

Reaching Out for Help on Shabbos

Posted by Kedusha - 12 Nov 2010 15:45

Disclaimer: Nothing posted on this thread, or anywhere else on the forum, should be relied upon for Halacha l'Maseh. As to whether a Sheilah should be asked, see replies # 110 & 112.

[Note that the first few pages of this thread relate to an earlier version of this poll. Many of the issues raised have been addressed in the way the question is currently worded].

What do you say, Chevra? This is a question that has been on my mind for quite some time.

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Re: Reaching Out for Help on Shabbos

Posted by Kedusha - 14 Nov 2010 03:39

[kosher wrote on 14 Nov 2010 02:13:](#)

Of course reaching out helps!! But not when the price is the negative feelings he will get from having been mechalel shabbos etc.

If it's mutar, there would be no reason to have any more negative feelings than a Hatzala driver does.

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Re: Reaching Out for Help on Shabbos

Posted by Stuart - 14 Nov 2010 03:43

It's going to seem hard to convince someone that falling is a case of pikuach nefashos. Not to make light of this aveira, but someone addicted to drugs or alcohol can very well be in a sakana, relative to this. Even if someone has a long sobriety streak at risk, this will be a tough sell.

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Re: Reaching Out for Help on Shabbos
Posted by Kedusha - 14 Nov 2010 03:48

It doesn't need to be Pikuach Nefashos. See my next post (give me a little while to write it up).

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Re: Reaching Out for Help on Shabbos
Posted by Kedusha - 14 Nov 2010 04:11

All right, the following summary is from Halachos of Refuah on Shabbos by Rav Yisroel Pinchos Bodner, Shlita (Feldheim 2008). Paragraphs 5 & 6 are my own conclusion, based on the first 4 paragraphs.

1.) Where there is no danger to life, but the person is Nafal l'Mishkav ("incapacitated"), it is permitted for a Jew to perform virtually any Melacha d'Rabbanan with a Shinuy (p. 41 & 49).

2.) In the above case, some Poskim also permit a Melacha d'Oraysah with a Shinuy, or a Melacha d'Rabbanan without a Shinuy. In case of great need, one may rely on either of these lenient views (p. 49 in English footnote).

3.) Using a phone on Shabbos is not d'Oraysah according to most Poskim (p.p. 315-316) Therefore, doing so with a Shinuy would be permitted for the sake of a person who is incapacitated (see #1 above). Even assuming that a Melacha d'Oraysa is involved (which is the opinion of a minority of Poskim – see p.p. 315-316), it would still be permitted in case of great need, if done with a Shinuy (see #2 above).

4.) A person who cannot function normally because of a psychological disorder, such as depression or anxiety, is also considered to be incapacitated (p. 43). It would, thus, be permissible, where needed, to use a phone with a Shinuy for such a person according to most Poskim (see #1 above). Even if using a phone were a Melacha d'Oraysa, one could still be lenient in case of great need, provided that a Shinuy were utilized (see #2 above).

5.) I think it's reasonable to categorize someone in recovery from a sex/lust addiction, which has made his life unmanageable, as a person who cannot function normally because of a psychological disorder, because, were he to relapse (i.e. have a fall and lose his sobriety), his ability to function normally may be seriously compromised (all nighters by the computer, cruising the streets, running up exorbitant bills for phone sex etc.).

6.) In summary, it appears that one who is lenient and uses a telephone with a Shinuy on Shabbos to help prevent losing his sobriety is on solid Halachic ground. As with other Halachic matters, one should consult with his own Posek to get a Psak appropriate for his circumstances.

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Re: Reaching Out for Help on Shabbos
Posted by frumfiend - 14 Nov 2010 04:59

Who is going to pick up the phone for him. Will you?

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Re: Reaching Out for Help on Shabbos
Posted by Dov - 14 Nov 2010 07:02

I hope the poor sex addict walks over to the poor hatzolah-guy's house and tells him that he really needs to look at some dirty pictures or else he will die. That would certainly have a better effect than any phone call he'd make to any sympathetic goyishe addict he would call. I am dead serious.

