

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 mechazek - 22 Aug 2011 07:34

Mottel you wrote that very well.Maskim .

May I add that Rabbi Yechaezkel Levestein one of the premier baalei mussar of the past generations,In his first discourse on ellul,he write that a prerequisite for judaism is to be an adam which means that your mind is in control of your body,otherwise you are a sick person and dont qualify as a human being.Only after living life in a way that your mind is present and leading can you start judaism.

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Re: Personal recovery plan
Posted by obormottel - 22 Aug 2011 07:51

yeah, it is Tanya's precept, too: Moach shalit al halev (and he adds: b'tuldosoi). I don't understand it , though: clearly I can't think myself out of my delusion. So, if I am not adam, and my mind doesn't govern etc, where do I go? is then Judaism applicable to me at all?

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Re: Personal recovery plan
Posted by mechazek - 22 Aug 2011 11:28

no is is not applicale at all unless your physical being is being led by a power higher than itself.As long as we are in the addiction our physicality is leading once we surrender to hashem ,he is now leading.So now we can start religion.So I think the answer to the question is that maybe your sechel means your connection to g-d.What I mean is healthy people have an inate sense of sprituality and their sechel is a way of actualizing this with their physical being.Addicts most constantly be giving over their physical being to the hands of g-d which is 2 ways of getting the same thing.I hope I make some sense to you.

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Re: Personal recovery plan
Posted by JackAbbey - 22 Aug 2011 12:43

mottel you make me think, that after all that, we still didnt scratch the surface of our hard shell, we need msuras nefesh

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Re: Personal recovery plan
Posted by alexeliezer - 22 Aug 2011 15:34

[obormottel wrote on 19 Aug 2011 22:06:](#)

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 seeing whomever is standing

Sometimes we do need to look where we're going, especially when driving. If she's there where I need to look, I don't look directly at her, but above her or to the side, so she's in my peripheral vision. I also right away ask Hashem to help me overcome the nisayon and not let the image stick in my mind.

And regarding your closing comment (not quoted above), I used to gaze in the street and think I was appreciating the beauty of Hashem's creation. We are taught that the Y"H will convince us that an aveira is actually a mitzva. A perfect example. Now with my re-sensitized mind, I can once again appreciate true, permitted beauty. It's good to be clean. It's better than being a slave to lust.

Have a great day!

Alex

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by obormottel - 22 Aug 2011 16:26

[mechazek wrote on 22 Aug 2011 11:28:](#)

no is is not applicale at all unless your physical being is being led by a power higher than itself.As long as we are in the addiction our physicality is leading once we surrender to hashem ,he is now leading.So now we can start religion.So I think the answer to the question is that maybe your sechel means your connection to g-d.What I mean is healthy people have an inate sense of sprituality and their sechel is a way of actualizing this with their physical being.Addicts most constantly be giving over their physical being to the hands of g-d which is 2 ways of getting the same thing.I hope I make some sense to you.

I have to think about it though on the surface it seems right.

[JackInShteeble wrote on 22 Aug 2011 12:43:](#)

mottel you make me think, that after all that, we still didnt scratch the surface of our hard shell, we need msuras nefesh

exactly. baby steps, brother. and in our dor, mesiras nefesh means mesiras haratzoin, so you're right on the money.

[alexeliezer wrote on 22 Aug 2011 15:34:](#)

I also right away ask Hashem to help me overcome the nisayon and not let the image stick in my mind.

That's what I was looking for. I start my day with being moiser myself to Hashem in all my netiyos, but to daven b'shaas ma'ase - that's gonna need to be learned.

[alexeliezer wrote on 22 Aug 2011 15:34:](#)

And regarding your closing comment (not quoted above), I used to gaze in the street and think I was appreciating the beauty of Hashem's creation. We are taught that the Y"H will convince us that an aveira is actually a mitzva.

again, exactly my (former) thinking.

I also read your original thread (until it was carried far far away), and found it to reflect a lot of my understanding.

Thanks for sharing.

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Re: Personal recovery plan
Posted by alexeliezer - 22 Aug 2011 16:38

[obormottel wrote on 22 Aug 2011 16:26:](#)

I start my day with being moiser myself to Hashem in all my netiyos, but to daven b'shaas ma'ase - that's gonna need to be learned.

We learn it from Yosef Hatzadik (the one in B'reishis, not on GYE). His masters saw that Hashem was with him. How did they know it was Hashem that was giving Yosef his success? Because they heard him constantly davening to Him, "Hashem help this come out right, Hashem, help me do this well."

It's something I'm working on in all areas. When I go to fix something around the house, I first ask Hashem to help me. When I go to talk to an irate client, I daven first. If it's a habit in all aspects of life, it will be there when we have our lust nisyonos.

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by obormottel - 24 Aug 2011 07:30

As I am working the steps, (and I am not calling it enrollment into a 12Step program, but the steps of GYE, with filters, emails etc, the path that is outlined in the GYE Nutshell and Attitude handbook), but as I am working these steps, I am certainly pying attention to the outline of the 12 Step program.

The first 4 steps are

1. We admitted we were powerless over lust--that our lives had become unmanageable.

I have admitted this truth years ago.

2. We came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

I have come to believe this within the last six months. Giving up control was very difficult.

Understanding that ein hachovush matir as atzmoi helped.

3. We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we

understood Him.

About two months ago....

4. We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

Can anyone tell me what this last thing means?

