

What's special about the Torah approach?

Posted by battleworn - 03 Jan 2010 17:45

I want to try to clarify some of the fundamental differences between the Torah approach and other approaches. I do not want to discuss any particular approach. In-fact I want to ask everyone to please not even mention other approaches on this board. I want to stick to the issue, which is, the Torah approach. I only want to try to add clarity to what the Torah approach is. The things I discuss may or may not be contrary to any particular approach.

We all know that our understanding is limited, and Hashem's is not. There are many things which may seem like contradictions to us but we trust Hashem that they are not. The classic example is *yediah* and *bechira*, or in the physical world: "Is light (energy) made up of particles or is it waves?" Just like in physics, experiments will show that they are both true even though it makes no sense at all to our tiny brains; so to in *Avodas Hashem* "Taamu Ure'u" when you try it it works.

On the other hand, it is of-course simpler to think simple. For example, if you want to strengthen your bitachon, it is simpler if you get the bechira out of the way. But Hashem expects us to strike a balance and have bitachon without getting bechira out of the way.

This type of balance is the key to most of the issues I want to discuss. I will only mention each one briefly and *bli neder* in the future I will try to elaborate be'H.

1) Religious reasons vs. self-interest.

Why do I want to stop? Is it for me or for Hashem?

According to the Torah there is no such question. Hashem commanded us to choose life so that we should live. We do it because He commanded us; He commanded us because it's our life. We are not doing Hashem a favor by doing a *mitzvah*, but we are making a "nachas ruach" - "sheomar v'naaseh retzono". We know that the reason He commanded us to do it is purely for our gain and not His. Every Jew has to know that this is a fact, regardless of how well he can understand it. (And there are many levels of understanding)

We don't need to separate our issue from the Torah in order to realize that our good is at stake,

because *aderaba* that's what the Torah is all about.

2) Will I be a goner if I mess up once?

This is a tough question. On the one hand it's so important to run from falling, like death itself. On the other hand, if one does *chas vesholom* fall, it's so important to be able to get right back up. People may feel that we need to choose one way, but according to Hashem's infinite wisdom you can learn to balance both. When a *nissoyon* comes up we need to look at it as nothing less than suicide. By the same token, we need to avoid *nisyonos* like the plague.

But if c/v we fall, we need to look at the moment after, like a new life - a new mission - a new *shlichus* from Hashem. We need to think "What does Hashem want from me NOW?"

3) Progressive recovery:

The Torah approach is to remove yourself farther and farther away from lust and sin; closer and closer to Hashem. You soon reach a state where "those things" don't talk to you at all. But that does not mean that you can be complacent. Again, balance is the key. Just like in a war, as you conquer ground and move the front lines farther and farther back, you still need to keep your guard up for a surprise attack; so to, as we get farther and farther from the *tumah* that we were previously addicted to, we still need to always be on guard for a sneak attack.

4) Bitachon vs. Histadlus:

Breaking free from the addiction is in many ways *lemaaleh miderech hateva*. We need a miracle and bitachon is the way to merit a miracle. Furthermore, the addiction thrives on anxiety [it thrives especially on the very anxiety that it causes] and bitachon is THE answer to anxiety. But according to the Torah, we can reach real, true bitachon, without lessening our *hishtadlus* at all. (This is a very important discussion; R' Tzadok says that the apparent contradiction is what caused the whole conflict between Yoseph Hatzadik and the Shevatim. I hope to discuss it more very soon)

5) Goals and Expectations:

Here again we need balance. The higher we set our goals, the farther we will get. On the other hand, high expectations are very dangerous. But the Torah way is to have NO expectations at all - ?????? ??? ??? I'm in Hashems arms - I trust Him totally. I don't demand anything from Him. I will except whatever happens - once it has happened. But I have no reason to lower my goals

or to stop davening for them. The higher my goals, the farther I'll get.

6) Ratzon vs. Bitul:

This is a really major one. It's quite obvious that we all have something big cooking inside of us. We can't just float through life; we were born with an extra dose of deep-seated ratzon - desire - quest - passion. It's also quite obvious that this powerful desire can be -and has been- hijacked by lust. Some people may feel that we need to lessen our desire and try to become like a jellyfish floating in the water *botul* to the waves that Hashem sends his way. I even heard someone refer to this desire as an essentially negative thing.

