

SA qns

Posted by Mordy - 23 Jun 2009 01:23

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Hello chaverim,

I have a couple of questions about the 12 step SA programs.

1) Is it a lifelong commitment or after attending x amount of meetings can one then cope on his own?

2) What is the effect of attending these meetings? Does it mean that I will no longer have to "cure" my boredom through impurity?

Respect,

Mordy

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Re: SA qns

Posted by the.guard - 23 Jun 2009 10:25

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Hi Mordy, welcome to our community. Please see [this post](#) and download the handbooks. They are the foundation of our community, and they contain much advice on beating this addiction, as well as advice on the 12-Step groups.

To answer your good questions:

1) Is it a lifelong commitment or after attending x amount of meetings can one then cope on his own?

I do not know your exact situation, but the only lifelong commitment we need to aim for is "**sobriety**". If you join the groups for a few months or a year and feel "recovered" for life, then no need to continue with the groups. If, however, the pattern of falls continues, or if you realize you have an illness that is not going away, you may need to continue in the groups for as long as it takes to keep you "safe". The 12-Steps also teach us, that the best insurance for **long term** sobriety is to continue helping others. So even if you feel strong enough to leave the groups one day, it is advisable to continue helping others for the long-term. But again, it's up to you and your state of recovery.

To find an SA group near you, [see here](#).

May I perhaps suggest though, that for starters you might want to try out one of our new anonymous 12-Step phone groups starting hopefully next week. (See [this page](#)).

2) What is the effect of attending these meetings? Does it mean that I will no longer have to "cure" my boredom through impurity?

By being in "active recovery", joining meetings, getting a sponsor and helping others, and by learning the secrets of the 12-Steps - which teach us how to "think right and live right", you will learn how to feel comfortable enough in your life to not have to reach for your "drug" when feeling bored, stressed, anxious or vulnerable, as you did in the past.

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Re: SA qns  
Posted by boruch - 23 Jun 2009 10:50

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[Mordy wrote on 23 Jun 2009 01:23:](#)

Hello chaverim,

I have a couple of questions about the 12 step SA programs.

1) Is it a lifelong commitment or after attending x amount of meetings can one then cope on his own?

Addiction is like diabetes - it is a chronic condition. There is no cure, only a daily maintenance. So the Steps have to be worked every day for continued sobriety. Step 12 means helping other sex addicts, and there is no better way than doing this through continued attendance of meetings. Roy K, the founder of SA writes, that if he were to forget his own story he would "go back out there and try and lust like a gentleman (lusting in moderation)". If, after the hundreds of thousands of addicts he has helped, he feels that he still needs to remember where he came from, it is certainly true for the rest of us. There is no better way of remembering where one came from, than by attending groups. I personally believe an argument I have heard, that any addict who stops group attendance will sooner or later stop doing the Steps.

As to how many meetings one needs, I believe that in the long term, 1-2 meetings a week should be enough if you work a good program. The key is to **work** the 12 Steps. The 12 Steps are the program, and their implementation is described in the literature, and they should be taken with either a group, sponsor or both.

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Re: SA qns  
Posted by the.guard - 23 Jun 2009 10:54

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Mordy, Boruch is talking about someone who is a real "addict". I do not know if that is your situation.

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Re: SA qns

Posted by boruch - 23 Jun 2009 12:49

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[guardureyes wrote on 23 Jun 2009 10:54:](#)

Mordy, Boruch is talking about someone who is a real "addict". I do not know if that is your situation.

My personal belief is that almost everyone who goes voluntarily to an SA group will be unable to remain sober without continued meetings, addict or not. The addict needs to work the Steps while the non-addict can just use the tools of meetings, fellowship, literature and other tools.

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Re: SA qns

Posted by hoping - 23 Jun 2009 12:55

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Mordy-

I will not really address your questions directly but I would like to add something. I was very concerned (and still am) about taking on a lifelong project. However, I came to the realization that I did want to have a long-lasting way of controlling myself so I would not act out. What I realized is that in order to do that I would never do that by finding tricks and getting Chizuk to fight the YH. I have done that many times over 20 years and I always fell back to my old ways after a while. What I need to do is be very honest and be willing to change. The truth is, being willing to change for the better is really the responsibility of every Yid. In a way, we have been given the benefit of having the need to change presented to us in a more obvious way. Once we started with this realization, there is not necessarily any rush to make a major overhaul the first day. That can be scary and overwhelming. Try posting your story on this forum (with complete anonymity) and see where it leads you. The handbooks are also amazing. We look forward to having you join us. You have nothing to lose.

