

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 southafricanJEW - 13 Apr 2010 23:02

frumfiend, please don't feel bad, its good to have an honest discussion about these things.

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by silentbattle - 13 Apr 2010 23:08

Yeah, no worries, bro - it's good to hear different viewpoints, and like you said - you can finally discuss these issues, and try to gain clarity on the best way to move forward!

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by Dov - 14 Apr 2010 05:13

[southafricanJEW wrote on 13 Apr 2010 22:38:](#)

Dear dov, I am not at all annoyed with your answer and appreciate your honesty,

Therefore I am going to comment on your answer and I beg you to answer honestly and I need you to tell me if I am misinterpreting you. I also hope you understand that I'm trying to be as objective as I can.

"You are thinking way too much. Stop it, OK" I think this is a very dangerous statement, in and of itself, secondly generally our emotions are controlled by our thinking, if we like it or not, you may as well say you are "feeling way too much stop it", I have a feeling of guilt, I need to find out what thinking is causing this and work through it, otherwise how can I get rid of the feeling?

I will be repressing my thoughts, dangerous.

You may answer "addictive thinking is different" I'll say "the need is stronger"[color]

OK. I'm not one to confidently identify 'addictive' thinking, but though I agree that how we think profoundly affects our emotions, I find it hard to believe that most addicts are really in touch with

the way they are thinking *nearly* as much as they *think* they are! My butt has been (figuratively) kicked for me enough times by unblinded people that I have come to admit my own weakness at seeing what is really motivating me. That was a skill I am learning but took time and the rustic, simple honesty of step-work. The main advantage of my program buddies was not their wisdom, rather it was that they *are just not me*.

I have also met honest, sweet guys who come to their first meeting, (usually give some heartfelt sage counsel to all the regular attendees there!) and finally say, "wow, I have finally found where I belong!" They often come back for one more meeting, maybe, and say they've "got it now"...sometimes coming back in tatters after an arrest or divorce. I am talking about b'nei Torah, here, too. I do not think they are just liars. I believe that like I can be, they are apparently *blind* to whats cooking with them; to their own motivations and true goals. Perhaps they'd rather remain a bit comfortable and keep their drug. Who knows?

Finally, I have seen that it was my own very *best* thinking that got me as screwed up as I became. Not anyone else's. Particularly prior to using the first seven steps, I see my own deep thinking and analysis as having been quite harmful to me. In the program we *do* take a long hard look at what our attitudes are and how misguided our thinking may be. But we generally do it with a sponsor or group. To do this on our own is where the entire problem is in the first place! It's a big pride pill, as far as I am concerned.

So in many many cases, program people I know advocate taking the energy we are expending on trying to pridefully change ourselves by "figuring it all out and then fixing it" (a common lust/preoccupation of most people I know of who are still acting out - especially me, for years) and instead, putting that same energy (and time) into simply taking the actions of love toward our families, communities, and selves. Ultimately, that thinking was yet another self-absorbed and self-centered exercise that only made me more self-absorbed and self-centered. Not a good idea for an addict, who *already* uses sex-with-self and self-pleasuring as his tool to cope with life's pains! Enough is sometimes enough.

For example, a few years ago (after a year or two in recovery), whenever my wife would surprisingly find me mopping or sweeping the entire house floor, she'd say, "so what are you angry about now, dov?", with a funny smile. She had discovered that when I'd get furious (usually at *her*), I had learned to react first by *doing stuff for her* without expectation of any reciprocation from her. Just shut up and give. That would often soften my pride, get a bit healthy, and help me see that our relationship was indeed precious to me. It helped open my heart a bit. I would then be more able to look at what *my* part in the problem was (working my 4th step with Hashem's help), ask Hashem to save me from the problem (my pride, fear, anger, etc.)(6&7), and then make my amends with the wife (9).

Our relationship is far from perfect, but it is very good. And it isn't because I "*worked on myself*". If anything it's because I **stopped** working on myself and started working for (not *on*!) others.

instead. Whew!

You are truly concerned about discouraging thinking. I agree that this may be a dangerous derech if we are in Cuba or a religious cult where someone *else* is vying for our conscience or to control us. Then I'd say "look out!"

