

Shalom Aleichem! Plz read and be Mechazek :-)

Posted by ATESHUVA1 - 22 Aug 2011 07:41

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Shalom Aleichem everyone,

This is really tough for me to do, just cause i never thought I would actually have to express my thoughts or feelings about this to anyone or anything and the process would always stay between me and The Aibishter, but I see through my own struggle that chizuk is an absolute must for any growth in this process.

My story starts about 8 years ago when a simple misspelling of a website by my own innocent child self led me to the first of the genre of sites that would grab my life and steer it in the total opposite direction. Who woulda thought an innocent elementary school boy whose soul desire was to bring yiddishe nachas to all those who loved him could be abducted so abruptly to be placed slowly but surely on the path towards utter rishus r"l.

Ever since that first exposure, which in retrospect seems to have been completely out of my control and so obviously controlled by the Yad Hashem, I continued to look for other things in my surroundings that could feed my unrelenting curiosity and subsequently give justification toward the satisfaction of anything my heart would desire. With every year that passed the urges got stronger and the venues with which to fulfill these urges seemed to never end.

Where were my parents during all this? They were doing everything they knew possible to stop my obvious acting out. Putting up restriction after restriction taking away computers from my immediate availability, watching my cell phone usage, monitoring who my friends were etc..(how I think the problem could have, and still can be **successfully** fixed among youth is for a different discussion) But no matter how they tried the desires never could be filled except through the obvious choice of evil with which I i think everyone within these discussion boards is familiar with. As I was finishing highschool, my rishus took a turn for the worst, I decided I wanted a way to be more and more like the animals I was so carefully observing, and chose for myself a mate to perpetrate my evil with. Having lived an extended amount of time committing heinous acts that simply put were the absolute opposite of anything a yiddishe relationship should be, there came a point in time where **BARUCH HASHEM** I had reached such a low that the only place to go was up. Not a day goes by where i am not thankful to The Aibishter for allowing me to hear the Bas Kol that went out that fateful day and said "its time to do teshuva."

It has been a few years since this momentous time in my life, and recovering has been a

*looonnnggg* difficult struggle. In my journey to get closer and closer to Hashem and know Him in all my journeys, I have been given the bracha to see small peiros of my efforts. I have been able to feel a part of the very serious yeshiva I attend and excell in the things most important to me in my Avodas Hashem. However, one of the hardest things throughout my growth process has been to find a successful manner to completley curb my acting out and control these desires in an effective manner. Walking in the streets is as scary as walking into the mouth of a lion and having parents who insist that I have my own laptop with unrestricted internet access doesnt exactly help either. Ive had long stints were I really feel as though ive found the guaranteed way to control myself and put the whole struggle out of mind, and for that time I feel like nothing could possibly get in my way of becoming the type of talmid chochom and oived Hashem that I trully desire to be. But somehow, someway, the most cunning creature on the planet, the yetzer harah, has been able to flex his devious muscles and throw me back into my desire seeking ways.

***And this is where all you gevaldige yidden come in,*** I have a computer which has to remain unrestricted for a multitude of reasons, which in it of itself is a difficult nissaion to which i have been able to be minatzeich, B"H, for long periods of time (longer than the 90 days). My real problem lies in the dormant yetzer that seems to wait for my feeling of tranquility from this sin and just then convince me its not so bad to surf around, and the next thing you know....

In short, what is the mindset for the recovered who experiences devastating relapses after what seems to be a real success?

I thank you all for your openness and willingness to share which has motivated me to share as well. While it may take me a lifetime to understand why The Ribbono Shel Oilam wanted this from me, after all i was so young and barely understood the concept of responsibility, but B"H i understand that this is why He created emunah. So that every beriah, no matter how incomprehensible the situation, will always have Him to rely on, that He always does everything

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Re: Shalom Aleichem! Plz read and be Mechazek :-)  
Posted by gothika - 24 Aug 2011 00:56

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[ATESHUYA1 wrote on 23 Aug 2011 20:28:](#)

Being that i have made the above observation, as crazy as this seems to me, I believe that my best step forward towards growth would actually be to stay away from this forum. As much as i have gained from reading these posts, I find myself coming back more and more to my computer wondering what the velt has to say about my addiction when I could just be away and thinking about all the helpful things you guys have already said and growing with them.

