

What, boruch doing the 12 steps????????????????????????????????

Posted by boruch - 28 Jan 2009 22:28

That's right, you read it right. boruch is in the very near and immediate future, B'Ezras Hashem, participating in a secular group that meets regularly on sexual addiction and works with the 12 steps. That is at least once.

Wait a second, this has to be some sort of publicity stunt. There is some sort of conspiracy going on here. Maybe boruch realized that he would get much more attention by first smashing the 12 steps to smithereens and then announcing that he himself is going to such a group than if he had just announced his intended participation when he originally joined.

Whichever way it is, there has to be something more to this than meets the eye.

Well, actually there is. boruch has a therapist. boruch said so in his first post on this board. For anyone who didn't notice boruch likes a good fight and he likes to come to a fight very well-armed. In fact, as far as boruch is concerned there is no such thing as being too well-armed.

So, boruch has an accountability partner, yes his accountability partner is out here on this board (and got here after they were accountability partners and before boruch took his partner's example and was himself posting here). boruch has his Jnet filtering allowing business only (no leisure at all) which is the highest level of filter available for DSL. boruch has two forms of monitoring software running simultaneously on both of his laptop and main PC. One that takes screenshots locally and the other that emails his accountability partner all activity and content of both PCs. boruch is active on this forum, and doing his best to see to it that he doesn't become too addicted to the forums either (his first week here wreaked absolute havoc on the rest of his life). So, if boruch has all of that, why does he need a therapist? ***Because boruch does not believe in half-measures.***

So if boruch is committed to using everything available why would boruch not just try the 12 steps even once before slamming them full force with everything he has?

Because boruch, when left to himself, is only interested in using what he believes are great weapons. If he is convinced that time and effort can be better spent otherwise, he is not going to do what everyone else does just for the sake of it (especially since he is not particularly averse

to being different).

So you may not have envied the job of my therapist last night.

You see, he and I have this very subtle disagreement. It's only a minor thing really. No big deal. I mean, what's so unusual? boruch's therapist is convinced that the 12 steps groups would be the best thing for boruch. And boruch himself? Long before he had ever discussed the 12 steps with his therapist he was deeply allergic to them and was dead set against ever using them.

So, for a moment, put yourself in the position that my therapist found himself in last night. What would you have done to get boruch, your client, to join a secular 12 step group? Taken early retirement? Schedule a got-to-go call for the beginning of the session and hot-tailed it straight to a very warm sunny place for the the balance of the Winter?

Well, my therapist is very smart. For one, he is really soft-spoken. And he is 100% all matter-of-fact practicality. No theories, no droshos, just the real deal. So here's what he did.

We were working on my addiction issues extending to these forums. He liked the idea of moderation, an hour on the forums daily (I am in jeopardy now and will BE"H be gone soon). But he added even more common sense. He helped me recognize that it's not just the forums that I am addicted to but computers as well. So, in the spirit of moderation he told me that I am not going to like it but he strongly advises me to only use a computer (at least for the next 30 days) during a window that is the equivalent of the number of hours in a workday. He also advised me to split the hour on these forums into two parts of half an hour each. One half hour to give me chizzuk as I log on and another half hour just before I log off.

Most importantly he strongly advised me (I have special circumstances -- you may be different) to avoid at all costs going on a computer to go to the forums. He said the forums are best used when you would anyway be on the computer so that they lessen addiction, but once you go on a computer to get forums then at least in my case I increase the risk of feeding my computer addiction.

That's when the subject of the 12 steps came up. He told me that I am not going to like his suggestion, but I should go to a session at least once.

Before he could get any further I briefly explained some of my issues with the 12 steps. I told him that I can manage fine without it because I have these forums. I told him that with Hashem's help I will join others in groups that are very different. etc. etc.

And he did not give up. He said, how do you think that you can make your own groups without having ever checked out the competition? He reminded me of the joke of the guy marooned on a desert island who had built himself two shuls, one that he davens in, and one that he won't daven in. ***He told me that it cannot truly be the shul you won't daven in, if you never davened there at least once.***

Now, of course, neither I nor my therapist were born yesterday. We both knew what he really meant. He really meant to say, I am your therapist and I am telling you, that not only will you do very well in those groups, you will like it very much. He meant to say that even if you try it just once, you'll be hooked for the long run.