But this secular spiritual group, with no leader, and no profit, asks for no commitment from it's members and presses no religious agenda. It's *only* purpose is in helping each other get sober - even without using the steps if some choose! If anyone feels endangered by that, let them joyfully go elsewhere!

Hence the emphasis on the *not thinking so much*. But by all means, if thinking is working for you, go right ahead!

"that should I actually figure-out the answer to this types of question, there is no evidence at all that I'd successfully put the answer into any consistent practice anyway"

Ok here a feel emotional, my question is not some philosophical inquiry, emotions are real. I'm either feeling regret and guilt or I'm not. Must I feel regret after I masturbate or not?, it is not an activity that requires "consistent practice" Some one who is becoming frum is entitled to know if he should feel regret for becoming religious slowly. The same holds true for me.

Frankly, this part really does sound like it'd be a futile thinking exercise for me. Perhaps I am really not getting what you mean. But perhaps my last megillah will deal with what you are touching on here. If I get what you mean. Sorry.

[quote]"3- In general, I need more action, less thinking."

Correct me if I'm wrong but you seem to be answering that I shouldn't think about it, i.e. the question of guilt, in other words, the answer is I DON'T NEED TO FEEL GUILTY WHEN I MASTURBATE, and if this is true obviously Hashem doesn't want me to regret doing it either. (if this is what you mean then you will be taking a great burden off my chest).

Youch! I don't recommend masturbation as a way to fill the big empty hole in ourselves. But I am not one to tell others not to use their drug. That's your business and *i* - not being G-d - can't stop you anyway! Speeches and guilt simply *do not work at all* for me or for anyone I know.

OK, so seriously: What business is it of mine whether you feel guilty about it? If I feel guilty about anything I am doing I have learned that I'd better learn how to stop doing it or soon I'll hurt so much I will have to act out. And to act out is to die. So I learn how to improve every
!)

"The reason every day is a no masturbation day for me is not because I am strong at all. It's a miracle. Hashem helps me not to have the nisayon at all most of the time. It is in the stupid little department of my life, by selfish necessity (and agonizingly slowly :
nisayonos that I need to work to surrender - I give up!....."

This paragraph is all about the 12 steps I don't find this approach speaks to me, I have been using the approach of this site www.sexualcontrol.com. (there is a link to it on gye) I understand that many people have overcome addiction through the 12 steps, but it is not for me. I hope you are open minded enough to understand that there are other successful paths.

So do I. If it is coming across that I am not, please let me know and I'll do my best to think about it.....just kidding. :-*

"do not focus on the issura for me - it is sakanta and therefore way more serious than issura, as the gemara states. This lust garbage ruins my life and will kill me. The main issue is the sakanta, not the issura, for me (b"H)."

Let me ask you something if a doctor (chas veshalom a million times) informed you that in a few years you are going to suffer a long, terrible, painful death with intense misery.

Would you be able to simply focus on something else and be content? Rather hard to do don't you think? Someone who believes in films like "the seal of truth" and can masturbate with out focusing on punishment does not truly believe it.

Secondly I can relate to the harm addictive masturbation causes, but what about natural masturbation? This is a very controversial topic, but sorry it needs to be addressed.

I can tell you that I posted my question over here www.guardureyes.com/GUE/RTwerski/Can'tStop.asp to the very site that guard quoted from and they told me that I was being very rational and that natural masturbation can not be treated like addictive masturbation. Natural

masturbation is a chok from Hashem, Hashem's love motivates me for this.

You are really bringing all my worms out of the can with this one, but here goes: If it were only masturbation (including the issur, spiritual/mental/interpersonal damage that it causes and its onesh as I understand them all in my heart) that I considered my **big problem**, I doubt I'd have ever stopped. I went on with it for years and cried my eyes out, ripped my ego to shreds with guilt and shame, fasted, mikvah'd and tikkun'd my brains out - all the while hiding and carefully guarding my dirty secret. I never actually gave it up and did what I really needed to stay quit until the problem became much more to me than "just" losing my olam haba, "more" than going to gehinnom, and "more" than being tied in a knot with fire burning at both its ends. Apparently, I had to come to see that I couldn't continue one more step in my double life, or I'd lose my G-d, my morality, and my entire world as I knew it. I liken myself in this prat to lyov, who R"l lost all his kids, estate and stuff, but never cracked - that is, until *he* got tzora'as. The meforshim explain that when it finally touched his very *body* - what he identified with at the deepest personal level, he couldn't take it any more.

