

Tips for New Users

Posted by Shteeble - 02 Sep 2010 03:55

This topic is designed to help the new user get a QUICK understanding of what this site is all about. It is intended to help the user get an idea of where to start.

Be"H I will be posting a lot of bits and pieces (probably mostly quotes) that I find to be helpful in this regard.

If you have any comments or questions please PM me. (by clicking one of the little chotchkes under my username to the left of this post) (Unless of course, you're a GUEST, in which case you can't PM until you sign up.)

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Introducing the handbook...

Posted by Shteeble - 02 Sep 2010 03:56

From the handbook:

When a newcomer first comes to our websites and forum, they can easily be overwhelmed and feel lost. They will see many tips and advice, ranging from the most simple and basic ideas, and on through more drastic steps, such as therapy, 12-Step groups and even medication. It is often hard for the newcomer to pinpoint exactly how "addicted" they really are, and what kind of steps are the most appropriate for them to try at the stage of addiction they may be at. For example, obviously a beginner is not going to jump straight into psychotherapy or join a live 12-Step group,

in the same way we don't try to treat the common flu with chemotherapy.

And that is the goal of this handbook. We have attempted to put together a guide of the practical tools that we, in the GuardYourEyes community, have found useful. And we have attempted to

present them in a progressive order that goes more-or-less from the most basic and fundamental

tools, and on through the more intense and life-changing recommendations.

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Exactly How Bad Is It?

Posted by Shteeble - 02 Sep 2010 04:16

From the handbook:

The addiction is

a disease, and if it is not dealt with properly, it only gets worse. Addiction leads us down a path of

pain and self-destruction, until we stand to lose everything important to us, in this world and the next.

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Hit Bottom While Still On Top

Posted by Shteeble - 02 Sep 2010 04:24

from the handbook:

It is our fervent hope that those who still stand in the beginning stages of the addiction take heed

and learn from the experience of those who have already fallen to "rock-bottom".

One of our goals at GuardYourEyes is to help people

"Hit Bottom while still On Top". By helping people understand the "nature" of this addiction and where it ultimately

leads to, we hope that they will take the necessary steps to break free of the disease while they are "Still on Top" and their lives remain intact.

The key to starting out in recovery is simply "Acceptance". We must accept that we are addicted to lust before we can start to heal. Otherwise, we will read through this handbook and say to ourselves: "they're not talking about me".

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Know what you are up against.

Posted by Shteeble - 02 Sep 2010 04:38

Home » Attitude

Know what you are up against

28 April 2009

When struggling with this issue, most people think they are just dealing with a much larger than usual Yetzer Hara, or simply a lack of self-control. It is neither of these. It is vital to understand that this is an addiction. An addiction is a spiritual and psychological disease. What classifies it as an addiction? It's simple neuroscience. Just like with any pleasure, the pleasure sensory is stimulated in the brain. Whether its cocaine, alcohol, or pleasure one might get from bad things seen during a movie, the serotonin levels spike & the dopaminergic pleasure pathways are activated in the standard "addiction" pattern. These behaviors have been shown to be MORE powerfully addictive than most drugs, in one study. It's not a big surprise or a big wonder why that would be. It's an intense pleasure stimulation, even more direct than a hard drug. And upon repeated exposure to certain types of stimulation, one tends to seek out more and more perverse and intense stimulation, leading to that vicious self-destructive cycle that is typical of addictions. (See more about the addictive nature of these behaviors in this article over here).

Often we think that if we could only stop viewing indecent images or stop the self-pleasuring behaviors, we will have broken the addiction. But in most cases this is not so. Whether the behaviors are browsing inappropriate websites, self-pleasuring, or even worse, the common denominator is the addiction to "Lust". We may stop one behavior or another, but we continue Lusting and holding on to lust. Lusting is like "Alcohol" to an alcoholic, whether it's Brandy, wine or beer. (The Minchas Chinuch – Mitzva 387 compares lust to Alcohol addiction). If we try

and stop bad behaviors but continue to hold on to “lust”, it is like immersing in the Mikva while holding the Sheretz in one’s hand.

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What classifies someone as an addict?

Posted by Shteeble - 02 Sep 2010 04:43

Rabbi Twerski in this article defines it as such:

The ultimate distinction between man and animals is not that man is more intelligent, but that animals are creatures that have no choice over their behavior. They must do whatever their bodies demand. They cannot choose what they should do. Man has the ability of self-control, to choose one’s behavior, even in defiance of physical urges.

If a person loses one’s ability to choose and is dominated by urges one cannot control, one is indeed an addict. Losing the ability to choose is losing the uniqueness of being a human being, and robs one of the dignity of being human. We pride ourselves on liberty and view slavery as evil because it dehumanizes a person. And that is exactly what happens when we relinquish our ability to choose.

It is also important to know that “once an addict, always an addict”. Once we have trained our minds to use lust as a form of drug, we must learn to stay far away from lust – no matter how far we may progress in this struggle. If we let ourselves take that first drink, we will feel powerless again.

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Scared?

