eternity basking in the intensely pleasurable divine light. Sounds like the muslim version of heaven, only a different source of pleasure instead of 72 virgins. Also, the passivity of it just seems boring. The only thing that gets me up in the morning is the feeling that I'm doing something. I can't imagine just sitting there all day, no matter how geshmak the divine light is. Also, I'm not kabalistically inclined, so don't care much for Nefesh Hachaim Shaar Daled and the like.

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Re: Seeking Help-A Crisis of Meaning
Posted by time2win - 20 Feb 2025 19:49

Potential Solution 4: Stop being so ungrateful! You are healthy, have a happy marriage, kids, a roof over your head, the car you drive is not a yeshivische clunker. You have plenty of food in the cupboards. You grew up in a two parent household. You have a job. You have so much blessing in your life!

Think about all the people who come from broken homes. Drug addicted, abusive parents. All the people who are childless. All the handicapped people or those struggling with chronic illness. Those who live in apartments their whole life because they can never afford a home. People who are unemployed. You have it so good. You should be happy

Response: I acknowledge all the blessings in my life. It certainly could have been much worse. However, I don't find deep happiness in focusing on what I have. I only find real happiness in what I have given to others. And right now, that is not much, because I don't have much to give.

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Re: Seeking Help-A Crisis of Meaning
Posted by yitzchokm - 20 Feb 2025 20:07

It looks like meaning for you is defined as making an impact on other people's lives. How meaningful would you find it to be free from P&M and to be able to help others who are struggling with holiness and suffering? Would that fill your hole of feeling empty? I haven't read most of your posts so perhaps you are helping others already but how would it feel to do so after you are already clean? Also, what does it feel like when you help others now? I don't know your story but do you think there are other ways in which your mind would be free to make an impact on others once you are clean?

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Re: Seeking Help-A Crisis of Meaning
Posted by simchastorah - 20 Feb 2025 20:11

First off I really enjoyed your thought provoking posts. I relate to the experience you're describing. I'm sorry for your pain. May Hashem put an end to it soon.

In your response to Potential Solution 1 you wrote that what matters to you is that you matter to other people. And in your original post you wrote that although you do matter to some people, like your family and coworkers, still you feel small.

So it sounds like you're saying that you suffer from feeling small and insignificant, and you believe that the way to stop feeling that way would be to have a larger circle of influence. And you're calling this meaning. But the real pain is a pain of feeling like you're small.

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Re: Seeking Help-A Crisis of Meaning
Posted by BenHashemBH - 20 Feb 2025 20:12

My Brother, you've clearly thought about this **a lot**.

If I may ask, how much giving would make you satisfied, and how have you come to the conclusion that X is the magic amount?

I hear all your questions and responses. This is deep stuff. Hope you find a good mentor that can help you sort and understand it.

(I'm not really qualified to talk about Oilam Haba, so I'm not going to try and say what it is, but I don't think anyone says the main goal is pleasure as you described it.)

Hatzlacha Rabba

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Re: Seeking Help-A Crisis of Meaning

Posted by eerie - 20 Feb 2025 20:17

My dear friend, I'm sorry for your ache and pain. you seem like a well thought out friend. There are points to argue and work through in the things you've written, but that would be meaningless for me to do. It won't change your mind. My suggestion to you is for you to sit down with a wise rebbe that knows you well, or a therapist that is very good, and work this through. You have to work through what are the goals you should be focusing on in life.

I would argue that you don't need to have all the answers in order to break free of p and m. If you want to hear more, feel free to reach out to my email, in my signature

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Re: Seeking Help-A Crisis of Meaning

Posted by chaimoigen - 20 Feb 2025 23:53

Welcome, friend!

Here's a warm hand.

I don't suffer from the specific feelings that you are describing, but I, too, have experienced a lot of pain. I think you will find that the overwhelming majority of the special people on this site are the same way, too. Most guys here have a living problem, of one sort or the other. And that pain is often the source, or very connected to, much of their active struggling with the challenges discussed in this special place.

I think that joining the community and conversations here can be extremely valuable, even if it doesn't immediately provide satisfactory answers to the existential questions you're grappling with. As Eerie wrote, you may not need to know the answers (now) to start on a pathway that can change your life, here in this place that's full of hope....

You are thoughtful, well spoken, and don't hesitate to be provocative. You raise valuable and deeply considered points.

I'm wishing you much Hazlacha and I look forward to getting to know you better !

Chaim Oigen

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Re: Seeking Help-A Crisis of Meaning
Posted by chaimoigen - 20 Feb 2025 23:55

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This golden insight is worth unpacking further, methinks....

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Re: Seeking Help-A Crisis of Meaning

Posted by neshomo kedosha - 21 Feb 2025 00:37

[time2win wrote on 20 Feb 2025 19:40:](#)

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With thanks from the bottom of my heart,

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All the big people making big impacts are esteemed because they help the small people who live their lives.

The Askan is a top jew because he is helping that quiet guy over there who is going through a divorce, the big Maggid Shiur is mamash something special, he's helping regular guys learn Torah. The world famous-singer is world famous because he is working so you should feel more joy.

The poshute guys give the meaning to the influencers actions. The big guys have nothing of their own to give unless they are serving lots of regular people. It's the regular Yid who is living his life, fighting his battles and raising his family who is the center-point that this whole big world is focused on

So who's the tachlis?

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Re: Seeking Help-A Crisis of Meaning
Posted by vehkam - 21 Feb 2025 02:20

[time2win wrote on 20 Feb 2025 19:44:](#)

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Posted by toughwarrior - 21 Feb 2025 02:46

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So who's the tachlis? I Don't usually write in but i couldn't help but make a comment here.

Whether this guy is right or not he is in pain and most definitely gave this matter some thought, so i think if anyone is going to try making him feel better or combat his thoughts, the minimum he deserves is a well thought out response.

I actually laughed out loud when i read this suggestion that the way he should look at it is that while he is unfortunately insignificant and there are people making a much bigger impact on others than he is, he should hold his head up high because without lowly people like him there wouldn't be anyone for the big askanim and gvirim to help.

This is ridiculous, no one in the right mind has or will ever have this mindset that the poor guy has more dignity because without him there wouldnt be a place to give handouts to.

When responding to a well thought comment, try at least responding with a fraction of the amount of thought.

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Re: Seeking Help-A Crisis of Meaning
Posted by toughwarrior - 21 Feb 2025 03:04

I don't usually write in but while reading this thread i felt compelled to put in my two cents here.

Whether this guy is right or not he is clearly in pain and has definitely put quite a bit of thought into this question so while it may not be smart to try combatting his thoughts, if you're going to do it the minimum he deserves is a thoughtful comment.

I literally laughed out loud when i read the suggestion that this guy has it all wrong, he thinks the askanim and the big influencers are the important ones, however without the simple people there would be no-one for them to help and give to, therefore the simpletons are the ones who

should walk around with a gaava d'kedusha.

This is so ridiculous I'm not even sure it deserves a response, no person has had or will ever have this mindset because its just not the straight way of thinking. In no world should a poor guy hold his head up high **because** he is poor and is the vehicle for which the rich guy can have influence. There are 2 types of ppl in the world there are givers and there are takers, and in no universe will the world ever look up to the takers because they are giving the opportunity for the givers to shine. While its unfortunate to be simple versus influential, and obviously its not up to anyone other than Hashem to decide who is going to make it or not, nonetheless you are most certainly not doing people a favor by being needy, that's just a warped way of thinking.

If you're going to respond to someone in pain who has thought over his question for as long as our ??? has, have the decency to at least make a comment that has a fraction of the same amount of thought put into it.

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