

Poll: What was your Primary Source of Recovery?

Posted by cordnoy - 22 Nov 2015 02:44

There has been lots of chatter in various groups regardin' methods of recovery that truly work.

I would like to see the results of this (somewhat crude) poll; perhaps it might be beneficial for people.

Now, for the sake of this poll, let us say that "recovery" means over 100 days clean/sober by any definition.

Perhaps some would argue that this is not a true barometer, for that is not yet recovery.

True, but.....for the sake of this poll, we will do it this way.

A bit of explanation of the choices:

1. GYE - you never went to SA (and ya' never know; perhaps this can be used as a GYE ad).
2. SA - although you were on GYE and made headway, your recovery was based on the meetin's and sponsors.
3. Live People - perhaps you were on GYE and maybe you frequented SA, but it was the interaction with real/live people with known first names and last names that tipped you over the edge.
4. Other - please explain; was it a combo effect? Was it the readin' of the books? Was it mussar?

This is not scientific and perhaps will need to be redone.

The Dr. did somethin' similar recently, so perhaps he can add to this as well.

Thank you

b'hatzlachah

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Re: What was your Primary Source of Recovery?
Posted by cordnoy - 22 Nov 2015 02:48

Hey!

Thanks for this poll.

My answer is # 4; other.

The reasonin' bein' is that although I was clean/sober several times (over 90) with just GYE, I felt the "white knucklin'" and although i went to SA, I fell afterwards as well. T'was the combo effect of GYE, SA and the interaction with live people that brought me to where I am today.

That bein' said, I still need lots of work, and the white/big books are an integral part of that.

b'hatzlachah to all.

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Re: What was your Primary Source of Recovery?
Posted by skeptical - 22 Nov 2015 03:51

I chose #1 - GYE.

The reason I chose this is because GYE showed me that there is a community of really frum Jews, just like me, who are going through the same things as me. They have many of the same kinds of struggles, the same kinds of concerns, and the same kinds of (sometimes critical) thoughts as I do.

When first joining GYE, I only read the forums. I had no real intentions to stop my behavior, and often I would read what people had to say while I was actively involved in that behavior. Though I was very very skeptical during that time, I think that I was absorbing the messages and it helped shape my mind so that when I was ready to take the leap to living a clean life, I had the framework to actually be able to do it.

I've never gone to an SA meeting and don't do anything programmy. That being said, I am very familiar with the steps (from hanging around here, and rarely listening into a GYE phone conference) and I'd be lying if I said that I haven't adopted some of the 12-step concepts.

I am a Lubavitcher chossid and have grown up with hearing the Chassidic approach to life. Many of the ideas on the GYE forum, and many of the ideas from the 12-step program mesh with that way of life. As well, I often listen to shiurim based on Chovos Halevovos, and other sources, which put an emphasis on hashgacha protis, which helps me to recognize that Hashem is really running the show, and I can relax while He does so.

I began chatting with people on GYE, and then I started posting on the forum. This allowed me to talk to myself while helping others, which cemented ideas in my mind, and it also helped me form really deep relationships with some of the people on the other side of the screen, while we shared our experiences with each other. When I first came to GYE, I never would have fathomed that I would ever in a million years voluntarily meet people in person to discuss these issues. Yet, having established these relationships, I have time and time again met with fellow GYE members, I am in touch with many on a daily basis, of whom I know their first and last names, they know mine, and they are of my closest friends.

While I've never experienced the feeling of long-term white knuckling, there have been setbacks over the past 3 years being on GYE. For each of those setbacks, GYE has given me the support system to get back up and to keep moving in the right direction. Therefore, I believe that GYE is my primary source of recovery.

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Re: What was your Primary Source of Recovery?
Posted by peloni almoni - 22 Nov 2015 03:56

[skeptical wrote:](#)

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this post made my night.

● **Warning: Spoiler!**

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Re: What was your Primary Source of Recovery?
Posted by Watson - 22 Nov 2015 12:23

IMO it's a loaded question. 'Recovery' suggests recovering from an illness, i.e. a real addiction. Many people who have become sexually sober through GYE were not really addicts in the first place. They didn't 'recover,' they learnt how to control themselves.

It's so difficult to compare methods because GYE has a mixture of addicts and non-addicts. This creates real confusion here from time to time. Sometimes addicts see the methods used successfully by non-addicts and think those methods will work for them. They can be trying this for years without real success and never identify the real problem. See my thread for a perfect example of this.

Conversely, some non-addicts are very attracted to the 12 steps and the idea of powerlessness and incorrectly label themselves addicts, causing further confusion.

I didn't post the results of my poll for exactly this reason. It seemed clear to me that the respondents were a mixture of addicts and non-addicts so the results (were fantastic from each individual who responded but as a poll) were at best unhelpful, at worst downright confusing.

IMO:

- If you're a real addict (you have an illness of the mind, body and spirit and) you need the 12 steps, the first of which (step zero) is to turn off your computer, pick up a phone and call SA.

- If you're not an addict (you're a regular guy who made some mistakes) how should I know, ask someone else.