It's my understanding, that according to Hashem's Torah, there could be nothing further from the truth. In-fact it is spiritual suicide to ruin this desire. Hashem gave each of us a Neshomoh with a strong yearning, because that's what life is all about. ????? ?????????? ??? ?? We were put on this world to bring this desire to fruition. In fact this desire is our true essence. It's a great tragedy if one c'v loses it.

The Torah approach is also *bitul*. Bitul to Ratzon Hashem as spelled out in the Torah and bitul to whatever Hashem has sent my way including this HUGE challenge known as lust addiction. It includes accepting that Hashem knows what's best for me and it includes thanking Him for whatever He has given me. But Hashem's Torah says that this is no contradiction at all to a powerful all-encompassing thirst for Hashem - this is what Tehilim is all about.

And of-course it works. Not only do they not diminish each other, but they actually strengthen each other.

7) Realizing how weak you can be and how low you have fallen vs. Recognizing your potential and the power of your Neshomoh:

Balance again. The Torah teaches us that we have a very high *Neshomoh* and tremendous potential. Furthermore, our Neshomoh is our true essence. BUT we also have a *guf* that is very animalistic. And that *guf* can take over. It can become "Baal Habayis". We need to know this, so that with Hashem's help we can set things straight. If you don't know your potential, you can't realize it.

8) Growing from the struggle:

People may feel that thinking about growth is counter-productive. But the Torah view is that the addiction is an indication of what happens when you let the y'h and your *guf* pull you away from Hashem. The solution is of-course to make an about face and work on getting closer to Hashem through His Torah. We must learn the lesson that -as the Torah says, "that" way is the way to death and you desperately want the other way.

9) Torah and Mitzvohs vs: *Emuna, Bitachon, Dveikus* and *Bitul* :

A very large part of the world claims that Mitzvoh's are a distraction from these things. But Hashem says that it's quite the opposite. Of-course we often don't see that the Torah and Mitzvohs are getting us there. When that happens, the Torah way is to find out where we went wrong. This is discussed a bit in the "Torah Tavlin" thread.

10) Improving self-control vs. Leaving it up to Hashem:(Very similar to #4 but here I'm talking more about the general attitude as opposed to dealing with a nissoyon)

Some people may feel that self-control has proven to be ineffective and therefore they must leave it up to Hashem. According to Hashem's infinite wisdom that reasoning is a terrible mistake. If you come to the realization that you have been missing *Siyata DiShmaya*, you would want to do whatever you can to merit *Siyata DiShmaya* and investing maximum effort does exactly that!

The problem is that one may feel that self-control, implies that I don't need Hashem, or at least that I am not completely dependent on Him. This is good reasoning for one who hasn't recieved the Torah on Har Sinai. But we know that it just doesn't work like that. The Gemoroh says that if Hashem wouldn't save us from the y'h we would be gone-finished. In fact all our Tefilos about this imply that it is totally in the Hands of Hashem. We don't say "Help us return" we say "Return us" Everyone is totally dependent on Hashem - addict or not.

But our job is still to try to control ourselves. The work is our job, Hashem gives us success. Like the Gemoroh says about Torah "One without the other is not enough" We need maximum effort with davening to Hashem. The tanya in perek 13 and R' Tzadok in *Machshivos Charutz* explain [It's also clear from the [i]Kedushas Levi [i] in *Vayichi* (thank you bardichev)] that the *Siyata Dishmaya* comes from within - through our *Neshomoh*. Self-control is **always** from Hashem, through the *Neshomoh* and *seichel* that are controlling the *guf*. (Bli neder I will explain it better in the future iy'H)

11) Self expression, self-fulfilment and self-improvement vs. Selflessness and "Lishmah":

Some people may feel that you can keep the whole Torah and be a *Tzadik* by concentrating on self improvement; but if you need a special "super-*siyata DiShmaya*" then Torah is not enough and you need to stop living for yourself.

First let me say that I hope noone around here feels this way, because it is k'fira. We know that Hashem came to us on *Har-Sinai* and gave us The Torah. The Torah is not a collection of *Mitzvohs*, rather it is THE book of Hashem's wisdom - it is the blueprint of the world. There can not possibly be a better way to live than the Torah way.

