

How I used GYE & the Arizal's 4-step program to break a 30-year lust addiction

Posted by alexeliezer - 31 Mar 2011 19:16

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Although this is my first post, I have benefitted from the GYE community for the past 2 years. My purpose in writing is to share with my brothers what worked for me in the hope of helping. I was lost in a very severe lust addiction for 30 years, starting pretty much from puberty. Gazing (live and in pics), fantasy, intrusive thoughts, obsession with various fetishes, self-pleasure. Numerous cycles of teshuva every Elul invariably ended in relapse soon after Succos.

All this while raising a frum family, learning Gemorra daily, listening to hashkafa tapes and attending shiurim.

It was only when I discovered GYE that I learned for the first time that I was an addict. I read voraciously and subscribed to both emails. I gained tremendous chizuk (encouragement) from those who told their stories on this forum. I made a commitment not to look at women (other than my wife) and still believe that this is the most important key to success. This is not easy. I love to look at women, and work with many young women at my job. I pinched my inner thigh if I caught myself looking, and in the beginning my thigh was quite bruised. Eventually, it got easier.

When intrusive thoughts (images, fantasies) entered my mind, I recited the following: "Ribbono Shel Olam I am powerless over lust and my life has become unmanageable. Only you can restore me to sanity. I turn my life and my lust over to your care and ask you to please heal me from this illness of lust. I don't want to lust. I only want you and a relationship with you." In the beginning, I probably said this dozens of times in a day. Now it's maybe once a month.

I worked on not lusting after my wife except when we were in the bedroom. I've gotten much better at this. This too is an important step for married men. The yetzer (evil impulse) tells us this type of lust is ok. [Late edit: since being on this forum, I learned that even lust [i]in the bedroom [i] isn't healthy either. Rather, the goal is healthy sexual attraction and interaction, utilized to bring us closer.]

This was right around Rosh Chodesh Nisan 2 years ago. I was then given a recording of a shiur about the hidden power of the Pesach Seder to overcome any yetzer hora (evil impulse or trait). I recommend downloading it from [www.JerusalemPulseradio.com](http://www.JerusalemPulseradio.com) well before Pesach and listening to it twice so you can prepare properly and get the most out of this incredible power of the first Seder night. The title is "Higher order of the Seder." The speaker is Rabbi Yaakov

Labinsky of Aish Hatorah. He explains how to use the four languages of redemption and the four cups of wine to free yourself from the bondage (avdus) of the yetzer hora to a new level of freedom (cheirus)\*. It worked a miracle for me. I have had NO RELAPSES in the following 2 years. After a couple of months I unsubscribed to the emails and have, for the first time, assumed a normal life. My connection with Hashem continues to grow immensely, my learning is going much better, my home is more peaceful. For the first time since childhood, I am alive and well.

I am now ending the selfishness of not sharing my story and not helping others suffering with this addiction. To be honest, I did not feel qualified to help because I did not follow the whole 12-step program. I also wanted to move on and not get dragged back in. My approach worked for me. No approach works for everyone. If I can help one person, that would be a success. I will monitor this thread, and I can be reached by email if there's anything I can do.

\*I've posted a synopsis of the shiur here:

[www.guardyoureyes.org/forum/index.php?topic=3750.0](http://www.guardyoureyes.org/forum/index.php?topic=3750.0)

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Re: How I used GYE & the Arizal's 4-step program to break a 30-year lust addiction  
Posted by Dov - 11 Apr 2011 03:28

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Dear alexeliezer,

How are you? I am sorry for my part in hijacking your thread with the typical, repetitive discussion about the use of Torah concepts in recovery. Much can and will be said on this, and it will not end. In the meantime, you and I will both be sober, clean, and growing along spiritual lines - both through Torah, because we choose to try to be ehrlicher, true, yidden.

I believe I speak for others, as well, in this.

Please keep posting all of us about your progress in your growth and improved life!

Much love,

Dov (and others)

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Re: How I used GYE & the Arizal's 4-step program to break a 30-year lust addiction  
Posted by TheJester - 11 Apr 2011 11:50

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[laagvokeles wrote on 10 Apr 2011 22:22:](#)

...stuff...

Hello.

