

Personal recovery plan

Posted by obormottel - 12 Aug 2011 22:38

I was pressed for practical steps I'm taking on the path to recovery. So here goes:

By way of introduction:

I've been a compulsive mast*****r since age 11 or 12. Started looking at internet p**n when it became available in my house, after being married for a short time. Can't tell you when viewing this garbage became addictive, but it's been years since I realized I have a BIG problem. I would come to shul to mincha with fresh stains on my pants, and people would ask me to be shliach tzibbur! The depression and anxiety, and feelings of hypocrisy! I don't have to tell you... I couldn't stop no matter how much I agonized over this. I installed BSAFE filter, and set my own password (dumb!!!). I took on hachlotois. I gave tzdoko, and even created a knas for myself of \$180 for each occurrence (turns out it's a legit technique; I just did everything else wrong). All to no help. About a month ago I gave up on myself, and gave myself over to G-d's mercy. I wrote a tzetle to a Tzaddik and gave myself over to the Tzaddik. Within 1 week of the latter I saw a banner for this website on Arutz7. Ever since then:

1. I had my wife install K9 filter and hold the password. In addition , she restricted my internet access so that now when I finish work at 6pm, my internet shuts down, so I have no reason to aimlessly (or, rather, intentionally) browse the web after I am alone in the office. Even with filter, there is plenty room for mischief on the web for a sick mind, so I find this trick especially helpful.
2. I subscribed and now READ daily the Chizzuk emails (both lists)
3. I got myself on the 90 Day chart (day 9 as of today, YAY!)
4. I am half way through the Handbook and Attitude handbook. Found both of them extremely helpful and lucid.
5. I listened to Rav Reisman's shiur on Yirmiyohu. (Did it on 9 Av, thought it to be appropriate). BTW, R' Reisman is great; I've been listening to his MP3 shiurim for a long time now.
6. I am obsessing with this site now, reading what I can, taking part in the forum etc. I probably spend as much time doing this as I used to do the other stuff, which keeps me busy and I do it from home in the evenings, not from the privacy of my office, so it brings me back home...

On the spiritual side, I kept the fence I've already created for myself before: to go to the mikva after each occurrence, and in general to be particular ab. tvilas Ezra. I started learning a particular kuntreis on shmiras eynaim (and once I know you better, I'll tell you which one it is), and plan on doing more of such reading. I also decided to keep my mouth shut in shul, if an argument of any sort ensues (I am usually very vocal expressing my opinion), so that I learn to not have attention focused on me. Also, I promised (in that above-mentioned tzetle) to wear a hat every time I daven, bentch, say Birchas Hashachar, or Al Hamichyo. I think it should add to the additional yiras Shomaim I'm trying to instill on to myself.

What else? I apologized to my wife (for which I was ostracized by some on this forum); and I actively turn my head away if something comes into my line of sight that I know will bring me to hirhurim.

And finally, I am making this kabolo allehabo (Bli neder, it's not a vow just yet): before acting out the next time (should a time like this come, Hashem yishmerenu), I will put on my hat and jacket and say my kappitel tehilim. If I don't do it and act out, C"V, then I will pay 10 times the mikva fee the following morning (I've been pretty consistent with my mikva promise).

Your input is welcome. Please don't beat up on me too much, I'm still working out my sensitivity issues:)

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 17 Aug 2011 15:50

great to hear you are doing well Mottel!

thanks for sharing

keep on keeping on

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by obormottel - 17 Aug 2011 19:50

Thank you all! Two weeks clean today. I treated myself to chocolate chip muffin.

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 17 Aug 2011 19:53

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did you jog home from the bakery?

Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by mechazek - 17 Aug 2011 20:50

bon appetite.I am really happy for you.

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by obormottel - 17 Aug 2011 23:00

[ZemirosShabbos wrote on 17 Aug 2011 15:50:](#)

you really know how to get to a fellow's soft spot ;D

[ZemirosShabbos wrote on 17 Aug 2011 19:53:](#)

why? I'm not depressed yet! Why waste good energy ;D

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by alexeliezer - 19 Aug 2011 17:28

Reb O'Mottel,

Fast moving thread!

I wanted to comment on the original post. It's so good to see what a serious recovery plan looks like. I hope you don't mind if I occasionally refer others to it as an example. Sometimes people come here and then just set up a filter and bite their lip and that's their recovery program.

Shteig on and have a great Shabbos!

Alex

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by obormottel - 19 Aug 2011 21:41

I realized a couple of things lately and here they are:

1. I am nothing. I thought I was doing Hashem a huge favor with my Toiro and mitzvois. Turns out, HE was doing me a favor by gratefully accepting Toiro and mitzvois even from such a menuval as me. Consequently

2. Even the litllest of my efforts counts, despite my huge overall problem. Meaning to say: even though my overall avoido is not avoido at all in the true sense of the word, Hashem in His kindness and understanding of my lowly status, considers it avoido none the less, may be even more, as is expressed in lefoom tzaro, agro: reward is befitting the effort.

Dov, StrugglingStrivingBT, Bardichev, ZmirosShabbos and others are primerily responsible for this attitude adjustment.

Therefore:

3. Instead of being down on myself for failing time and again to fix my problem(s) I have a right and an obligation to be happy that, despite my obvious, real problem(s) I still do what I do: daven, learn, keep mitzvois, and occasionally put up a fight with the Yetzer.

