

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 masturbator since age 11 or 12. Started looking at internet porn 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 obormottel - 05 Oct 2011 23:00

I gotta read Dov's piece a few times, so I'll get back to you on that.

Thanks a lot for taking the time, I really appreciate your effort.

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by JackAbbey - 05 Oct 2011 23:15

why not just delete the entire history including all those searches

its dead simple

just go to tools, internet options, and take it from there

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by obormottel - 06 Oct 2011 00:49

This is not my browser's history, in the past few years I used In-Private browsing for my fixes. This is like a toolbar search box kinda thingy, I don't know if I can clear that, I'd love to. It seems

that in one of the bouts of insanity I actually searched for something and the on-line memory thing remembered that forever.

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by JackAbbey - 06 Oct 2011 13:43

you can also download from filehippo, very powerfull history cleaners, that will delete all the tab infos

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by Dov - 06 Oct 2011 16:42

Oh, boy.

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by gibbor120 - 06 Oct 2011 21:15

I know this is several posts ago already, but I had another thought about "reaching for the stars". I forget which yeshiva, maybe kelm, they used to go to the bakery and ask for shoes, to the shoe store and ask for bread. In this way they would break their gaivoh. I don't think anyone would suggest that today. Why don't we "shoot for the stars" and imitate what they did? Obviously, it would be devastating for us, no aliyah at all. It would probably break us. Short term (today) - we need to work on our madreigah. Long term - we can ask "masei yagiu maasai lamasei avosei".

It's humbling to think our avodah is to work on not looking at porn or masturbating. But that's the reality. The sooner we accept it, the better. If we still think our avodah is heilige kavanos,).

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by obormottel - 06 Oct 2011 21:55

Gibbor, I am maskim 100%! I am so through with the kavonois...

I heard the ma'ase, too: Theu used to gehen in apteik, koifen chvekes: go into pharmacy to buy nails, so they can be berated by the pharmacist. Nu.

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by obormottel - 09 Oct 2011 06:32

Dear, teiere all!

This was the best Yom Kippur ever! Of course, I ended up doing tshuvo for my disgusting behavior last year, saying al cheit shechotonu lefonecho b'hoyitzoas z"l in every viduy, and v'idas znus brought up some memories, and b'yetzer horo, and giluy aroyos, and b'goluy uvasoser....Wait, it's over, I don't have to confess anymore! But it was truly the first yom kippur I felt I have actually **done** tshuvo, I was actually on my way to being a better Yid. Thanks to you!

At the same time, I had **two** very vivid dreams this night, and woke up both times pre-climatic; and only the thought of Yom Kippur stopped me, or maybe even awaken me. Truthfully, I think it is a good sign: It means the Evil one was really on his death bed, and didn't know what else to do...I never had dreams like that on Yom Kippur, ever! And never two in a row! I think I finally turned the corner on him.

I feel really awesome! Thank you, thank you, thank you, Tatte in Himmel, and Rabbeinu Gaurd Meshichoi, and all of you, dear fellow strugglers!

Now to building the sukko!

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by Dov - 09 Oct 2011 13:42

It was Navorodek (they call it 'Novardok' in yeshivah circles). And it is an essential recovery tool for many addicts. We talk about it every now and then in stepwork - whether Jews or lh' goyim.

Happy to read about your nice YK, OBMTL kanobi!! Continued success to you, chabibi.

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by obormottel - 09 Oct 2011 15:50

[dov wrote on 09 Oct 2011 13:42:](#)

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Happy to read about your nice YK, OBMTL kanobi!! Continued success to you, chabibi.

Thanks for your wishes!

Care to elaborate on how putting yourself thru a humiliating experience on purpose is beneficial to recovery?

Isn't our natural tendency after being humiliated to make ourselves "feel good" again?

Needless to say, chassidus advocates a totally different approach to acquiring midas hoanovo, but let's relate it to recovery, not hashkofo.

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by obormottel - 09 Oct 2011 22:45

OY VEY!

So my wife won a free family portrait session at a Chinese auction for some school or Ladies' Bikur Choilim or something. So it had to happen today, because the photographer (aka pictcha macher) doesn't shoot on Chol Hamoed and the certificate expires afterwards.

