

Murder or pork?

Posted by londonbocher - 07 Apr 2010 21:06

There seems to be a lot of confusion over something that I think in my opinion is extremely important to clear up.

I am writing from the perspective of someone not yet in a committed relationship. My reasoning would not apply in the same way for someone in a relationship.

My question is that it seems that in the frum world the only acceptable approach to overcoming sexual addiction is to stop "cold turkey". In other words if some one is addicted to immorality with other people, and is addicted to porn, and masturbation he should at least attempt to stop everything, not only his addiction with other people, his porn and addictive masturbation, but even his natural desire to masturbate.

This approach seems to be based on the gemorah ""There is a small limb in a man... " as can be seen over here <http://rehab-my-site.com/guardureyes/forum/index.php?topic=915.0>

The other approach of giving oneself time to grow at one's individual pace is from my experience seen by the frum world as completely contrary to modern psychology and borderline apikorsus.

This approach takes into account human limitation and what one can realistically expect from oneself. In other words if some one is addicted to immorality with other people, and is addicted to porn, and masturbation instead of attempting to stop everything all at once one should take things in stages, fighting slowly but very steadily up and up.

Until one has built himself. Once this has occurred he will have the emotional and spiritual strength to rise above the natural sexual drive and strive to masturbate less and less and express his sexuality only with his wife with a purity and kedusha that would make hashem cry with joy.

This approach does not seem like an accepted approach in the Torah world and my question is why?

Reb Ya'ir Shochet seems to follow this "unorthodox" approach as can be seen in his book

"The First Day of the Rest of My Life" in day nine.

I have tried both paths, I tried the "cold turkey" way and reached the 90 day mark, a few times. But eventually down I would go. When I read "the first day of the rest of my life" and took slow

steady steps ONLY fighting and feeling guilty for my next point in the battle I finally began to rebuild my G-dly soul, and when I REALLY saw my self as Hashem's child I would slowly begin to rise.

Now I am ready to rise above my natural drive.

My question is not a Psychological one. Maybe for a lot of people the "cold turkey" approach works. But if someone knows that he needs time, is this going against Hashems will?

I think the issue may in essence be clarified with the following question; what is the real root of the avaira of spilling seed?

Is it an avera like shabbat, kashrut or shutnez? If this is the case then there is absolutely no reason why one can't take things slowly see the shuir that "happygrowth" posted <http://rehab-my-site.com/guardureyes/forum/index.php?topic=402.15> . where Rav Gotleib says that when some one who is striving to keep shaboss it is often the yetzer hara that tells him he MUST stop "cold turkey"

But if spilling seed is an avera that REALLY effects others terribly, in other words if it is LITERALLY like murder or child molestation, G-d forbid, then one would have a lot more to worry about than the individuals psychological and spiritual well being. Just like a child molester needs to be locked up even if this will destroy him because children's lives are at stake. (someone who REALLY thinks that masturbation is like killing children and can carry on normal daily live when he wakes up either is either insane or does not appreciate the infinite value of a child or any human for that matter.)

I would love to know what all you holy yiddin, especially what guardureyes thinks.

Must I feel isolated from the warm Torah world for my different approach?

I often feel guilty and alone for having an alternative path.

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by Dov - 12 Apr 2010 04:40

Dear Commando,

Why stop there, chaver? The very phrases "*Hayom al l'vovecha*" and "*asher Anochi metzaveh es'chem Hayom*" in kriyas sh'ma are both darshened by chazal to mean that His proclamation here is *new* - today is the *first day* we have heard of it! Now, to me, this is precisely living one day at a time. It is an approach to life in kriyas sh'ma itself. It reminds me each time I say it that Hashem is concerned with how I do today. Not yesterday, nor tomorrow. Teshuva is only relevant inasmuch as it affects **today's** avodah. Hashem asks for one day at a time - should we ask for *more*?

Still, there are times that the way we understand teshuva doesn't work. It weighs us down today's avodah. That is when I need to say, "I guess I do not understand teshuvah right now". Instead, I need to do what works right now so that I do Hashem's Will for me *now*. It usually turns out that what I thought was teshuvah, was really tikkun, a later part of the teshuva process that is poorly understood and often jumped into by all us guilty types to relieve the terrible burden of guilt we carry. Quite idiotic in my case. And as Chovos Hal'vavos says (right at the start of sha'ar hateshuvah), the **definition** of Teshuvah is **behaving correctly** right now even though I have screwed up badly in the past. It is not about fixing anything. *Hashem* fixes, or helps me fix.

