

New Here, i hope this helps

Posted by tshuvah5771 - 12 Jun 2011 20:13

Hi Everyone

I am in the mid 30's Yingerman with 4 Kids BL"H, beautiful wife, doesn't look the same as she was in her 20's, This is the first time I am trying this, I am so addicted that I can't work, everytime I am alone in the office I go straight to porn, I go to the mikvah the next day and promise myself that this was the last time, 2 days go by and I fall thru again, at night as soon as my wife falls asleep, I start looking at porn till 3-4 in the morning, I have tried different filters it helped for a week, then I reformatted my computer to erase the filters and started again, how can I stop it's ruining my life, every time I have a spare minute I do it again, I try not to mzl but once a week I can't help it anymore and do it again. since I am a bucher I have looked at magazines everytime I had a chance, I really want to stop for good, so I came here. to see if anybody can give me some advise or chizuk, and I hope Hashem is going to be me mochel after mzl so many years.

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Re: New Here, i hope this helps

Posted by mnman415 - 20 Jun 2011 22:35

how are you doing?

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Re: New Here, i hope this helps

Posted by tshuvah5771 - 21 Jun 2011 03:34

Hi

It's very hard I am still clean, I am most of the day on the street and the shmiras einayim is very hard. I fight every minute of the day or night.

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Re: New Here, i hope this helps

Posted by Dov - 21 Jun 2011 04:44

Relax, let go and let Hashem help you - not do it *for* you, but *help* you. We do not typically let Him. Instead, I think that most of the time we daven to Him very hard - but that is still not *letting* Him. We push and beg and fight tooth and nail, holding off another day and let it pile up till the weight of holding off 59 1/2 days is just too much for us....then we flop. And then we ultimately blame Him, ourselves, etc...Oy, how many times did I do this? Many!

Take it easy amigo. Letting Him help you feels more calm than the 'good old fight' did. It brings us closer to people and to living normally and comfortably. The way He wants us to. The fight against lust is meant to be *anything but* our main preoccupation! It's a real rachmonus on us when we see the fight with our lust almost everywhere and are aware of it all the time.

That comes from hiding the details of it from ourselves and from others. Admit the details of your struggle to a trusted and safe friend (or friends) and talk to Hashem with expectancy that He will help you move past the lust without too much pain. He forgives you for the pain and for the feeling of missing it. There is no aveiro in wanting to look at porn, and no shame at all - certainly none before Hashem, who knows and loves you on the inside through and through and always knew you with all the dirt and all your beauty, and is taking care of you and always did.

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Re: New Here, i hope this helps

Posted by helpfyi - 21 Jun 2011 13:03

[dov wrote on 21 Jun 2011 04:44:](#)

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when we see the fight with our lust almost everywhere and are aware of it all the time.

How do you get that to not be on your mind? when ever i walk the street i work on not looking, if i would not think that i would look! how do make it 2nd nature not to fight it but to not be affected by it? also what does it mean give it to hashem? i have seen this many times on this web site and i don't have a full understanding of it.

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Re: New Here, i hope this helps
Posted by TheJester - 21 Jun 2011 14:21

[Helpfyi wrote on 21 Jun 2011 13:03:](#)

How do you get that to not be on your mind? when ever i walk the street i work on not looking, if i would not think that i would look! how do make it 2nd nature not to fight it but to not be affected by it? also what does it mean give it to hashem? i have seen this many times on this web site and i don't have a full understanding of it.

I recall a thread that you started about guarding your eyes on *Shavuot*, and I mentioned that "not looking" is a very, very hard thing to do. It is taxing - emotionally and mentally. Eventually, we just get tired of fighting. We are mortal. As I mentioned in that thread, if you try to not look (which is subtly different to try not to look) in a corner of a room, it is quite difficult. Now, if you are reading a book or doing something else, then you are protected, to an extent.

Here is a powerful side to our mortality - we are quite limited. Why is that good? If you get weird thoughts during *davening*, and you manage to catch yourself - what do you do? Do you fight the thoughts? Argue with them? No - that just distracts you from the *davening*. The solution is to... *Daven!*

"Huh?" I can hear you ask, "but my *davening* is ruined by those thoughts - I need to cleanse them!"

That's the recipe for a headache, and of course your mouth will have gone on without you, on autopilot, you will have won the battle (or perhaps not), but you will have not really *davened*.

What else can you do? You can instead (this is a trick that a friend attributed to advice from the most recent *Lubavitcher Rebbe*) point at the words, concentrate on saying them, and their meaning. **This is where the immense and unique power of mortality comes into play - you can only fit so much into your head at once.** This, *Baruch Hashem*, works for me literally every time! OK, so 30 seconds later my mind is wandering yet again - this is a deeper problem. But getting into the ring is the wrong approach. Focus on what needs to be done, not what does not need to be done.