And yet, realizing what he really wanted to achieve I nevertheless wholeheartedly agreed to try it out. **Even though I am dead against the 12 steps.** Why? Because as both my therapist and I know, after all is said and done, boruch is a pragmatist. Yes, boruch will not sell out on his convictions for anyone, therapist or not. That is not to say that he is not open to persuasion. boruch reversed himself when Guard and Ano took him to task for belligerence on the forum. But boruch won't sell out on his convictions. Because open minded as he is boruch has not reversed himself on everything else discussed here, because much as he has tried to look for it, he has yet to hear anything even remotely worthwhile, let alone convincing on any of the topics that we debate so fiercely here (you see Guard you didn't need to worry, the fighting spirit is far from gone, and my style is not exactly cramped).

But what does that have to do with boruch going to a secular group that works with the 12 steps? Even if the 12 steps were 1000% hogwash (which they are not --- *look, see --- moderation at work*) that's not an excuse to dismiss my therapist's suggestion.

And I can even prove to you beyond a shadow of doubt that my therapist is right. I usually look up *everything* and source *everything* before I quote, but as I quote something once posted on these forums I am making an exception, so as not to give credit where it certainly does not belong.

So, let's just say, to keep it friendly and diplomatic, that someone on these forums (we'll keep it totally anonymous, safer that way) so someone once wrote that there are no rules on these forums (there weren't then, B"H there are now -- relax Guard, I am only teasing) and then this guy continued by qualifying, that is, ***with the possible exception of the 12 steps.***

So, here's a question for everyone here. There's this forum online for frum Jews that deals with addiction. And many or most of the guys are like, you know, really, really into the 12 steps.

Do you think that such a forum would be a good idea for boruch?

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Re: What, boruch doing the 12 steps????????????????????????????????
Posted by Ano Nymous - 28 Jan 2009 22:48

I will just add to what I wrote in your other thread before I saw this one. If you walk in there and begin to question their system instead of focusing on the PARTS of their system which are helpful and speak to you, you will be wasting your time and theirs.

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Re: What, boruch doing the 12 steps????????????????????????????????
Posted by the.guard - 28 Jan 2009 23:20

Boruch, you are again walking a fine line between tiger/kid gloves. PLEASE calm down and stop even "hinting" to attacks.

I read your post but I'm not sure I understood what you are getting at. I did understand one thing, and that is that you want to try the 12-Steps so that you can decide "close-up" if it is for you or not. And if you decide that it is NOT, you will have at least tried. So I will repeat what I posted before. If you are going, here are 5 things to keep in mind.

- 1) Don't go with pre-defined notions or grievances. Leave your heart and mind OPEN.
- 2) Don't go with the intention of seeing what you can find WRONG with it.
- 3) Take the kid gloves please. They don't like tigers running loose over there :D.
- 4) Remember that Rabbi Twerski, who you wrote is an "*Adom Gadol Me'od*", is a strong advocate of the program.
- 5) And lastly, they say it takes at least 6 meetings to really see if they are for you. **(So if you go for any less, your "anti-12-step" tirades will have little credibility).**

At the end of the day, no matter how many proofs you might bring against the 12-Steps - and even if you yourself joined the groups for a while and decide that they are as wrong as can be, we on GuardUrEyes have Rabbi Twerski as our guidance, and he is an *adom gadol me'od* as you say, and he is a fierce proponent of the 12-Steps. So Boruch, who do you think we are going to listen to at the end of the day? Will it be "Boruch" who is starting out on his own personal journey, or Rabbi Twerski who is over 85 years old, written over 50 books on psychology, and has helped thousands of people make their own personal journeys to recovery?

I rest my case (to quote you).

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Re: What, boruch doing the 12 steps?????????????????????????????????
Posted by boruch - 28 Jan 2009 23:39

[Ano Nymous wrote on 28 Jan 2009 22:48:](#)

I will just add to what I wrote in your other thread before I saw this one. If you walk in there and begin to question their system instead of focusing on the PARTS of their system which are helpful and speak to you, you will be wasting your time and theirs.

Relax, take it easy.

Before this gets out of hand and before anyone thinks that in real life I interact in the same way that I do on a forum, let me reassure everyone that in real life, I can be a very, very normal guy.