So what then is the Torah's view on the question of selflessness and self-actualization? The simple answer is -once again- that in The Creator's opinion they are one and the same - whether we understand it or not. Look at any real *Tzadik* and you will see that he excels in both. He is constantly striving to improve himSELF and at the same time he is totally selfless. R' Chaim Volozhiner would constantly remind his children that "???? ?? ?????? ????? ??? ?????? ??????" - while at the same time his life was most definitely dedicated to SELF-improvement through Torah.

But I think it would be helpfull to try to understand how it works. We know that our Neshomoh is a "*Chelek Eloka Mimaal*", Hashem -*kaviyocho*- breathed it in to us.

THE NATURE OF THE NESHOMO IS TO EMULATE HASHEM [AS MUCH AS IT CAN] AND TO GRAVITATE TOWARDS HASHEM. Emulating Hashem includess being selfless. Being selfless is not a trick to get us somewhere rather it's the "Yoshor" way that Hashem created us. Gravitating towards Hashem is not a "Religious issue" but rather it's the "Yoshor" way that Hashem created us. Selfishness and all other bad midos come from the *guf*(=*nefesh hab'hami*). And when the *guf* takes control, all kinds of trouble happen.

Being selfish is -in essence, distorting the way that Hashem made you. The Jew's job is to set things straight. That is Hashem's idea of self-actualization and that is what the Torah is all about. {Once we set things straight we become a "*merkava*" for the *Shechina*, which means that we are the vessel[-the *guf*] for the *Shechina*. See Kedushas Levi Parshas Vayechi on "???? ?????? ??????"}

If you have something to add or a question to ask, please post!

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Re: What's special about the Torah approach?
Posted by bardichev - 03 Jan 2010 18:04

gevaldiggggggggggggggggggggggggggggg

we need this now more than ever

raboisai!!!!!!!

listen

to reb battle he is a gadol!!!!!!!

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Re: What's special about the Torah approach?
Posted by the.guard - 03 Jan 2010 20:41

This is a very deep and beautiful post... I need more time to read it through more carefully, but I

For example, if you want to strengthen your bitachon, it is simpler if you get the bechira out of

the way.

Everyone agrees there's Bechirah, but the question is **where** is the bechira? If a person has diabetes, chas veshalom, is his bechirah whether or not to have diabetes in the first place, or is his bechira whether or not he will take his recovery into his own hands and do whatever he can to stay healthy?

Why do I want to stop? Is it for me or for Hashem?

A vort from the Chidah:

Why does it say in Al Hanissim: "You (Hashem) revenged THEIR revenge"? Shouldn't it say "you revenged YOUR revenge"? After all, they were doing it for Hashem's sake! Answers the Chidah, that the Chashmona'yim felt that a life without Torah and Mitzvos was not worth living at all. It was not just for "Hashem". They felt that their OWN lives were at stake!

And when Hashem sees that it is a matter of life-and-death for **us**, he will step in and give over the POWERFUL into the hands of the WEAK.

We are not doing Hashem a favor by doing a mitzvah, but we are making a "nachas ruach"

See Kaneshner's post that Bardichev LOVED [over here](#).

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Re: What's special about the Torah approach?
Posted by Ykv_schwartz - 03 Jan 2010 22:15

Wow! Battleworn. That is an awesome post. I have lots to add to it. But for now, I want to address a point that Guard made. I hope you do not mind me quoting some secular knowledge on the topic.

If a person has diabetes, chas veshalom, is his bechirah whether or not to have diabetes in the first place, or is his bechira whether or not he will take his recovery into his own hands and do whatever he can to stay healthy?

Guard, I have seen this comparison many times on this site and I have chosen to keep quiet. But now that we have a battleworn's corner, I think it would be appropriate for me to explain that this "disease approach" to addiction is false. It is false both from a Torah perspective and a secular perspective. There is a far cry between diabetes and addiction. And yes, I happen to have lots of knowledge about diabetes AND addictions.

If you want a good Torah Source on this topic, read Michtav M'Eliyahu Page 112, bottom of the page. His whole springboard for his kuntras habechira began with an analysis of the typical addicts decision making process. And he goes on to explain how many people believe that we do not have bechira to make the choices, but that is false. The first steps of Recovery means learning how to use your bechira, learning how to make decisions and choices. Read [This Post](#) for greater understanding about this subject. I was only able to break free when I realized how the matter is in my hands.