This approach works for me with regard to lust, as well. If my eyes wander, I put them elsewhere. But if I walk down the street intending *not to look*, it's a little like sitting in a room, with nothing to do, trying not to look into a corner. I would rather prepare the remedy than focus on the problem like that. Of course, there are other things to do, as well - putting yourself into a room with nothing to do, and having to not look in a corner is just stupid. So... Either don't go into the room, or have something to do! The analogy only stretches so far, but I hope that it has illustrated my point.

In summary - focus on something positive, not abstinence from the negative. And the vast limitation of our mortality can save us - if we refrain and replace, then we're too busy to notice the things we should not be noticing. How can I be cheating on my wife when I am busy cooking, cleaning, learning, *davening* or gymming? (OK - for the record, or if my wife reads this - I rarely clean, and not nearly as much as I should)

I know that I only addressed about one quarter of your post, but I'm sure that the professionals

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Re: New Here, i hope this helps

Posted by lookingforwisdom - 21 Jun 2011 14:40

[dov wrote on 21 Jun 2011 04:44:](#)

The fight against lust is meant to be *anything* **but** our main preoccupation! It's a real rachmonus on us when we see the fight with our lust almost everywhere and are aware of it all the time.

This is what I always wonder is going a lot on gue causing me to be too much preoccupied with this whole thing? it's a tough balance sometimes

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Re: New Here, i hope this helps

Posted by Serene smile - 21 Jun 2011 15:55

"give it to hashem".. I'm @ work.. But I've done this 100000's of times BH.. It's a WONDERFUL experience and blessing..

I can't wait to see what answers come..

Seriously

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Re: New Here, i hope this helps

Posted by helpfyi - 21 Jun 2011 16:37

[TheJester wrote on 21 Jun 2011 14:21:](#)

In summary - focus on something positive, not abstinence from the negative. And the vast limitation of our mortality can save us - if we refrain and replace, then we're too busy to notice the things we should not be noticing. How can I be cheating on my wife when I am busy cooking, cleaning, learning, *davening* or gymming? (OK - for the record, or if my wife reads this - I rarely clean, and not nearly as much as I should)

I know that I only addressed about one quarter of your post, but I'm sure that the professionals

I understand your point, but what exactly do you focus on when walking in the street? the floor? that is even harder! i try to hum a tune (when really faced with a challenge i hum nesana tokef tune from yom kipper!) but i really know I'm trying not to look, how do you make it 2nd nature not to look? yes telling yourself not look is hard but just not noticing it is somewhere i'm not holding by yet.

Shevouses i had a challenge to keep to the agreement so that kept me going (btw i'm still going strong on that, only slipped once with gazing since :D) but i want to keep on going without feeling suppressed.

will be in soon to do the rest

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Re: New Here, i hope this helps
Posted by Dov - 21 Jun 2011 18:11

Dear fyi,

First, I was not really talking to you, but to "Teshuvah5771". That's a major problem on a forum: we write in response to someone specific, and whatever we write is applied to others who need to hear the opposite message. Looking at porn for ten minutes can actually be a thing to be patient and encouraging about for one guy - who was looking at porn for hours a night.....yet completely unacceptable for another - who either just getting started with looking at a little schmutz OR a fellow who is way *ahead* in recovery with a year or so of clean time. It all depends and changes, no? It also depends on how 'negatively judged' they have been by 'drive-

by holy-roller critics'. Some people react so poorly to any kind of constructive criticism that the slightest implication that their *derech* is wrong, and they freak out. Ouch.

The first thing to know is that when it says "*hirhurei aveiro* koshin me'aveiro atzmah", Chazal are **not** talking about wanting to look at porn really badly, they are **not** talking about having the feeling that one really *needs* to go to that dirty phone call, webcam, or chatroom *right now*, and they are **not** referring to one who realizes that he has a strong desire to use a certain woman he sees for sex. No way. Then what are they referring to, you may ask....think. It is obvious.

But, since you asked, I'll share it with you anyhow.

They are referring to making **plans** to do these types of things. I read too often about guys who are all tied in a knot of guilt about having desires. If they'd take the 2nd step (instead of just whining), they'd learn that it cannot be that the Almighty is shirt-tempered and short-sighted enough to hate them (or even be *angry* at them) for desiring such things. Especially if one is an addict. The only attitude I know that works for me when I have a desire is to first and foremost COOL IT. What *else* would I expect for a sex and lust addict?! What else would Hashem expect from a sex and lust addict? Is He so uptight that He has no perspective - are RULES **all** He cares about and pays any attention to?! Sadly, most of us (I believe) really go through a stage of believing exactly that. We walk around with that exact belief for years, decades, and don't even know that we do not really have a G-d that loves us, at all.

