

Introducing myself

Posted by clown - 04 Feb 2011 20:38

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I'm not even sure why I'm here.

The site clearly designed for **RELIGIOUS JEWS**. I can't claim to be one.

I was born of Jewish parents and that's about all I could have to claim from Judaism until I was about 21 or so... Then I found out the minimum, like what the word Kosher means or Torah or anything else most men on this site have known since before they can remember.

At the age of 35 I met a non Jewish woman, who shortly after became my wife. My children are not Jewish by any stretch of imagination.

Maybe only after I realized the last fact I became in anyway interested in being observant.

Of course, what should I do now? Become seriously observant and alienate my family? Just, please, no advices like: "You should convince your wife to convert"... Let's be realistic here, shall we?

So I went as far as I could: I observe what I call "a minimal Kashrut", go to my observant relatives for Yom Kippur and fast with them, make a speed version of Ceder for Pesah...

And here I am, half baked Jew, looking from outside in on the bunch of people who have the same disease that I have, but who have something they believe in...

Maybe I just need to know that someone HEARD me and not hear in response "just believe in Jesus... Torah... Allah..."

One of the great rabbis said: "Jew do not believe in G-d, Jews know". No one can convince me, but someone can let me KNOW...

My story started probably 40 years ago. I remember at the age of 13 I found some reprints from a dirty magazine. For a while I kept them but was always afraid of being caught.

Once I tried to throw them away and found myself looking through the garbage... Later I had to burn them in order make it "irreversible".

Back then I should have realized that I need help. But that was 40 years ago. In the time and place where I was growing up it was not as simple as going to the school psychologist. I had no rabbi, or "spiritual adviser", or guru...

In late 70s my family moved to Brooklyn NY. Anybody who lived in New York in late 70s early 80s, knows what Time Square like was back then.

I clearly remember going out of my way just to pass through the area... I remember how I was trying to convince myself, that I won't even stop... well maybe for a minute... well maybe just this one time... 3-4 or sometime 5 hours later I would be coming back on the subway trying to come up with excuses where I was all this time.

Anyone from Brooklyn? Anyone knows if there is the movie theater on Kings Highway and Ocean Parkway still there?

It probably does not have the same repertoire...

I remember one time I notices how my legs literally carried me towards it. How hopeless I felt... I'm not talking in some "poetic" sense, I mean physically...

Maybe at that point it was not too late...

I did have a chance then. I was enrolled in Brooklyn College and I even went to see a psychologist back then... But I never had enough guts to talk to her about what really bothered me.

People blame internet for making pornography so available. Let me tell you something: the quality changed a lot not the core of the issue. I was sick way before the internet existed.

People with all good intentions tried to prevent alcoholism and probably did saved few souls during prohibition... but did it work?

Alcoholics can blame wine maker, but the bottom line is that it is never **THEM** it is **US**, always **US... YOU, ME**, anyone who reads this...

Any kind of addicts alcoholics, drug addicts, food addicts... it does not matter we are all responsible for our own problems.

Here on this site things are relatively simple: there is no question about what we do... It's wrong... And I don't disagree

Let's put our notions away for a minute. Let imagine ourselves in the different kind of society. Someplace where looking at naked but is no different than looking at flower or a fruit?

Remember "Breakfast for Champions" by Kurt Vonnegutt? No? Try to read... You'll never laugh at herself harder...

Who is old enough to remember when it was just as shameful to be homosexual? How politically correct it would be to have homosexual anonymous today?

What if instead of crying on each other shoulders we decided to start a revolution? "Stonewall riots of pornophiles"...

OK, don't panic, I'm no revolutionary. I'm not interested in changing the society for the sake of my dirty habits...

Just like I said, I just need to talk it out...

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Re: Introducing myself

Posted by the.guard - 05 Feb 2011 17:22

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Hi WonderingJew, welcome. You've come to the right place.

I am the admin of this website/forum... Not everyone here is religious. Here is an e-mail I got recently from "Peter":

Hello Guard,

I have been receiving your daily Chizuk emails for about 8 months now, I enjoy and look forward to reading them everyday. I am involved for the last year in SA groups here in Toronto. I am Jewish but not observant right now, I grew up very secular. That being said I find the 12th steps with Torah commentary that you provide tremendously inspiring and helpful in my recovery. I would like to find out how I can donate to your organization by credit card. I tell all the religious Jews in my meetings about this site, I think it is absolutely amazing and contains the true spirit of recovery. I only wish sometimes my SA meetings had more of the spirit of this group.

It means so much to me to be part of the GYE community, I think I brought much joy and inspiration to my daily SA meeting that day just because of how good I felt inside to be sharing my journey of recovery with such holy and special Jews. Even as I write this I thank Hashem for such a wonderful gift. The GYE community has inspired me by demonstrating endless patience and tolerance with those who are struggling in their addiction and recovery. Never have I read an unnecessary harsh word, self-righteousness or judgemental comment, all I have seen is brotherhood, love, support, gentleness, respect, faith and inspiration. I know that even if God forbid I fall backwards, both the GYE community and Hashem will be there to lend me a hand. What a blessing.