From what you've said on this thread, I believe that I can relate to certain aspects of your views. Some things that you said which resonate with me include (I will paraphrase/observe):

- You could control yourself if you want to. What you lack is the desire - **and you know it** (*sound familiar?*)
- You wrap objections based Torah around your behavior, effectively cutting off one obvious path to dealing with that which the Torah prohibits
- You consider your actions wrong on an intellectual level, but not an emotional one. This is linked to the first point.
- You are "removed" from the issue at hand, and the people on this board - you demonstrate this with distancing language, and a "that does/would/should not apply to me" mentality. I would conjecture that you do not have many "close" friends, with whom you share your true emotions, nor do you like the idea too much.
- You are here, on this board.

If I am correct, then I relate those things keenly. If I'm wrong, then I must just be using you as a mirror in which to view myself.

Either way, in my life, things had to come crashing down around me for my behavior to change. And I believe that it's *Hashem's* gift to those of us who cannot make that first step. You know, He has odd ways of working. We think we protect ourselves from danger, but we are deluding ourselves. Have you ever seen a young child believe that he is "getting away with something" while all the adults laugh? He must laugh at us the same way.

I also suspect that if you felt strongly enough that what you are doing is wrong, then you would **initially** have very little need of the 12-steps or even a remedy based upon Torah. You just strike me as that sort of person. I also believe that if you felt that it was sufficiently wrong, you would grab at any method available. I believe that, if your world came crashing down, you would do anything - *anything* - that would set your world right again. From what you've let on, you have very little motivation to take any remedy seriously, since on at least one level, you do not feel that you have a problem (even if you *think* that you do).

And a general note: This coming *seder* night, we will read of the *Makkos* (plagues). We will all ask, "how was *Paroh* so stupid as to not read the danger signs?". We will be answered that "*Hashem* hardened his heart". It took a *mortal danger to Paroh himself* before he ran to the *B'nei Yisroel*, begging them to leave, something he would never have considered doing in the past.

I can attest to this sequence of events, as I imagine many here can do. We might start off with some guilt, but over time, our hearts are hardened (calloused, if you will). We might see some danger signs, but "we can manage them". Finally, we get a good kick up the backside. Many of us will thank *Hashem* for this, some might not. But at that stage, we will do the unspeakable, and ask for help, or have help thrust upon us.

And how many of the *B'nei Yisroel* did not want to leave? And how many only continued because of the support of good leadership and downright peer-pressure? *Chazal* have repeatedly pointed out reference to our own "personal" *Mitzrayim* and slavery to the physical (especially lust) from which we should escape.

When you are all at your *Seder*, reading about the plagues and ultimate mortal peril in which *Paroh* found himself - spare a thought for your fellow *Yidden* who have a hardened heart, and pray that we have the strength to move forward before we are forcibly moved on.

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Re: How I used GYE & the Arizal's 4-step program to break a 30-year lust addiction  
Posted by laagvokeles - 11 Apr 2011 13:10

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the jester? newbie? (what dos jester mean?)

mama mia its the first time in my life i read such a long message!

and with joy! (u go in into my private guiness book)

and shtiklech toiro in this forum? if i wanna learn i wouldnt be here! but still i enjoyed it and read it (i never read toiro here, its for porn only! if i wanna learn ill do it somewhere allse, here it is for to help ppl do tshuva or 12 steps)

but you spoke staraight into my heart!

you know how it hurts me your vivid moshol to paroi? you know how it hurds me to think that im exactly like him? pushing and pushing and pushing and hoping the sky will never fall?

its not that im cured or will do tshuva after reading your post, but i believe in ???? ?????? ????  
?? ???? and then one day BOOOM they went in ???? ????

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just what u wrote :

You wrap objections based Torah around your behavior, effectively cutting off one obvious path to dealing with that which the Torah prohibits

and also what u write:

-You are "removed" from the issue at hand, and the people on this board - you demonstrate this with distancing language, and a "that does/would/should not apply to me" mentality.

those 2 ?????? i didnt understand (cause of my bad english)

by the way may i know how old u are and if married

chasidish litvish

learn, work? ;D thanks ;D

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Re: How I used GYE & the Arizal's 4-step program to break a 30-year lust addiction

Posted by TheJester - 11 Apr 2011 14:01

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[laagvokeles wrote on 11 Apr 2011 13:10:](#)

just what u wrote :

You wrap objections based Torah around your behavior, effectively cutting off one obvious path to dealing with that which the Torah prohibits

You use the Torah as a barrier to one possible solution for your issue, i.e. you give reasons as to why a possible remedy should not be used.

and also what u write:

-You are "removed" from the issue at hand, and the people on this board - you demonstrate this with distancing language, and a "that does/would/should not apply to me" mentality.

