

Help!!

Posted by Hebjew414 - 01 Sep 2010 17:03

I am a young married guy and I am desperate for help. I have been married almost 3 years and all this time I have had a problem with pornography, masturbation, and infidelity. My wife wants to leave me.... We tried therapy but just can't come down to the reason why I have done the things I did.

This is my last resort. I am turn here to GYE for help and guidance with this. I don't want to lose her, I want to start a family and my selfishness and problems are just pushing everything away.

Please, please help me

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Re: Help!!

Posted by yedidya aleph - 02 Sep 2010 22:50

you get help for yourself everything else will fall into place. If you don't get help for your problem nothing you tell her will make any difference at all

after spending many years in therapy and in the 12 step rooms, (O.A.,A.A) and most recently in SA (thanks to GYE),i wholeheartedly agree that recovery requires changes in behavior aka **action**

btw i went to "open" AA meetings at the suggestion of my therapist even though ,alcohol abuse is B.H. bli eyan harah not my issue.

B'ezras Hashem,your wife wife will believe when she sees u changing and growing in recovery. please keep us posted. hoping to see u at an SA. meeting there in one in Brooklyn tonight (pm me or E-mail me for the details)

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Re: Help!!

Posted by Dov - 02 Sep 2010 23:10

In response to your PM to me, I decided to post this. Maybe it'll be helpful to somebody...maybe

Dear new friend and medic,

even to you!

I am *not* the guy who will tell you that you need to go to meetings. I am not the one who would say, "if you aren't trying to get better the same way I got/get better, then there's no hope for you." If I did that or even believed that, I believe that I'd lose my sobriety pretty soon. The judgementalism and hubris of the 'one-way (*my way*) approach' is too much for me to handle. To me, it is a sickness. Instead, all I can share with you is my own experience and leave it at that. You will take it or leave it and it is Hashem's issue, not mine. Besides, many people get better by getting into a recovery fellowship, and many do not. Same for counseling, inpatient rehab, and any other derech...of course, I am still partial...

Please bear with me here:

The point is - and I believe that this is really the entire issue - are you ready for change? NOT are you ready to change yourself/ quit for good/ start 'behaving yourself', etc. Just, "are you ready for change?" (The word 'change' is a *noun*, not a verb.) Till now, I am pretty sure you have used all the wits you have to change yourself. To keep the lust while somehow controlling it enough to still be the good man you really are...apparently you had no more success that I did! That's why I can say love you. We are so similar already.

Long before I was caught (which didn't get me into recovery, either) I had moments when I was **completely** committed to change my behavior, though I had no clue how to do it. My (unexpected) reaction to those moments was: absolute terror.

Once, when I made up my mind not to ever use porn again (for the z'chus of a yeshiva guy I knew who had just been killed in a drunk purim car accident) I felt so good about my decision, so hopeful. But moments later, the fate of having a lifetime without looking at porn *ever again* gripped me with terror (which proves that I was really sincere). I felt frantic. I couldn't take it. The familiar warm, sweet and comforting feeling of porn, masturbation, and the like, was more than I could actually face really giving up. Sad, but 100% true. That's powerlessness, for you. Maybe honest, but still powerless. It took me about seven more years of screwing life up my way for me

to finally get into recovery.

Years later, in recovery, I came to admit that lust (including porn and masturbation and more) had actually become my very best friend in the entire world. Kind of like how a sailor is married to the sea. Unfortunately for me, I picked a very bad best friend. Lust is very, very mean. I think it is even meaner than heroin and alcohol. It nearly ruined our marriage, my life as a Yid, and my sanity - because I sacrificed all these things on the altar of 'getting' what lust seemed to offer. Not at all because I was a bad guy - on the contrary, I was always a nice man. But I obviously truly believe that I needed it like other people need air. If I felt the same way now, I'd use lust again, no question. I am an addict, even though I am sober for a while, thank-G-d.

Do you feel the same? If not, then who or what do *you* depend on in life? I don't mean in theory, I mean *functionally*. Do you consistently run to anything/anyone when *you* feel needy? Are you dependent on sex and lust, perhaps? Or do you just consider it a bad habit you've got to 'shake' by trying hard enough? It sounds to me that you are at or near the point of concession - of hachno'oh to the truth about yourself, otherwise I'd *never* be this forward. If I am off, please forgive me.

My experience was (and is) that people who are already attached to addiction do not start 'running to', or 'utilizing' healthy relationships with Hashem and people simply because of a deep decision to be good. Talking about 'waking up that latent emunah and bitachon in Hashem' is often just silly talk. Most who I have seen have just gotten more religious - and kept progressing in using their drug. It leads to shocking scandals that break up marriages, destroy the lives of innocent children of those parents, and does not really go away. And neither does our problem.

