

Hello

Posted by TahorVneeman - 05 Feb 2010 20:45

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Hello everyone,

I have hesitated a long time before posting here for many reasons. One is a fear that I am not "frum enough" to be here because it seems so many guys have been in Yeshiva or Kollel for a hundred years. Another reason is that I am just overwhelmed by the many things I have read on this site. Some of it is contradictory. But I need help-that I know. And if you can't jump into something just before Shabbat Yitro, when can you?

I am a Kippah Serugah kind of Jew. Lots of time in Israel. A Davening, learning Jew striving to grow always who falls over and over again because of my slavery to lust. I grew up in a secular Jewish home with hardworking parents, not so great with intimacy and communication. My father and uncles traded Playboys in front of us. We watched a lot of tv and as time went on, the images of women got to be more and more explicit. And I fell into it.

You know the rest. Along with growing in observance and learning, I also became more and more encased in shmutz. Buying magazines, videos, and then the internet. Much worse in many ways, phone sex. All the money, the time, the waste down the tubes. I shake just typing this.

I am married to a marvelous woman who knows of my challenges and now thinks I have mostly overcome them... But she suspects and has reason to. I no longer have the ability to satisfy her without medication and am often distracted and tense.

What have I tried? Lots of learning, Mussar, Jewish meditation, calming herbs, some therapy, davening up a storm, Teshuvah with tears, fasting, exercise, and lots more. Some things help a bit, I know how to calm myself, I can have some disciplined days with early morning time with a Sugya or Mishnah, some exercise, lots of things accomplished... and it feels like Gan Eden. Then it stops.

What doesn't seem to work is Torah alone- I often get tense just as I am about to end a session and know what will be next... The same with Mussar practice. It buys me a little time at best....

I have no doubt that some of this is about intimacy, ego, spiritual deficiency but what it overwhelmingly feels like is a chemical addiction. My body craves the high and I don't need the internet to trigger it. I shut it down a lot and it doesn't matter because almost anything can set it off. I practice Shmirat Haeinayim, offer Tefillot to Hashem and do all sorts of things but just saying no to the Yetzer makes it come roaring back even stronger.

A typical day involves great intentions but time wasted in mbtn and sometimes prn. No need even to spill zera. I get my high. After getting the chemical high, it takes hours for my body to come back to reality. In the meantime, I am disoriented, disorganized, agitated, short-tempered and filled with self-loathing. How could a lover of Torah and one who wants closeness with the KB"H so such a thing? Again and again? How could I become so isolated from my wife, kids and others?

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Re: Hello

Posted by me - 10 Feb 2010 08:45

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TahorV...

But I have been doing so much better. Just a few days but I appreciate you guys. I really feel less alone....Can't explain it but thank you....

You are feeling better about yourself because being here, is taking you out of the isolation that this addiction feeds on. This isolation, and hermetic secrecy is the life force of this disease. It is the protection device for this disease to keep us in it's control, and falling.

I remember learning that there are many different types

of demaot. Ashan? Good ones too. These feel good. Thank you

These tears of wanting to return to Hashem. Of regretting where you have been, of wanting, and needing the closeness to Hashem that we are all meant to have...these are tears of life. Keep them flowing, and they will also heal your eyes from all of the things they have seen.

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Re: Hello

Posted by silentbattle - 10 Feb 2010 16:18

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I'm glad you feel less alone - that's a major help in these struggles...

Let us know what's happening!

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Re: Hello

Posted by briut - 10 Feb 2010 17:20

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By the way, I'm only "on this forum" for a few weeks myself. So my comments aren't the educated ones of folks who understand addiction, 12-steps, empirical evidence, or anything else. I'm sure you'll hear from them, too.

For me, what I'm finding most powerful has almost nothing to do with 'slips & falls' as the euphemism here goes. It has to do with finding a relationship with Hashem that allows for me, in my current state, to restructure that relationship as far as I'm able to do, and then giving the rest over to Him, one day at a time. Once that foundation goes in place, I think the sexual work will be so much clearer and easier.

I'm not speaking for anyone else, but in my case I need to focus on what I want to INJECT into this work, this relationship, this sexual content. I do NOT need to harp on what I need to REJECT / EJECT from my life. If I can focus on growing my dveikus, there's basically no room left for chet. But if I tell myself ever hour, "I will not think about elephants; I will not think about elephants, elephants are bad and sinful," I know exactly what I'll be thinking about.