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Re: What was your Primary Source of Recovery?
Posted by cordnoy - 22 Nov 2015 12:57

[9494 wrote:](#)

[cordnoy wrote:](#)

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b'hatzlachah

If I am understanding you correctly Cords, one of the purposes of this poll is that people who are not successful can get an idea of what has been successful for others. The only problem is how are these "unsuccessful" people who have never reached 100 days (such as myself) supposed to see the results of the poll???

Unless they are going to be published after a while - that would make total sense.

Can't you see the results?

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Re: What was your Primary Source of Recovery?
Posted by skeptical - 22 Nov 2015 12:57

Watson -

If you want to know if I'm an addict, ask my wife.

She told me that I was an addict for many years before I joined GYE, and I refused to accept it. She threatened to leave me if I wouldn't get help (she actually did one night) and I told her to go ahead.

I read your post to her, and she said, "I wish I could believe that you're not an addict." I asked, "So why can't you believe that?" She answered, "Because either you're an addict, or you're the world's biggest creep."

Bottom line is, SA is not the only answer, even for addicts. While SA likes to make everyone think so, such polls are not even allowed there, and the available stats show that a very small percentage of attendees find long-term sobriety without additional methods. A book by Dr. Patrick Carnes, an expert in sex addiction, says that therapy, the 12-steps, and support groups (online support groups are actually praised in the book), are helpful, and better if combined.

You know what? I'll just quote the book: "We also want to stress the importance of combined therapies. Too often, people seeking help for compulsive or addictive online sexual behaviors will select only one source of help, such as a Twelve Step group, group therapy, or seeing a therapist. This strategy can work successfully, but using a combination of therapies increases the likelihood of your success. A comprehensive treatment approach is best. We believe that using individual and group therapy along with recovery groups and medication, if appropriate, is the most effective recovery strategy."

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Re: What was your Primary Source of Recovery?
Posted by cordnoy - 22 Nov 2015 13:02

[Watson wrote:](#)

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- If you're not an addict (you're a regular guy who made some mistakes) how should I know, ask someone else.

Thank you for this comment. I mentioned to some fellows early this morning that there is a big difference between addicts and non addicts, but to pose the question that way, would be too confusing.

I also mentioned like you said that there are some who believe that the only way for an addict to recover is thru the twelve steps, and for some reason, the conversation went south.

Good doctor, couldn't you take your survey, and then ask the people if they think they were addicted?

I might.

Thank you

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Re: What was your Primary Source of Recovery?
Posted by cordnoy - 22 Nov 2015 13:07

[9494 wrote:](#)

[cordnoy wrote:](#)

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Oh, it seems you can only see results after you vote....As of now, it is.....

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Thanks

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Re: What was your Primary Source of Recovery?
Posted by Watson - 22 Nov 2015 13:46

[skeptical wrote:](#)

Bottom line is, SA is not the only answer, even for addicts. While SA likes to make everyone think so

You're quite right, SA is not the only solution. My apologies for sounding like it was.

SA does NOT like everything to think that SA is the only answer. At every meeting it is read out clearly that there are other groups of recovery.

I feel there are people here who are chronic slippers and are blissfully unaware of that ugly fact. After every relapse there is some version of "but it's OK cos I'm making progress." While there's some truth to that, for how long is it OK to relapse and call it progress? For me it took about 3 years. 3 painful years.

If they were part of a group, someone would be able to call them out on their BS. Not to upset them or feel superior, to help them and save their lives. But they're not in a real group, they're here on GYE sitting behind a computer listening to these messages from others who call themselves addicts but really are not (I don't mean you specifically Skep, I'm talking in general terms).

Remember all those members who used to post on this forum regularly and have now gone? Why did they leave? Is it because they recovered and have not acted out since they left, or did they give up trying? Could we have done any more to help those people? Another useful poll, although impossible to conduct, would be to find out how those guys are doing now.

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Re: What was your Primary Source of Recovery?
Posted by cordnoy - 22 Nov 2015 14:14

Watson, i love you dearly, but somethin' here smells funny.

I have been hearin' from SA fellows that SA and the 12 steps is the only way for an addict.

Then, they are called on it, and they back out.

Your two posts were within minutes of each other, and you are well-thought out (unlike me).

Which one is it please?

[Watson wrote:](#)

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Re: What was your Primary Source of Recovery?
Posted by skeptical - 22 Nov 2015 14:35

Dr. Watson

Remember all those members who used to post on this forum regularly and have now gone? Why did they leave? Is it because they recovered and have not acted out since they left, or did they give up trying? Could we have done any more to help those people? Another useful poll, although impossible to conduct, would be to find out how those guys are doing now.

There's probably a bit of both. And if the person left because s/he gave up, there's not a thing GYE could do to help, the same way there's not a thing an SA group could do to save people from leaving there and giving up.

Which members are you referring to?

Many have had to leave GYE for practical reasons - no/limited internet access, busy life, etc.

I am in touch with a few guys who are no longer able to make it onto GYE, and they are continuing to do well, boruch Hashem.

