

the yetzer hora keeps beating me  
Posted by ataglance12345 - 02 Jul 2015 15:45

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First time poster...So here is my issue. I have run out of any ability to stop the following behavior: I will go to a bar. First mistake. Then I will drink too much. Then I will start flirting with women. Then I will sometimes go to a dance club from the bar. Then I will pay for services...all types. I have also been known to sometimes have had actual relations with these woman as well, sometimes quasi-prostitutes other times just loose women that I meet at a bar. Then I usually will go to a nearby restaurant and eat everything on the menu that is not kosher. Last night I had a bacon cheeseburger, french fries, pancakes and steak and eggs. Then I go home and go to bed. The next day I will feel horrible, beg Hashem for forgiveness, maybe go to the mikvah to make myself feel clean, and then stop for a week or two. Then I will go to a bar, and the whole thing starts over again. Oh, and let's not forget that I will access pornographic sites as well and sometimes finish myself that way. Talk about a yetzer hora. I am not sure what else I could be doing that is worse. I am a Shomer Shabbos Jew. Obviously, I know that what I m doing is terribly terribly wrong, but I cannot seem to stop. Even when I stop for months at a time, I still go back to this behavior. And it is getting worse. Just as an aside, when I am sober, I do not engage in any of this behavior, but am a good Jew, learning and davening, keeping kosher etc. I always seem to drink to drunkenness at the bar as well. Binge drinking they call it. I do not drink at all during the day and can actually go weeks without a drink. Obviously, I feel like a horrible hypocrite. On a "postive " note, I have never had a long term affair with another woman, only one time sexual trysts. Of course, I often fantasize about having long term affairs with my coworkers or people I meet. I am a basket case, living a double life, and fully aware of the spiritual damage I am doing to myself and my family. I keep praying to Hashem not to punish my family on account of my sins, as that is my worst fear. I also find myself wishing that I was dead after these incidents, but have only thought about it and said it to myself, I have never attempted to take my own life, but it scares me that I could if I get so low. Oh, and lets not forget how many times I have driven while drunk, clearly breaking the law. I always pray to Hashem to get me home safely and not let me be pulled over and arrested while driving drunk. How is that for scary stuff. So, what am I? Alcoholic, sex addicted, or just a creep with a nasty Yetzer Hora that he can't control. G-d, writing this down and actually seeing it on paper scares the daylights out of me. Help! What should I do?

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Re: the yetzer hora keeps beating me  
Posted by ataglance12345 - 05 Nov 2015 19:37

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No, of course I think about them, I should have been more specific. I cannot stop my mind from wandering. What it seems is that the alcohol is the trigger that allows these thoughts to unfortunately translate in to action. En Vino Veritas they say in latin, in wine truth. Obviously, my "taayvahs" are deep and many, but B"H it seems that I am able to control myself as long as my mind is lucid. As soon as I would get a "buzz" going in the wrong environment, all H-LL would break loose as I have described in all its gory detail above. Please do not envy me, (don't want

to make hte Y"H even stronger, right? ) I am still a VERY flawed person morally and am constantly doing teshuvah for my many many aveiros. I don't have any tricks for you to control yourself...all of them have been spoken about in one way or another on this site. I found the Taphsic section to be quite illuminating and really focused. Give it a look see. We are in a constant battle, we will never win, but only try to keep the injuries and collateral damage to a minimum. I wish you luck my friend and much success!

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Re: the yetzer hora keeps beating me  
Posted by ataglance12345 - 05 Nov 2015 19:59

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I will also relate that yesterady, when I was able to overcome my urge to go to a bar, I felt really really strong and quite elated. It seems their may be a lot of happiness to be found by kicking the Y"H around

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Re: the yetzer hora keeps beating me  
Posted by gibbor120 - 05 Nov 2015 20:21

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I wouldn't kick him around, he may fight back. I'd rather just turn and walk away.

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Re: the yetzer hora keeps beating me  
Posted by ataglance12345 - 05 Nov 2015 21:32

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Excellent advice. To challenge him is to lose.