Anyways these are just my outlooks, but my "nogeih bedavar"ness might have an effect so let

I think that although checking into the forum many times a day can certainly be a waste of time, as you said, it's kind of like too much of a good thing. But on the other hand, it can certainly be a good thing. One just has to impose limits on oneself to get the right balance, eg. Every sunday one hour before maariv is my one hour weekly dose of chizuk. I am afraid that in your case, there is a risk at this stage that you might dissapear for a while, be flying high with all this chizuk, but then then chas v'shalom but I have to say it, come crashing down with a fall, once the yetzer gets to work at chipping away all the chizuk. On the other hand, you could just get that chizuk from the emails, so there is that to consider. I would think that if you were able to discuss the decision of balance with a rov who knows you well, who would be able to assess the balance then that would be your best shot.

Also I too am interested to know, what does the forum say about ateshuva1's question.

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Re: Shalom Aleichem! Plz read and be Mechazek :-)  
Posted by Dov - 25 Aug 2011 21:48

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Dear ATESHUVA1. You wrote:

So even though I have fallen a few times in the past year, immediatley i have been able to come to an understanding that these nefillas are not really who I am and not who I want to be. I have been able to set personal boundaries that keep me off my computer or off anything remotely dangerous to the point that these nefillas are really just small black spots in months of positive growth. I do not feel like they are the "hard falls" that I keep reading about from other posters like me. I really feel like I have no desire, and am completley disgusted by anything having to do with pornography.

**However I feel as though my problem lies in that even though i have B"H made significant changes in my attitude towards inappropriate material and acting out, there are times when the attitude alone cannot keep me away from the animalistic lustings that seem to utterly take over my ability to stay within my logical process and make the proper decisions.**

The way you write here makes me think that you are talking about two distinct things. There is the porn and masturbation issue that people here are mainly referring to, and then there is some kind of thing you call "the animalistic lustings" that you describe as totally messing-up your judgement process.

I would like to be very sensitive here, but must be a bit blunt for the sake of clarity. So please clarify: *Are* you masturbating, following women, looking up porn, touching women, exposing yourself, or *what*? In other words: exactly what **proof** do you have that these desires "*utterly take over my ability to stay within my logical process and make the proper decisions*"? What exactly does that **practically** mean to you?

Is it all and only in your *machshovoh*? Or is it in your behavior: do you *do* something 'bad', or not? And exactly what is the end of this sentence of yours (it matters):

My real problem lies in the dormant yetzer that seems to wait for my feeling of tranquility from this sin and just then convince me its not so bad to surf around, ***and the next thing you know....***  
, please? (emphasis is mine)

If you actually *do* 'bad' stuff, then I understand what you are writing above. But if it is strictly affecting your *machshovoh* and *madreigah* without physical manifestation in destructive behavior, then I ask you why you call that "utterly take over my ability to stay within my logical process and make the proper decisions."

Can you please clarify that?

And please also explain if there are two things here. Namely, the porn and masturbation that

you seem to have left behind you, and the 'animalistic desires' you also refer to - or if they are exactly and totally the same thing.

I am not convinced you are an addict, at all. Please clarify these things and I hope you will have an easier time knowing in what direction your next step must be.

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Re: Shalom Aleichem! Plz read and be Mechazek :-)  
Posted by ATESHUVA1 - 25 Aug 2011 22:10

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I apologize for the convoluted speech. I was trying to "**cleanly**" express the problem (????? ????  
????? ????- ???? ????? ?) in a way that would be understood by all but i guess in the process  
lost the clarity of my message.

To answer your question. Yes my machshovos lead to mayseh of moitzi zerah levatolah  
bemayzid. (Thats as graphic as i can get :-[)

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Re: Shalom Aleichem! Plz read and be Mechazek :-)  
Posted by Dov - 28 Aug 2011 03:58

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In other words, you used to use porn a lot more than you do now, and you used to masturbate  
yourself a lot more than you do now. Though you have done some growing up recently and  
have a better mentality toward schmutz, it is still a problem for you at times.

Am I putting it right?

If so, why in the world do you think you are an addict at all? I do not get it. What you describe  
sounds pretty normal to me.

I am serious. Can you explain to me what the big deal is with your problem? Do you actually expect to be lifted above this? Orgasm makes you feel great inside. Does anything even come close to that kind of pleasure for you, or not?

If there are other things that you can do that make you feel pleasure as intense, please list them here.

If the list is very short (or empty), I ask you: how do you expect to totally 'triumph' over your masturbation problem?

Saying "Oh, well, Hashem apparently does expect me to do so," is avoiding the question completely.

I hope you can do better than that. Please look over this post and answer all my questions rather than just the last one.

If you think I am a fruitcake, or insist on trying to figure out where I am going with all this and disqualifying these questions at the outset, that's your prerogative. But if you want to, please consider taking these steps if you really want to get somewhere different than where you are.

Hatzlocha, brother.