Book-knowledge is not what I am talking about here, brother. I *know* what Jews are supposed to believe. You know, the yud gimel ikkarim and six mitzvos temidios...fine. That's not what I am talking about here - I am talking about Jews, not *Judaism*. Torah is perfect - we are not. And Hashem *must* be aware of that fact, or we have got the wroooong 'G-d', amigo.

Yes, there *is* a need for the 'Agudas Yisroel' image, and Rabbis should *definitely not* say most of the things I say from a pulpit - as a people, we *need* to shoot for the stars! But once there is a problem, there is some point at which you cannot live at all until there is acceptance of your limitations. For addicts, that is the one big ikkar - acceptance is the Key. It's the first two steps. They tell me I am unable to successfully use lust, and that I have some insanity that I need G-d for, nothing less.

It's not the what *Hashem* says or teaches me through His Torah that is the point here, sorry! *Halocha* will not determine for me whether I am a fool, sick, or an addict. The only thing that

forms our actual *priorities* is what is in our hearts right now. That is what leads us to behave the way we do. That is where the disease is. The disease is not in the Torah and not in Hashem and not in the Rabbis - if we have it, then it is ***in us***.

So. Sorry about the megillah, but this is just an intro to the answer to your question, really. 'Hirhurei aveiro' is *planing* to do it, not wanting to do it. Wanting to do it is natural - for an addict. I have no weight put on me when I realize that I want to stare at her, or do such-and-such. All it means is that I am still sick. I need treatment, not chizzuk, and certainly not guilt.

Now, that having been said, coming back to the first paragraph above, this changes for different people. They say that the Ba'al haTanya once saw/heard something from a chosid who came to him for advice that was about a terrible aveiro. Later, his reaction was to try and think what shaychus he has to evil that made it that Hashem allowed him to even *hear* of such evil things. He knew that there must be a p'gam in him if he hears or sees evil - he must have a shaychus to it to be involved with it, at all.

Then he remembered what led him to a shaychus with such depravity. he was feeling some money in his pocket and enjoyed the form of the image on it - the way it felt on his fingers. Nothin' sexual here, I am sure....he just was normally separated from tayvos of all kinds, and this was a regression for him k'fi his current state.

Now. What are we to do with a story like this? I must say that there are madreigos and there are *madreigos*. The ba'al haTanya accepted his limitations. He was so holy that such a thing was poison for him. For a normal person - even being a big talmid chochom! - pleasure from feeling a portrait form on a coin is irrelevant. Completely ***irrelevant***. Not good, not bad - just irrelevant.

Should a normal yid allow in or use guilt for his feeling a coin and liking the way it feels on his finger? Well, if he does, I will guarantee him that his false standards will soon make him impossible to live with, his gayvoh will grow and bloom until he will be far 'smarter' than even Hashem, and that he will eventually destroy his entire avodas Hashem from the inside. Hi Korach!

OK. Now what? Oh, I was supposed to talk about letting go and letting Hashem take care of us even in the lust area.....next time. But if this is not clear to a person, then I believe they will tenaciously hold onto their struggle against lust till they die, and never ever, let Hashem get 'a piece of the action'. It is one way addicts are so screwed up....till it hurts too much. Then they

find it too hard to believe that Hashem would touch them with a tem foot pole! What a switch.
How sad.

Rachmono litzolon!

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Re: New Here, i hope this helps
Posted by helpfyi - 21 Jun 2011 18:26

thanks for your reply and could be i put my nose in. I understand that hashem loves us all and i
know and fell he does, i just don't understand what this means to leave it up to him? you mean
like betochon or that he understands if we fall... i'm still confused.

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Re: New Here, i hope this helps
Posted by tshuvah5771 - 22 Jun 2011 03:27

hi

thanks for all your help, but can someone explain to me all the above in plain english, since i am
a chusid and don't understand high vocabulary.

Thanks again for all the help and support, i can really use it.

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Re: New Here, i hope this helps
Posted by TheJester - 22 Jun 2011 09:43

[tshuvah5771 wrote on 22 Jun 2011 03:27:](#)

thanks for all your help, but can someone explain to me all the above in plain english, since i am a chusid and don't understand high vocabulary.