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Re: the yetzer hora keeps beating me  
Posted by yiraishamaim - 05 Nov 2015 21:59

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So very true. Remember the approach is letting go and allowing Hashem to fight the battle.

So what good feelings and good sense of self can we have - if in reality Hashem did it. Well firstly hakol bashamayim chutz miyiras shmaim. We made the choice to humble ourselves and give it over to him. That's not a cowardly decision. it takes emunah and bitachon. - many have yet to take that fundamental step and without it I believe they can't make it for any significant amount of time.

But I find the biggest thrill is the following. Think for a moment about the greatness of Hashem. Of course we can't really get it but try for 30 seconds.

nature -he is the creator, sustainer and supervisor of the world. Which includes the cosmos, he is beyond comprehension. and as Dovid Hamelech writes "who is man that you should pay any attention.

YET, HE CARES SO MUCH ABOUT LITTLE "OL ME THAT HE DIVINELY INTERVENES AND MAKES MIRACLES FOR MY PERSONAL SOBRIETY AT EVERY MOMENT- IS THERE A GREATER HONOR POSSIBLE??

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Re: the yetzer hora keeps beating me  
Posted by cordnoy - 05 Nov 2015 22:18

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Serenity will find the quote in the white book where it says that the mighty and the courageous ones are those who have faith.

I believe it is towards the end.

There must be sources in chazal to that effect as well.

B'hatzlachah

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Re: the yetzer hora keeps beating me  
Posted by serenity - 06 Nov 2015 02:08

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I don't see the reference

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Re: the yetzer hora keeps beating me  
Posted by Dov - 09 Nov 2015 05:54

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This is a very long post and not only intended to be a response to your comment, ataglance. It's got a lot added in from discussions on the Desperados call and previous posts, and more Torah-related than most of my posts appear to be. Hope you can tolerate it and maybe even enjoy it!

[ataglance12345 wrote:](#)

Ugh. This struggle is so hard. Maybe I can just go OTD and forget about it. lol Have you noticed all the books coming out about people going OTD from their Chasidic background? It is something of a trend. Bizarre.

What does it mean to be Jewish, in its essence, to me, is fighting and controlling the very strong natural urges to engage in vastly immoral activities. Now go out and learn.

I hear your concern loud and clear, ataglance12345...

Since you brought it up, let's talk a bit about good Jews and try be"H to address your concern. This is going to be a bit more Torah-sounding than most of my posts. It will also not be theory and ideas, but rather based on practice in my own life, and those of my peers in recovery. Also, there will be a few small tangents so please try to bear with me on this. There will be a flow -

basically from avodas Hashem to Sobriety and Recovery, ending with some ideas about the 3rd step. Thanks for your posting, feel free to ignore everything I wrote and not comment on it at all if you don't feel like it...and have fun!

The Shlo"h hakadosh, Ba'al haTanya, Sfas Emess, and many others explain the Midrash that basically says there are 2 general kinds of tzaddikim: Those like Avrohom avinu and those like Noach. It's cool that both were the tenth generation (see Pirkei Avos) becs each was a unit of the 'Yesod and Malchus' (9&10) necessary to begin a new world. You know that Yesod is the power to connect Shomayim with Aretz (as in "tzaddik achid Sh'maya v'ara"), giving with receiving, light with dark, G-d's Will with it's being put into action, etc. It is symbolized on the small scale by husband being honest with his wife (real intimacy is only present with full honesty, and *it* actually creates the intimacy itself). The presence of Yesod+Malchus is the only way to create a new world - and on the small scale, to create a new child...who is 'an entire world' (olam molei), as we know. OK, on to the point...

[Incidentally, Noach, who was [b]born[/b] mahul, was a tzaddik (Yesod olam) and his Malchus (typically represented by a k'li) was the actual Teivah itself; Avrohom Avinu was the *ba'al* haBris (by **giving** himself one) and his Malchus was Sarah - on the small scale - and the entire world - on the larger scale. Avrohom was the 'reboot' of Adam, as Noach could have been. And Chaza"l tell us Adam actually seemed to fill the entire world, as though it was a k'li for him...kind of like the teiva was for Noach, who went all over it all day and night feeding the animals. This stuff will fit into the discussion but now back to our regular programming...]