I've heard the concept before, but before hearing it on this forum, whenever it would come from a "normal" person, I would dismiss it thinking: "if only you knew WHAT my problem is, you wouldn't be so fast to say that Hashem sheps nachas from the rest of the stuff that I do or from

the occasional abstaining from sin." Afterall, if I'm not perfect 100%, why would G-d love me? Well, that's because before the Perfect G-d no one is perfect, stupid....

I owe the gratitude for this realization to the Attitude Handbook, and everyone on this forum: you guys share my problem to a lesser or a greater degree, and yet you are content with the thought that G-d loves us. It was a lot to digest, but I think my stomach is slowly settling on this idea.

4. I will never be normal again. This thought can be and is comforting: it means, I have to be forever vigilant in how I look at (things), but: if I look wrongly or worse, it's not a new problem, but an old, familiar one, with which I (hopefully, soon) will learn how to deal on a day to day basis. Which leads to a final realization of the week:

5. Take the struggle one day at a time. This thought: "I must, this Yom Kippur, yom huledes, special occasion etc, accept upon myself to NEVER AGAIN do what I loved/felt compelled doing", was daunting to the point of unbearable, making tshuva and recovery from compulsion/addiction impossible. Knowing, as Alexeliezer (?) put it, that "I cannot look, because once I look I am dead" helps me realize the importance of not looking NOW, and not worrying about how I might react in the future. Staying away from triggers one day at a time for the rest of my life, that's what it's about now.

I realize now, after this paradigm shift in my understanding of the nature of my beast, that I cannot change myself totally but I can make a decision/take action regarding certain behaviours and habits to safeguard myself from acting on my lowest desires. And by the way, these desires are inherent to my nature, and apparently they are exactly what Hashem wants me to fight as part of my curriculum vittae.

I am still left with many questions, of course, so if something seems illogical or wrong, please bring it up.

I'm still working out the theology behind this theory and it's place in my engrained understanding of Toradike principles of sin, and tshuvo, and bechiro chofshis etc.

But I have done things before that "went against my best judgement, consciousness, and religious conviction" and were bad, lowly, nisht passige things; and not worried about contradictions to my "understanding of Toirodige principles of sin".

So I can put some effort into a positive action (or inaction as the case may be) that agrees with my best judgement etc, inspite of seeming contradictions.

Thanks for listening.

Gut Shabbos.

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 19 Aug 2011 21:59

Mottel, i think you've just summed up everything for me in a nutshell, better than i ever could.

good shabbos

Gevura!

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by obormottel - 19 Aug 2011 22:06

Alexeliezer:

just wanted to pick up this conversation without hijacking the other guy's thread, also as it relates to me personally:

[alexeliezer wrote on 19 Aug 2011 17:17:](#)

The streets are ***murder*** these days. It's unbelievable what they're (not) wearing out there.

I stopped going shopping to a certain place near where I live (although it inconveniences me greatly when I "have to" run out for a six-pack), and have to remember to tell my wife (politely, k'muvon) that I can't run an errand to the supermarket. I don't know how long this stage will take, hopefully, I'll be able to function in a worldly environment, but right now I feel violated after forcing my stare down at places like this. But if I look, I'm dead! I went to the airport the other day to pick someone up, and only realized what I have done after walking into the terminal. Thank G-d for electronic devices with GYE forum on them, I could keep my eyes busy, and the party I was meeting didn't need to be looked out for. I can't shop while reading the messages on my phone! So your next point:

[alexeliezer wrote on 19 Aug 2011 17:17:](#)

Something I learned from a chizuk email is to go outside with the attitude that really I shouldn't be out here altogether, it's too dangerous for me. But nu, I have places I need to go. But I only have the right to be out here if I can guard my eyes. I only have the right to look exactly where I need to so I get where I'm going without bumping into something or crashing.

is very important to me. So do you have a tip on a particular technique that helped you "not crashing"? I've made left turns lately with my head turned in the opposite direction to avoid

[alexeliezer wrote on 19 Aug 2011 17:17:](#)

(A stark contrast to the old "woohoo it's flesh season" attitude I used to have.)

can you believe, I used to say Thank you Hashem for sending this sight my way. I took it as a cheer, as an encouragment to look on. "If you're showing, I'm looking" attitude.

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seeing whomever is standing on the intersection, but crashing is a concern

Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by obormottel - 19 Aug 2011 22:07

[Gevura ShebYesod wrote on 19 Aug 2011 21:59:](#)

Mottel, i think you've just summed up everything for me in a nutshell, better than i ever could.

good shabbos

Gevura!

nootz gesunderheit!

Goot Shabbos

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by mechazek - 20 Aug 2011 19:19

Mottel your taniying very shtark.

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by obormottel - 21 Aug 2011 17:14

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by JackAbbey - 21 Aug 2011 23:19

mottel, you exposed in a snap lots of my spiritual struggles i had, i found that after i mastered mesulas yeshurim & chovos halvoves many times over & over, & having a daily sheur in them, straightened out ALL my double thoughts.

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by mechazek - 21 Aug 2011 23:46

There is no english word that explains taniying-suffice to say what you said meant something to me ;D

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