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Re: What was your Primary Source of Recovery?

Posted by Watson - 22 Nov 2015 14:54

I didn't say addicts need SA, I said they needed the 12 steps.

The 12 steps cannot be worked effectively by oneself. A sponsor and the support of a group who are also working the steps is essential.

I mentioned SA but it could be any 12 step group. SA is the logical choice but certainly SA is not the only group. But a real addict needs real recovery.

My point is more aimed the other way round. I think the term addict is way overused here and that makes it harder for people who are real addicts to get the help they need.

I spent about 2 years before joining GYE trying to re-invent the wheel, then over a year here taking action and not getting anywhere, refusing to join SA. Why?

I 'did' the 12 steps a few times by myself and it did not work. I then told an SA member who tried to help me that SA wouldn't work for me, I'd already done the 12 steps and I was no better off. Why?

I relapsed countless times and then came here saying how much I'd improved since the last

relapse. Why?

BTW I am not infallible. Far from it. I am also not giving the SA point of view. I do not speak for SA. I am giving my own point of view only.

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Re: What was your Primary Source of Recovery?

Posted by cordnoy - 22 Nov 2015 14:56

Gye for addicts?

SA for addicts?

in Dov's words.

The last post quoted, i bolded.....if you are an addict, GYE can be used as a steppin' stone for real recovery.

I have very little experience in SA and recovery, in comparioson with Dov, so it is almost unfair for me to disagree (which I do, as of now, but I just wanted to put out there what i feel Dov's opinion is on the matter - in his words, and in short. Of course, this is a public forum, and you might say that i am misreadin' and Dov might say that as well. i am simply writin' my conception of his opinion.

Let me conclude by sayin' that he is doin' a hell of a job for klal yisroel on this issue, and he has saved hundreds of neshamos and marriages and lives of many. May he continue to do so ad bias goel tzedek bimheirah.

[Dov wrote:](#)

Now, for the addicts among us, the main thing is not to admit powerlessness, but unmanageability. I sometimes ask guys who call and cry about their painful habit, after years of struggling and failing: "I understand. I know your pain very well. If you are so upset that you are ready to do anything to finally quit and refer to the masturbating you are doing as 'a bitter struggle'...then why hide behind the fake name? Why do so many never open up clearly and explicitly "without holding back *anything* due to shame" to a real, safe person (to quote the Rebbe R' Meilech in os 13 of his Tzet'l kotton, referring of course to non-addicts) and really get

real help? And use their real name and even open up, as I am using my real name, and open completely up to them.

Taphsics and shvu'os? It's the fox guarding the henhouse...it's still a chavush trying to matir himself from the beis ha'asurim. Insisting that he calls the shots for what he is willing to do and not willing to do, is not the way to let G-d in. Admitting all - behind a fake name - is not really the true opening up that causes miracles. All who have done so know that.

Maybe those things **are** enough for non-addicts - and I know many non-addicts who have gotten all the help they need on GYE! But those stepping stones usually fall way, way short for addicts. G-d save us from our shame and fear.

[Dov wrote:](#)

frankly I'm not so worried about the real addicts any more. After years on GYE and speaking to hundreds (yes hundreds) of yeshivishe, chassidische guys, frum doctors, lawyers, rabbonim, shlichim, etc, etc...I have learned that the addicts finally break, as i did. They will come to recovery whether 'Torah' should work, or not. We eventually come on our knees, begging for help - often from sober *goyim davka* before anyone else - for they will eventually be beaten (with their Gemora's, Tanyas, Nefesh Hachayim's and Mesillas Yeshorims b'cheikom) into submission by their (our) own mental disease called addiction. They will come, no worries.

Unfortunately, there is this thing called denial, and it delays that final destination...while families and neshoma's and marriages rot in living hell.

And going to an anonymous (really 'hidden' - even from each other - and that iss not what 'Anonymous' means in 12 step groups) 12 step call might be a nice way to get introduced to the ideas of the 12 steps. But I doubt there is much seriousness going on within any group of people not bringing their faces - and not even serious enough *to use their real names...*

To me, that's just allowing the sweet comfort of yet more denial time for the addicts, while they are told they 'are working the 12 steps'.

[Dov wrote:](#)

So is GYE bad? No way! It's awesome for the non-addicts (who are clearly the majority) because they get the chizzuk they need; **and it is a stepping stone for the addicts who fail and find they are finally ready to get the help that sick people like us need.** It's a tremendous 12th step tool for me and other sober addicts here, and we are eternally grateful to Guard and the organization.

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Re: What was your Primary Source of Recovery?
Posted by cordnoy - 22 Nov 2015 15:01

[Watson wrote:](#)

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Sir,

Chaver,

Please.

you write: addicts don't need SA; they need the 12 steps.

Then: the 12 steps must be done in a group.

so, addicts need a group of people workin' the 12 steps.

addicts need SA (or whatever the hell they call that meetin').

Why are you hidin' from your beliefs?

I'm not sure you're wrong either.

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