Again, this does not take away from the fact that many addicts will need therapy or groups to recover, but they need to know what the goals in recovery are. The goals are learning how to use the bechira facilities not to continue running away from it and falling over and over again. (And yes I have spoken to Addicts on this site who attend our phone sessions who have fallen many times and keep telling me that if only they would invest more in Hashem, they will recover. Huh? We need to know what our role is and what HIS role is. If we mix up the roles, we are leading ourselves into destruction. Please read the above mentioned post for more about this.)

The 12 steps believed and continues to believe that addicts (and ALL addicts) have a disease. This has become known as the disease approach. I alluded on [this post](#) (please read it in depth) the dangers of subscribing to this belief. Modern science and research has already disproved that and most recovery approaches deny that assumption.

Below is a quote from [Recovery Nation](#):

“You've heard the mantra, "Once an addict, always an addict"... Well, while such a statement is not technically a "lie"--as a lie implies deception--such statements are not accurate, either. **Not with what we know today to be true of addiction.** They may be accurate on the surface, offering a sense of temporary stability and identity...but they are offering the WRONG identity for permanent change to occur.

They will die thinking that they were born an addict; they will die thinking that they were somehow defective. **That they had a 'disease' which controlled their life. And such thoughts are all obstacles to making a healthy transition in life.**”

Below is two quotes from [Cameo's FAQ page](#):

” Q: Is pornography addiction “curable?”

A: Yes! We are fond of saying, “The same type of process that got you into your addiction will get you out.” Through the implementation of correct principles and consistent practice, you can break free. It's a simple matter of applying cutting-edge brain science, retraining the neurological pathways and habit patterns in your brain. You cannot recover from your addiction with the brain you have today, you must build new brain circuitry that no longer prefers pornography and other illicit sexual behaviors.

Q: I've heard the statement, “Once an addict, always an addict” is this true?

A: This statement is absolutely false and does not stand up against factual brain science, and the thousands of success stories in our clinics. Through the tested and proven brain-rebuilding process known as the M.A.P. (Motive, Awareness, Practice) coupled with the daily tool “Face-it, Replace-it, Connect” addiction circuitry shrinks, while new healthy brain circuitry expands and becomes dominant. **Complete freedom from addiction is a reality!**

...Addiction is about an individual's choices."

Below is a therapist's frustrated experience with a patient that failed the 12 steps due to brainwashed assumptions injected into him from 12 steps. In the following quote, he explains how the "disease model" totally derailed his recovery. ([click here for the article in full](#). Just beware, I copied the text for this link a while back, when my filter was not as strong. My new filter does not let me access this anymore.)

Treating sex addiction as a disease will not help you. Here's why:

• You won't be able to rely on yourself:

Let's assume you are struck with a curable form of cancer. You would rely on a surgeon or medication to save you.

In the Twelve Step Program and conventional, licensed therapy, sex addiction is considered a disease that just happened to strike you. Supposedly, you must rely on a Higher Power or medication to overcome the disease for you.

Allan truly believed that he could not overcome sex addiction on his own because he was convinced he had a disease.

But, as you've seen, sex addiction is the result of your choices.

Only you can change you.

Allan's addiction did not begin with a disease. A Higher Power or medication did not overcome it. It began with Allan. Allan's own correct choices overcame it.

• You will have an attractive excuse to continue with your sexually addictive behavior:

If you were struck by cancer and your spouse said to you, "If you don't overcome your disease, I'm divorcing you," your spouse would be totally heartless.

Allan expected people to treat him as if he had been struck by cancer - and to accept whatever his "disease" supposedly forced him to do. His favorite line was, "The disease makes us lie."

Allan didn't have a chance of overcoming sex addiction until he admitted that he was fully responsible for his actions - and his lying.

- You will be in conflict with the mind's nature:

The mind is a wonderfully precise and powerfully logical instrument; it also dispenses a justice of its own.

As Allan accepted responsibility for his actions, his mind rewarded him with confidence to face his problems.

He also learned that his mind sent him a pain signal when he attempted to escape the responsibility for his actions.