They each had their own very different styles of avodah. And no, Noach was *not* just the immature or 'goyishe' one vs. Avraham being the 'Yid' one. Rather, the Shlo"H hakadosh (and after him, the Ba'al haTanya and others) explain that both of these extraordinary men lived with an avodah-style and goals that are relevant to real Jewish tzaddikim and all Jews even today, depending on what's right for each yid.

Now certainly, '**ataglance**', your implication is right that Avrohom Avinu's approach is the preferable one in a classical sense - the one that we as Jews hold up as our banner! But then you *defined* success at being truly *Jewish* at all (or 'on the derech'), as "overcoming and controlling" evil desires. So what I am gonna say might be a rather tall order for you to consider: Not all yidden are Avrohom's. Some are more like Noachs. In fact, you may very well be one. It's possible. And though it is likely that neither you nor I come up to Noach's toenails in terms of actual avodah...this is not my point here. My point is about ultimate goals for avodah: What is my personal goal in daily life, life in general, and specifically my avodah that fills and defines it all. I will explain exactly what I mean by this, be"H, and thanks for the patience.

Noach is called by the Zohar hakadosh: '**Shabbos**'. In contrast, the 3 avos are connected with the Yomim Tovim. Shabbos is the mekor of all kedusha of time...does this indicate that Noach could be higher than the avos? Can't be. We frum yidden of all types are certainly bigger fans of Noach than of Avrohom! But Don't you know that Shabbos is greater than Yomim Tovim? Please consider setting what you think aside so that you give me a chance to make my point. How do we work this out?

Shabbos is hisbatlus to the shoresh - there is no tikkun on Shabbos, no birur of nitzotzos (See Bnei Yisoschor and Sfas Emess). All is fine on Shabbos - it is a glance at the future, perfected world (Sfas Emess says this is why taking medicine and refuah is generally assur on Sabbos). And this is why zivug is encouraged on Shabbos, why we focus on ta'anug and eat instead of work, and why we make no discussion nor even *bakashos* for weekday needs. It's a different world - it's the way all is *supposed* to be. Relax, "k'ilu kol melacht'cho asuya" - behave as though all your work is done," Chaza"I tell us. Done? But who *did* it?! We surely didn't finish all our tikkunim and all our labors! But it's ok, cuz on Shabbos there is menucha - real menucha. We are done - it's only G-d. That is what Noach is about: G-d's got everything taken care of for you and me. It's Shabbos. Melocha has no place on Shabbos because there is really nothing you or I *can* add! It's G-d's day, as it says in the Torah, "Shabbos laShem Elokecha," not mine to change or improve. And this is why the Torah refers to Noach as walking **with** G-d ("Es (with) hoElokim his-halech Noach"). He isn't about pushing, influencing, struggling, reaching out, changing people or things to make them better, or being mashpiya. Rather, his focus all day and in every situation is on accepting and flowing naturally *with* Hashem's Will. This is not about being *frum*, really. It's not primarily about *doing* Hashem's Will, but *accepting* His Will for me. And Hashem's Will is mostly demonstrated by how the day turns out and by things that happen to me - not by the Halocha. What is He doing with and for us today **is** His Will. Rich, poor, fat, skinny, have kids or not, job, boss's mood today, kids teachers, traffic and each and every one of the NY drivers who will affect me...all of it orchestrated to perfectly accomplish His Will for me today. Noach lived in synch w that. It was all 'just right'. He *was* Shabbos, himself. It's why he was **born** mahul - G-d took care of him naturally. He was not about 'beating' anything. Dependence on G-d. As Chaza"I tell us, "rabim mach'ovim lorosho - v'habote'ach baShem, Chesed yisovevenhu" and they say, "*afilu rosho ubote'ach baShem, Chessed y'sovevenhu.*" This is the philosophy of Surrendering our lives to G-d that is referred to in all 12 step Programs and that the sober sheigetzes and shiksas in AA and NA taught us by their example, one day at a time. And many Jewish tzaddikim (and non-tzaddikim, as well) function in just this way - but for religious and moral reasons. That is, **surrendering** - to Hashem. *Mesiras nefesh* - surrendering (giving over) of our *will* and our lives to Hashem. [nefesh can mean 'life/soul/self', but can also mean 'will', as it does many times including "im yesh es nafsh'chem" meaning, "if you will it".] In recovery we do it for survival and to keep our sanity and serenity, not to be good. This is for keeps, not just 'the best way'. And it is one general path in avodas Hashem.

