

Sholom's Mindfulness Recovery Path

Posted by tiefster88 - 22 Feb 2018 17:19

Hi everybody,

I am posting on this website for the first time. I have tried a few different methods in the past to recover. The highest quality for me was the mindfulness app programs for addiction by Judson Brewer.

In the past I was sober using this program for months and didn't have to struggle with difficult cravings as much. However after so many weeks I lost the emotional push to keep up with the program. Other things came up in life and this got pushed to the side. Eventually a craving came along and knocked me over.

This time I am going through the program again in combination with a Taphsic neder. I hope that posting my insights of the program on here can help me with my program and staying sober. If anybody else reads it and gains something that can help them then that would be a great bonus.

=====

Re: Getting back up quickly

Posted by cordnoy - 10 Jul 2018 13:28

[tiefster88 wrote on 10 Jul 2018 11:03:](#)

For sure SA is full of mindfulness. Very often sponsors will tell a sponsee to start noticing their triggers. Where does the big book ever worry about triggers? It says that you can go to bars with friends and don't need to worry because you will no longer have any cravings.

The main reason I want to surrender my desires to Hashem is because I think that certain addictions may be spiritual in nature rather than only chemical. Although paying attention to emotions can give oneself control over his emotions, still if there is a spiritual hunger that one is covering up with lust then that still needs to be fulfilled in some way. So the person will get other problems. Maybe addiction or maybe other symptomatic issues altogether.

Just learning how to control ones emotions with ones brain doesn't take care of why the person was reaching for that drug of choice in the first place. The person must be missing something. In my case being a Jew I would want to fill that with dveykus to Hashem which also seems to be something that worked for many alcoholics in AA in taking away their cravings for alcohol. I can tell that this is what I am lacking.

Must be a different edition of the big book, or perhaps it's a different book altogether.

Godspeed!

=====

Re: Getting back up quickly

Posted by tiefster88 - 10 Jul 2018 14:07

You can learn not to be controlled by emotions by paying attention to them and recognizing that they are just producing sensations in our body and that we don't need to do what they are trying to tell us to do. Instead we can just allow them to be to be there and they will eventually die down on their own.

=====

Re: Getting back up quickly

Posted by tiefster88 - 10 Jul 2018 14:17

This is what I'm referring to: Page 100

"Assuming we are spiritually fit, we can do all sorts of things alcoholics are not supposed to do. People have said we must not go where liquor is served; we must not have it in our homes; we must shun friends who drink; we must avoid moving pictures which show drinking scenes; we must not go into bars; our friends must hide their bottles if we go to their houses; we mustn't think or be reminded about alcohol at all.

Our experience shows that this is not necessarily so. We meet these conditions every day. An alcoholic who cannot meet them, still has an alcoholic mind; there is something the matter with his spiritual status. His only chance for sobriety would be some place like the Greenland Ice Cap, and even there an Eskimo might turn up with a bottle of scotch and ruin everything! Ask any woman who has sent her husband to distant places on the theory he would escape the alcohol problem.

In our belief any scheme of combating alcoholism which proposes to shield the sick man from temptation is doomed to failure. If the alcoholic tries to shield himself he may succeed for a time, but he usually winds up with a bigger explosion than ever. We have tried these methods. These attempts to do the impossible have always failed.

So our rule is not to avoid a place where there is drink- ing, if we have a legitimate reason for being there. That includes bars, nightclubs, dances, receptions, weddings, even plain ordinary whoopee parties. To a person who has had experience with an alcoholic, this may seem like tempting Providence, but it isn't.

=====

=====

Re: Getting back up quickly
Posted by cordnoy - 10 Jul 2018 14:23

The big book and the other books teach us how to live life, and yes, if one learns to live life properly, he might be able to enter a bar, and what is wrong with that? There might even be some who can drink a l'chaim or two.

=====

=====

Re: Getting back up quickly
Posted by mzl - 10 Jul 2018 14:27

Thank you for typing that, I have never read the big book.