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Re: Shalom Aleichem! Plz read and be Mechazek :-)  
Posted by ATESHUVA1 - 28 Aug 2011 05:48

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[dov wrote on 28 Aug 2011 03:58:](#)

why in the world do you think you are an addict at all? I do not get it. What you describe sounds

pretty normal to me.

I am serious. Can you explain to me what the big deal is with your problem?

The answer to this question can be found by looking at the progressive flow of this thread up until now. I came in with my original post thinking the same as you, that it was not an addiction and that I just have some sort of habituation with the desire to act out and just needed a positive plan to completely remove any remnant of that habituation. But as soon as I voiced my opinion on these things I was made to believe that my premise was mistaken and that the only way to improve was to call it an addiction to lust.

[dov wrote on 28 Aug 2011 03:58:](#)

Do you actually expect to be lifted above this? Orgasm makes you feel great inside. Does anything even come close to that kind of pleasure for you, or not?

If there are other things that you can do that make you feel pleasure as intense, please list them here.

Yes i honestly do think many other things in my life are much more pleasurable than an orgasm. As corny as this may sound, most things that I enjoy in ruchnius are just as pleasurable (if not more due to their nitzchius). Handling a svora in the gemora, being metareitz a teif kasha, hissoirurus at a tisch, a gevaldik davening... the list goes on..Now, i'll give you that these pleasures are not the same type of immense pleasure I could partake of in lets say eating a 50\$ steak, (or the orgasm in this case) but these ruchnius pleasures have been able to keep me focused on my tachlis to the point that I rarely have the slightest craving for the gashmiusdik pleasure.

So why have I fallen into the yetzer harahs trap? I think its because he has the incredible koiach to convince me that an empty pleasure is not so empty and that pleasure is just pleasure so why not partake? He convinces me that i am not so great to be a poiraish maioilam hazeh and that the real me should just partake.

Is this me just saying "Oh, well, Hashem apparently does expect me to do so"? I dont think so, but maybe youll disagree.

I appreciate you asking these questions and I believe I have answered them honestly, and I hope that this might give clarity as to where i believe I am holding and how to fight off the yetzers "?????"s from now until moshiach

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Re: Shalom Aleichem! Plz read and be Mechazek :-)  
Posted by gothika - 28 Aug 2011 20:41

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dov, you mentioned the following:

[dov wrote on 28 Aug 2011 03:58:](#)

In other words, you used to use porn a lot more than you do now, and you used to masturbate yourself a lot more than you do now. Though you have done some growing up recently and have a better mentality toward schmutz, it is still a problem for you at times.

Am I putting it right?

If so, why in the world do you think you are an addict at all? I do not get it. What you describe sounds pretty normal to me.



I would like to ask you, since this behavior definitely applies to myself. I also used to masturbate a lot more than I do now. I was at a stage where I never even thought anything of it, despite doing everything else that a frum jew would do. I have been trying since around September 2009, to stop doing it, and I have met varied success over the past 2 years, more so in this last year. Nevertheless, I have never had even close to a 90 day stretch in these 2 years of trying to work on it.

(If you want more info on my story here is my intro page:

<http://www.guardyoureyes.org/forum/index.php?topic=4308.0>, and for more info on a particularly odd aspect to this problem of mine, here is a link to it:

<http://www.guardyoureyes.org/forum/index.php?topic=4309.0>)

My point is: If I haven't been able to stay clean, for these last 2 years, despite my desire to do so, isn't that precisely what we mean by "addict" I get that there can be different levels of addiction, but if I want to become clean, and yet simply have not done so, despite my full desire to be clean, then doesn't that make me an addict i.e someone who doesn't have **control** over my masturbation problem?

I am serious. Can you explain to me what the big deal is with your problem? Do you actually expect to be lifted above this? Orgasm makes you feel great inside. Does anything even come close to that kind of pleasure for you, or not?

Also what do you mean by "Can you explain to me what the big deal is with your problem?" I assumed that the big deal with ATESHUVA1's problem, and my problem too, since they are similar in some ways, is that masturbation is an aveira, and still doing it every now and then is in fact a huge problem. I don't expect to be lifted above this desire, without actual chemical intervention, however, I do hope to one day be completely rid of this behavior, meaning it is so under control that I haven't ever done it again, and I won't ever do it again, despite not really finding anything that can match the pleasure that one gets from it.

I clearly am misunderstanding what you mean by the above, so if you could clarify, it would

really help me.

Also I think that my definition of addict is supported by the discussion on the first page of this thread, <http://www.guardyoureyes.org/forum/index.php?topic=634.0> The person in question over there (Eye.nonymous) too mentioned that he wouldn't even fall once a month, and yet since he couldn't fully break free, everyone involved, (guardureyes, 7up, bardichev, etc) all seemed to be in agreement that even such a mild case such as it could be defined as an addiction. But I encourage anyone to double check if I am not reading too much into it.