I am not going anywhere to prove any point, one way or another. I am going to the groups, totally matter of fact. To see if there is anything at all that helps me personally as yet another tool/weapon in the fight against addiction. I don't care whether they believe in the 12 steps and I will not be trying to change, either their opinion of the 12 steps or my own.

All appearances aside, what has helped me here on this forum is not the opposition and arguing, but the group dynamic. And they have a group dynamic there too. So, yes, I am going there open, open to finding something useful, regardless of what the actual beliefs are. And no, I do not intend to lecture a secular group on how they should be more torahdik!!!!

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Re: What, boruch doing the 12 steps????????????????????????????????
Posted by the.guard - 28 Jan 2009 23:49

Ok Good, you are starting to sound like a normal guy :D

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Re: What, boruch doing the 12 steps????????????????????????????????
Posted by boruch - 29 Jan 2009 01:48

[guardureyes wrote on 28 Jan 2009 23:20:](#)

Boruch, you are again walking a fine line between tiger/kid gloves. PLEASE calm down

Ahhh, there, that feels better already.

[guardureyes wrote on 28 Jan 2009 23:20:](#)

I read your post but I'm not sure I understood what you are getting at.

OK, so as I said to Ano, I'll say to you, with a little more background.

One week ago I was totally on fire because, for the first time in 38 years, I had finally seen addiction in all its ugliness and I was extremely determined and enthusiastic. So, I got carried away, yes, I have an addictive personality, and, fueled by a lot of passion, and without the self-restraint of face-to-face interaction, I made mistakes and I am neither trying to excuse them nor do I intend to repeat them.

[guardureyes wrote on 28 Jan 2009 23:20:](#)

I did understand one thing, and that is that you want to try the 12-Steps so that you can decide "close-up" if it is for you or not. And if you decide that it is NOT, you will have at least tried.

No. I didn't make it clear enough but I personally don't buy into the 12 steps and so I will not be trying them at all. What, doing the 12 steps without the 12 steps? What does that mean? How will that work? If you are really a totally beholden believer in the 12 steps it will seem to be totally meaningless. But if like me, you are not a great believer in them, then the groups may work out for any of a multitude of other, equally good reasons.

[guardureyes wrote on 28 Jan 2009 23:20:](#)

So I will repeat what I posted before. If you are going, here are 5 things to keep in mind.

If I were going to try out the 12 steps that would be something to consider.

[guardureyes wrote on 28 Jan 2009 23:20:](#)

At the end of the day, no matter how many proofs you might bring against the 12-Steps - and even if you yourself joined the groups for a while and decide that they are as wrong as can be, we on GuardUrEyes have Rabbi Twerski as our guidance, and he is an *adom gadol me'od* as you say, and he is a fierce proponent of the 12-Steps. So Boruch, who do you think we are going to listen to at the end of the day? Will it be "Boruch" who is starting out on his own personal journey, or Rabbi Twerski who is over 85 years old, written over 50 books on psychology, and has helped thousands of people make their own personal journeys to recovery?

That's a false dichotomy. Meaning, you claim it's either one or the other when really it does not have to be either.

I am going to say something extremely important, that should probably have been said sooner, but it has taken a while for me to be able to verbalize it fully. There is no argument over values at all here. Any discussion and disagreement to the extent that it exists at all is 100% about method, strategy and approach and 0% over values.

I value sobriety and so does everyone on this board.

I value personal responsibility and so does everyone on this board.

I value teshuva and so does everyone on this board.

So in reality, we are absolutely and totally be'achdus, which explains why we can all get on really well when we want to. Because all discussions aside, we are all here ke'ish echod belev echod to become better Yidden and better Ovdei Hashem.

From here on, as a general rule, I will focus on not just my own personal path but lessons that **everyone** can take from Torah regardless of their attitude to the 12 steps. Once there is a crack in the door and people are willing to

discuss and perhaps listen to something new in addition to what they already know, that is more than enough.

As you will see, your attitude will change a lot more than you expect it to.

Now, as to the real point of the piece I wrote here it was intended to be essentially humorous but also interesting and my main focus was on the manner and method of my therapist.