Keep up the inspiration and faith! With much much gratitude and appreciation for what you do.

Humbly,

Peter "Pesach"

And now to address your post... I want to bring you a quote from Dov. Dov is sober n SA (sexaholics anon) for 13 years. A fellow asked Dov what he thought of seeking out SA meetings that are exclusively/mostly religious (there are some). Dov responded:

Frankly, I do not understand the Jewish-recovery connection. I am not disagreeing with you, it's just that I do not understand it in my own experience. Here's why:

I am not sober because I fear G-d - if that was enough of a motivation for me then I'd have gotten sober long, long ago! Right? But I didn't.

Rather, the reason I became ready to give up acting out and start living sober was - and (I believe) still is - only because of the same stuff that motivated the non-Jews I know in recovery: staying sane and alive. Sure, my life was stinky while I was acting out, but the fact that I did not stop means to me that it was not stinky enough for me, yet. It had to get unmanageable. And even that was not really enough, till I *recognized* it as unmanageable.

So what does the Torah, or other Jews, have anything to do with that?

Sure, being sober and working the steps fits into my Jewishness (and helps it a great deal) - but the sobriety comes first. As long as I am sober, there is room for Judaism in my life. If I am not sober, there is no room for anything but lies. And, as we know, "the seal of G-s is TRUTH". So there is not room for Him, and no room for the real me, either. Just a dead shell of me. Real life is 'on hold' for me.

That having been said, if you feel more comfortable being honest around other Jews, then go find a Jewish meeting! But I would not look for sobriety in their Jewishness. I just do not believe it is there. And I have seen my share of desperate addicts who saw their recovery as a Jewish thing, only to discover that they still needed to have one more layer painfully stripped away from their egos before they were finally ready to drop lust for real - not just to live up to a standard that they held very dear, but for themselves.

One more thing. I believe that many people do not really comprehend how screwed up they really are until they humbly sit through to a few (live) meetings of sober sexaholics - and see their own reflection shockingly reflected back to them. Then the truth about how ridiculous their lives are, finally sinks in. And that's a good thing. No?

I suggest you join our phone conferences. And keep posting here!

G-d luck.

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Re: Introducing myself

Posted by ben durdayah - 05 Feb 2011 21:21

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Dear Wondering,

Welcome to our community.

Yes, many of us are religious Jews -even so called "Ultra-Orthodox" Jews, but that is not what brings us together here.

As the site's mission states: 'Note: Although GYE is *designed* (emphasis mine -EBD) for

religious Jews, no sincere individual of any faith will be turned away in their quest to overcome their struggles in conquering lust addiction.'

So make yourself at home, and avail yourself of all the wonderful things our little corner has to offer.

Cordially,

Elazar ben Durdayah

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Re: Introducing myself

Posted by Dov - 06 Feb 2011 05:46

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Dear 'Wondering Jew',

Keep posting here and sharing and perhaps the "why you are here" will become clear to you. If you wish to get more clear here about what your problem involves, that will probably help in two ways:

1- by being clear about it all with others, you will find a lot less *self*-condemnation,

and

2- by being clear about it all with others, you will find that *others* do not condemn you, either...yeah, even your 'religious' Jewish brothers!

What do you have to lose, anyway?

All the best,

Dov

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Re: Introducing myself

Posted by pinokio - 06 Feb 2011 16:39

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Dear wandering jew,

Although i am a religious jew, i humbly agree with my great peers;

SA was created by gentiles-this has nothing to do with religion-as the wonderful gye handbook clarifies, this struggle is about the transition from being an animal, who excersizes no self control, to becoming a person, a paradigm for mankind.

As a great Rabbi once said (r' mendel kaplan, r' mendel and his wisdom, artscroll publishers): Rabbi kaplan once told his class that even if they were to meet a simple gentile from a long time ago, they'd be swept up by his values, his self control, his pursuit for wisdom, his appreciation for toil.

From even biblical accounts, see old testament in several places (see R' aryeh kaplans' living torah ed.), we see how great men made truces and oaths with even the biggest villains, and the nafarious villain kept his word. That was the way god designed man.

Over time, we, shall we say, changed from our nature.

Youv'e found the right place, wandering jew, to gain that self control.

So you say you are a wandering jew? So what are you waiting for! Come in, let me take your coat....tea? Feel here at home, and keep posting, bec. then we can all work together to help ea. other in our struggles. maybe join the break free board, check it out.

In respect of your goals to become pure and decent,

Tzaddik90

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Re: Introducing myself

Posted by 1daat - 07 Feb 2011 00:05

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Hi Wondering Jew. Welcome, welcome, welcome. I guess you figured out you're more than welcome here. There is so much here to help. Your story sounds so much like mine. Also have a child from a gentile. What our kids want is a father who can love them without that nagging sense of being fake at the back of our heads.

Much success. I'll be checking in.

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