And besides, how does the frummie get **off** the phone? Just *hang-up* on the poor, unsuspecting goy (because once I have shared the facts I am always saved from the insanity - so certainly no

more chillu shabbos is needed...)? That's not very nice, >
so I didn't ;D) and messed around so much with Kedusha - one of the nicest guys I know:

To me, this entire issue is just too *blois groiseh 'teefeh' cheshboinos*. It is just thinking, theoretical, what-iffy, and still more agonizing cheshboning. *How do you **take** it?* I feel like I need a shower already! (That may be true anyhow, though...)

[illegible]

(sound of cool, relaxing shower - the singing was very quiet)

Not that *anyone* should care what I think, but I must beg to differ with *somebody*, though after all the cheshboinos, I can't tell exactly *who* it is.... ???

My wife and I were sitting and schmoozing last night. It was very nice, and we agreed that we need to do it more often. One of the topics we talked over was why I believe that my addiction is deadly to me. "Like, really...what do you really mean? How can you possibly be *serious*?" she asked.

So I spent about ten minutes telling over how one thing leads to another, and how looking at dirty pictures and reading dirty stories would *have* to graduate to calling women on the phone and that would *have* to graduate to meeting them in 'honorable' establishments, and would *certainly* progress to unsafe...ummmm...'intimacy' in less honorable establishments, and how that would certainly ruin me as a person, introduce both of us to diseases, and ruin the family.

I talked of how, when I coast and am *not* in active persistent recovery, my problem only gets

worse, never better. And of how in active addiction I violated every single 'red line' I was *sure* I'd never cross - it was always just a matter of time for everything to eventually go. I took risks and jeopardized my health, job, standing in the community, my marriage, children, you name it. And most guys looking at porn on the internet and doing the same and many have lost jobs already. The pain and shame of that is rarely enough to stop the habit for very long.

And I talked about how it was so, so very hard for me to accept that it wasn't the ***last***, really bad, 'drink' I took that was the one that got me into so much trouble - but that it was the ***first*** 'drink' that was the destructive one. All I had to learn to do was how to not take the first drink, and I knew I'd be safe...but I could never really accept that the first 'drink' was a real danger. That it was sakonas nefoshos for me. No...I always cheshboned that seriousness away - and got into trouble, over and over.

And I explained why all my hope of recovery and safety is based on my full acceptance of that very nekudah. And how *as long as I didn't accept that and truly see things that way, I was doomed to slip and fall.*

So, I'd rather make a phone call on Shabbos than act out, and I'd rather make a phone call on Shabbos than intentionally fantasize, or touch myself in a sexual way, or look up porn on the internet. No contest. Whether Hashem does or doesn't want me to do those things is completely irrelevant, boruch Hashem.

I say "boruch Hashem", because *that distinction* is the only reason I can come up with that He helps me stay sober, at all. I have admitted that *I cannot afford* to do those things - whether they are assur or not - and ask Him to save me from them. Mixing in whether it is assur or not is the only sure-fire way I have known to cause a 'fall'! Once my little frum brain starts to try to get me to stop specifically because it's assur or because I think it's just plain wrong, I am toast. For I will eventually figure out how it is *somehow* not 'that' wrong! Just ask "chusid", a poster from long ago who asked exactly what is actually ossur about looking at goyishe women in pictures....gevalt. That's what *na'aseh lo k'heter* ***means***.

For me, I need to see the end-game: where following my lust will lead me (based on my track record), and then I need to have faith - true emunah - that my slip has a very good chance of leading me down that very path to the bitter end. Like running down a dark hallway or closing my eyes for ten seconds while driving. It *might* not get me killed, but it *probably* will - so I do not do it, period. Hey, the stakes are quite high.

And anyone who tries to start foolishly nitpicking whether a *deoraisa* is *docheh* an *abizrayhu* *d'arayos* or whether me looking at dirty pictures is a true *abizraya* , and if one *aveira* is 'worth' doing to stop another *aveiro* is not on the same boat I am stuck on.

Until I stopped trying to be sober to be good and to serve Hashem, I kept 'drinking'. That's why I do not accept any credit for being good no matter how many decades of sobriety He gives me - the credit goes to Hashem, not to me, for I am working a program for selfish, self-serving reasons: I simply do not want to destroy my life. Maybe Hashem **gave** me that ratzon and in some way that is 'avodas Hashem"...but that'd be back to the useless cheshboning game again.

Boruch Hashem shelo osani phi/osoph!

