

Big Steps

Posted by Shlomo24 - 21 Oct 2014 17:59

i came to israel for y"t and i am staying here,
im going to be going to yeshiva here also.

Why did i switch? well i came here and i was hooked up with a bunch of guys who also have ssa just like me. that is something that i never experienced in america, simply because of logistics and availability. i israel there is a whole support group of guys who are willing to reach out and connect with each other. its amazing.
hey whats up yall? im in israel now, permanently

additionally, because the gay rights group has a much smaller contingent here, many therapists openly say that they can change ssa. something that i would say is close to nonexistent in america, b/c u could lose your job from saying that, especially if the media finds out. i started going to a therapist who specializes in ssa and so far it has been awesome.

another reason is that in israel the general atmosphere is an atmosphere that is dedicated to torah and growth in yiddishkeit (at least in yerushalayim). i personally see that the level of tznius is much higher here. in america it has become normal for women to wear skirts above the knee, i am not sure who made up that garbage halacha. in israel the percentage of women who are untznus is soooooo much lower.

also, i have started going to sa in israel. what is unique is that i would say 97% of the members are frum, not just that, in fact most of them are in yeshiva/kollel and look like yeshivish guys.

basically, the feeling i am getting is an overwhelmingly positive one. with a lot of seyata deshmaya i have arrived here. i actually have to thank gye, because i would have never gone to sa if not for gye. also i made contact with someone who has ssa through gye and he was the one who gave me the original numbers of other guys that i could talk to.

KOT! YTC!

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Re: Big Steps

Posted by Shlomo24 - 16 Dec 2016 05:53

I want to publicly thank my Higher Power for helping me so much along my path and with my recovery. I just received a voice note from a new friend of mine: He basically said that he thinks I'm one of the nicest, normal guys in our college. He said that he didn't find that a lot of other guys were like that but I am and he said that I'm always helping people and I should "keep it up."

After listening to that I had tears in my eyes. That is a huge miracle that someone told me that. There's no way that happens if I'm left to my own devices. I have been wanting something like that to happen for a my whole life. And with God's grace it has happened. This one is particularly acute because this friend has no idea that I'm in any program and he only knows me as a friend. Not to sound stuck-up, but at this point I'm used to people being attracted to me from a program basis and complimenting me on that. But in my social life that doesn't happen too often. Additionally, this guy is a popular and cool guy. I always had issues with those kind of guys in my past. I desperately wanted to be friends with them and I never knew the first thing of what to do. I always had a lot of friends, but they weren't "cool" so I felt inadequate (yes, I was an immature little kid in high school). So this means a lot to me.

Also, I'm on my journey in discovering my alcoholism or lack thereof (Spoiler: AA is for me), and I'm grateful that I have so many tools and resources from which to glean from. I could be in a totally different situation right now. Today I spoke with a guy who is sober for 20 years whom I met once. And I didn't even feel fear when calling him. That's another miracle of my recovery. I'm also able to honestly assess my character and connect to God and others on a daily basis. I could go on and on but I got a meeting at 6am tomorrow...

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Re: Big Steps

Posted by Shlomo24 - 27 Dec 2016 15:25

I had an interesting thought today: For those who are ADDICTED to lust, lust is not a yetzer hara. I used to think it was, and then I got over that. But then I was thinking that maybe I really do believe that it's just a desire that isn't used properly, much like a yetzer hara. I realized, however, that it's not a misplaced desire, it's a disease. The latest research points to the disease aspect of addiction, how there are genetic components and other factors that make it a disease. With the acceptance that it's a disease, or even without the acceptance, as it's a reality whether one wants to accept it or not, then this isn't a yetzer hara. It would be like calling cancer

or Alzheimers or diabetes a yetzer hara. If you want to get psychological, it would be like calling Schizophrenia or Bipolar Disorder a yetzer hara. This helps me realize that I'm not a bad person, I don't have a choice when it comes to lust. I have a disease that craves lust. So if I slip it's not a moral failing of mine, it's just a harsh reality.

I capitalized addiction before because for a non-addict this might just be a yetzer hara, and the treatment and ramifications are much different.

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Re: Big Steps

Posted by gibbor120 - 27 Dec 2016 18:43

I don't usually like to debate this stuff because it is not usually very productive. I'll just say that I view it kind of like diabetes. It is a disease, but a person can do things that make it more likely for him to get it. Diet, exercise (or lack thereof) etc. So perhaps, at the end of the day, he has lost control, must have a certain diet, check blood sugar, etc. But, he was not totally blameless. (I realize that this is only one type of diabetes)

Now, I'm not advocating feeling guilty. I actually think that is counter-productive. What was - was, and we have to deal with the new reality. The word "disease" just rubs me the wrong way, because it implies something that just "happens" to us. Not something we choose.

I realize as well, that many of us did not "choose" this in the classical sense. We were either young, didn't know any better, followed bad friends, were abused, or suffered other emotional trauma etc. We did this at a young age where perhaps we did not have full bechira. Again, I'm not saying we should all feel guilty and at fault. I just don't like comparing it to other diseases that we really have no control (or very little control) over.