In the middle-ages, yidden were motivated to behave better by remembering that malochim or worms would bust their eyeballs if they looked at lust objects; that zera l'vatola was murder of doros, etc....I have not met anyone with a long-term lust problem who actually got better by focusing on that alone. But I *have* met many who learned how damaged they were, and accepted that they need to treat themselves differently than they thought, because they have an allergy to lust and are hard-wired to feel that it is truly *in their best interest* to use schmutz or masturbate. After all, that is *exactly* what it means when we feel inside that we **absolutely need** it, right now...isn't it? And we have *all* felt that way, no? That we needed it.....that's why we "fall", R"l.

Nu, too tired to ramble on....hope it made some sense to somebody and didn't offend c"v.

Love,

Dov

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by trying123 - 12 Apr 2010 04:52

Interpretation of Dov:

To see it as murder/destroying future doros, was used in the past by great people to keep them clean.

We tend not to get helped by this realization alone.

But the way people have gotten helped is by being humble and realizing/admitting that they are damaged and are allergic to lust, and then accepting a new way of dealing with the problem (seemingly not gradual).

Hope I got this one right....

(but based on my track-record with Dov, I probably misinterpreted him)

Oh well....

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by Dov - 12 Apr 2010 05:07

Wow! You got it! I'd give myself up, if I were you....

Caveat: [Tried-123 wrote on 12 Apr 2010 04:52:](#)

accepting a new way of dealing with the problem (seemingly not gradual).

The mindset may not feel gradual, but putting it into action is gradual. And we grow gradually in the attitude, too. It's weird, but it works. Like many people at my job....oops!

Blue!!

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by frumfiend - 12 Apr 2010 16:19

Gradual or long term are just mind tricks. They are not at all intellectual. The whole idea of goals is actually not intellectual, it is just to help a person focus. One has to learn how to juggle both. When the long term becomes depressing focus on the short term when, even that is to hard focus on the past etc. Its just mind juggling. The main idea is don't become hyperfocused on anything. No nervousnes or anxiety.

The chovos halvovos in shaar avodas elokim says explicitly that a person needs both

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by Dov - 12 Apr 2010 16:37

Reminds me of the two papers in the pocket from R' SimchaBunim...bishvili nivra Olam, and anochi ofor vo'efer (or was it afilu yitush kadmecka?...i guess I need more of that paper right now! ;D)

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by trying123 - 12 Apr 2010 17:25

[frumfiend wrote on 12 Apr 2010 16:19:](#)

Gradual or long term are just mind tricks. They are not at all intellectual. The whole idea of goals is actually not intellectual, it is just to help a person focus. One has to learn how to juggle both. When the long term becomes depressing focus on the short term when, even that is too hard focus on the past etc. It's just mind juggling. The main idea is don't become hyperfocused on anything. No nervousness or anxiety.

The chovos halvovos in shaar avodas elokim says explicitly that a person needs both

Gradual vs. Long Term is not merely a matter of mind tricks....

The question is:

Experience has shown me that when I try to quit all at once (cold turkey) it is too difficult, too much, does not last, is not sustainable, and it actually makes me more prone to act out (think of a spring in a box)....

Do I use a cold turkey approach anyway as Guard suggested (Because I only focus on today...), or do I take my long term growth into account and try to do a bit better than yesterday etc. and not over-restrict myself (since it has always backfired)....

This is a somewhat intellectual question...

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by frumfiend - 12 Apr 2010 17:39

A person has to have a long term goal for two reasons.

one without a goal a person loses focus. Two the goal of one day is not sufficient incentive.

On the otherhand the emotional trauma of accepting to change long term is very difficult.

we therefore are shiaaf yearn to reach that long term goal but we trick ourselves that we are not doing anything to actively pursue this goal.

Meanwhile we sneak in the short term objective.

When the short term starts to feel stupid we remind ourselves with obligating ourselves that maybe we will reach the big goal. We then regain our perspective .

Ask any millionaire, his goal was to be a millionaire but he was happy with every penny he made.

In other words we want big but we are not a all or nothing baby that when we don't get there we say, you see we didn't get anywhere.

Remember reb boruch ber said that he tried to be reb akiva eigar. So really he failed at his lifes

goal. hu!