Your friend,

HOPING

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Re: SA qns  
Posted by Dov - 23 Jun 2009 21:17

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Hi Mordy - It's so nice to read another "hello" from a yid who has actually gotten sick and tired enough of *whatever* to actually post on this site! When I came to the meeting-rooms of SA, I was so desperate to stop and salvage some control over my life, that it didn't *occur* to me how long I'd be attending meetings for. After about three months I decided that SA was working for me. That's when I decided to keep attending and working the steps until I felt I no longer needed to. Now I take it a day at a time and it has been nice discovering my life for the past eleven years. It is shocking how much waste of energy it took just to maintain a double life. The great life I was expecting (really *demanding*) to have before getting sober, was completely out of my reach because of my stupid addiction.

Anyhow, if you want to read my first post on this forum for part of my story you are welcome, of course. Whatever you do, it all depends on what you want: if your problem really began 10 or more years ago (or even just the *roots* of it), why expect it'd take only a few months or a year for you to *really* get better? If what you have now is *not* what you want, how valuable to you is living a really good life?

So, **no** - there is certainly no lifelong commitment, but I bet you have a personal lifelong commitment to living a better life, and that is all that matters.

Finally Mordy, I challenge you to reevaluate whether your problem is "boredom", or not. Some of us engage in our habit because we simply believe it is the only way we can really trust to feel good :o. Maybe you'll discover some stuff you don't expect in the meetings or on this forum. Who knows? Hey, it's not as predictably useless and upsetting as you-know-what.

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Re: SA qns  
Posted by Mordy - 24 Jun 2009 02:22

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Dear All,

Firstly I would like to thank you all for your responses.

As a little background information to know where I am holding, this is basically me;

*The issue* started early in highschool after being exposed to inappropriate material. Currently I am single and am in my young 20s. After highschool I spent a significant amount of time in a reputable Yeshiva and although I took that time very seriously, *the issue* that continued into my yeshiva life (albeit to a lesser extent) surely stunted my spiritual heights, it actually made me very upset at times. On numerous occasions I have tried and failed to stop this, yada yada yada, you've all heard that story at least 100 times before. That's basically me, no massive story.

There is much talk about how an addicts "addiction" controls his life until it is "unmanageable". Would I say that my life is "controlled" by this to the extent that my life has become "unmanageable"? I think not, but then again, it depends on what unmanageable means. If it means that one has desires and temptations when one wishes not to have them, then maybe my life is unmanageable, but, I doubt that's the meaning because then everyone would have unmanageable lives.

I believe that *this issue* really bothers me, mainly if not only because, I am what one would categorise as "frum". If not for my "frumkeit" I don't think I would make an issue out of *the issue*, it wouldn't really bother me. It is because of the grave sin involved that I am mostly concerned, if not for which, I would be living what most people in the 21st century of today would consider to be a normal lifestyle.

I am currently living at home whilst studying in college. I have the internet at home and have in the past asked my father to password protect our computer so as to prevent my use. My father will not do it, it seems as if there is not much I can do about that. If you wish to suggest that I sit down with my parents and explain them my situation, please don't, all families are different and that advice shall not be heeded. I wish not to go into details about my family matsav, (it's nothing crazy, just maybe not the ideal that most would like to imagine).

I have been contemplating attendance at SA meetings. I just don't know that it is for me even though I can not stop (my longest streak that I can remember which was roughly 2 months ago,

was 37 days(with the help of this site)). I would absolutely hate to have to go to one of those meetings, I can't tell you how much I would hate to go, and, the thought of having to go for the rest of my life? OY, R"SO!! Also, if it is not for me, it may create more damage - that worries me. Having said all that, from all which I have read on this forum and elsewhere, the only people that seem to be content and successful are those who have been to SA meetings, that's why it seems to me as if there is really no other option.

So, here I am today, a young bechelor that has tried time and time again, and, quite frankly am sick and tired of being a "loser". Is there a way to win? Please let me know!