One 'downside' of this path is that it isn't very cool-sounding - except on paper. No real glory of victory in beating of the YH or evil...or anybody. We do not compromise on our values - but we also stop fighting against the life Hashem brings to us. It's central pillar is Humility; Hachno'oh.

Living at complete peace with G-d and His will as it expresses itself in the circumstances of my life, right now and with no end. No bargaining with it and figuring it out how to beat it. No saving the world, me, or anybody, unless He saves it. This derech isn't for sissies. Egotism and self-centeredness have no foothold here. Noach isn't particularly worried about sin the way the Avos were worried "shema yigrom hacheit". For him it's 'ah gantz yorr Shabbos'; G-d's raising us up and taking care of us so we will do just fine if we just follow the simple directions.

This path is gonna be chosen by either the very, very holy (nobody reading this, and that's not an insult) - or by the very, very broken (addicts are one example). In this derech, anything that *appears* to be a victory is recognized as only G-d's victory, not the man's. It's the path of many tzaddikim who were known to say verbally, "Ich Shik't arois dem s'char en gantzen!" before performing a mitzvah. It's not me and not my victory. I want no part in schar or victory. It is G-d making me able to do this and His Will is all that matters - were s'char talk to start here, it would all get flushed down the toilet. The goal of it is to eventually grow less and less significant, so as to eventually become **transparent**. *Aspaklaria hame'ira* means not a *bright* lens, but a *clear lens*. No ego left to cloud things up, cuz it's not about me and never will be. Moshe Rabeinu was called *aspaklaria ham'ira* because his humility meant 'nachnu mah' - he wasn't even *there*, as far as he was concerned. No ego in the way - so G-d's Will flows cleanly through such a person into the world. The goal here is that G-d shines right through me and I leave practically no recognizable signature of my own except as a window for G-d to shine perfectly through to everyone and everything around me, making the world better and more connected to Him. Kind of like Aharon, 'shelo shinah' - he didn't do his avodah leaving an 'Aharonesque' signature to it. Rather, it was like G-d's Will was done in each mitzvah *w/o Aharon even being noticeable*. "I want Him to use me and all that I do with my relationships, my body, and my talents to express His Will. That's good enough for me." This is not a halocha issue, it is a spiritual one. It does not start with 'allegiance to mitzvos and fighting my yetzer hora', but rather with *not demanding to be right* any more - not demanding to 'make my mark', to get s'char, or to 'win'. Very much like what a great talmid said about his rebbi the Alter of Slabodka, "His *goal* in life included working with so much tzniyus, that when he passed away, no one would even be aware that anyone such as him ever existed. He wanted to succeed but it was not about him, at all." Amazing hisbatlus.

**And we addicts don't choose real hisbatlus because we are holy enough to *want* it...we choose it because we are broken enough to *need* it.** It's the opposite of egotism, and also probably very different than why the tzaddikim choose it. They actually *want* it! We just *need* it. In practical terms (not religious ones at all) it is the 3rd step, as explained by Chuck C in "A New Pair of Glasses" and in all of **Sandy B's** AA talks (you can hear them on the web, a great listen. Look up "Odomtology on Youtube, if you OK with Youtube at all, and "Sandy B."). Openly admitting that we drunks and perverts are only giving up everything to G-d because we have to - because we are too sick not to - is actually quite a lucky strike for us. It gives us a shot at a shred of humility. And as long as we avoid saying "I am Recovered" or "I *used* to act out," we are pretty much guaranteed to hang onto that precious little bit of humility...and our sobriety.

