

just realised i am an addict

Posted by andrewsh - 18 Feb 2010 17:39

wow, after all these years it has dawned on me that i am an addict!

I have tried to fight it so hard, and succeded even for long periods at a time, but now i realise it will never just go away.

I am so scared to write anything...what happens if someone i know, somehow reads this and knows its me, particularly my wife

i am in a bad place, bh never gone as far as involving someone else, although dreamt about it enough, but its eating me up, both what i do now, and what i have done over the years.

help please, although my vagueness doesnt really help

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Re: just realised i am an addict

Posted by Kedusha - 22 Feb 2010 15:51

Dear Andrew,

You're right that there's no cure for an addiction, in the sense that you will never be the same as a person who was never addicted ("I'm a pickle, and I'll never be a cucumber again"). However, by following the steps properly (either the 12 steps, the steps in the GYE handbooks, or the steps of some other good program, if one exists), one day at a time, relapsing is NOT inevitable.

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Re: just realised i am an addict

Posted by silentbattle - 22 Feb 2010 15:57

Exactly - one day at a time, we can stay clean forever. People can still relapse, but each person can choose to, or not.

Today, I choose not to.

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Re: just realised i am an addict

Posted by Kedusha - 22 Feb 2010 16:11

There's another element at play, as well. If a person gets to the point where he realizes that another fall, c"v, may kill him, he will behave differently than someone who does not have the same view regarding the consequences of falling.

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Re: just realised i am an addict

Posted by andrewsh - 22 Feb 2010 16:29

what do u mean may kill him, in terms of heavenly punishment or literally

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Re: just realised i am an addict

Posted by Kedusha - 22 Feb 2010 16:33

[andrewsh wrote on 22 Feb 2010 16:29:](#)

what do u mean may kill him, in terms of heavenly punishment or literally

No, literally. For example, think, c"v, AIDS, hepatitis C, or suicide. If you're certain that it would never come to any of those, think walking around spiritually dead and in perpetual misery.

Dov may have more to add - I'm going to ask him if he wants to weigh in.

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Re: just realised i am an addict

Posted by andrewsh - 22 Feb 2010 16:34

the last one is not as strong a deterrent unfortunately

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Re: just realised i am an addict

Posted by Kedusha - 22 Feb 2010 16:37

[andrewsh wrote on 22 Feb 2010 16:34:](#)

the last one is not as strong a deterrent unfortunately

If spiritually dead is not a deterrent, perpetual misery certainly should be. But, with any addiction, physical death is a real possibility if the person has hit rock bottom and doesn't stop. Again, I'm going to ask Dov if he wants to weigh in, because he has personal experience with this.

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Re: just realised i am an addict

Posted by shemirateinayim - 22 Feb 2010 17:04

[andrewsh wrote on 22 Feb 2010 16:34:](#)

the last one is not as strong a deterrent unfortunately

sorry for being harsh, but here goes:

You have absolutely no right to take your life! The ribono shel olem gave it to you to guard, and the first place you will report to is up there. Gehenom is only for those who are zocheh to get there. Many neshamos can spend even 70 years being harrassed by mazikim, untill they are zocheh to attain enough of a tikkun to get into HELL!!!

Read R lugasi's sefarim and you will get abig eye opener. DO you know **what** gehenom is. Without any amount of exaduration of joking, it IS the 12 steps. You are forcibly torn from every single pirud and klipa that you created. Working on it here is THE easy way out. It is easier to look away from the beis hazonos on one occasion, than to face the dinoh shel gehenom for that look!

The begining of rehab is in a sence 1/60th of gehenom, although chazal may not say it, the kavanah in that meimer chzal, and my point run parallel!!

I know that you are not suicidal, just deopressed and shamed with where you have come. Do yourself a favor and learn a propper perception of what you are up against. Learn R Lugasi 's sefarim, especialy about gilgulim-dibukim-etc...

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Re: just realised i am an addict

Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 22 Feb 2010 17:14

If spiritually dead is not a deterrent, perpetual misery certainly should be.

Unfortunately, knowing and thinking of this didn't stop me at all. Many times I would be thinking that on the day that I don't control myself in these matters it is impossible for me to be happy/in a good mood. But it still did not stop me!

That is until I found this forum. Reading from this forum keeps my mind thinking about this even when I'm offline, I find this to be my ONLY tool.

