

clarity please

Posted by geshertzarmeod - 14 Feb 2011 10:18

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Can someone clarify for me please. How is acceptance of lust addiction as a disease not a "cop out" for a responsible person not to take responsibility for his actions? I read Dr. Twerski's definition of addiction. But cant everything be written off as an addiction? Isnt that what our society has done with psychology? Nothing is our fault anymore. I realize that there is a difference between a one time aveira and a constant behavior pattern. But that still doesnt do it for me. Reb Elazar ben Dordaya succeeded by taking responsibility for himself. Granted he cried

So is that the answer? taking responsibility doesnt work if you want to stay alive? I dont think so.

Can someone help me here, because this a major hashkafic issue preventing me from proceeding.

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Re: clarity please

Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 14 Feb 2011 15:48

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himself to death

a lot of my struggle in the past was trying to push the wrong buttons, buttons that cannot be pushed at all, buttons that were glued shut with a pound of Crazy Glue.

trying to 'be good' by sheer willpower for an addict just doesn't work. once the lust hits and your body is affected by it it is an almost forgone conclusion that there will be trouble. the buttons that needed to be pushed were available before that slide started and the struggle is to gain the awareness and take action before you start sliding.

identifying it as an addiction does not take away your responsibility for any actions. rather it gives you the knowledge of which buttons to push. buttons that work.

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Re: clarity please

Posted by ss7107 - 14 Feb 2011 17:14

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I'm not sure exactly what you are asking because accepting Lust as an addiction was the first time I was ready to take responsibility for my actions. Until that point I always choose to explain why I was acting out. Family, work, yeshiva, parents, friends, the president, etc. At the point that

I came into SA and accepted that I have an addiction and that there are very simple steps to take to stop acting out with Hashems help, I was finally becoming a responsible person.

I too agree with you that people take the word "addiction" and apply it to pattern of behavior. However, if someone is actually getting help for those behaviors (gambling, overeating, watching movies, debting, etc) what do I care what they call it, so long as they have gone for help and can find freedom from the bondage of those behaviors.

I can't speak for SA but for me recovery was taking responsibility for my life. Today I feel so much better because of it. Truth be told, those that profess addiction or compulsive behavior, but do nothing about it because of their perception of what recovery means are actually the ones "copping out".

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Re: clarity please

Posted by geshertzarmeod - 14 Feb 2011 21:10

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First, thanks for responses. It gave me food for thought. Im not sure I have my answer yet. But at least I understand thankd to David that admitting the addiction is the start not the end. Which is probably where others get sidetracked, as Getting well pointed out. Zemiros, i like your button approach. Maybe thats what Pharaoh's problem was. He was addicted to slavery. Really he lost his bechirah cause he had made all the wrong choices before. So this process brings us back to a normal bechirah point. maybe. Im still trying to better express my problem. I guess the yetzer hara has me second guessing this approach because he knows that this is really it. If I can break free of his stranglehold, I can start to have a chance to succeed.

Wait! It just came to me! Rav Dessler talks about the point of bechirah. Wherever you are, you have a choice. What you guys are telling me is that when you are addicted, you dont really have a choice. Like I mentioned b4 with Pharaoh. I think that's where Im stuck

Is this valid hashkafically? as it seems to fly in the face of everything Ive ever learned in mussar or maybe Im just having a hard time realizing that Ive hit rock bottom like Pharaoh. WE may have hit upon something here. Im going to sleep on it Thanks again

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Re: clarity please

Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 14 Feb 2011 22:46

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remember also that understanding and gaining clarity are luxuries. someone drowning does not really care about how the aerodynamics of a helicopter work, he just wants one to get him out of the water.

if a technique works and it can pull you out of the garbage then grab it now. understand it later.

continued hatzlocha

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Re: clarity please

Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 14 Feb 2011 22:47

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Allow me to quote two things I heard from **Harav Matisyahu Salamon Shlita**. (On two separate occasions. It is from memory - not an exact quote)

[The Mashgiach, Harav Matisyahu Salamon Shlita\]](#)

[Most of our life we do not have bechira.](#)

[We wake up in the morning, can we really choose not to put on tefilin today? We cannot get ourselves not to. Oftentimes, we learn because we cannot really choose not to.](#)

[So when do we have our \[i\]nekudas habechira\[/i\]? When we make the decision to go learn mussar! Once we have a daily mussar seder, we might be learning it because it is part of the flow of our daily schedule. It might not be part of our bechira on any given day anymore. The effect that mussar has on us will surely lessen our opportunities the rest of the day!.....](#)

[\[/quote\]](#)

[So we can say that the bechira is not when we are in the throes of an uncontrollable urge. We have a bechira whether we should spend time on \[glow=red,2,300\]GuardYourEyes.org\[/glow\] to wean us off the addictive behavior, we have bechira to reach out to others from our chevra](#)

[when we feel that we are beginning to slip or entering potentially dangerous situations.](#)

[\[quote= wrote:](#)

Ultimately, it is not in our power to do a mitzva. That, like everything else, is entirely up to Hashem!

Lets take the Mitzva of Tefilin as an example. We want to put on tefilin. Can we do it? To put on tefilin we need many things: We need to actually *have* tefilin! We need to have had a Rebbi to teach us how to put on tefilin. We need an arm to put the tefilin onto. There are those who had their arm amputated.

All that we can do is CHOOSE to put on tefilin. We can ask Hashem to grant us the merit of actually putting them on. The rest is up to Hashem.