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by Dov - 12 Apr 2010 18:23

No offence to the great Reb Boruch Ber zt"l, but Reb Zushia taught me *not* to try to be Reb Zushia...harbei drochim....

I have always wondered how *different* our drashos about bechirah, sobriety, and working on ourselves would be *after we are actually sober for a year*. It seemed that I knew so much, yet *what I knew didn't actually work!*

After a year of sobriety, I was actually *less* educated: I knew more clearly that I knew so little, was so limited, and so weak....***but sober***.

Nu. Lower but *actually working* has to be worth ***something!***

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by trying123 - 12 Apr 2010 19:14

[dov wrote on 12 Apr 2010 18:23:](#)

I have always wondered how *different* our drashos about bechirah, sobriety, and working on ourselves would be *after we are actually sober for a year*. It seemed that I knew so much, yet *what I knew didn't actually work!*

After a year of sobriety, I was actually *less* educated: I knew more clearly that I knew so little, was so limited, and so weak....

As usual I didn't catch everything you said... but on the above I would have to say that you have a very valid point....

I can not say what does or doesn't work to stay totally abstinent for a year... Because I have not yet been abstinent for a year..... :-[:-[

All I know is that I have never succeeded in anything when I tried taking it on all at once... It has always made things more complicated...

On the other hand I know that I have succeeded in things that I tried to simply do a bit better and a bit better etc. (mainly by working on the underlying causes as apposed to fighting blindly...)

One example would be getting to sleep on time. If I forced myself to get to sleep at the right time... no luck..

If however I worked on getting into the habit of getting ready on time and than allowing myself flexibility... It got me sleeping earlier than before (but still quiet late...)

After that I tried figuring out why I feel a need to stay up... I realized that I didn't want to face my loneliness... Once I knew that, I began trying to find ways to feel less lonely (I call a friend every night after I take care of the things I needed to do before going to sleep... I would then give myself the same flexibility with time...)

I found that I was getting to sleep much earlier (still not the ideal time, but a heck better than before. I saw real tangible long lasting change. Not perfection but improvement...)

This is but one personal example... I have tried this approach in many areas... with success (Not perfection)...

Just sharing what seems to work for me in other areas... I am still working on trying to apply this to Mast*****

Peace and Love to all....

To each his own....

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by silentbattle - 12 Apr 2010 23:24

A few thoughts come to mind. One is that part of this whole trap is that we think that we're totally caught, that we can't *possibly* survive if we stopped masturbating. Like Tried123's example of trying to go without food and water. We've convinced ourselves that we're in the same boat. But the truth is that one day at a time, we can be sober, and find ourselves living a happier life, day by day!

Second, what would we think of an alcoholic who used the same line of reasoning? Involved in behavior that is ruining his life, he nods solemnly and informs us that from now on, he's not going to drink anymore on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. "I'd love to stop cold turkey," he says, "but I don't think I can handle that!"

What would you say to this man? How about if he was addicted to heroine?

Thirdly, as Dov always says, the problem isn't how bad the aveirah is - the question you need to ask is, "is this poison for me?" And for me, the answer is - yes.

So, since I don't like poison, I stay clean. And I remind myself that I'm happier in every way, living life like this! Life doesn't become more difficult, it becomes easier!

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by southafricanJEW - 13 Apr 2010 00:40

Tried-123 I think I am on a very similar path to you, my experience has also taught me that if I take on too much, I fall all the way down, how can we ignore our own experience knowing where it will lead us? I think that is foolish and I don't think that's what Hashem wants. One can argue that our thoughts are just "addictive thinking", which is why I had a long and expensive appointment with a well known frum psychologist. He said that I have chosen a very healthy approach and that it is good that I view my self like a I baalteshuva trying to keep shaboss.

I have never heard of someone becoming frum "cold turkey"

It seems a lot of people find that "cold turkey" works for this addiction, so I daven for their success in the path they choose but for me it is one bad idea, I know this from pure experience.

The hardest thing for me to deal with is not porn or addictive masturbation but natural masturbation, i.e. the masturbation urge that I feel even when I am happy and content, the urge of being a healthy male. I have deep, terrible guilt, associated with this type of masturbation. With porn if I slip I can feel guilty and move on, but not this.

For addictive things I am motivated partly by the damage it causes, like Dov said, but to strive to overcome my natural drive, which is not harmful on a physical and emotional level, sorry if people get offended by me saying that but I'm not saying that there isn't spiritual damage.