We seem to need real, awkward help to learn how to come to Hashem, how to use Him, and how to have healthy relationships again. We must be twisted in all those areas - for only by being twisted yidden, fathers, and husbands, can we actually tolerate years of having a 'marriage' and being 'frum' - while doing all the crazy things we do in addiction! It's all about hiding from everyone and even from ourselves...so recovery requires us to get over the shame and to get our insides out - or we do not get better. Well, at least that is the way it works for me.

I got (and get) the help I need to get 'untwisted' by watching other people like me doing it and by asking for and following some direction. That is what I get from meetings, having a sponsor, and sponsoring others.

I too went to a shrink, and the main benefit of it was that it helped me take my recovery seriously. It helped me get clarity in how goofy my thinking really was - and how shockingly comfortable I really was with my own twisted thinking. It was very helpful. It didn't heal me at all - but it helped me get into the healing business. It also gave my wife and I a much-needed neutral ground while I get straightened out and could actually start getting better through a miracle that I am still living today. It's the same exact miracle as He did for me on day 1.

So hatzlocha in counseling and please know that you are far from alone. The recovery rooms I go to in SA, for example, are filled with guys whose wives said the very same thing your wife is saying to you - and she has the right to know. We betrayed our wives trust and keep the lie alive by hiding it. That is not 'loving'. From the moment we went to lust we betrayed our wives, ourselves, Hashem, and lots of other people who thought we were OK, like our kids, for example. 'Getting caught' had surprisingly little to do with the betrayal, really. That was news to me, alright. But by the same token, some (like myself) believe that you have the right to not say anything without professional help first. Do what you think you need to and learn how to really love this woman for a change.

Hatzlocha. Hashem will help you if you let Him, or probably even if you don't...the help just doesn't usually come in as pleasant a form, *that* way.

Love,

Dov

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Re: Help!!

Posted by yedidya aleph - 02 Sep 2010 23:49

btw one of the slogans i heard in the 12 step rooms goes something like this

Insanity is if u keep doing the same thing and expect different results.

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Re: Help!!

Posted by Dov - 03 Sep 2010 14:27

Dear J,

As far as a good shrink, I would do a good week's research on that one if I were you, before committing - get someone who is experienced with sexual addictions more than with Marriage Issues - you can always work out the marriage stuff after you get your head screwed on straighter and she will come to a much healthier acceptance of you and your crapola that way. Going the marriage-focused route has a better chance of keeping the entire issue you have as one that is between you and her - and it has nothing whatsoever to do with your wife. Yes, it has a lot to do with your emotional *relationship* with her - but the thing that scares the hell out of me most here is someone trying to solve their addiction insanity by way of getting a better relationship with their wife - I believe that would backfire because independence is what we need - to be sober because we need to be sober for *ourselves*, not for our *wives*. And from a frum point of view, perhaps for G-d...I am fine with that, but approaching it that way from the very start is fraught with it's own garbage, cuz *if we were really that concerned about what G-d wants, we'd never have gotten so screwed up in the first place!* Pretending we really have G-d and are good doesn't make it so - and I didn't get very far that way. The people who insist on seeing this whole issue as a religious and moral failing and who want to 'fix' everyone see it differently, though, and you may hear things from them like "do t'shuvah now, quick! It's Rosh Hashanah soon! It's the perfect time!"...good luck to 'em. To me that's silly - the time for sobriety and today's recovery is always **now** - **today** - no matter *what* day it is, and it takes time - like growing up always does...it doesn't go by any 'calendar'.

Much love,

Dov

PS. To me, this was gorgeous:

[Jooboy wrote on 02 Sep 2010 17:50:](#)

I don't know what else to tel her

J,

It seems your real issue is not "what else to tell her", but what are you going to do about your problem. If you get help for yourself everything else will fall into place. If you don't get help for your problem nothing you tell her will make any difference at all.

I relate very much to your situation. When my wife discovered my porn issue she was devastated and so was I (that she found out). I spent a few years trying to control the damage and maker her be OK with me. It didn't work so great. Now I'm spending my time trying to fix me and trying to let go of what she thinks and overall the 2nd method is working much better.

Hatzlacha

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Re: Help!!

Posted by kosher - 03 Sep 2010 15:52

I will add my voice to those that say; there might be all sorts of legitimate issues with your wife/shalom bayis and it is true that having a better marraige would certainly help with these issues. Even so, start with fixing your own problem then the marraige shalom bayis issues are a lot easier to fix (if they don't correct themselves).

I personally did find that shalom bayis was a postive motivational factor to fix myself, but it was about fixing me...

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