So I brush my beard, spit out the gum, get in the van, load the pretty kids, made-up Wife, and off we goto a public park, because this is where the shoot is going to take place. So Wife got one on me so far, I thought we are going to a studio. I'm doing my best to watch my eyes in the park, it's not too crowded, and the women are mostly native, which translates into short and hunched over, and there are plenty empty spaces and trees to look at if something comes into my sight that's triggering. Not ideal, I know, but I'm doing what I can. But now comes the pictcha macher...She (SHEE!) is a frum girl, from a choshuve mishpocho (chassidish or yeshivish) and she is dressed tzniyusdigfor a walk down the promenade. But you know how the photographer needs to crouch to take that perfect shot? So the skirt is running up her leg during this take, and she exposes herself in another way during the next, and she is doing this posing and that bending.....all the while my wife is telling me: just look over her shoulder, honey, look above her head; and the pictcha macherke is telling me: C'mon, dad, right into the camera, and smile, smile, pretend you're happy. And my teenage boy is sitting there, and I know he is a good kid, but who can stand this kind of tease without looking? And how the H. can I smile when my brain is on fire?

So this is gonna be one day to live down, and a day after Yom Kippur yet!

I hope this sharing will help me to get it out of my head.

Another problem I realized I now have to face, is inability to take my kids to a park. The last time we went to a large communal park was around July 4th, when being healthy was not the first thing on my mind, so I enjoyed the trip in more ways than one. So this was the first time since I attempted recovery, and frankly I am quite upset that park trips are going to be out of my family time.

How do you guys do it?

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by Dov - 10 Oct 2011 03:57

I do not fight, and therefore am usually in pretty good shape. It's not easy to give up the pleasure of trying to figure out who the prettiest woman or girl in the entire park is, but giving it up sure beats the old way of struggling with it.

I know exactly what you mean, bro. It's gehinom in a park, when there is so much (fake) sweet candy all around, and it's such easy pickings. But struggling just does not work for me. So I give

it up, over and over. And it's much, much more comfortable. They are beautiful, not mine, and good for them! Hashem loves them and cares for them all, too! None of my business, really.

My wife and I can laugh about it now, b"H. I do not know how I could even make it, if my wife was there with me actually thinking that she should be trying to 'save me from sin'! And even if I were not trying to be sober! Ha. What a fool she'd be, thinking she is saving me, while I'd be dutifully closing my eyes.....and then peek around the corner a couple dozen times at the college girls while my wife was off getting ice cream for a second!

Ein apotropus, indeed.

Yes, perhaps it will be a good idea to forgo these trips while you do some work, and doing that will be a great way to learn humility without being humiliated, at all.

Speaking of humiliation, your question makes me think you miss the vort, completely. The Novardokers were trying to rise above the opinions of others on an *emotional* level. That is, for **real**. Feeling at all humiliated would prove they were still subject to the power of others.

Which is what the 2nd step is all about. "Me'olam kivinu Loch" is the program's answer to the fact that I am under the power of others, instead of only under G-d's power. See, if the shocking sweetness or beauty, or whatever, of the 'tzniyusdikeh' women in the park drives me meshugah...then it matters too much to me. I am "giving away my power to others", as Roy K. put it, in his White book.

"Kavei el Hashem" is nice in theory, and looks very good in sforim, or to talk about. But when I am numbed and totally distracted by the 'perfect' woman in the supermarket, subway, or shul - *or by the struggle **against** lusting over her* - it becomes clear that to me, deep in my gut, they have power. I am confused about who G-d (ba'al hakochos kulam) really is.

In the end, all 12 steps recovery leads to "mei'olam kivinu lach" - all along we were really needing you, but were confused about who our Higher Power really was.

If I discover that I actually am confused - regardless of whether yiddishkeit says I *ought* to be confused about it or not - that just means I need to do some surrendering, and get the help to do that. It is how the first step (admission of the truth about me and what I am really motivated by) allows me to actually work the second step (choose a better, more reliable Higher Power for myself than women's legs).

I am not pontificating, just sharing my own program.

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by obormottel - 10 Oct 2011 05:25

I'd love to spend time on the Novardokers' approach, which, you are right, I took in a very different way, since I heard the maase in a discouraging way from chassidim. But to the point:

You are right, I am damned if I do, and damned if I don't. If I lust or fight not to lust, I am still thinking of woman's legs. This thought bothered me for some time now. It's like trying not to think of pink elephants. When I see a trigger and turn away, she still lingers in the back of my mind, so I say a quick prayer asking G-d to take my lust away, and bless her with her heart's desires. And it helps (sorta, till the next one).

So you're saying in order for me to live a normal life again, where I am not affected at all by legs and other body parts (that's another prayer I say every so often, based on one of your posts: I don't want to worship "bodyparts"), I need to surrender my fight to G-d (right, that's the 2nd step?).

I totally see the importance of it, if I ever want to function like a human being again. The question is, if my davening at the time of a challenge is not surrender, then what is?

And without any tongue in cheek at all, since you're kind enough to give me your time:

In your opinion, is my admission of truth about myself a sufficient first step? And how would you suggest I moved on to step two, which, according to your description of it, I have not yet attained?

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by bardichev - 10 Oct 2011 14:47

just wondering out loud

why is this still in the introduce yourself section??

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