Test it for yourself. The next time you act sexually addictive, tell yourself, "I'm diseased. There is nothing I can do about my actions. Someone has to come along and cure me."

At best, you might feel a temporary relief of guilt. But your mind will know that you are responsible for what you did. The guilt will return. And it will be more intense because you refused to accept responsibility for your actions.

Now try this: Tell yourself, "I got myself into this mess, and it's up to me to get myself out. I'll observe my actions, my thoughts, my feelings and then I'll look for a solution. I'll seek advice if necessary, but I know it's not up to the advisor to overcome my addiction; it's up to me."

Although that approach alone will not overcome your addiction, you will retain the dignity of being responsible for your actions. Without that dignity, your chances of overcoming sex addiction are just about zero.

- You will become dangerously confused:

You don't choose to get cancer or any other disease.

If you tell your mind, "I have a disease," your mind will not know if it should approach your addictive behavior as something you have a choice about, or something you don't have a choice about.

I helped Allan clear up his confusion by getting him to understand that his addiction was a result of choices that he made - and those choices could be changed only by him.

- The disease approach can be a big financial mistake:

Many medical professionals and conventional, licensed therapists will offer you an expensive hospital program to "cure" your supposed addiction disease.

Allan knew quite a few people who had spent thousands of dollars on hospital programs to overcome sexual addiction. He had never met one who had achieved long-term success.

Your addiction is not a disease because:

- It began with choices you made.
- It continued on because of your choices.
- Only your choices can overcome it.

ENDQUOTE

While I think the above author was a bit extreme in his approach, he raises some very good points. It is important for the recovering addict to know what the facts are. And Battleworn's "Torah Approach" with regard to understanding bechira is a lot closer to moder research.

The one difference is the idea that we, as Jews, believe that we cannot accomplish anything without Hashem. But that does not take away from our bechira. Hashem does not take over for us. He brings the results from our bechira, ratzon, hishtadlus, and general avodah. As stated earlier and mentioned on my reply to the control thread, we need to know what our role is and what HIS role is. Or in the words of Battleworn, we need to learn how to "**strike a balance and have bitachon without getting bechira out of the way**".

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What's special about
Posted by loi-misyaeish - 03 Jan 2010 22:40

WOW,WOW,WOW! My mother who's a well trained psychologist and learnt stuff that was fully censored by the gedolim. During the four and a half hour conversation i had with her last night, she was touching on some of the points mentioned by yaakov shwartz. Truly amazing what's been discussed here!

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Re: What's special about the Torah approach?
Posted by the.guard - 03 Jan 2010 23:05

WOW. I didn't have time to read everything you wrote Yakov and Battleworn, (I'll print it out bl'n), but I am not an expert in these things at all. There are many arguments both ways. I just know that Dov always shares that the moment he starts thinking that he can struggle with lust - or "lust a little" - or that he just has a bad "habit" but he himself is not "ill", then he's dead. I don't have any hidden agenda to spread Dov's shitta - I just trust him as a person who made an amazing turn around and probably has a lot more experience in this area than all of us put together, and **He** claims, that he simply had to face the facts about himself honestly before beginning to heal, otherwise he never could have started healing. Many people are good at bringing complex arguments and quotes to show that their approach is right, but all the *sevaros* and *pilpul* in the world don't match plain and simple **experience** of what **works** for **real** addicts in **real** life. If you can find me a group of succesful x-addicts who broke free of their serious addictions without ever admitting they were "ill", I would be happy to quote them on GYE just as much as I quote Dov. Again, there are no hidden agendas here. Only helping Yidden find what works best for them, and sharing the experience that works with others.

By the way, Battleworn, if I am going off tangent/topic from what you wanted this "corner" to be, I apologize and will try to stay out of this kind of "shakla vetarya" in the future, bl'n.

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Re: What's special about the Torah approach?
Posted by Ykv_schwartz - 04 Jan 2010 06:17

Recovery Nation was written by an x-addict and deals with recovering all the time. He was in fact a 12 step dropout. And yes he was a "real addcict". And yes he learned to heal. His workshops are very comprehensive and very helpful for anyone wanting to to do self help recovery. He explains in very clear terminology why the "disease model" is not healthy for many. The same goes for cameo. The third post I wrote to you was from a therapist who explains the dangers of subscribing to the "disease model". Dov is one person out of many. No one is denying that there are people that were able to learn how to cope by believing that they are "ill". But those who want to know the facts, here they are. These are facts both in terms of understanding what addiction is and the facts about maintaining the proper attitude for recovery.