Am I saying I had no emunah? That I really didn't take the onashim warned of in chazal seriously, etc..? Perhaps yes. I do not really know - nor do I care. Perhaps if I really believed it all b'chush, it'd been po'el more in my heart to stop me. But the pain of the lusting lifestyle is what stopped me - *not* the aveiro.

And I am not alone: When the great Tanna RYB"Z (I think) was dying, he advised his students to learn how to have an awareness of Hashem's presence that is as powerful as the simple presence of a man in the room with them. They said, "That's it?". He answered:, "ummmm. Hellooo! Hal'vai they should be the same for (you) people!" (cynical dramatization added by me!) Now, perhaps I totally misinterpret this story and surely there is some m'forash that takes it out of the apparent p'shat. But it seems valid and plain to me. I actually expected myself to be greater in simple emunah than these great people! What unbridled ga'avah. In fact, it seems that my very pride itself was always my worst enemy: It always told me that I could really stop (a lie), and that I was therefore a loser for ever failing!

Back to my point: In general, in my emotions - my heart - my reality - the *seriousness* of aveiros, per se', simply does not even come *close* to the shame of actually being caught or *paying in an immediate way* for a mistake. And takanos and k'nasos are artificial, BTW. Natural consequences **teach**.

I am not interested in whether this is apikorsus or just a shanda - only in the functional truth. As you put it, "without honesty we are doomed."

I am sober today as a result of this derech, it seems, and my life (and family members' lives) has been improving in ways I'd never have even wished for, in every respect. I have far to go, but every year is definitely far better than one before, which is kind of bizarre given what kind of goofball I am.

I hope that was clear, whether you see it my way or not.

Right backatcha,

Dov

PS. I don't know what 'natural masturbation' is, nor have I ever heard of that guilt-ridding movie you quoted above, sorry. But the entire topic of an acceptable kind of masturbation is too complicated for me. That's the poison, especially in early recovery. Any playing around with this thing (no pun intended) is unsafe for me. I pity the day I start to redefine and complicate my sobriety definition that way. I might as well just flush my head down the toilet right now rather than wait around as my ego and pride re-inflates to insidiously ruin my life and screw up my family. That's just me.

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by southafricanJEW - 14 Apr 2010 07:41

Thanks very much dov, there are just a few things I need cleared up. I'm very sorry for taking up so much of your time.

"Frankly, this part really does sound like it'd be a futile thinking exercise for me. Perhaps I am really not getting what you mean."To put it bluntly, some one who is from a secular background and is now keeping shaboss every other week. (he is striving to keep shaboss completely). He is sitting in shul on yom kipur, does he have to do teshuva even for every other week, or only for the weeks he took upon himself. Surely every one has there level of freewill. He should feel a deep desire to one day keep shaboss fully, obviously he should not regret taking things slowly if it worked for him.

Or should he "stop thinking about it" and sit in shul with a blank expression on his face like a zombie. I think most people will agree with me for shabboss, but by an issue like masturbation, it seems that all logic and rational thinking falls away.

"Youch! I don't recommend masturbation as a way to fill the big empty hole in ourselves."

I agree but I'm saying there is no reason at all to feel guilty for trying to stop slowly. guilt means you could and should have tried harder guilt=choosing with ones free will the wrong thing when you had the ability to choose the write thing otherwise its not your fault

"PS. I don't know what 'natural masturbation' is"

If you want to know simply look on any medical website, or ask any mental health profetional.

For you separating the two dos not work, so obviously you shouldn't do it.

I find that for me separating addictive masturbation from natural masturbation works, I am not sucking these things out my thumb, a lot of experts will agree.

It is a fundamental principle that we are only juggled for things with in our current grasp, that's why I don't have to worry about this burning in hell thing.

I can't just follow conventional method that don't work for me.