I think that on that same page, bardichev said it particularly best

KUTAN EYE.N HEILIGER TZADIKKIM

THERE IS AN OLD HUNGARIAN SAYING

OUR GRANDMOTHERS USED TO SAY

MEN KEN NISHT ZAYN ABISSEL ALLAPUTTUSH!

(you cant be a little bit pregnant)

if you are addicted you are addicted

it is how you deal with the addiction

THE DECEPTION IS THAT THE YH TELLS US WE ARE REALLY NOT ADDICTED

AND WE CAN SNAP OUT OF IT ON A DIME

It seems to me, but really grain of salt and all since as you can see I am very new around here, the tactic of the yetzer harah is to tell us that we are fine, and just ignore it, whatever, but sooner or later, once you let yourself believe that it is only a little problem, its under control, the yetzer hara strikes, and somehow one finds oneself knee deep in shmutz, even if only for a few minutes, but the damage is done, and the 90 day habit clock thingy gets reset, all the pathways get reestablished and this can sometimes, and unfortunately just become a cycle; 1) Its a problem 2) Ok, its under control, I am on a higher level now, there is nothing to worry about 3) Oh no! How on earth did that happen? I just fell. Oh well start again, step 1 etc

Now just to be clear, I don't mean c"v to be calling anyone an addict who isn't, and each and every person himself, exclusively reserves the right to define who they are, and no one, especially not me of all people, can do that. However I just want to get clarity, for myself at least, dov, on what you mean by saying

I am not convinced you are an addict, at all.  
since as I have pointed out, I thought there was a fairly agreed upon idea of what an addict is, and it doesn't have to be someone who is totally at rock bottom, it can even be someone who falls only a few times a year, but a even few times a year clearly shows that the problem is not under control.

I hope I haven't offended anyone here, or misjudged them, and if I do I sincerely apologize, but I just want to get clarity on this whole, addict/not controversy around here.

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Re: Shalom Aleichem! Plz read and be Mechazek :-)  
Posted by Dov - 01 Sep 2011 23:19

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OK, so I posted something about this (sort of) already yesterday. Yes, absolutely, if the issur of zera levatola is that upsetting to you or anyone else, I see no reason that being a person who is "wreaking the destruction of such a cheit" could, in fact, consider his life unmanageable as a result of that.

I read the entire sefer Yesod Yosef (as suggested in the Kitzur) in order to try and do that, though. It did not work for me. How much power to help does just, plain guilt have, for the man who cannot stop? Not much, I believe. I think it only has the power to destroy, for him.

So you may say that "not being able to stop" simply proves that he does not have enough guilt yet. That his cheit does not hurt him enough yet at a personal level.

Theoretically, I agree. But practically I do not. I think people typically do not work that way. If it is all guilt, then we eventually create mechanisms to lie to ourselves about how it is "a mitzvah somehow" (Guard and I have witnessed that actually occurring with at least one case), or shift the blame to someone else (like shiksas, prusteh women, the "Yetzer Hora", the mother-in-law, the wife, etc), BEFORE it reaches a 'critical mass' that would force us to stop....or we commit suicide.....or we do something *suicidal*, like ruin someone *else's* life by molestation, violence, or such. I have seen these occur before. But **quit?** I doubt it. *Some* people, maybe, but *most?* I do not think so.

Like Iyov, he lost his house, his cattle and sheep, his money, and even his children....and he was still intact. He could still rely on the faith he had always had to 'deal with it'.

But 'the Soton' knew what would really make the difference, and 'asked' Hashem to do it. And he was 'right': When the pain went to **his own flesh** (tzora'as mam'ere), Iyov cracked. His old faith was not enough. He could not cope unless he developed a new, different and deeper faith in G-d...but he was obviously not ready to, so he cracked, R"l, (k'fi madreigaso). Then his three good friends messed with him for a while, till Hashem *gave* him that extra faith (with a \_\_\_\_\_), and then he was apparently fine (*even before* Hashem 'replaced' his stuff and kids and all) and lived happily ever after.

Same here....when the results of acting out our lust touch us in a **personally** devastating way, the truth comes out (like kiso kaaso or koso) that we are powerless and that our lives are unmanageable (by us, period). For some it takes loud demonstrations, and for some, it only takes quiet hints, like religious or mental/moral torture.

Oh, to be in that latter group! I certainly am not one of those. But better late than never, right?

Is that helpful, or not?

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