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Re: clarity please

Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 14 Feb 2011 22:57

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[ZemirosShabbos wrote on 14 Feb 2011 22:46:](#)

remember also that understanding and gaining clarity are luxuries. someone drowning does not really care about how the aerodynamics of a helicopter work, he just wants one to get him out of the water.

if a technique works and it can pull you out of the garbage then grab it now. understand it later.

continued hatzlocha

Reb **Zemiroshabbos**,

With all due respect, ;D

Some people have a greater impediment than others when it comes to doing something which [seems] against Yidishkeit & hashkafa.

We would rather not be cured from cancer via avoda zara...

If we must to believe kefir in order to live in Recovery. Do we want recovery?

*Lo sasuru acharei levavchem* is written BEFORE *acharei eineichem*!

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Re: clarity please

Posted by Zemiroshabbos - 14 Feb 2011 23:06

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Yosef, point well taken.

i need to remember that people coming here are being exposed to new ideas and it often takes the breaking of some barriers to accept those ideas. Especially ideas that run counter to what is accepted and looked upon as holy doctrine.

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Re: clarity please

Posted by geshertzarmeod - 14 Feb 2011 23:18

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Yosef and Zemiros

you guys are great! I really appreciate your input and I think you both have valid points. But Yosef I think you hit the nail on the head! That is what's bothering me. On the other hand, what Zemiros said reminded me of a teshuva from Rav Moshe Feinstein about sending special children to non jewish institutions when there is no other choice. I guess I would feel better knowing which category this fits into. But either way, Im in! Like I said b4 I think the yetzer hara is just using this a way of hindering my progress. Thanks again!

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Re: clarity please

Posted by geshertzarmeod - 15 Feb 2011 01:00

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My apologies to David for not acknowledging his input in the previous post, it was an unintentional oversight.

My mind is racing for a bunch of reasons and I cant sleep.

One thought that came to mind regarding the previous posts. specifically what the practical difference is between the two options.

Here goes... Long ago I was hooked on candy. Notice, I didnt say addicted although I ate it all the time. For various reasons I decided that it needed to stop. It seemed out of control. So I stopped, cold turkey. After 2 years, I felt that it was under control and since then it is. I followed the Ramabm's principal that sometimes we go to an extreme to gain control and then we can go back to normal. Now if we see something as an addiction, there is never going back to it even in moderation and i accept that. But why doesnt addiction fit the Rambam's model? So let's say that candy is different than lust, although I can't see why it should be. But let's say that lust leads to destructive behavior whereas candy doesnt. In my case the lust leads to Hotzaas zera, an aveira. Yes an aveira is destructive, but it isnt effecting others. I'm Baruch Hashem not into porn. Nonetheless All aveiros are destructive. So why is the the Rambam's principle applicable to other aveiros or bad habits and not to lust?

Because lust is an addiction? So why isn't one's desire for tarfus also an addiction?Did I clarify my problem or have I made it foggier? Maybe writing at 3 in the am isnt a good idea.

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Re: clarity please

Posted by bardichev - 15 Feb 2011 01:07

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Ok I will stikk my big romanian nose in this gulash

Who cares what its called?

Masskim sykologedee is a cop-out

Masskim sykologedee was invented and misused by liberals with hedonistic agendas

Having said that

I will frum up here

Why oh why do we get so "dakkisdigg" on what to call this or what not to call it

Or if this is or not kinegged Torah

Where were all these hashkaffidiggeh Toiradigge Halachadigge arguments when we fell into shmuts

As my rebbe reb doiv

The aaddict says

I don't care what LAV suicide is

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Re: clarity please

Posted by chaimhelp - 15 Feb 2011 05:09

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Reb volba quotes rabenu yona that bechira is from the maalos elyanos. Reb volba says this means that bechira isnt our lechem yom yomi. Bechira isnt our daily bread. In otherwords its not such a common occurance that a person is bocher

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Re: clarity please

Posted by geshertzarmeod - 15 Feb 2011 08:14

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chaim, you're talking to me! Thanks

can you give me a source that I can look it up and see what he's talking about for myself?

You are all amazing!

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Re: clarity please

Posted by DovInIsrael - 15 Feb 2011 10:12

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hi Gesh.

def' addiction: Anything which causes a progressive degeneration of the mind by repeated use (or misuse)

in other words - the thrill wears off, and one must seek more intense thrills - to satisfy oneself.

Think about where you are today - and where you were 6 months ago.. at this rate where will you be in 6 months?

our thrills release good feelings chemicals in the brain (endorphins) - they become like a bribe, we want them!

the brain also releases - dorphamines...which create a "craving" for more of the same...

we get hooked.

the dorphamines literally eat away at our brain.

Is this a disease?

a cop-out ?

an illness?

dont know.

in the Tues group I lead - we blame the buzzing in our head, which causes us to act out, on the Invisible Mud Wasps which fly into our head.

Bottom line - who cares what we call it.

but THERE IS A PROBLEM going on.. and if we DONT act on it (rather than just acting out) it WILL destroy us!

dov.ii

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Re: clarity please

Posted by Me3 - 15 Feb 2011 15:45

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I too have had some bad habits and difficult situations in my life that I managed to conquer and get through with sheer will power.

Then I met lust. I tried everything, I challenged myself, I berated myself, I made one ultimatum after another. One resolution after the next. Me, the one with the iron will, steely resolve, but nothing worked.

Now I still have not beaten this (call it what you want) yet. But what have I found to work? Something completely counter intuitive. Rather than will power, it's been just the opposite.

Saying, "Hashem, I can't do this! I'm sorry, but I've messed myself up so badly that I can't get past this by myself. I need You to carry me, to do it for me. I am powerless in the face of this yetzar hara. Please help me."

So call it addiction, call it what you will. All I know is what gives me a fighting chance.

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