If you want I can tell you what my addictive behaviors were compared to what they are now, with my attitude and approach. This is why I may seem stubborn in my belief, because its working.

all i what to do is let go of all this terrible guilt and like you say "get down to actions"

Im not asking you to agree I'm just asking you to see where I'm coming from.

Thanks soooooooooo much!

I respect you.

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by Dov - 14 Apr 2010 13:44

[southafricanJEW wrote on 14 Apr 2010 07:41:](#)

Thanks very much dov, there are just a few things I need cleared up. I'm very sorry for taking up so much of your time.

"Frankly, this part really does sound like it'd be a futile thinking exercise for me. Perhaps I am really not getting what you mean."To put it bluntly, some one who is from a secular background and is now keeping shaboss every other week. (he is striving to keep shaboss completely). He is sitting in shul on yom kipur, does he have to do teshuva even for every other week, or only for the weeks he took upon himself. Surely every one has there level of freewill. He should feel a deep desire to one day keep shaboss fully, obviously he should not regret taking things slowly if it worked for him.

Or should he "stop thinking about it" and sit in shul with a blank expression on his face like a zombie. I think most people will agree with me for shabboss, but by an issue like masturbation, it seems that all logic and rational thinking falls away.Why do you go right to the blank expression thing? And perhaps in thirty years from now you and I will actually look back at our mental state on 14, April, 2010 and perceive it as relative zombyism. But that's not my point, nor concern. I am not afraid of being the idiot that I am, today, yesterday, nor tomorrow. I am interested in doing the best I can right now, moron or not (though when all is said and done, I know I am a moron in the Big Picture of Reality).

So yes, the way I see it, I am progressing as a little child - Hashem's personal protege' (just like everyone else is) - scratching the crust of understanding *even* as a member of the "intelligentsia". When it comes to things that I am repeatedly fail and am struggling with, I need not *concern* myself *today* with whether I'll be judged on it, *how* I will be judged on it, nor whether I need to do teshuva on the past and to what degree. If I get better, I'll look at that then. The guilt and the ga'avah that causes it are both so toxic that letting go of them is often the only way to succeed at actually stopping. And I do believe that Hashem wants me to be better - *not* smarter. I will always be a work in progress.

W/respect to apparently clear-cut things such as aveiros like masturbation, chillul Shabbos, treif, etc...well, all I can say is that we ought to do the best we can and leave the cheshbonos to the Ribono she Olam. Is that considered zombyism? I don't think so. Actually, I think it is genius!

"Youch! I don't recommend masturbation as a way to fill the big empty hole in ourselves."

I agree but I'm saying there is no reason at all to feel guilty for trying to stop slowly. guilt means you could and should have tried harder guilt=choosing with ones free will the wrong thing when you had the ability to choose the write thing otherwise its not your fault

Trying to stop slowly? If you tried to stop cold turkey would that be any more successful? Perhaps yes, perhaps not. Some here seem to say that it backfires, others report that it's hell, and still others have said that Masturbation being totally out of the question for them gives them the only relief they have ever tasted in the past ten years! What works for you is what matters - not *what you want to do*, or the derech that's "mat'im" to you, but *what works*.

"PS. I don't know what 'natural masturbation' is"

If you want to know simply look on any medical website, or ask any mental health professional.

For you separating the two dos not work, so obviously you shouldn't do it.

I find that for me separating addictive masturbation from natural masturbation works, I am not sucking these things out my thumb, a lot of experts will agree.

It is a fundamental principle that we are only juggled for things with in our current grasp, that's why I don't have to worry about this burning in hell thing.

I can't just follow conventional method that don't work for me.

If you want I can tell you what my addictive behaviors were compared to what they are now, with my attitude and approach. This is why I may seem stubborn in my belief, because its working.

all i what to do is let go of all this terrible guilt and like you say "get down to actions"

Im not asking you to agree I'm just asking you to see where I'm coming from.

Being a baylim over when/how I can do it and when/how I can't would make me crazy - I'd never find inner peace - and that is the main reason I wouldn't have done it that way. Nothing to do with aveiros. It's enlightened self-interest. Besides, I have faith that Hashem is correct that masturbation is not good for me, natural or not. Nu, maybe I am wrong somehow. But the power and cheshboning would certainly kill me, in the end - and *that* I do not need Hashem to tell *me*! I discovered it all by myself.