You act like an outsider - you show an intellectual interest, but do not feel that the solutions apply to you. Why do I say this? Because you are at pains (you try hard) to voice your opinion on why 12-steps should not come first, and you defend it. But then go on to say (basically) that this is all theoretical, and you are not yet at the stage where even *Torah* can help you. So why do you even comment? We are told that the wicked son (who distances himself from the rest) asks to ask, not to learn. When he argues, it is to argue, not to understand. However, I firmly believe that you actually want to understand, and are not like this - that is why you are here. I believe the same about the wicked son - he is actually at the *seder*... We just have different ways of expressing it.

Of course, perhaps I see too much of myself in this - I tend to distance myself, and approach things on an intellectual level. I find *feeling* difficult in many situations. So if I read things wrongly, I apologize.

by the way may i know how old u are and if married

chasidish litvish

learn, work? ;D thanks ;D

I am old enough to know better, and have reached my full strength by now. B"H I am blessed with a wife. *Chassidish/Litvish* is a distraction from who we really are. I have a job, B"H, and

do not learn as much as I should.

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Re: How I used GYE & the Arizal's 4-step program to break a 30-year lust addiction  
Posted by laagvokeles - 11 Apr 2011 14:23

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[TheJester wrote on 11 Apr 2011 14:01:](#)

You use the Torah as a barrier to one possible solution for your issue, i.e. you give reasons as to why a possible remedy should not be used.

exactly i am a jew and i dont need no favors from no boddy allse we have the bible with all the solutions in it, we dont need ????? ???? ???? (it could even be that the 12 steps have ??????? in the toiro like a few ppl said then it can even be aproached as the 1 option)

unless its not been proved that this specific individual suffers of mental problems called addiction etc, no reason why just not to do tshuva and finish.

its my opinion for my private needs, no intettion of telling someboddy that he is wrong

[TheJester wrote on 11 Apr 2011 14:01:](#)

But then go on to say (basically) that this is all theoretical, and you are not yet at the stage where even *Torah* can help you.



no no no the toiro can help me big time.... if i would only start to take the medicine the toiro offers me.....

so why do i comment? cause of ppl like u who tell me things to the point like that i am ??? ????

believe it or not it helps me, it helps to wake up my apetite to decide for the 10000 time thats it... ill fight it!

thank you for that (you didnt answer me what juster means)

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Re: How I used GYE & the Arizal's 4-step program to break a 30-year lust addiction  
Posted by TheJester - 11 Apr 2011 14:48

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[laagvokeles wrote on 11 Apr 2011 14:23:](#)

so why do i comment? cause of ppl like u who tell me things to the point like that i am ??? ????

believe it or not it helps me, it helps to wake up my apetite to decide for the 10000 time thats it... ill fight it!

thank you for that

I don't believe I have helped you. I believe my words will do one of two things:

(1) Make you depressed C"V.

(2) Give your *Yetzer Hora* something else to learn to overcome - another argument to be intellectually picked apart and deemed irrelevant to you, over time. Perhaps after (1) has

occurred.

Unless you can tell me "I did not do X at a specific time because your words affected me", I will believe this. It's what I would do.

**Edit:**

***Jester***

*—noun*

1. a person who is given to witticisms, jokes, and pranks.
2. a professional fool or clown, especially at a medieval court.

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Re: How I used GYE & the Arizal's 4-step program to break a 30-year lust addiction  
Posted by laagvokeles - 11 Apr 2011 14:55

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no worries.... depressed? hahaha... (what do u think im a woman? or a american polite sensitive guy... no no.... I fress tshulent kigel till i blow up.... im a man who gets depressed only if i have no money or if woman or child get sick c"v thats it...)

please keep it up!

about the other option that u wrote that ill probably overcome it etc, its true till a certain point... cause we get used to evereything...

but still i enjoyed it and it gave me a nice nice tickle

?? ????? ??????

loved it

and dont forget i wanna change! i just am "asleep" so ppl like u help me wake up

and i thank you for that

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Re: How I used GYE & the Arizal's 4-step program to break a 30-year lust addiction  
Posted by TheJester - 11 Apr 2011 15:04

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[laagvokeles wrote on 11 Apr 2011 14:55:](#)

and dont forget i wanna change! i just am "asleep" so ppl like u help me wake up

and i thank you for that

My pleasure.

And you do not want to change - you said as much earlier. In fact, you said that if you wanted to, you could. I think you want to **want** to change.