However comparing going to a nude beach for a sex addict and going to a bar for an alcoholic is not really a logical comparison, because alcohol does not enter the drunk's system when he

sees the bottle. So I think one has to be careful when drawing analogies from sex to substance abuse.

=====

Re: Getting back up quickly
Posted by cordnoy - 10 Jul 2018 14:51

[mzl wrote on 10 Jul 2018 14:27:](#)

Thank you for typing that, I have never read the big book.

However comparing going to a nude beach for a sex addict and going to a bar for an alcoholic is not really a logical comparison, because alcohol does not enter the drunk's system when he sees the bottle. So I think one has to be careful when drawing analogies from sex to substance abuse.

And perhaps one needs to be careful when contrastin' as well. Experience trumps all thinkin'.

=====

Re: Getting back up quickly
Posted by GrowStrong - 12 Jul 2018 08:21

Just to put this into context and reply with my own experience, this means for me that i sit here typing this from a completely unfiltered computer. IM sitting 'in' the bar.

But this doesn't mean that i can have a couple of l'chaims..

I personally cannot lust or porn like a gentlemen, it leads me to ~~censored~~ places.

=====

Re: Getting back up quickly
Posted by mzl - 12 Jul 2018 12:48

I get the metaphor. It's a very helpful metaphor. I was just pointing that it's not exactly the same thing because the consumption mechanism is a little different.

Being around my wife for me is like being in bar for an alkie for sure.

=====

Re: Getting back up quickly

Posted by tiefster88 - 15 Jul 2018 16:39

I agree with both of these comments. Somebody who is on the level of spiritual fitness that the big book is aiming for should be able to have unfiltered internet without even having the craving to look at anything.

The fact on the ground however is that I don't know if I met anyone the whole time I was in SA who was free from lust. Even people that I met there who had been sober 30 years still suffered from lust cravings from time to time. Maybe thats due to being around ones wife or the availability and closeness of lust or maybe it's just they way we are wired physically or spiritually.

That is probably why many sponsors help their sponsees with techniques like noticing their triggers and learning to "let go" which in mindfulness would be similar to urge surfing.

Even given that there are going to be cravings with lust addiction I still agree with the big books point that *"any scheme of combating alcoholism which proposes to shield the sick man from temptation is doomed to failure. If the alcoholic tries to shield himself he may succeed for a time, but he usually winds up with a bigger explosion than ever. We have tried these methods. These attempts to do the impossible have always failed."*

Trying to escape triggers is not the solution because there will always be triggers for lust. The solution is to learn how to deal with the inevitable cravings.

It would be so much easier to be on the level that many AA people get to where they just don't have cravings any more. It seems like in SA that is more of a long term goal. In the short term we probably have to be realistic about the fact that we are going to suffer from lust cravings and learn how to deal with them best, whether it be through surrendering them to Hashem or urge surfing.

I also saw on Shabbos the Pri Tzaddik asks "Why is parshas Mattos after the story of Bnos Midyan? What is the connection between that terrible story and the halachos of nedarim?

He answers that after the fall due to lust with the bnos Midyan which led to avoda zara. klal yisrael needed a powerful measure to protect from lust. This was nedarim. These allow us to build fences which have the full force of Torah law.

These days my tafsic neder is one of the main factors which keeps me from acting out most of the time. Before that I used to act out almost every day with maybe a week or 2 of clean days here and there. At this point I am managing to stay clean months and only acted out for a couple of days in between. Although what I want is to be free from acting out all the time and be able to deal with my cravings.

This is the way I look at it the tafsic acts as a substitution to 2nd gear for me. I don't manage this all the time but this would be the ideal for now. And that is why I am writing here. To try and get things clearer for myself ;-):

- In 1st gear I notice my cravings as they come up. What do they feel like in my body? What are they trying to get me to do? and Why?
- In 2nd gear I decide that I am going to surf them out because lust is not going help anyways and its just going to make me feel worse afterwards and also I don't want to lose hundreds of \$ because of my tafsic, also it's going to separate me from Hashem, at the time of doing the aveira.
- In 3rd gear I surf the craving using R.A.I.N and while doing so I daven to Hashem to take away the craving. I do this until the craving dissolves. I notice how even though the craving was very uncomfortable and I felt like I was dieing a little, if I don't act out I don't die and eventually the craving is gone and I am way happier than I would have been had I acted out.