I am glad you found a derech that is working for you, bless you with success, and ask you for your brocha, as well. Shlach *al Hashem* y'Hov'cha - and work your bum off. That's my motto, I guess.

Thanks soooooooooo much!

I respect you.

Ditto.

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by Dov - 14 Apr 2010 14:27

One more thing: What I mean by ga'avah is the feeling that by figuring out how things work I am running the show and managing outcomes for myself. This is a subtle point, and AA literature mentions it in the 4th step in AA, the 12&12, and elsewhere. It was a tremendous relief to me when I saw that I was really holding the weight of the world on my shoulders.

BTW, though I choose the chassidish derech in general, this is precisely how I see the old argument of the Nodah Biyhuda against the *l'shem yichud's* 200 years ago. It was the mentality that he was railing against that, to him, symbolized a basic assumption that we run the show. He saw that as poisonous and saw his derech of deep understanding in Torah and simplicity in doing Hashem's Mitzvos as the way to go.

It's kind of ironic, of course, but that's how i understand the argument, anyhow.

Now, I still say l'shem yichuds, and try to do like the *tzet'l koton* suggests, to say a calm l'shem yichud before doing anything at all that I remember is actually probably Hashem's Will, be it an "official mitzvah", or not. he suggests doing it before everything, as we try to do *everything* for Hashem (as the shulchan aruch paskens). Nu. I'm a work in progress and can't take myself too seriously, b"H. I look at it simply as an opportunity or tool to *remind* me to that I *can* do stuff *with* Hashem, and for good purpose. It helps me live a bit more sensibly, that's all. "Madreigos" are for the really religious. Thinking overly much about madreigos and kedusha is really silly for me - I'm truly just a kid doing my father's Will, and rather poorly at that. But I'm getting by OK so far, Thank-G-d.

Hope that helps.

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by briut - 14 Apr 2010 15:14

I'm honestly happy to see that so many of you are able to spend so much time 'thinking' on this thread. Darn it, I'm far too distracted for that today.

So I'm not going to even try thinking with you. But I will try to DO something. And then DO again. And then probably do-be-do-be-do. [Hmmn, it's Frank Sinatra day here.]

Or as some Indian Guru liked to say in English, it's a fundamental day. Time to put da' FUN befo' da' MENTAL. If the question was murder or pork, my answer is -- no thanks to either, but I'd take an ice cream!

[I'm hoping someone will recognize the content behind this irreverency.]

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by the.guard - 14 Apr 2010 17:09

[Briut wrote on 14 Apr 2010 15:14:](#)

If the question was murder or pork, my answer is -- no thanks to either, but I'd take an ice cream!

Sign me up too! ;D

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 14 Apr 2010 17:18

Bards, Where are you when we need you?

When is truck stopping by our area??????

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by southafricanJEW - 14 Apr 2010 21:24

Wow dov, I must say you are very insightful, thanks, you have helped tremendously.

I have never considered this whole ga'ava thing, but I think I may kind of see your point.

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by Chazak Amenu - 14 Apr 2010 21:44

Ice cream? you scream? no... WE ALL SCREAM FOR ICE CREAM!!! not sure what Briut is hinting to but i sure would love some ice cream right now!

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by Dov - 15 Apr 2010 01:11

Well, it's not *my* fault you live on the wrong side of the planet where it's night *in the morning*, you know....vanilla or chocolate?

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by DovInIsrael - 15 Apr 2010 10:36

re: ice cream

sometimes translation are pretty funny in Israel - I guess nobody takes the time to make sure they got the right translation.

one day we noticed an ice cream store with TONSIL ice cream!

first of all - it sounds GROSS!

secondly - basar v'chalav..problem!

so what are they talking about?

perhaps a hospital was near by - and this was the fav choice of people who had their tonsil out?

nope...

finally found out that SCH'KEDIA (almonds) is the same word as Tonsil - because they look like almond, or something like that.

so what will it be - one scoop or two?

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by Dov - 16 Apr 2010 03:05

aghhhhaaa ghaaa, ngaaaa!!! Wooo-wooo, ngingiiii, wahhh. ohh ghhayy?

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