Regards,

Mordy

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Re: SA qns  
Posted by hoping - 24 Jun 2009 12:47

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Mordy-

I can relate very well to your position. I am a very similar kind of 'addict'. If not for halacha, i would not consider myself to have a problem at all. I can't give any advice that matches some of the more experienced people on this forum. I would suggest, however, that you don't allow the fear of what will be involved in getting better to stop you from trying. Start by taking the first steps including posting details on this site and possibly talking to Elya K or another sponsor if you have not already done so. Read the hand books. Take it one day at a time. People on this site will continue to give advice as long as you want. They have done so for me.

Wishing you much Hatzlacha.

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Re: SA qns  
Posted by aaron4 - 24 Jun 2009 20:13

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Mordy,

Your predicament is a tough one. I wish I had recognized it in my earlier 20's the way that you do, I would have been saved many years of pain and heartache, so you can feel good about that!

I have an idea in response to one of your points:

I believe that this issue really bothers me, mainly if not only because, I am what one would categorise as "frum". If not for my "frumkeit" I don't think I would make an issue out of the issue, it wouldn't really bother me. It is because of the grave sin involved that I am mostly concerned, if not for which, I would be living what most people in the 21st century of today would consider to be a normal lifestyle.

This is exactly the rut that I was in. I felt bad because it was "wrong" but was convinced that it was "normal" in the context of the rest of the world. If you think about it, this creates tension because you're being influenced by the outside world. You **believe** they're right and it's normal, otherwise you wouldn't point that out. But that's not consistent with *proper* frumkeit. There's a gap between your internal, **real** beliefs and the beliefs that you **would like** to have. That's ok. In fact, that's inevitable, because Hashem created us as imperfect beings and our job is to grow. But the answer is to bridge the gap. It's easy to say but not easy to do. Learn mussar, hashkafa, or anything that helps you internalize the Torah ideals so that they replace those of the outside world. But it takes true introspection and honesty to identify **where I am**, where I **want** to be, and then focus on closing the gap.

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Re: SA qns

Posted by Dov - 24 Jun 2009 21:22

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To me, "unmanageable" means that it messes up my life. One person's tolerance to messing up is obviously different than for other people. One friend just got out of jail and a mental institution afterward. Another admitted himself into a treatment facility and later got a divorce (rather nasty one) all results of lust addiction. In both cases it was just masturbation and por for years and both are frum, really nice guys. It seems to me that they were at that point when it all hit me, as I



have described in other posts - but *they* took the next step into the quicksand pit of lust. Where for me it felt like **the end of the line**, they said "no big deal"...because they could. Go figure. Thank G-d I couldn't. On the other hand I have other program friends who never did anything near where I have been and their bottom was enough to convince them they are hopeless and need help to keep their lives.

When someone refers to it as "a struggle", that does not sound like it's messing up their lives. And it may *not* be. It's hard to judge, even after arrest, divorce, falling asleep at the wheel, and having a gun in the face. Everyone's tolerance is different. Gevalt.

But, the real question is: will this addict have to wait until his life is "almost" **over** until he can finally prove *to his satisfaction* that his habit is messing it up? This is a great thing to daven for: the ability to recognize the truth about where my life is going today, so I can be mekayem: "kir'oo levavchem, v'al bigdeichem - tear your *hearts* so that you won't have to tear your clothes"

Hoping this was helpful,

Hatzlochah and kol tuv! Dov

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Re: SA qns

Posted by MosheF - 25 Jun 2009 00:51

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When I first joined SA, I wanted to come in, recover and get the hell outa there. I hated the reteric "once an addict, always and addict" "lifetime commitment", "disease" etc, it scared me more then anything and it surely stopped me from joining for some time. Now that I've joined the groups I take it one day at a time, I am slowly reocovering and I know that what I messed up in 15 years I can't fix in 2 weeks so I'm willing to continue untl I'm sober for at least another 6 months or year and then reevaluate. At that time I may try therapy, may decide to stay or leave and live happily ever after, or I may leave the program, relapese and come back untill I die. Many old time members of SA know people who have left the program and have maintained sobriety, they usually admit this after giving you the whole diabities drosha.

My point is, Mordy don't worry so much about the future and don't let other people scare you, every addict is different and it may or may not be a lifelong commitment, either way it's not a commitment, you try as long as you want. Good luck.

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Re: SA qns

Posted by Dov - 25 Jun 2009 16:05

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Amen to mosheF's point! The ikkar is to be honest with myself and repeatedly ask Hashem for help to go on the right path. All the best!

-Dov

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