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Re: just realised i am an addict

Posted by me - 22 Feb 2010 17:17

I know that you are not suicidal, just deopressed and shamed with where you have come. Do yourself a favor and learn a proper perception of what you are up against. Learn R Lugasi 's sefarim, especialy about gilgulim-dibukim-etc...

I think many of us have already looked into these seforim. As i had mentioned above, I myself looked at mesechta gehinnom. And, many times it is these seforim that add depression to anxiety, and lead the person in the wrong direction. For example, we would think that getting Aids would be a bigger deterant, yet there are many so called "swingers" who spend time with people who have the highest risk of having this disease. So, what do they do? They use that old psychological trick cognitive disonance, and believe that "it will never happen to me". This way, they can still indulge in their taivas.

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Re: just realised i am an addict

Posted by Kedusha - 22 Feb 2010 17:37

I agree that knowing it may kill him does not give self control to an addict. But, it may very well motivate him to work the program (e.g. a 12-step program).

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Re: just realised i am an addict

Posted by silentbattle - 22 Feb 2010 18:33

Exactly - it gives us an idea of just what the stakes are.

Here's another understanding of the addiction killing us - we always have this idea that we'll eventually stop. Imagine if you knew that if you fell one more time, there was no going back - you'd be doing it for the rest of your life. Well, each time we fall, we're making exactly that decision. Because if we keep on falling one more time, we'll keep on going, always thinking that "I'll stop eventually" - until we run out of days.

I prefer being alive.

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Re: just realised i am an addict

Posted by Kedusha - 22 Feb 2010 21:47

[silentbattle wrote on 22 Feb 2010 18:33:](#)

Exactly - it gives us an idea of just what the stakes are.

Here's another understanding of the addiction killing us - we always have this idea that we'll eventually stop. Imagine if you knew that if you fell one more time, there was no going back - you'd be doing it for the rest of your life. Well, each time we fall, we're making exactly that

decision. Because if we keep on falling one more time, we'll keep on going, always thinking that "I'll stop eventually" - until we run out of days.

I prefer being alive.

Great point, SB! We need to be concerned that if we, c"v, fall again, we might reach the point of no return.

Of course, after a fall, one needs to realize that it's never too late . . .

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Re: just realised i am an addict
Posted by Dov - 22 Feb 2010 22:03

[andrewsh wrote on 22 Feb 2010 09:23:](#)

Dov, wow strong stuff, I believe you are right, tell me something is it possible that I have had this issue my whole life yet not an addict, most of the time I don't act at all on it ever so often it's some porn and very rarely m, made contact with one or twowomen via facebook etc nothing worse, although I do realise how bad that is believe me. I do alwAys have thoughts about women and occasionally manage to control my shmiras einayim. Is it still possible that all I need is strength and mussar?

arent all these steps and ways just things that make the next relapse further away, ppl still relapse sometimes, perhaps a bit later so it is also no cure? just blabbing a thought that just came to me

Certain words just conjure up images in people's minds. I don't think there is much we can do about the fact that our experiences define things for us, rather than dictionaries - or the Torah. They just *do*.

For example, it seems that the word "G-d", conjures up thoughts of a frustrating, confusing Entity who's main preoccupation and interest is punishing people for their sins. You know, sc'har v'onesh, the whole 9 yards. Sounds good to many, but it's actually superficial and really stupid, though many people I know harbor that image even after decades in yeshiva. I carried a bit of it around, too, before starting recovery. All the positive shmuessen aside....it can still be just lip service. What matters is the exact way we relate to G-d right at this moment, and in this act. It defines the word to me. This seems to go for yidden as much as it goes for goyim (if not more).

Not that many people hear "G-d", or "Hashem", and naturally get a sweet, comforting feeling because they remember the Power that *will* put everything in order and know that it'll all be OK in the end cuz He's got a great plan and *isn't* out to screw us over. I *do* know some Breslovers,

The same thing goes for many issues, like abortion, homosexuality, Jews, women, conservatism, liberalism, divorce, marriage, your mother (sorry), etc.

So...getting back to your thoughts above, "Andrewsh":

Why does the label, "addict" have to mean "one who has done *really* bad stuff" - or at least "stuff worse than *you* have"? Where did anyone get the idea that one has to actually voyeur, expose himself, or be oiver on gilui arayos (ie. with another person - masturbation doesn't seem to 'count' for some reason ???) in order to *really* be "an addict"?