If it works for some, great. But please do not push this idea on people. For many it makes them depressed. It is a very unhealthy way yto approach recovery and totally unnecessary. And in the long run, many in SA fail. There was a post recently here in GYE about that. [Click](#)

[here](#) for the post.

And remember, I am also another x-addict. I am another example of someone who did not subscribe to this belief and I recovered. I am B"H no longer an addict. Before I started recovery, I took an assessment test to see where my addiction ranked. I was high up on the addiction mark. But internalizing what Battleworn wrote about bechira wa my first necessary step to recovery. Please read [this post](#) for more.

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Re: What's special about the Torah approach?
Posted by the.guard - 04 Jan 2010 13:12

I printed out everything Battleworn and Yakov wrote and read it last night...

Maybe Battleworn, Yakov Shwartz, and Tomim should all join together on the forum here...

You guys seem to all feel the same way, and **I have nothing against that**. You guys can work together on a program that you feel could help Yidden recover based more on a "Jewish Hashkafa"... I am completely open to that. I would just ask that no one put down the 12-Step approach in the process. We **do** have Rabbi Twerski backing the 12-Steps as fully Torah compatible, and it really **does** work for many people, so **on GYE we don't put down anyone else's approach. We only share what we feel would work best for us.**

Dov has been in SA for over 10 years and has seen so many **frum** people come and go, and he can tell you exactly why one person succeeded and the other didn't. He tells over how he watched those who suddenly felt they were "no longer addicts" leave SA and quickly fall back into their old ways...

As far as calling it a disease, I want to clarify something. This is completely **NOT** about absolving ourselves of responsibility, at all. The quotes you brought above are from people who completely misunderstand what the 12-Step philosophy is trying to get at with this model. To prove that it has nothing to do with absolving ourselves of responsibility, let me quote a few quotes from a 12-Step book I have:

- We realized we were acting insane. It's not sane to repeat self-destructive behaviors.
- We recognized how insidious the addiction is, how it continues to tell us lies, getting us to continue to act out again and again
- We recognized that will power alone, is not effective in dealing with the complex problem of sex addiction
- **Powerless does not mean helpless.**
- **Powerless is never an excuse to continue**
- **We are responsible for our recovery**
- **Determination is completely up to us.**
- We cannot think our way out, we need to **act** our way into a new pattern of thinking.

Let me explain how these guys you quoted above misunderstand the concept of "disease" all together... The idea of disease is the same idea of the "pickle" that Duvid Chaim talks about. If a cucumber falls into brine and you take it out right away, you can just wash it off and it will be a cucumber again. But if it sits in the brine for a little too long, it will become a pickle and nothing you can ever do will make it a cucumber again. It's the same with this addiction. Someone who fell once or twice out of curiosity can be washed off and get out of it. But once a person has sunk his mind into this stuff for years, and he has **learned to use lust as an escape** from life whenever feeling discontent, etc.. and he has trained his mind to be triggered by everything he sees, he develops an "allergy" to lust that never really goes away. What that simply means is, that for the rest of his life, he now knows that he can not take even the first sip of lust, because if he does he can easily lose control. His acting out all these years burned neuron pathways into his brain by "conditioning" himself to be aroused by everything. This is a proven condition. A big psychiatrist here in Israel that I once spoke too (who doesn't know much about the 12-Steps) explained to me that after the conditioning of years, an addict develops a medical condition known as "hyper-sexuality". And he explained to me that this can be tested by scientific sensors that show how an addict's dopamine levels spike very high on the chart from the slightest suggestion of triggers. Well this condition that he called "hyper-sexuality" is what the 12-Steppers call "an allergy". And there's nothing unhealthy or dangerous for someone to know that he has this condition. It doesn't absolve him of anything. After all, he is the one who sat in

It's just called "getting honest about the facts about ourselves". And the reason why that is so important for an addict is because once he knows he has this condition, **he stops trying to "test" lust and see if he can maybe lust a little**, like most people can... He knows that he simply needs to stay away from lust completely, not let it in at all - because if he starts to

"struggle" with it, he'll fall. So what's dangerous or unhealthy about that?