So it's not about sex or halacha or tears of guilt; it's really about rebuilding a chunk of my life onto a base built with tears of joy. (And it's also not about a guilt trip: perhaps H' needed you to go through all these painful hoops just to end up here, where you needed to be. His plans are perfect. B'H you're now here.)

If there's any common ground here between you and me, it's that you're finding those tears of joy within your own life. Wherever you find them, I'd suggest you consider those areas first as the foundation of your new house. Maybe this new house be a bayit ne'eman b'yisrael and binyan adei ad, built of a strong foundation.

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Re: Hello

Posted by TahorVneeman - 10 Feb 2010 17:21

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Just remembered...Demaot shel Perot. Fruitful tears....Sharing them....I remember a drash on Parshat Shoftim. Something about how the Shotrim are the organs-how we perceive the world...Especially the eyes. If they are pure,then the Shoftim have less to do! The outer gates are protected. And some tears heal the outer Shoter.

I like this stuff. Just wish I could remember it at the right time. How do you guys do it? Get yourself to really know what to do in that tiny split second when you know you are vulnerable and it is a Bechira point and you know that too and you slip anyhow? Or not. The time is so tiny and if you are used to being on automatic pilot,stimulus and response( a half second street scene or memory in the head-doesn't have to be a movie or internet)I so often just slip. And a half second becomes a 2 hour binge. And then the sadness over the time waste and Chillul Hashem and all the rest. Help please!

Tvn.

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Re: Hello

Posted by TahorVneeman - 10 Feb 2010 17:24

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Thanks Briut. I like the idea of filling up the time and not focusing on ejecting the Tamei. I still struggle with that little moment that sneaks up and takes me by surprise. Do you find that the filling up helps in those moments for you? Tvn

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Re: Hello

Posted by silentbattle - 10 Feb 2010 17:30

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that's like asking a stewardess how they cook all those meals for every person on the plane. The answer? They're all prepared beforehand. OK, that's not a good example, because those meals aren't very good :-)

Seriously, though - you've just an important point, I think. If I waited till the test was right in front of me, I'd be toast. And not the good kind. The key, i think, is to figure out when and how tests come up, and why. And then deal with all of those.

Why? I identify which issues are leading me to have these issues, and i try to address them. To a certain extent, even just the realization of what's pulling me can help.

When and how - I realize what triggers me, what leads up to it, which roads take me to temptation, and I try to get off those roads as soon as possible. I set up plans in my head before the temptation comes. the plans can be calling a friend, going to GYE, or even just getting up and walking away from the computer - I review these plans in my mind until it's a natural response.

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Re: Hello

Posted by me - 10 Feb 2010 17:43

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How do you guys do it? Get yourself to really know what to do in that tiny split second when you know you are vulnerable and it is a Bechira point and you know that too and you slip anyhow? Or not.

Reb tahorV.....The most successful warriors on this site are the one's who "don't know what to do, and especially in that split second".

What I mean is: The more we "Know" that we DON'T KNOW what to do, we then learn to lean,

and trust on Hashem's BIG WIDE shoulders...so to speak. Because we found out, then when we thought that we knew something, we kept trying, new, and more innovative, cutting edge, high tech tachbolos and.....none of them worked!!!! So, we then fell into despair, depression, anxiety attacks, and all of the rest of the Y"H tricks.

We found out that by going straight to Hashem, and letting him fight for us...we have a chance. Of course this does not negate our making cheshbon hanefeshes, to see what we must keep away from, so that we don't all of sudden find ourselves in the abiss.

Stay here Tahor, and you will understand better.

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Re: Hello

Posted by briut - 10 Feb 2010 17:50

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[TahorVneeman wrote on 10 Feb 2010 17:24:](#)

Thanks Briut. I like the idea of filling up the time and not focusing on ejecting the Tamei. I still struggle with that little moment that sneaks up and takes me by surprise. Do you find that the filling up helps in those moments for you? Tvn

Well, I don't take the same approach of silent battle (recent post). Different people, different methods.

