

The first step

Posted by livingpalpitation - 06 Sep 2024 17:29

I hope this is the first step on a journey to rid myself of a profoundly insidious habit. As part of a couple who had difficulty conceiving, I am constantly fearful that my sins will be avenged on my children.

Is that Judaism? I don't know.

At the same time, I am keenly aware that a great deal of prohibitive writings on masturbation drew from incomplete and incorrect understanding of the human body.

Where does the truth lie?

I need to rid myself of these thoughts but I don't know where to begin.

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Re: The first step

Posted by richtig - 09 Sep 2024 03:24

[livingpalpitation wrote on 09 Sep 2024 02:35:](#)

Both. I think you need both. Sure, you can deal with this issue in a completely irreligious way but in order to accept the prohibition, I need to understand where it came from and whether there is a prohibition to begin with.

In your original post you said "I hope this is the first step on a journey to rid myself of a profoundly insidious habit". Regardless of the source of your beliefs that this habit is insidious, you can get help for it here.

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Re: The first step

Posted by Markz - 09 Sep 2024 03:28

Livingpalpitation, let's say it's a Mitzva to Masturbate. Where would that take you today??

Here's one of (many :-) gold dov posts, linked in my sig below.

[Masturbation is **Evil**... But That is Quite Irrelevant](#)

What do you think about it?

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Re: The first step

Posted by redfaced - 09 Sep 2024 03:32

[Markz wrote on 09 Sep 2024 03:28:](#)

Livingpalpitation, let's say it's a Mitzva to Masturbate. Where would that take you today??

Here's one of (many :-) gold dov posts, linked in my sig below.

[Masturbation is **Evil**... But That is Quite Irrelevant](#)

What do you think about it?

Excellent !! As usual...

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Re: The first step

Posted by truthaintflashy - 09 Sep 2024 13:47

OK, after eating myself up all morning about calling something kefira without being absolutely sure I finally had some compassion on myself and figured out where I was coming from...I was pretty sure the prohibition on wasting seed was biblical, either from the story of Er and Onen or from the section on the Arayot about not giving your seed to Molech...that's why I thought it was kfira -- Moses had the BIG picture; we don't argue with the Chumash.

Not sure how this holds up in the eyes of a talmid chacham who knows to and succeeds to research before talking, since I'm not.

(Why do we know he had the BIG picture? Because so did everyone else, at least briefly -- we heard G-d speak and knew it was G-d, and collectively decided to protect that memory.)

Anyhow sorry for being mean

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Re: The first step

Posted by chosemyshem - 09 Sep 2024 14:12

[richtig wrote on 09 Sep 2024 03:17:](#)

Any legal system accepts precedent, and certainly to change a law requires major legal wrangling and procedural due process. Here, to uproot a law established millennia ago, by asking a simple question--- this is simply not how it works, in any legal system.

Uh-oh. Arguments about Torah hashkafa are one thing, but if you're boldly stating the value of

All kidding aside. Richtig I really liked your posts on this thread.

I'm also upset I came so late to this popcorn thread.

But has anyone ever gotten clean because they suddenly realized masturbating is assur??

It really doesn't matter much if it's an issur deaorraisa, d'rabbanan, a minhag, something the Arizal decided, or totally muttar. (Although that is totally important to know to properly adhere to bal tosef.) If it's hurting your life, stop because it hurts. If it's not hurting your life, religious guilt is 99% guaranteed to not be enough to make you stop.

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Re: The first step

Posted by truthaintflashy - 09 Sep 2024 15:27

Ugh, sorry, more to say

[chosemyschem wrote on 09 Sep 2024 14:12:](#)

But has anyone ever gotten clean because they suddenly realized masturbating is assur??

I think someone with a clear concept of G-d, that He loves and wants us to lead happy and fulfilling lives, can darshen "it's assur" as "even if it seems like I'm doing myself a favor doing this, I'm not" which is a helpful thought sometimes.

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Re: The first step

Posted by chosemyshem - 09 Sep 2024 15:40

[truthaintflashy wrote on 09 Sep 2024 15:27:](#)

Ugh, sorry, more to say Don't be sorry! Stir the popcorn bucket with joy!

[chosemyshem wrote on 09 Sep 2024 14:12:](#)

But has anyone ever gotten clean because they suddenly realized masturbating is assur??

I think someone with a clear concept of G-d, that He loves and wants us to lead happy and fulfilling lives, can darshen "it's assur" as "even if it seems like I'm doing myself a favor doing this, I'm not" which is a helpful thought sometimes.

The difference between "masturbating is assur" and "G-d loves *me* and wants *me* to lead a happy and fulfilling life" is immense. Many people believe the first thing and have almost no relation to the latter (even if they intellectually admit to it).

Living a life with G-d is of course an eminently practical way to get clean. But it's not an attitude that can bootstrap itself. That is to say, someone who's chronically masturbating is very unlikely to make the leap from "masturbating is assur, my life sucks, I hate myself and G-d is gonna get me for this" to "G-d loves me and my life is the way it should be and now I can stop masturbating till my hand bleeds".

