

Struggling with Torah

Posted by aaron - 23 Mar 2010 04:21

shalom chevra,

i've come to understand that much of my RID is caused by my frustration with learning. It has been engraved in my mind that the purpose of life is learning torah, but I can't help but feel a tremendous disconnect.

I'm really ashamed to be writing this now, to be quite honest. I don't know what to say. every time i open a gm' all I hear in my mind is

"you an idiot....you can't read.... you'll never know anything.... everyone is smarter than you"

now I know myself to be a pretty bright guy, but when it comes to gm' my mind just hits depression and even what I am capable of accomplishing I don't. My yetzer is so in control of this issue, and I know it.

its really hard to combat him. its also really hard becuse I have not foudn myself enjoying learning lately.

the reasons I think i'm not enjoying learning lately are:

1) i'm constantly struggling with my y'h to make myself believe that i'm not a complete idiot(which i logically know i'm not)

2) i feel like a bum because:

a. I feel like i'm being judged by others (including my rebbe) for:

i. being dumb

ii. not being serious about my learning and being a fake jew because i'm serious in all other things but my learning shadows in comparison with my tephilla and feeling of closeness to H'

iii. missing seder (because i don't enjoy it, because i'm being judged and getting attacked by my y'h)

iv. being a crazy "chasid"(not to imply anything about real chasidim) who doesn't know anything about being a real jew but just makes up his own mehalech stressing what is less important in yahadus and abiding by his own priorities rather than the Torah's

3)I haven't been having any serious chevrusa's because I'm:

- a. dumb
- b. perceived to be not serious about learning
- c. missing seders

and more.....

all this is really holding me back, making me feel like a horrible jew and person. I'm basically scared to sit and learn when others are in the beis. when shabbas roles around and it empties out, i feel much better and i love learning. i think i'm really paralyzed by what others think and jealousy. Even when I read another person's torah, i get jealous so quickly, and depressed thinking "i'll never be able to say over torah like he does" "how does he remeber things so well" "why can't I remember all the key lumdish phrases everyone else does that makes them sound smart and frum and only be able to speak in the language I know - english - which makes me sometimes even need a translator to convey my ideas and makes me sound stupid and secular!

i know these are very improper thoughts, but what can i do..... i'm only human.

Any mussar I get on the subject from others just further makes me feel like garbage because thats reallly the last thing I need and it further proves my theory that I am being judged by others.

i feel like i know what I would respond to myself logically, but the emotional hurdles behind this pain seem almost insurmountable. Because I have made learning the most basic goal and purpose of my life and I know I am not fulfilling it, I am going to automatically end up feeling like garbage. I think that it is this RID that is causing me to act out and be depressed. I feel very alone about the subject because all I seem to be getting from most people (who cannot empathize, only sympathize) is pity - no encouragement.

I'm embarrassed to tell my real friends about this because I don't need any more pity and I am worried about being judged by them as well.

In yeshiva in E"Y i was in a tremendous environment where I was zoche to be the tail of the lion if you will. but in the process, my self confidence was completely destroyed, leaving me feeling like garbage. when i came back to the USA, these feelings in combination with not learning (becasue it made me feel like garbage) caused me to start acting out more in hopes of numbing the pain (which it did).

I even feel like I am not worth anything as a person or to anyone in my world as long as I don't know more torah. becasue i don't know the sugya we are in, i feel like my opinion is worthless on any matter in life or torah living. even what i do know I am questioned about to be made felt like an idiot.

now I feel farther away from H' than ever and I want to get back into the learning and be metaken my self-perception and shine the real me.

I know all this sounds silly, and I probably should just try and stiff it out, but I was hoping that I'm completely wrong and that trying to stiff it out is exactly what i am not supposed to do.

really really really really really looking forward to advice on this one!!!

Hopefully i'll be able to really take it all in and live with the real, supportive answers this incredible forum is known to provide.

bout ready to cry myself to sleep

much love,

Aaron

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Re: Struggling with Torah

Posted by bardichev - 23 Mar 2010 04:29

bout ready to cry myself to sleep

dont cry

bards was also a late starter

im no reb akiva eiggger

but i am not the tam from the haggadah

there is something for everyone in torah!!!\

b

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Re: Struggling with Torah

Posted by Ineedhelp!! - 23 Mar 2010 04:35

Lehavdil Wayne Gretzky once said: "Its not the talent god gave me, maybe it was the passion."

The love is there, just gotta get this self conscious thing out.

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Re: Struggling with Torah

Posted by undertheNet - 23 Mar 2010 09:09

A question: are you currently enrolled in a Yeshiva, or learning on your own?

If you're in a Yeshiva, the problem is a bit more complex, because you have to conform (more or less) to what the Yeshiva is learning.

However, if you are learning on your own, maybe you should spend some time learning something else? I would recommend considering have your main learning be mishnayos - you might find it more in tune with your strengths. I know of someone, a poshute working man, who has a serious seder in mishnayos every day, and he knows them backwards and forwards. After all, the mishna is the basis of the gemara, so a solid grounding in mishna (something which very few people, even serious talmidei chachamim, have nowadays) is certainly a worthwhile endeavor. You should also know that the Tosafos Yom Tov, in his introduction, says that learning mishnayos with commentaries has the same status a learning gemara, because the commentaries **are** really the gemara, just phrased differently.

Hope this helps!

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Re: Struggling with Torah

Posted by DovInIsrael - 23 Mar 2010 15:30

i nikow how you feel - i felt the same way ..

until I realized and internalized that I am a right brain thinker in a left brain world.

gemora for me was too much detail - sensory overload !!!

untill....

one day...

I was in between jobs - and took a job in an orange juice factory.. the monotony was killing me... I decided that since the sorting machine stops every couple of seconds I could at least learn one maybe two words of a mishnah in this time.

it became fun...

one day I forgot my notes - and tried to rebuild where I was...

I was recalling things I had not looked at in a few months!

very cool!

I started to teach others my "method" while at work - before long we had the whole floor discussing mishnayot ba?I peh.

I realized I had to see the big picture before I could appreciate the finer details.

Right brain people are not dumb - we are just able to see the bigger picture .. and do it faster

than the rest.

(BTW - Thomas Edison was kicked out of school in 4th grade fro his inabilityuy to focus in class.
THEY also though he was DUMB!!!

same story for Branson - the foundre of virgin irlines...

PM me - if this strike a chord with you I'll teach you my system...

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Re: Struggling with Torah

Posted by silentbattle - 23 Mar 2010 17:08

First of all, I'd be interested in knowing what you mean when you say:

iv. being a crazy "chasid"(not to imply anything about real chasidim) who doesn't know anything about being a real jew but just makes up his own mehalech stressing what is less important in yahadus and abiding by his own priorities rather than the Torah's

Hope you're feeling a bit better today!

Remember - no matter what, you are an incredible person. Deep down, you know it, I know it, and most importantly, hashem knows it!

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Re: Struggling with Torah

Posted by the.guard - 23 Mar 2010 23:48

Please see [this page](#) for some ideas.

There is something in Torah for everyone.

Tip: Take an English Artscroll Gemara and focus only on understanding the Gemara (not Tosfos). I'm sure you can understand most of it. That's fantastic!

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Re: Struggling with Torah

Posted by aaron - 24 Mar 2010 02:15

I'm really appreciating everyone's words of wisdom here. they are helping. more than anything i have self-confidence issues.

the truth is, right after I wrote this, i saw JIP's post and decided to write him the pshat i heard on acher. that made me feel alot better.

the issue is still here, but its still amazing how well we listen to our own logic when we are giving it over to others

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