Perhaps this will help:

You said that you have a test that you want to pass, and you want the *Zechus* of "holding back" to carry you through the test. And then if you hold back but fail the test, you will take it as a sigh that Hashem does not love you, and that you will "sin".

You then asked if it is normal. I think that yes, it is very normal. The most "normal" people make all kinds of deals and illogical conclusions in their minds (I did, a lot). That does not mean that it is constructive.

Dov pointed out that you should ask Hashem to help you, not do something for you. He pointed out that you might be taking this "fight" with you everywhere, and connecting it to other things that you do, such as your test.

What you described was like a deal you're making with Hashem - I'll give this up for you, and you help me out. This is quite normal, but then you put something else on it that makes it dangerous - *"if i fail the test (C.V.) it means that hashem doesn't love me anyway and i will sin"*. I want to point out something (someone will probably shoot me for being mean and pedantic) - you put a "C.V." by failing the test, but not by the "sin". Tell me - what is more scary to you, failing the test, or failing *MZ"L*? Are you being honest with yourself? Could you be honest with others? (**Edit:** Silly, me - I had academic tests on my mind. I now realize that what you wrote could be much more serious than that. I will leave this paragraph up here nonetheless, but apologize for any insensitivity and offer the above explanation of my thought process (academic test).)

Still, that line (it means Hashem does not love me) is dangerous - if you fail your test because you just couldn't do it, or didn't try enough... It's now Hashem's turn to feel guilty for not loving you enough? You should feel angry, sad, depressed or whatever you will feel? By taking this fight around with you, you are creating a weird fantasy world, with weird rules of nature.

Dov then explains why this is - it is because you are living in this world by yourself. People in solitary confinement in prisons go a little nutty. They might create their own reality, because of their confinement. They get out of touch with the real world. **Dov's advice to you is to stop living in your own fantasy world created by your own isolation, and reach out to other people, so as to start living in the real world.** [color=red][b]

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Re: New Here, i hope this helps
Posted by ninetydays - 22 Jun 2011 14:55

Hi Tshuva5771 -

Welcome to the forum -

This is the most amazing place on the internet and please hang in here and dont let go. I read the whole thread and you have some amazing people sharing advice with you. For one "Dov" posts a lot to people who are struggling. This is the equivalent of writing shailos utshuvos in Hashem's eyes (I dont claim to know what G-d thinks; just my opinion).

If I can throw in two cents. This point really really helps me.

I believe in Hashgacha and that Hashem runs every aspect of this world. Once I got my grips around that the following made it much easier.

Every test you get is an expression of Hashems love!! Think about it for a second... If you got the option today of choosing a life of bliss and happiness with no nisyonos and a death fit for a king would you take it? That life is Hashem spitting in your face. Every time you are walking in the street and you want to turn to catch a glimpse of someone its a test and an expression of his love. This helped me a lot.

Ninety

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Re: New Here, i hope this helps
Posted by Dov - 22 Jun 2011 21:50

OK, so some great guy (really) PM'd me and asked if based on what I posted yesterday, was I implying that *fantasizing* about doing 'issur'/my desires is OK? In other words, if me *having* a tendency to desire is "100% OK" by Hashem, then is He also fine with me *thinking about* my desires, too?

What did I say wrong? Oh no. I never meant **that**. I was addressing the *presense* of desire in us, not our *using lust*. I'll try to explain, be"H:

Fantasy is obviously the single deadliest aspect of our disease, and it is also what Chaza"l were referring to in the "hirhurei aveiro koshin me'aveiro atzmah" thing (even though I maintain that they were clearly never referring to *addicts* in anything they ever taught for normal Jews, which is the overwhelming majority of maymar Chaza"l's, of course).

The main problem that lust addicts have (Lust), *is* fantasizing. It means *using* natural desire inside us in order to create a powerful change in our inner world, in our priorities - in our hearts. So we sincerely feel driven to get what we feel sure we need: acting out. It can be conscious fantasizing or *unconscious* fantasizing - either way, it is lusting and is very poisonous. It cannot be tolerated well by an addict - not **because** it is wrong or because G-d says to us "v'Lo sasuru." That is the truth, for sure, but it is not sufficient for addicts, for it is talking to normals. Rather, fantasy is intolerable to addicts because **an addict simply cannot successfully use lust!** It is how I understand what it means to be an addict, in fact. An addict is a person who does (eventually) get carried away to unmanageability once he uses lust as his tool. Just like alcoholics getting carried away with their alcohol, while others clearly do not! This is very unlike a normal yid who **IS able** to lust, use porn, fantasize and even masturbate a little - without ending up with an unmanageable life for one reason or another.