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Re: How I used GYE & the Arizal's 4-step program to break a 30-year lust addiction  
Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 11 Apr 2011 15:31

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there is a Chasidisher vort, ?? ??? ????? ??, from the lashon of 'ratzon', like ??? ?????? ??  
???? ?? ???????

sometimes we only want to want

even then we can daven that we feel the correct ratzon

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Re: How I used GYE & the Arizal's 4-step program to break a 30-year lust addiction  
Posted by laagvokeles - 11 Apr 2011 15:42

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[TheJester wrote on 11 Apr 2011 15:04:](#)

I think you want to **want** to change.

more acurate impossible

so im here so we manage with the 1 step wich is: want to want, and when ppl tell me ?? ????

????? the way u did (with taam and chein) u help me to want to want

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Re: How I used GYE & the Arizal's 4-step program to break a 30-year lust addiction  
Posted by TheJester - 11 Apr 2011 16:00

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[laagvokeles wrote on 11 Apr 2011 15:42:](#)

[TheJester wrote on 11 Apr 2011 15:04:](#)

I think you want to **want** to change.

more accurate impossible

so im here so we manage with the 1 step wich is: want to want, and when ppl tell me ?? ????  
????? the way u did (with taam and chein) u help me to want to want

Yosef,

So I have succeeded in taking you nowhere you were not already, except to "tickle" you with a mirror of broken promises.

Yehuda.

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Re: How I used GYE & the Arizal's 4-step program to break a 30-year lust addiction  
Posted by laagvokeles - 11 Apr 2011 16:03

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lol

well...maybe next round....

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Re: How I used GYE & the Arizal's 4-step program to break a 30-year lust addiction

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Posted by Dov - 11 Apr 2011 16:12

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Dear Jester/Yehuda,

I am a very big fan of yours already. I just hope we do not see everything the same way. So far, I am quite shocked to meet someone else I can hear so easily.

Thank-you, and may Hashem grant us totally **for free** as he has been so far, the willingness to keep changing and outgrowing our old skins, uncomfortable as the process may prove to be. And we will get more and more of the "Paroh" *out* of us.

Be well, chaveri

Dov

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Re: How I used GYE & the Arizal's 4-step program to break a 30-year lust addiction

Posted by TheJester - 11 Apr 2011 16:26

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[dov wrote on 11 Apr 2011 16:12:](#)

Dear Jester/Yehuda,

Just to be clear, that was a reference to ?? ???? ????? only, and my name is not Yehuda. Nor would I expect our learned friend to be called Yosef.

I am a very big fan of yours already. I just hope we do not see everything the same way. So far, I am quite shocked to meet someone else I can hear so easily.

Thank-you, and may Hashem grant us totally **for free** as he has been so far, the willingness to keep changing and outgrowing our old skins, uncomfortable as the process may prove to be. And we will get more and more of the "Paroh" *out* of us.

Likewise, I am a big fan of yours. And may He indeed remove *Paroh* from us; and remove us from our slavery. And keep us growing so that we never again fit into our old skins, as painful as *that* may be.

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Re: How I used GYE & the Arizal's 4-step program to break a 30-year lust addiction  
Posted by alexeliezer - 11 Apr 2011 19:37

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Dov, I must give you hakoras hatov. It was your posts two years ago that helped me understand what it meant to "turn our will and our lives over...." You helped me implement this by realizing I wasn't fighting any more, I was turning over the battle to Hashem. This took time to internalize and implement, and I incorporated the words into my little tfilla. I would not have succeeded had I not had your insights at that critical juncture. Yakov\_schwartz was also a wonderful influence and gave me much chizuk.

In the final analysis, I used most of the 12 steps in my recovery, but on my own, in my own fashion.

In terms of motivation for giving up lusting, I had several.

I wanted to appreciate the beauty of the world around me, and for an addict, the only beauty I could really appreciate was the prohibited kind.

I had graphic intrusive thoughts that were just obviously sick, and I wanted to be rid of them.

I felt that my habit was a complete lack of hakoras hatov for my healthy body, my wife, children, home, bed, etc.

I felt that looking at forbidden websites was partaking of the seudah of Achashveirosh, and bringing destruction to Klal Yisroel.

I can now appreciate the beauty of the world around me, find joy in so many pleasurable activities, and feel a new connection to the Boreh which continues to grow.

One of my strongest motivators not to relapse is that it was sooooo difficult to overcome this habit, that I simply don't ever want to go through it again -- not the habit and not the painful, energy-robbing fight. So I'm just not going to take that drink.

So, thank you once again to all the GYE's who have helped me in my recovery. May you be blessed with sobriety and more.

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