Do you see how the guys you quoted above are completely misreading what this "allergy" means? It doesn't take off any responsibility at all. If anything, it makes us have more responsibility. We simply say, "I am a pickle because of all these years that I conditioned myself to use lust, and now that I know exactly what is "wrong" with me (like I am allergic to peanuts), I also know exactly what I have to do to stay sober!" And that's a huge MECHAYEV, not a PETUR at all. (Does it look like Dov uses this to feel "patur" from acting out?)

I don't think we are arguing here at all. I think that those who are against the "disease" model simply misunderstand what it's about.

And even if you think there still is some subtle disagreement here, that's fine with me. Everyone is free to share the way they feel is most conducive to recovery **for them**. In SA they say straight out that they don't have a monopoly on recovery... And you know something? GYE **does** have a monopoly on recovery. You know why? Because we invite and encourage ANY

All we ask is two things:

- (1) that you have some sort of evidence that your way works for some people (which you guys **do** have)
- (2) that you don't put down any other approach that works for some people. And that includes calling it "wrong" or "false".

I just want to end with something. Battleworn asked for a corner where he can discuss the Torah approach. And he is doing a beautiful job at it. After reading what he wrote last night I was very impressed, and I really saw nothing that he wrote that disagrees with any other approach in any significant way. And we really shouldn't have gotten into this discussion here. It's my fault that we did, because I answered Battleworn on the thread above before I had time to really think through what he is saying. Once I read it over last night and thought about it, I couldn't find anything that I disagreed with. But because I was hasty and answered too fast yesterday, it prompted a response from Yakov. And once Yakov responded, I couldn't leave it hanging like that, lest others come and misunderstand completely what the "illness" model means and get discouraged. So I felt I had to clarify.

possible derech of recovery that works for some people

I apologize, and I hope we can leave Battleworn his corner again... If you feel a need to reply to my specific arguments above, I'm sure Battleworn would prefer you send it to my e-mail.

Sorry Battle, just trying to help everyone... it's not easy. *K'sheim she'partufei hem ainum shavos...*

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Re: What's special about the Torah approach?
Posted by the.guard - 04 Jan 2010 14:11

In the long run, many in SA fail. There was a post recently here in GYE about that. [Click here](#) for the post.

I think you misunderstood Yosef's post. He did very well in SA. I even asked him to moderate a phone group here in Israel when he makes an Aliyah. When I asked about his 12-Step experience, here is what he replied:

I did an average of two SA meetings a week for about 5 months before my trip to Israel. (Paltalk online. It is called SA WorldRecovery). I am still an administrator for the group and led lots of meetings. I officially worked the first 10 steps with an SA sponsor. I plan to return to make Aliyah with my family in approximately 6-8 weeks and attend the SA group there. They have some people there with good sobriety so I'll look for a new or additional sponsor there and continue my step-work. I checked the group out when I was doing my pilot trip and I liked it. Its the English group. I think it is fair to say that I have a basic grasp of the program. I am also a psychotherapist.

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Re: What's special about the Torah approach?
Posted by battleworn - 04 Jan 2010 19:04

Ve'hanogei'ah le'inyaneinu: The Torah approach is that you can and must change and become

the opposite of an addict. ???? ????? ?? ?' ???????. I feel that it's a tragedy if one thinks he can't, or if he thinks that it's not his responsibility.

And the Torah approach is to learn from this mess ?? ?? ??? ????? ?? ? and eventually to learn to run from all aveiros ????? ?? ??? . Again, I feel that it's a tragedy if one separates this issue from the rest of the Torah. (You can call it a disease if you call all aveiros a disease like the Rambam does.)

Reb Yaakov, thank you very much for participating. I have no problem at all with quoting secular sources, as long as they fit with the Torah view.

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Re: What's special about the Torah approach?
Posted by bardichev - 04 Jan 2010 20:55

THERE IS ONE MORE NEKKUDDAH I NEED TO ADD

AND THIS IS KEY!!