However I will say that while I have and had no interest in perpetuating the fight over the 12 steps, coming as it does at the expense of posting Torah messages on recovery, with some of the comments being posted very recently to my other thread in support of the 12 steps I was determined to go out of my way to make it obvious that my own involvement with a 12 step group is no capitulation.

But that is all in the past. Because with Siyatta Dishmaya and Achdus we can learn from each other.

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Re: What, boruch doing the 12 steps????????????????????????????????
Posted by the.guard - 29 Jan 2009 10:24

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From here on, as a general rule, I will focus on not just my own personal path but lessons that everyone can take from Torah regardless of their attitude to the 12 steps.

Let the above lines be your new motto and new approach to this forum, and we will all be able to benefit from your wisdom. However, if you deviate from the above and continue debating,

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Re: What, boruch doing the 12 steps????????????????????????????????
Posted by boruch - 29 Jan 2009 15:44

[guardureyes wrote on 29 Jan 2009 10:24:](#)

However, if you deviate from the above and continue debating, bashing the 12-Steps or

That's a deal.

You know Guard, I have noticed on several occasions that you can be very wise.

That's why I have a suspicion about you.

I suspect that in order to give boruch a little space, and in order to encourage the "new" Boruch, you yourself will, in your own way, and at your own discretion, make it a little easier for him by doing your bit too, wherever possible and wherever it's not too difficult, to keep your interaction, on threads that he has started, away from some of the more charged aspects of discussion (so by way of an example of a situation similar to the one which almost brought back the debate on this thread, I can envision that if in the future, boruch is keeping his end of the deal, then let's say on boruch's alternatives to the 12 steps thread, you were considering expounding at length on something that had a strong chance of getting boruch all riled up, I can imagine a scenario in which, in your discretion and wisdom, and learning from experience, you might, just for example, direct the more provocative aspects of discussion off his thread by linking to a new thread).

Of course Guard, you are the big boss here and you will ultimately do whatever you want, but now that boruch is doing so well, we would not, chas vesholom, want him to have a relapse and revert to his old ways and become all aggressive again. I mean after all we have been through, you would not want to trigger him, would you? (I am obviously talking about triggering his aggression)

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Re: What, boruch doing the 12 steps????????????????????????????????

Posted by the.guard - 29 Jan 2009 19:59

Boruch'l, Boruch'l. Part of breaking free of this addiction is becoming a better person. And part of becoming a better person is breaking our ego. So what is so bad if someone triggers your aggression and you don't act on it? Yes, your ego will be deflated, but that's a GOOD thing. I heard a story with the Tolner Rebbe Zatzal. When he was younger, he was not yet well known.

He was invited to a convention of Rabbanim and he went to sit down at the head table. The gabbai of the event came along and asked him "who he thinks he is" and told him to sit by the table of the "lesser" Rabbanim. So he got up and went to the table lower down. A few minutes later, he got up and went back to the head table. Again, the Gabbai came and told him off in a stronger tone of voice to go to the other table, which he did. The Tolner Rebbe's gabbai was very surprised and he ask his Rebbe why he had gone to the head table after already being told not to. His answer was "Ah! That was such a Gemshmake Busha - I wanted it again".

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Re: What, boruch doing the 12 steps????????????????????????????????
Posted by boruch - 09 Feb 2009 17:45

[guardureyes wrote on 29 Jan 2009 19:59:](#)

Boruch'l, Boruch'l. Part of breaking free of this addiction is becoming a better person. And part of becoming a better person is breaking our ego. So what is so bad if someone triggers you're aggression and you don't act on it? Yes, your ego will be deflated, but that's a GOOD thing. I heard a story with the Tolner Rebbe Zatzal. When he was younger, he was not yet well known. He was invited to a convention of Rabbanim and he went to sit down at the head table. The gabbai of the event came along and asked him "who he thinks he is" and told him to sit by the table of the "lesser" Rabbanim. So he got up and went to the table lower down. A few minutes later, he got up and went back to the head table. Again, the Gabbai came and told him off in a stronger tone of voice to go to the other table, which he did. The Tolner Rebbe's gabbai was very surprised and he ask his Rebbe why he had gone to the head table after already being told not to. His answer was "Ah! That was such a Gemshmake Busha - I wanted it again".

ok, ok, but don't expect me to come for more... I won't become the tolner overnight...

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