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Re: The first step

Posted by livingpalpitation - 09 Sep 2024 16:15

What about "God loves me and occasional masturbation will not cause my sperm to become demons that will haunt me?"

It's not all or nothing, right?

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Re: The first step

Posted by truthaintflashy - 09 Sep 2024 16:27

The way I understand it, this gets into the whole midrash of "initially G-d wanted to create the world with the Attribute of Strict Judgement etc."

Basically the more a certain choice will naturally lead a person to moral confusion/identity confusion, the more G-d chooses to correspondingly wake that person up to stop confusing themselves. Sexual sins are way up near the top of that scale, and have lasting effects on the mind that are difficult to correct in one fell swoop, so the consequence is also usually prolonged.

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Re: The first step

Posted by chosemyshem - 09 Sep 2024 16:31

[livingpalpitation wrote on 09 Sep 2024 16:15:](#)

What about "God loves me and occasional masturbation will not cause my sperm to become demons that will haunt me?"

It's not all or nothing, right?

Very few things in life are all or nothing. But the two halves of your sentence don't depend on

each other even a little. G-d might love me and sperm demons may still haunt you. Or G-d may hate you and the sperm demons may be fake news.

I have no idea if my wasted sperm breed with Lilith to become demons that try to kill me. That's above my pay grade. But unless those demons are *real* to a person, they have very little relevance.

Look. There are people who occasionally indulge in lust and feel religious guilt about that. Those people are by and large not on this site. Those people talk to a rabbi, do teshuva (or not) and move on with life. That's a religious problem.

Basically everyone on this site is here because at some point they tried that process and it didn't work. Their lust had progressed to a point where just stopping was not an option. And the proof is we tried that many times and it didn't click. So now the problem isn't really anything religious. The problem is that we've lost control of something in our life.

There are some people who don't have control of their lust but that doesn't really bother them but-for the religious aspect of the lust. Those people have an extremely hard time stopping.

If you want to hear about solutions to out of control lust - that's what we're here for. But debating the nature of the spiritual ramifications of lust isn't really going to get anyone anywhere.

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Re: The first step

Posted by livingpalpitation - 09 Sep 2024 16:33

Can you please elaborate on this?

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Re: The first step

Posted by BenHashemBH - 09 Sep 2024 16:59

[livingpalpitation wrote on 09 Sep 2024 16:15:](#)

What about “God loves me and occasional masturbation will not cause my sperm to become demons that will haunt me?”

It's not all or nothing, right?

If I understand you correctly, I agree with what you are saying here.

Religion is all or nothing. You can't omit any parts you don't like or don't understand. It's a package deal, and as many have said already, we can question in order to understand, but at the end of the day, we need faith to accept G-d's will regardless.

That doesn't mean that if you sin you are out. G-d created sin, and he knows we will sin. That's why He first created repentance.

Our sages of blessed memory speak strongly about sin and punishment. They also speak about love, mercy, kindness, and reward. I know neither what heaven nor hell is like. Maybe you create demons, maybe someone else creates demons. Maybe they affect you, maybe they don't. Whatever happens, the world runs according to G-d's rules and I trust G-d that He wants the best for me. He's not out to get me.

To not understand it fully and be willing to accept it anyways isn't a copout. It's a combination of faith and accepting that I'm human, I'm on whatever level I'm on, and Hashem and all the inner workings of His universe are beyond me. There is difference between lack of understanding and doubt.

We trust Dr's to perform surgery. We trust engineers to build safe cars & airplanes. We trust food companies not to poison us. Nitpicking exceptions aside, we can all find many things in life that we trust with some level of blind faith. I don't know about anyone else, but what little I know is certainly far from the full picture.

So whether you create demons by masturbating or not I don't know, but even if you do, so what? G-d is just. He's not out to get you. That doesn't mean that you get the occasional free pass to sin without repercussions, but the punishment fits the transgressor too, not just the transgression.

Hope you find the clarity you are looking for.

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Re: The first step

Posted by thompson - 09 Sep 2024 17:11

[livingpalpitation wrote on 09 Sep 2024 16:15:](#)

What about "God loves me and occasional masturbation will not cause my sperm to become demons that will haunt me?"

It's not all or nothing, right?

"God loves me, and the occasional swim in lava shouldn't harm me."

"God loves me, and he'll make sure that I don't get cancer from smoking."

All of God's love won't save you from yourself.

Chazal described the reality of things. Now, whether you accept what they said as reality or not is largely up to you. And it seems that you have a hard time with that. No judgment from my side. I just feel bad because it seems to be messing with your thought process. Perhaps reaching out to someone well-versed in the subject can help improve the quality of your life. (i.e., Rabbi Dovid Gottlieb, he's helped me in many areas, including this one).

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Re: The first step

Posted by cande - 09 Sep 2024 17:32

What about "God loves me and occasional masturbation will not cause my sperm to become demons that will haunt me?"

It's not all or nothing, right? i would guess he doesnt mind negotiating,

see if you can cut a deal.

just my guess, i dont keenly aware of this as fact.

side point, how are you keenly aware that god loves you?

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