Yes, those things **are** ossur and horrible, etc. But a normal person (even a Jew) **can** live an acceptable life even though he does these things a bit. **For his partaking does not become an obsession that puts real life 'on hold' as it does with an addict.** It does not make a

decent life *impossible* for him. Maybe it makes it much harder, yet not impossible. There is Teshuvah, denial, forgetting, 'chizzuk', and other great tools he or she can use to 'get by'. Some of these people are rabbonim, our parents, or children, and other good people. Really. And you know what? Life goes on.

Mah sh'ein kein for an addict. We are sicker than normal people. Allergic to lusting. We *can't* use it and still manage. Well, actually, we can *for a time* - I did for about 10 years, on and off...till it 'hit the fan' and I saw *ki kolsoh eilov ho'roh'oh* - I saw that I was actually doomed and unable to stop, and that was very depressing and scary. I was taking this to the grave, you know. But I used the normal person's tools to 'get by' for a few years: teshuvah, distraction, doing mesiras nefesh to *counterbalance* it, shrinks, meds, whatever. But then it hit the fan *weekly* for about 8 years until I finally couldn't manage any more. Finally, when I had no other option, I dropped the silly stuff (like the comfort of denial, shrinks who didn't know what they were talking about, anti-depressants, or using even more creative masturbation - all worthless solutions for me then) and got the help I knew had a chance of working: the one that hurt the most - Recovery as a real addict. I went to an addictions shrink, who sent me to SA, and I went, and stayed, and participated, and did the work so as to *let* Hashem help me, for a change.

It took a year and a half of sobriety for me to *recognize* my life was probably saved. Things were gonna be OK be"H. And I still have lust in me to some extent - I have occasional recognition of the fact that I "desire"...but as long as I let go of it and give it up, He will take away the unbearable pain of missing out on my goodies. My mind generally does not lust any more - it's mainly my body now. I watch it go by. This is a miracle and started only about 5 years ago. Before that, the desires were occasionally in my mind, too. Now that is very rare. And I never consciously worked on 'banishing desire'! Boruch Hashem for that! The last thing I (a recovering sex pervert) needs is to focus on lusting or not lusting! Right?

This is basic sh'b'*basic* 12 steps stuff, and if you don't hear what I am saying here at all, then I would be glad to talk about it privately. Or you can go on trying something else that may very well work. I know that there *are* other valid opinions and derachim - harbei shluchim laMakom!!

So I am not saying that it is OK, allowed, or right for ANY yid to use porn, fantasy, or masturbation! But I *am* saying that what makes the difference between addicts and non-addicts is that we addicts cannot successfully 'lust like a gentleman'. It ruins our lives ***because we get self-centered*** about our next trip to our 'precious' schmutzy internet drug - ***or about the struggle against it***, and basically put *real* life on hold. Eventually, it is a living death. We get into the zone, and Hashem and all His sweet people essentially become an annoying distraction to us. We risk danger to things like our marriages, maybe our jobs, maybe our personal safety - and do not even really see that we are being so incredibly stupid. Even though we are very smart for other stuff. **In other words, addiction itself - and that's our problem, not porn - is**

not about aveiros, period. The act in the particular addiction may involve an aveiro, but that is peripheral and clouds the real issue here - the issue that makes it stick to us like a mouse in a glue trap.

Just go to an NA meeting and see the things that the chassidish and yeshivish crack addicts are saying about their obsession with cocaine - or with fighting cocaine - and you will see the 90% of exact same words and issues as all the frummy sex addicts I know say about their sex addiction. Same thing. What does that *mean*?

In fact, and this is really interesting: if you hang around GYE long enough, you will see a few guys sincerely posting stuff like, "Someone *please* explain to me exactly what the issur is for me to see goyishe naked women!?" - and they are dead serious. Why? Because they are crazy addicts. Then some well-meaning halachist actually tries to work it out with the guy! "It's an abizraya, it's a rishon here, and ach'ron there", whatever. Nonsense!! They are sick, powerless (out of all meaningful control), in a lot of trouble, and they know it - but they are trying to beat the rap by escaping into the world of "*issur v'heter*", rather than *sakanta*....and as we all know, *sakanta* (addiction) is *more* chomur than *issura* (aveiros).

If you are not hearing me, then let me know, because this fact is at the root of my entire approach and recovery.

There is room for Teshuvah, but it is secondary. This is very painful and even disgusting to those who are romantically obsessed with beating the aveiro and doing teshuva gemurah. That is all nice - but it has nothing to do with the issue at hand for the addict: stopping and staying clean.

Do you get me, or am I writing in swahili? Does this appear to be apikorsus to you?

- Dov

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