Posted by Shteeble - 02 Sep 2010 04:49

This all may sound scary, but it is actually freeing to know exactly what you are up against. Now that we know we are dealing with an addiction, and an addiction to “Lust” in particular, there are tried and proven methods that work, and then there are methods that don’t work. For

example, many times we thought that by increasing Torah Study, Mussar, or by making new resolutions we would be able to break free, only to find that we fall back into the behaviors in short time.

Having narrowed the struggle down to two simple terms "Lust Addiction" we can now explore the best ways of dealing with it and we can also learn to recognize if a thought pattern we have is coming from the addiction or not.

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(OK so maybe you should just read the handbook already.)

Posted by Shteeble - 02 Sep 2010 05:01

From the handbook:

We suggest first reading this handbook all the way through, from beginning to end, and only afterwards starting again from Tool #1 and working through each tool more carefully. On the second time around, we suggest clicking on the important links that are referenced in many of the tools, to help us understand the concepts better. By following this strategy, we will already have an overview of the tools available, and this can help us focus better on each individual tool the second time around.

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Shiur from R' Yisrael Reisman Shlit"a

Posted by Shteeble - 02 Sep 2010 05:23

We can listen to this wonderful shiur from R' Yisrael Reisman Shlit"a, which provides some excellent perspective on this struggle.

www.guardureyes.com/GUE/Music/mus/ShiurYesodos.mp3

(handbook tool#1)

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Internet Filters

Posted by Shteeble - 02 Sep 2010 11:03

The GuardUrEyes.com website has an entire section with filter options, ranging from "server" or "client" based, free or commercial, Jewish or non-Jewish. There is something there to meet anyone's needs. On our website, we can also learn about how the different types of filters work and what the terms mean, such as "server based", "client based", "white-list", "blacklist" etc...

(from the handbook - tool #2)

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Accountability Software

Posted by Shteeble - 02 Sep 2010 11:11

If we must have completely open Internet access for our work, we can still download accountability software where e-mails are sent to a partner who will see all the questionable pages that we may have browsed.

(from the handbook - tool #2)

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Tips For Guarding The Eyes

Posted by Shteeble - 02 Sep 2010 11:27

This site offers many tips for GUARDING YOUR EYES.

Here's one:

Yes, (.....), you have hit the nail on the head. The site is called "GuardUrEyes" because no matter how complex this disease seems to be, emotionally, psychologically, physically, etc... it all boils down to guarding the eyes. If a person can guard your eyes, he is 99.99% healed. The heart and mind may be polluted from years of abuse, but they too will become pure and holy if one learns to guards his eyes.

But there are many levels. Even for one who has stopped with the and for a while, may find himself still struggling with keeping his eyes clean when out on the street. This is a valiant battle. But as "(.....)" said, with small steps and determination, it can be done.

(from shaklah vetaryah between users)

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Before You Sign Up....

Posted by Shteeble - 02 Sep 2010 15:25

Be sure to pick a username that is meaningful to you. Keep in mind that this is what your friends (your support team people) are going to call you.

Just imagine this...

Dear OylCan'tThinkOfANameRightNow,

I just finished reading your post, and I want to show you some support.....

or...

Dear R' Oy,

Keep on posting.... let me know.... keep on trucking... don't get down... daven...

Dear Can't Think,

Ok you get the message!

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Guarding The Eyes

Posted by Shteeble - 02 Sep 2010 18:37

As we discussed, guarding our eyes is the starting point, middle point, and the final frontier of this

struggle. Even when we have already learned to control the more seriously damaging addictive behaviors, we may still find that it takes us yet another few years to learn how to fully surrender our lusting to Hashem and gain complete control over our eyes. So don't get discouraged if you break free of the inappropriate behaviors but still find it difficult to guard your eyes on the street. It

is a process. But if we stay determined to get our lives and priorities back on track, we will see progress in this area, slowly but surely. And we must progress. Staying in the same place keeps us vulnerable to relapse, and if we don't try to move forward a little every day in learning how to guard our eyes, we will remain susceptible to being drawn back into the harmful addictive behaviors as well.

(from the handbook - tool #2)

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The "Three-Second Rule"

Posted by Shteeble - 02 Sep 2010 19:20

If we see something inappropriate, we can implement the "three-second rule." Doing so involves three steps: alert, avert, and affirm. The first step is to realize that we're seeing something inappropriate. That's the "alert" stage, and it may take a second or two. The second step is to close our eyes or look away. That's the "avert" stage. These two steps should take place within [about] three seconds. The third step is to give yourself a mental "pat on the back" thinking

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something like, "I saw that by mistake, and I quickly looked away. I'm still clean and, G-d willing, I'm going to build on that, one day at a time." That's the "affirm" stage.

This is crucial, because as addicts, it's often the first slip that does us in ("just as an alcoholic needs to avoid that first sip, a lust addict needs to avoid that first slip").

Many times, people say things like, "I looked away, but maybe I waited a drop longer than I had to". Then the Yetzer Hara makes this poor soul feel guilty, when he's done nothing wrong at all, and that can lead to further slips and falls. The "three-second rule" recognizes that it may take a second or two to realize that something is amiss, and only then are we expected to look away.

(handbook - tool #2)

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