Also when I focus on the "spiritual stuff" I freak out big time, that movie "The Seal of Truth" has probably been more harmful to me than any Hollywood movie I have ever seen in my life, any one who has issues with guilt don't watch it! (by the way I don't know what happened to Tinuk Shnitsbar and people's point of bechira in that film, it seems to have been conveniently ignored.) focusing on the "so called" fact that I will be publically humiliated and tortured first thing in shomuyim for masturbation doesn't motivate me it makes me angry, depressed lonely,

scared etc, all the emotions an addiction needs.

MOST IMPORTANTLY I UNDERSTAND THAT HASHEM WAN'T'S ME TO TRY STOP, OR LIMIT AS MUCH AS I CAN. I HAVE NO IDEA WHY, BUT HASHEM LOVES ME AND I LOVE HASHEM AND HE KNOWS WHATS BEST FOR ME.

THEREFORE I WILL TRY MY BEST BUT I NEED TO DO THIS IN STEPS OTHERWISE ALL IS LOST. AS TREID-123 SAID ONE'S EMOTION'S BEHIND THE ACTIONS NEEDS TO BE ADRESSED. MY MOTIVATION IS THERE FOR A LOVING RELATIONTIOP TO THE INFINITLY CARING CREATER OF ALL.

Sorry for all my rantings I just have a lot of emotion regarding this whole thing

I would like to officially thank all participants of this thread, I feel a lot better from it, and I am very grateful.

I better go to sleep it's very late!

N.B silentbattle I read your post as I was typing I have to respectfully disagree, this is from Wikipedia: “

Sudden withdrawal from drugs such as alcohol, benzodiazepines and barbiturates can be extremely dangerous, leading to potentially fatal seizures. In long-term alcoholics, going cold turkey can cause life-threatening delirium tremens and thus is not an appropriate method for breaking an alcohol addiction

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by trying123 - 13 Apr 2010 01:30

SB is black I am blue...

together it's a black and blue...

(But this one really is a black and blue...)

Part of this whole trap is that we think that we're totally caught, that we can't *possibly* survive if we stopped masturbating. Like Tried123's example of trying to go without food and water. We've convinced ourselves that we're in the same boat. But the truth is that one day at a time, we can be sober, and find ourselves living a happier life, day by day!

First my example did not imply not existing. I gave an example of full survival. But on a level that can not be sustained for me...

What you are saying, may not apply to everyone...

I sincerely believe that I am not **convincing** myself...

I am basing what I say on a long track record...

Second, what would we think of an alcoholic who used the same line of reasoning? Involved in behavior that is ruining his life, he nods solemnly and informs us that from now on, he's not going to drink anymore on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. "I'd love to stop cold turkey," he says, "but I don't think I can handle that!"

What would you say to this man? How about if he was addicted to heroine?

If his track record proves that quitting everything at once will have him right back where he started... than by all means he should not embark down that path... It will be counterproductive....

So, since I don't like poison, I stay clean. And I remind myself that I'm happier in every way,

living life like this! Life doesn't become more difficult, it becomes easier!

For me it would become more difficult because I would be left with more frustration, despair, pressure, failure, and I would be right back where I started...

(I was a bit frustrated by your post...)

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by trying123 - 13 Apr 2010 01:33

[southafricanJEW wrote on 13 Apr 2010 00:40:](#)

That movie "the seal of truth" has probably been more harmful to me then any Hollywood movie I have ever seen in my life, any one who has issues with guilt don't watch it! (by the way I don't know what happened to tinuk shnishbar and people's point of bechira in that film, it seems to have been conveniently ignored.) focusing on the "so called" fact that I will be publically humiliated and tortured first thing in shomuyim for masturbation doesn't motivate me it makes me angry, depressed lonely, scared etc, all the emotions an addiction needs.

Same for me....

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by silentbattle - 13 Apr 2010 01:43

I'm not saying we should expect to be perfect, and consider ourselves terrible if we're not.

However, I know that if I decided beforehand that as soon as the urge becomes "overwhelming," it's OK if i give in, well, then I'd have given in many times over the last few months. There were numerous times when I literally felt an overwhelming urge. But I was able to walk away from that urge. And not because i expect myself to be perfect - if I try to think about never giving in, I'd probably fall that day. But for right now, no matter how overwhelming the urge is, I can go do something else. Not fight it, but avoid it.

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