TORAH "IS" MAGEN UMATZIL BI-IDDAN DI ASSUK BEI

AND BE-IDDAN DLO ASSUK BEI

NOW DO NOT GET ANGRY AT ME HERE

(I WILL SOUND DOVISH BUT READ WITH AN OPEN MIND)

TALKING ABOUT TORAH HELPS NOTHING

QUOTING CHAZALS ALSO HELP VERY LITTLE

LEARNING HURRAVING BREAKING ONES SELF OVER A RASHBA A KETZOIS

OR RAYSSING SHTIKKER FROM ZICH TO LEARN BI-RITZEEFUSS

THAT IS MAIGEN UMATZIL

EVEN WHEN U ARE NOT ASSUK BEI

SO WHEN SOMEONE SAYS CHAZL DOESN'T WORK U NEED TO ASK THEM WHAT DO U MEAN??

YES YOU CANT THROW MAMAREI CHAZAL AT YOU TUBE

BUT ESSEK HATORAH WILL KEEP U FAR AWAY FROM IT

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Re: What's special about the Torah approach?
Posted by battleworn - 05 Jan 2010 12:06

BARDICHEV, YOU ARE THE VERY BEST!!! UN DO ZOGST AZOI GUT!!!

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Re: What's special about the Torah approach?
Posted by battleworn - 05 Jan 2010 17:16

I added more to the original post, please check it out.

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Re: What's special about the Torah approach?
Posted by Ykv_schwartz - 05 Jan 2010 19:18

But our job is still to try to control ourselves. The work is our job, Hashem gives us success.

Rav Noach Weinberg once said:

"Being created in the Image of Hashem is to have Free Will. That is what makes me a human being. Until I figure out how to use that power, I have not unlocked the key to my humanity"

Harav Battleworn spoke about the idea of "Growing from the struggle". I have learned a lot about myself, mankind, and the world around me through my recovery and have grown from it. Amongst the many lessons and "life tools" that recovery gave me is learning how to use bechira. I have turned myself from powerless and helpless to powerful. I am far from perfect. But I feel that by learning how to overcome my struggles and challenges of life, I was able to "unlock the key to my humanity".

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Re: What's special about the Torah approach?
Posted by bardichev - 05 Jan 2010 21:43

hello

you both know me

so bear with me as i attempt to explain something

being powerless doesnot mean helpless

being strong does not make you one bit better

"powerless" is the point what the ballai mussar call destroying the anochi the zich

chassidishe sformim call it being battul umivittil to the ohr ayn sof

what the 12-steps don't realize

and I am sorry to say but what the un-12 fail to recognize

is as follows

being powerless does not make you one iota less responsible for your actions

and yes yaakov if being powerless shoots you down the sewer because the powerless

can fall into what the sformim call fake anivus (which is gaava) then you better become powerful

my zayda says in kedushas levy when we realize that we are efes and battul imivittel to the ohr ayn sof but.. but.. Hakadosh Boruch hu only has nachas ruach from little me and little you

powerless is the hakara that I cant do it alone

as long as a person thinks he can do it alone

and why does he want to do it alone ? cuase of selfish gaava that person is still toast!!

why?

cause today mr anochi wants to be the shayner yeed the shoimer aynayim

tomorrow mr anochi has new needs ,that is the need for shmuts

so all powerlessness is migalleh (only migalleh reb battle not michadesh) is a

paradigm shift in how a person looks at himself

another nekuddah

the 12 steps never ever (and they can't) talk about the hielikite of a yiddishe neshama

(yes i will grant rebberebber=DOV some wiggle room here because he is a heilige yiddishe neshama we all are , and the deepest subconciuous effort to heal or come clean ,

is only the tzaama lecha nafshi kumah licha bisari.. but as they say harbeh derachim lamakom)

a neshama wants only kurvas elokim !! farkert all lust is just kurvas elokim that was naflah laklippah (which does not patter one a single iota even if we define it in yiddishe terms)

but the hayliggeh neshama wants raynkite wants tahara

and only the Aibishter who is "ulifnay me attem mitatahrin" can promise a person

that if he is mikaddesh atzmo me-at mikadshin oso harbeh!!

just keep an open mind to Tayere Heiligeh Yidden like DOV etc.. that want normalicy first

it is their mehalich to the same goal!!

beleive me every word I wrote is said with emes and ahavas yisroel!!

bards

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