Also, but not the least:

for steps 2 and 3, maybe I'm just saying this? Is there a litmus test to know one's sincerity?

I've changed my mind about important musogim in my life a couple of times in the recent past. I've given up on my freedom of will. I am quite confused about my understanding of things that I thought to be unshakable truths.

Like: G-d gives you Yetzer so you can fight it. So what am I doing giving the fight back to Hashem? So I **know** that I am powerless in this struggle. I've tried every other way and failed. But do I **believe** it? What is my kivshon ho'aysh?

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Re: Personal recovery plan
Posted by ben durdayah - 24 Aug 2011 07:54

Mottel,

Have you read the Big Book, or are you just relying on the lashon of the steps themselves?

From your post it would appear that the former is the case. Bill describes this step very clearly in chapter 5.

As an aside, I can say from my personal experience that "working" the steps and studying them (even intensively with study aids such as Joe and Charlie's Big Book Study [a must hear, and a delight for those with even a slight sense of humor...]) is two different WORLDS.

Personally, I haven't even *started* "working" step one in the group framework. I'm in the first half of step 0 according to my temporary sponsor.

Would like to be ma'arich, but must sign off.

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Re: Personal recovery plan
Posted by obormottel - 24 Aug 2011 16:07

[ben durdayah wrote on 24 Aug 2011 07:54:](#)

Have you read the Big Book, or are you just relying on the lashon of the steps themselves?

From your post it would appear that the former is the case.

you mean latter?

I am just reading what's available on this website. and I would like to find Toiro-based answers to this questions. Since (according to the Great ones) the 12 steps ARE in Toiro, that shouldn't be hard. Why read the Big Book with Charlie's comments or whatever, when I can read a really BIG BOOK with a nice meforesh from Bardichev, or Dov, or alexeliezer?

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Re: Personal recovery plan
Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 24 Aug 2011 16:11

Mottel, did you see this?

www.guardyoureyes.org/forum/index.php?topic=3643.msg100187#msg100187

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by alexeliezer - 24 Aug 2011 19:12

[obormottel wrote on 24 Aug 2011 07:30:](#)

I've given up on my freedom of will. I am quite confused about my understanding of things that I thought to be unshakable truths.

Like: G-d gives you Yetzer so you can fight it. So what am I doing giving the fight back to Hashem? So I **know** that I am powerless in this struggle. I've tried every other way and failed. But do I **believe** it? What is my kivshon ho'aysh?

O'Mottel,

It's OK if you're confused. Hopefully your Y"H is confused too.

I'm a bit of a rogue here, and quite new at helping others with this, so please don't put me in the same sentence as Dov and Bard.

I really don't know much about the "toirah shel baal peh" of the 12 steps. I just read them, and worked them on my own. Working them to ME meant working to understand how to do them, and most importantly how to internalize them. So I ended up with my own understanding, and

so far it's working. I turned the first few steps into a tfila. By repeating the tfila, I get Help from above, and internalize the steps.

Regarding giving the fight back to Hashem rather than fighting it ourselves, this is far from giving up and not fighting our Y"H. Let's be realistic here. It takes a great deal of will power to not just give in to lust, but instead turn the fight over to Hashem. The willpower is not giving in. But instead of tightening every muscle in our bodies and growling in resistance, we call out to Hashem, turning the fight over to him. Plenty of willpower exercised.

And instead of looking where I shouldn't and then fighting the lust, or sitting down to a computer when everyone else has gone to bed, I admit that I am powerless over lust. And when you're powerless over an opponent, your only hope is to avoid it. Duck and hide like a mouse.

Alex

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Re: Personal recovery plan
Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 24 Aug 2011 19:22

Giving the fight over to Hashem doesn't mean giving up and saying "I'll do whatever I want, let Hashem come and drag me out of the swamp I wandered into". It means after we have done our best we say "OK this is as far as I can take it myself, the hill is too steep, come and push WITH me." It says "Ilmolei HKB"H Ozro" that means he helps, not that he takes over. There needs to be the Pischu Li Pesach first.

It's kind of like the mitzva of Azov Taazov lmo, you are not mechuyav to help if the owner does not work also.

Just my 2cents....

Gevura!

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Re: Personal recovery plan
Posted by obormottel - 24 Aug 2011 20:19

Thank you guys, that helps clear things up.

Alexeliezer, you didn't even put a smiley there when you said not to include you with Dov etc

I saw that you crossed hairs with him once or twice, but as long as it's l'shem Shomayim, I think "rogue" doesn't apply. Besides, in my book you're a sage and as much as I think Dov is Vice G-d, I find your thoughts very close to my own understanding of things (only much deeper and broader), and given your track record, I'd say I stand to learn a lot from you.

As to the meat of the discussion:

Zemmy, I **know** that that's what Twersky says, and I will read your link to get his explanation on this things.

The main problem I have developed in the last day or so, was based on Dov's email which says something to the effect "if you are ashamed of your lusting, you're still holding on to it".

I am ashamed as heck (I hate using this word instead of the real one, so it is brought to you courtesy of Ben Durdarya) and I can't even fathom talking to a live person about it, either face to face or on the phone. Which is why (is it alex or eliezer?) I didn't take you up on a talking on the phone offer; and you would be the guy to talk to, similar-minded etc.

So does that mean I still didn't make a decision to give over my will and my life to Hashem, and all I've done so far has been lip-service?

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So this is anivus sh'loy b'mkoimoi.