This takes a lot of work and time and rubbing elbows with real live people who are doing this crazy-sounding stuff. We do not get it naturally, and when we think we got it, we haven't...there is probably always gonna be more and we will never make it all the way in this lifetime. Probably nobody has completely done a 3rd Step - that is precisely why it reads, "Made a decision to turn our will and lives over to the care of G-d, etc.", rather than "We turned or will and our lives over to the care of G-d, etc." If we have the humility to do it *at all*, then we have the humility to admit we will probably never do it *all the way*.

So are you a Noach yid, or an Avrohom Avinu yid? We all know what you **want** to be - I know of many yidden who have been doing pushups practically since they were fetuses to save the world and get every yid to put on tefilin, convince everybody to be this way or think thus-and-so, etc, etc. So it demands great humility to be honest about surrendering to G-d this way, for one who needs it. It really seems to fly right in the face of what you expressed as your view of what a Jew *is!* But the psychological/emotional cost of fighting who one actually is, is demonstrated sadly well by many yidden. Our arrogance insists deep down inside us where we don't show it to anybody...that we must be the 'Rebbe' ourselves, or as high as he may be to G-d, to be the Hero of the Play (and Tanya itself refers to the fact that your neshamas shoshonim may be the 'heel' of the body that represents Knesses Yisroel, while the neshama of a particular tzaddik might be from the head, etc., the point being that this needs to be *accepted*, not argued with). True acceptance is far from most of us. There are many things one can fight or escape from...but there is no escape from himself, ever. If there are things we do not like about ourselves, our bodies, or our lives, it can drive us really nuts. We all lack the humility necessary for this stuff - especially if we are the sexually perverted type. Sexaholics like myself. As frum people, we often flirt with humility, but for real recovery from real problems that's not good enough. But eventually, our recovery makes some humility a must and Hashem helps us have enough of it to get by...humiliation beats us into submission, basically. We kick our own butts with our 'indulging' and the crushing weight of living our double lives.

In terms of connecting with others, this derech naturally relies on attraction rather than promotion (see AA's "12 & 12" page 180 for the whole AA concept of this). Even though Bittul *sounds* cool, most young, wide-eyed bochorim generally *despise* this path when it comes to actually living it. Surrendering the entire struggle - and all the glory of 'beating the yetzer hora' - is a real downer to them...*even if it means they will be free of sinning!* Older avreichim tend to be more open to it (as described beautifully in the first Me'or Voshomesh in B'midbar re: midlife crisis and the acceptance of a quieter, deeper and slower avoda due to failure in youth), and that's precisely why the success rate for adolescents is so dismal in recovery. See, Noach was His is certainly a valid derech even today, as the sforim say. Many tzaddikim have lived by it, and many have chosen another path.

Now, the other path (the Avrohom one) is really G-d doing everything, too! It's just that He makes it *appear* as though the yid is contributing a whole lot to it, fighting, manipulating his



environment, etc. Sfas Emess says Hashem makes it seem that way because the guy healthier and on a higher madreigo. Heh...another opportunity for our gayvoh to flame up...even though it's *still* Hashem all the way!

Now, even though recovery in actual practice has nothing inherently to do with either religion or Teshuvah, many recovering addicts come to understand this surrender and the 'walking *with* G-d' (rather than struggling with Him) stuff, well. The guy who started frum, might never let go of his stubborn insistence to be the vanquisher of the yetzer hora. Nu. If he is an addict, he won't get very far. Hence the many thousands of very good, very frum guys who slog through this 'bitter struggle' for decades and decades, never getting far.

As far as I can tell, the extent of my success living, serenity, sanity, is entirely dependent on my inner life, not on my circumstances. Once I am sober, my inner life is then able to become completely based on my 3rd Step. The rest of the steps are only there in order to activate my 3rd Step, nothing else. And accepting G-d's Will does NOT primarily refer to a commitment to 'stop sinning' with sperm-wasting or with anything else. Just as surely no alcoholic would say that 'surrendering our will and lives to His care' **means** not drinking! For sobriety is what the *1st and 2nd* Steps are about, not the 3rd. The 3rd Step is only about my attitude toward Life and is the linchpin of the entire recovery. Sobriety ain't Recovery. Sobriety just enables recovery (like breathing enables living but is far from how we would describe our *lives*). Recovery of what we lost since we started to drink/act out our lust. We stopped growing up when we started masturbating ourselves at 10 years of age, or whatever age. This is far bigger than whether I am keeping a particular rule or halocha. Obedience to Him isn't the *point* of Step 3 - though I assume it should *motivate* me toward obedience...and does.