As a matter of fact, I know of plenty folks who **have** been oiver on gilui arayos and are mostlikely *not* addicts. I doubt that the yidden in the midbar who were oiver with the shiksas at sheettim were addicts. I doubt that *most* men and women who have affairs are addicts - almost 30% of americans *have* per some surveys, and the idea that all of them are addicts is just plain silly, in my opinion. Of course, it may comfort us to point a finger and say "Oh, he's *that* horrible? He must be an addict."...*but since when is being an addict an **insult**?* Is it, do you think?
though... ;D

You may feel that, as yidden, we are held to a higher standard and maybe we qualify as "out of control" with less bad behavior than non-jews. Perhaps masturbation is horrible enough...Rebbi Akiva may even tell us so (though he might feel the exact same shock about 150 *other* things we do nowadays). But I digress.

My point is that I do not believe that "badness" is what defines how sick we are. I believe that it

has very little to do with whether we are "addicts". Not being an expert on addiction, of course, all I can suggest is for you to read the First Step of AA. The realizations that brought us here, were:

1- that our formerly trusted and depended upon behavior (using lust, alcohol, gambling, heroin, whatever) actually makes our lives **unmanageable** - it screws up our lives and the lives of those around us, *and...*

2- that we came to the conclusion that we cannot successfully **stop**. We do not have to *prove* that we cannot stop - how do you prove something that hasn't happened yet? Rather, to me, it is just as Rav Noach zt"l would define beginner's Emunah/Belief in Hashem: "I have enough evidence to honestly accept that there really is a G-d." **Then** begins the lifelong mitzva of *Yidias haBorei*, *yisborach Sh'mo*.

In the same way, every recovering addict I know, has come to believe that he or she is an addict by weight of the *evidence* that they *are not able to get better by their own power* - after all, it was your/my very **best** thinking and efforts that got us exactly *in* this deep trouble, right?

Nimtza, that the *definition* of "addict" is exactly these 2 things, per my own experience. The behavior may have been "mild" like schmutzy magazines or internet, masturbation, or more. ***It's not the behavior that matters - it's what it does to your life that is the issue, to me. The pivotal point here boils down to pure (enlightened) self-interest, not morality nor even Hashem's Will. This is plain to me, though others twist themselves into a religiomoralistic pretzel over it. Can I take it any more? If I percieve that I can, and perhaps will be able to just stop tomorrow, then I will keep using my drug. Period. And that's what I call an addict. Like me.***

So, what it all comes down to is either **humility**....or humiliation.

In my case, the opposite (staying in addiction/the problem) is just plain gayva - dressed-up as it is in a deep commitment to "making it" as an Eved Hashem. This gayva in disguise is deadly poison for some of us. I believe that many of us - davka **because** we are *frum* - need to get the crapola beaten out of us extra badly and come "this close" to being convinced we are coming to *apikorsus* for us to finally let go of the gayva and get into the serious recovery we may desperately need. Wasn't it? If not, I suggest we just try harder and then talk again.

We often fight it tooth and nail - perhaps harder than we fight our addiction...nu. There are bigger ironies, somewhere.

PS. And, no. The idea of these steps is *not* to delay the next relapse. It is to finally give up confusing ourselves as G-d Himself, admit we are beaten by our own disease and finally get

with Hashem to stay sober - at all costs. I believe that the many relapses you see everywhere are due to lack of rigorous self-honesty. We easily confuse what we should be, or what the Torah tells us we should be, with what we actually are right now. So we fall flat on our faces until we accept the truth. And the truth is that yesterday does not exist, not does tomorrow: we are only with Hashem right now. Precisely the "Hayom" in k'riyas sh'ma. As Bill expressed his experience in AA, it's only a daily reprieve based on maintaining our spiritual condition and letting G-d in to our lives. Based on all I have experienced, my disease appears to be progressive and terminal. Is *yours* getting better?

I like the idea of my illness being in remission today. Don't *you*?

Trust me and all the other recovering addicts I have known: when we live with Hashem and let *Him* hold the reins one day at a time **w/o demands**, everything get markedly easier and life starts to get *much* better as an eved Hashem, son/daughter, husband, father, worker, friend, etc....for *all* parties concerned. Just ask the wife or kids of any addict with a few years of sobriety. Then ask the wife and kids of one who isn't sober.

Does this help?

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