One sweet posuk in Mishlei (16:3) "gol el Hashem Ma'asecha - v'yikonu machshevosecha" In other words, even with Hashem's help, we cannot *think* ourselves into 'right-living'. Rather, we can only surrender the fixing of our minds and out our main focus on *living* right - then he will take care of our thinking and make *that* right,too.

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Re: Reaching Out for Help on Shabbos

Posted by kosher - 14 Nov 2010 07:17

R' Dov,

You have a beautiful post, but I am unclear how you are responding to the issue.

ISTM that what you are saying is that the only way to tackle this issue (for people who have a problem with it) is to become convinced that the first start is like suicide, in which case there is no basis to make cheshbonos about chilul shabbos. Either this is something you are deathly scared of and wont touch or this is a lost cause anyways.

Is this what you were saying. I was thinking something like that, but I decided maybe I am too removed from the "break-free" stage and therefore don't know what it takes to "break free". (I was even considering stopping to post on the forum for fear of being too out of touch with the

general oilam here.)

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Re: Reaching Out for Help on Shabbos
Posted by Kedusha - 14 Nov 2010 15:18

[Frumfiend The star wrote on 14 Nov 2010 04:59:](#)

Who is going to pick up the phone for him. Will you?

Let's say he has a non-Jewish sponsor.

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Re: Reaching Out for Help on Shabbos
Posted by Kedusha - 14 Nov 2010 15:27

[dov wrote on 14 Nov 2010 07:02:](#)

So, I'd rather make a phone call on Shabbos than act out, and I'd rather make a phone call on Shabbos than intentionally fantasize, or touch myself in a sexual way, or look up porn on the internet. No contest. Whether Hashem does or doesn't want me too do those things is completely irrelevant, boruch Hashem.

Dov,

It sounds like in your case, a fall, c"v, would literally be Pikuach Nefashos, which I already knew from what you've told me in the past.

So why didn't you vote to that effect?

In any event (for those who look at this from a Halachic perspective), my post above (reply #19) demonstrates that it need not be Pikuach Nefashos to allow making a phone call (with a Shinuy).

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Re: Reaching Out for Help on Shabbos
Posted by frumfiend - 14 Nov 2010 15:29

Halacha Imaase if someone is being taken to shmad you can be mechalel shabbos to save him. mutav sheyichalel shabbos echod val yichalel kol hatorah. A lust addict is in a matzav of chilul kol hatorah. He will be mechalel shabbos steal be mezaneh etc.

My gut reaction is he should make the call. The maaseh of calling will also help him feel how powerless and helpless he is.

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Re: Reaching Out for Help on Shabbos
Posted by Kedusha - 14 Nov 2010 15:37

[dov wrote on 14 Nov 2010 07:02:](#)

And besides, how does the frummie get **off** the phone? Just *hang-up* on the poor, unsuspecting goy (because once I have shared the facts I am always saved from the insanity - so certainly no

more chillul Shabbos is needed....)? That's not very nice. >

Talking on the phone is the least of the Halachic issues. The main problems are taking the phone off the hook (if you dealing with an old fashioned phone), dialing the number, and hanging up, all three of which can be done with a Shinuy (most likely, hanging up should not be done at all in our case).

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Re: Reaching Out for Help on Shabbos
Posted by Kedusha - 14 Nov 2010 15:41

To address Bard's concern, I will reiterate:

Nothing posted on this thread, or anywhere else on the forum, should be relied upon for Halacha l'Maaseh. Everyone should ask their own Posek, who will consider all the factors, both in Metzius and in Halacha.

I also added a similar disclaimer to the first post of this thread.

B'li Neder, I hope to ask this question to a Posek who is willing to be quoted on the record. The To'eles of this thread is that, I believe, it will help a person ask his Posek in an educated manner, which can sometimes make all the difference.

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Re: Reaching Out for Help on Shabbos
Posted by Kedusha - 14 Nov 2010 15:56

I think the main To'eles of this thread is that it can help a thinking person avoid losing his sobriety during the week: "If there's at least a Tzad to allow using the phone on Shabbos to

avoid losing my sobriety, shouldn't I be doing more to avoid temptation on a Sunday afternoon?"

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Re: Reaching Out for Help on Shabbos
Posted by Kedusha - 14 Nov 2010 16:11

FYI, I removed the poll. The other choice was to reset it, but I had already done that a few too many times!

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