But if I'm spending time in good parenting, or hanging around the B"M / shiurim / whatever, or even in exercise, music, etc, there's not much room left for the Y'H or his shmutz. And, most important -- learning to be a good husband (yet another plug for The Garden of Peace by R' Abush, translated R' Lazer Brody -- it completely completely transformed the way I look at marriage relationships, and for the better ).

So for me, being prepared doesn't focus on a response to the Y'H (actually a non-response - any kind of dialogue simply energizes his arguments when I'm trying to starve them to death). Prepaid responses are a good bag of tricks to carry in case of emergency. But if I can think of "Hashem knows I'm better than 'that' and He's just sending this Y'H down so I'll remind myself of that today," then maybe I can avoid the issue in the first place.

I'm not doing a very good job of it lately: a couple of situations in particular are difficult (PM me for details if you like; it's not so tznius). But when I find my tears, I find something real to keep me going.

Don't know if this rambling post has any content at all, but just writing it down made me feel like things are getting a little clearer. Hope it means something to you. Keep posting. - Briut

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Re: Hello

Posted by silentbattle - 10 Feb 2010 17:57

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Agreed - Everyone should use what works for them.

However, just to point out, I wasn't just talking about pre-programmed responses, i was also talking about recognizing beforehand where the dangers are, and avoiding them entirely, whenever possible. Do you disagree with that?

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Re: Hello

Posted by briut - 10 Feb 2010 20:21

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So, you're saying it's like the man who goes to the doctor; says "it hurts when I do this (and shows doc the offending movement)." Doc says, "SO STOP DOING THAT!"

I am good with that approach. It just doesn't compare to "ok, Tatty, if You want me to be here, You're gonna hafta fix it so I survive joyfully!"

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Re: Hello

Posted by TahorVneeman - 10 Feb 2010 21:51

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I lean more to Briut's approach because in the past my twisted thinking went something like this. "Ok Hashem I can't do this I have to rely on You" No real change in temptation or behavior leading me to conclude "well I guess He doesn't care either I might as well act out!" How's that for brilliant reasoning! Oy.

I have had some success with preparedness. But not enough. I yearn for a break, for cleanliness. I just want to be normal!!! I just want to be able to Daven again with real Kavannah and not feel as if a cloud is hanging over me. So much to learn but I am starting. I just wish GYE and you guys had been around years ago.

Thanks again...TvN

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Re: Hello

Posted by Elya K - 10 Feb 2010 22:07

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Tahor,

Welcome home. You mentioned a few posts ago about being a member of the Chevrah.

Not isolating and becoming a part of a group is the main way to get sober and recover from this addiction. Ideally that means a live SA or SLAA group in your city. We also have phone groups that meet 3 nights a week for members of the forum. You and none of us can do this alone. You can make it easier on yourself by staying off the computer for 2 weeks. Just don't turn it on. I did it for a month. And I work on the computer.

But I had to reprogram my brain and the only way was to be free of it. My wife answered my emails and we made it. Get a filter, get a sponsor, figure out what it is that is



driving you to avoid fear, anger, loneliness, boredom.

Never give up. There is hope and a bright future ahead in recovery and sobriety.

Keep coming back one day at a time.

Elya

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Re: Hello

Posted by silentbattle - 10 Feb 2010 23:15

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Or like saying, "when i walk down the street with rusty nails, my feet hurt."

The hard thing to figure out sometimes is which streets have rusty nails.

The reason I'm not such a fan of [Briut wrote on 10 Feb 2010 20:21](#):

"ok, Tatty, if You want me to be here, You're gonna hafta fix it so I survive joyfully!"

Is because that sounds like an ultimatum. We're setting the terms for what we'll do for god. And it sounds like Reb BVN's tried that, and it doesn't work for him for precisely that reason.

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Re: Hello

Posted by the.guard - 11 Feb 2010 08:19

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[silentbattle wrote on 10 Feb 2010 23:15:](#)

The reason I'm not such a fan of [Briut wrote on 10 Feb 2010 20:21:](#)

"ok, Tatty, if You want me to be here, You're gonna hafta fix it so I survive joyfully!"

Is because that sounds like an ultimatum. We're setting the terms for what we'll do for god. And it sounds like Reb BVN's tried that, and it doesn't work for him for precisely that reason.

Yeh, and see what Dov answered joeshmoe reply #159 on [this page](#).

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