=====

=====

Re: Getting back up quickly
Posted by mzl - 15 Jul 2018 16:58

Once again, p*** doesn't fit in life the same way that alcohol does. Alcohol is legal. It's sold in grocery stores. P*** is by definition forbidden.

To me the critical consideration is "if I attempt to protect myself from A, B and C, will it work?"

With alcohol the answer is no for most people. With p*** the answer is yes for most people.

It's a practical question. Keep away from the things which **you** can consistently keep away from. Defeat the others.

=====

Re: Getting back up quickly
Posted by tiefster88 - 15 Jul 2018 17:06

In my case I don't actually watch p***. My addiction has always been to just nudity.

It takes very little for me to get triggered. Just a pic of a woman with the skirt above the knee could do it. or even if the skirt is below the knee. actually even if its all the way to the floor.

I don't really see how I could keep away from triggers. I think I need to learn how to deal with them.

=====

Re: Getting back up quickly
Posted by cordnoy - 15 Jul 2018 17:11

[tiefster88 wrote on 15 Jul 2018 17:06:](#)

In my case I don't actually watch p***. My addiction has always been to just nudity.

It takes very little for me to get triggered. Just a pic of a woman with the skirt above the knee could do it. or even if the skirt is below the knee. actually even if its all the way to the floor.

I don't really see how I could keep away from triggers.I think I need to learn how to deal with them.

How true!

=====

Re: Getting back up quickly

Posted by Dovid824 - 15 Jul 2018 19:47

[tiefster88 wrote on 15 Jul 2018 17:06:](#)

...

I don't really see how I could keep away from triggers.I think I need to learn how to deal with them.

That made me think of a statement in an article I recently read:

... The Avnei Nezer, zt"l, learns this brilliant strategy from today's daf. ... "The answer is that teshuvah begins by strengthening positives, where we are still strong. Only in this way can we overcome the negatives."

The full article is:

Stories Off the Daf - "Positive Reinforcement"

www.dafdigest.org/Zevachim/Zevachim%20089.pdf

Wednesday, Jul 11 2018

=====

Forward Movement

Posted by tiefster88 - 17 Jul 2018 10:11

What type of mindsets get in the way of forward movement and make us feel like we have gone back to square 1?

Doubt- To choose doubt as a philosophy of life is akin to using immobility as a means of transportation. Doubt is the fixed mindset. "I doubt that I can do this." That's immobility and it feels fixed because we aren't moving.

When we move in a direction even if we aren't sure it's the right one, how does this compare to not driving at all? Even if it's wrong we learn that it's the wrong direction.

If we sit there and doubt and wonder "Oh, I don't know, I don't know", we will never know anything for certain because we aren't learning anything. We aren't exploring. **Moving in the wrong direction might be OK if we are in a growth mindset.**

We might not be making progress as fast as we want to. Let say we fall and act out after a few months sober. **But if we are working, then we are mapping out the territory of our minds in the process and that one step backward might not be so backward after all.** We will be on the lookout to look out for similar dead ends and detours in the future. **We will be less likely to do those again.** We are actually learning. We are actually growing!

See if you can bow to "failures" and "mistakes as learning opportunities. **See if you can learn something from then so that the seeming "failure" or seeming "mistake" is actually a movement.** Even if it isn't the direction you want to be going in at the time. See what you can learn. Bow to it as a teacher and see what happens next.

=====

=====

Re: Forward Movement

Posted by mzl - 17 Jul 2018 11:52

I know this seems eye opening to you but for the reader it's pretty abstract. Examples, perhaps?

Also, there is the danger of a local minimum.

People have been looking to discover the Torah for millenia and nobody has discovered it yet. It had to be given. There's a major data point there.

=====

=====