I trust Him more than a normal person needs to BECAUSE I am an addict and unable to run my own life, and I've got to allow Him to hold the steering wheel. If I were a normal Jew and not an addicted one, I'd probably not come to this. Perhaps I would not need it. I'd be able to do what most of us do and use G-d when I want Him and ignore Him when I don't.

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Re: the yetzer hora keeps beating me  
Posted by cordnoy - 09 Nov 2015 06:14

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cliff notes anyone?

there seemed to be tons of good stuff.

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Re: the yetzer hora keeps beating me  
Posted by serenity - 09 Nov 2015 06:57

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Dov. thank you so much for sharing this here in writing. It will take me a few sessions to read it due to my ADD, but I'm glad to have that opportunity. I heard you say this on the call a while back and couldn't really remember all the nuances. Even the little that I did recall helped me a lot.

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Re: the yetzer hora keeps beating me  
Posted by Shlomo24 - 09 Nov 2015 19:15

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OH LORD! I did not read it... I second cordnoy's notion

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Re: the yetzer hora keeps beating me  
Posted by Dov - 09 Nov 2015 19:36

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Don't blame you a drop. I just needed to make room in my brain for more nahrishkeit, so naturally some of the good stuff had to go...

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Re: the yetzer hora keeps beating me  
Posted by Dov - 09 Nov 2015 22:58

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But is **ataglance** gonna read and think it over? I just re-read his 1st post on this thread...he's no lightweight. It's funny to read abt him mulling over the idea of maybe going off the derech, as a

joke. Hey, ataglace, you chap the issue here chaver? I can relate to you so well because you are a supposedly-frum, married yid who gets drunk, screws people, and eats lots of treif, then can threaten 'going OTD' - and still states that "the very definition of being a Jew is overcoming desires".

You hearing the goofiness here? That's why I relate so much to you. You are not alone. And there is an answer other than pretending we are really frum or really only have one path (the Avrohom path or death)...especially given the fact that neither of your double lives are working too well for you at present. I relate to that too and have not forgotten what that's like.

No pity here, just plenty of brotherly empathy.

Hatzlocha chaver!

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Re: the yetzer hora keeps beating me  
Posted by ataglace12345 - 18 Nov 2015 17:51

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Thank You Dov.

I quickly read your lengthy post. I will try to re-read it in more detail next time. I want to reflect more on your recent post.

*But is ataglace gonna read and think it over? I just re-read his 1st post on this thread...he's no lightweight. It's funny to read abt him mulling over the idea of maybe going off the derech, as a joke. Hey, ataglace, you chap the issue here chaver? I can relate to you so well because you are a supposedly-frum, married yid who gets drunk, screws people, and eats lots of treif, then can threaten 'going OTD' - and still states that "the very definition of being a Jew is overcoming desires".*

*You hearing the goofiness here? That's why I relate so much to you. You are not alone. And there is an answer other than pretending we are really frum or really only have one path (the*

*Avrohom path or death)...especially given the fact that neither of your double lives are working too well for you at present. I relate to that too and have not forgotten what that's like.*

*No pity here, just plenty of brotherly empathy.*

*Hatzlocha chaver!*

Please expand on it, I am not really chapping it to be honest. So what is the "other answer" to the fact that my double lives are not working too well on either side.

And what I meant by going "otd" is not so much in practice such as being seen as a frei Yid in public, but in not feeling guilty about my aveiros.

Now, with that said, I have been making some progress, as Kislev is here and I have not been to a bar nor engaged in hashtas zera since before Elul. Yasher Koach to me beli ayin hora.

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