If a guy smokes and gets lung cancer. We don't say, nebach he got a disease. We understand that happens when you smoke. When a person acts out, watches porn etc. it changes his brain - of course. And then it is much harder (sometimes nearly impossible) to stop - yes. But saying it is a disease, makes it sound like catching a cold or having allergies.

I will say that some people can watch porn, act out, etc and not get addicted and some do get

addicted. That may be due to genetics, environment, etc. But some people smoke until age 95, and never get lung cancer. I still would not recommend it.

I hope I was clear and didn't ruffle too many feathers. That is just the way I see it.

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Re: Big Steps

Posted by Shlomo24 - 27 Dec 2016 19:55

Only my former avatar could get its feathers ruffled.

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Re: Big Steps

Posted by gibbor120 - 27 Dec 2016 20:13

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Re: Big Steps

Posted by Shlomo24 - 27 Dec 2016 21:35

In all seriousness, I'm on the same page as you, gibbor. No chinks in the armor.

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Re: Big Steps

Posted by thanks613 - 28 Dec 2016 22:32

[gibbor120 wrote on 27 Dec 2016 18:43:](#)

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Hey Y'all!

Was just reading this and wanted to chirp in. Thanks for the post-

I recently heard a talk from an addictions counselor and he called it a "disease of choice". Both because it was often the person's ill guided choices that got him (or her) into the situation in the

first place (as you mentioned), and because technically it is the person choice to stay in the addictive process by continuing to engage in the addictive behavior. The disease part had to do with brain changes as you said, which, in part, mess with decision making abilities. Maybe it's kind of like the way we understand that kids don't have the capacity for delayed gratification because that part of their brain has not yet developed.

I had a funny moment in my head during the talk. The presenter put up these pictures of basically "This is your brain. This is your brain on drugs". He was showing brain scans, but all I could think about was a cracked egg on a frying pan.

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Re: Big Steps

Posted by Trouble - 28 Dec 2016 23:30

He must be on drugs; who eats such a skimpy portion of bacon?

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Re: Big Steps

Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 29 Dec 2016 04:08

Hey, i thought this was a frum site??

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Re: Big Steps

Posted by cordnoy - 29 Dec 2016 04:10

[Gevura Shebyesod wrote on 29 Dec 2016 04:08:](#)

Hey, i thought this was a frum site??

He is tryin' to get over his bakin' addiction.

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Re: Big Steps

Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 29 Dec 2016 04:19

Is that why i can't find a doughnut anywhere?

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Re: Big Steps

Posted by cordnoy - 29 Dec 2016 04:23

[Gevura Shebyesod wrote on 29 Dec 2016 04:19:](#)

Is that why i can't find a doughnut anywhere?

How many times did you frequent the coffee room today?

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Re: Big Steps

Posted by Shlomo24 - 02 Jan 2017 18:23

So last night was a bit of an emotional roller coaster for me. My mother hasn't been feeling well over the past 3 days, and she really needed to go to the hospital. For whatever reason, my father refused to let her go. But last night I reached a breaking point. I saw my mother sitting at the table, struggling to breath. She looked like she was in so much pain. I couldn't handle seeing her like that. I reached out to my family via our WhatsApp group and I begged someone to come over. My brother said he was going to come and before he came I burst in to tears. It was very hard for me to see my mother like that. I also was trying to listen to my HP's guidance because I didn't want to be manipulative but at the same time something needed to be done. When my brother arrived I pleaded with my parents to send my mother to the hospital. I was crying as this happened, which is a big step for me because it's hard for me to be vulnerable in front of others, especially family. My father wasn't exactly happy with me but he agreed for a

Hatzalah member to check her out. At that point the battle was half over because I knew once he came it was only a matter of time before she went to the hospital.

However, things kinda got worse. My mother was apparently in much worse shape than we thought. They hooked her up to oxygen and an IV. She even needed a special medicine just so she would be stable enough to go into the ambulance because they weren't sure she would make it safely without the medicine. That was really hard for me to hear. I was with my sister-in-law and I began crying. I was so scared at that moment. I just began saying Tehillim and I tried to focus on accepting God's will for whatever it was. Thank God she is doing much better now and she's stable in the hospital. She's going to be there for another day at least while they run tests to see what is wrong.

Why am I sharing all of this? Because there are some things that I find very important in this story. Firstly, I am so grateful that I'm sober. If I wasn't sober I wouldn't have been able to connect to my emotions and that is what ultimately convinced my father. I would have just been angry or pissed off and that definitely wouldn't have worked. I'm also grateful that I took a risk by being vulnerable in front of others, and that I was even able to do that in the first place. While I don't want this to happen ever again, as last night was quite scary, I have never felt more a part of the family than last night. My family was congratulating me for convincing my father when they have been trying for 3 days already. I felt very validated and supported by them. I'm the youngest and because of my addiction I haven't been the most mature and sane member of the family. Slowly but surely I am being let back in more.

I'm also grateful that I wasn't alone last night and I was able to share what happened with others and make calls to other fellows. God was with me and I was able to connect with him. They say that God is the "Gift Of Desperation" and I sure as hell felt that way when I was saying tehillim last night.

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Re: Big Steps

Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 02 Jan 2017 18:50

She should have a Refuah Sheleima Bekorov.

As painful and scary as this whole thing must have been, it's awesome that you were able to see how good things can come from even the most stressful situations. May the progress

continue.

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