

Additional tools for recovery

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 07 Dec 2011 21:33

I attended an SA workshop with lots and lots of tools for recovery (about 100 or so). I hope, little by little, to share them here on this thread.

Some of them are very simple and might even seem silly (but may surprise you--and work if you try them), and some of them are very deep. Some of them you may have heard of before, and some of them not.

Take whatever you find helpful, and leave the rest--maybe someone else will find it helpful. I can't say that I have tested them all personally, either.

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I posted this on Jan 1, '12, but thought it would be appropriate to add it here at the beginning of this thread, too:

I could have easily cut and paste the whole list of recovery tools into a post all at once and left it at that. However, I thought that by posting only one each day, it would give people a better chance to digest them and implement them (and remember them) to some extent in their lives. Also, in posting one at a time, I see it is giving me a chance to reflect on each of these tools and appreciate them much more.

So, if you are joining this thread now that so many of these tools have already been posted (and more yet to come, BE"H), I suggest you will have the greatest benefit by reading this thread slowly, just one or two tools each day. There's no hurry.

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--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 14 Dec 2011 13:06

8. Take the Step Zero questionnaire.

What is it?

This:

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Step Zero Questionnaire

(From "Essay" Issue 4 published in 2003)

Compulsion: Having started the process with one fix, one drink, one look, one thought, we cannot stop through our own power of will. Because of our sensitivity to lust, we are completely in the grip of a destructive power greater than ourselves.

Have I stopped compulsion in all its forms?

Have I stopped feeding lust? – through my eyes? – my fantasies? – my memories?

Have I stopped living only and always inside my own head? This means, do I keep my thoughts, battles, and struggles a secret? How do I deal with those [people] outside of myself?

List and identify my forms of compulsion.

What are my methods of acting out?

What are my biggest triggers?

What do I try to stop the compulsions?

Do I have an accountability partner? If yes, explain the relationship. If now, why not?

What am I willing to do to achieve sexual sobriety?

Am I getting involved in the program of SA [or in the forum of GYE]? How? What do I do daily?

Do I have a sponsor?

Obsession: The fixed idea that takes us back time and time again to our particular drub or some substitute, to recapture the ease and comfort we once knew.

What do I obsess over?

Do I talk about the overwhelming impact that the temptations have on me to my sponsor, accountability partner, or group [for the forum: Do I post about it or PM to anyone]?

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--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery
Posted by gibbor120 - 14 Dec 2011 14:21

[Eye.nonymous wrote on 14 Dec 2011 12:57:](#)

I would like to add a word about the importance of "having a program." Once we are in the grips of a major lust attack, it is often too late, or at least extremely difficult, to escape it. Having a program is maintenance work--we need to make sure we are doing something **EVERY DAY** to contribute to our sobriety, whether or not we feel the need for it. Then, when a lust attack DOES come along, we will have a structure firmly in place to be able to deal with it.

...

In other words: Maybe you can cram for an exam, but you can't cram for a diet and exercise program to stop a heart attack! It's the regular, and seemingly useless daily effort that keeps us healthy.

Thanks Elyah! I need this constant reminder. Great list!

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Re: Additional tools for recovery
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 14 Dec 2011 17:56

Thanks Gibbor.

Also another word about having a program [in case this wasn't already clear]... it not only makes it easier to deal with lust attacks but also, you'll find that **doing the right actions--regularly**, will often prevent an attack in the first place. You'll look back and notice you just handled a situation calmly as a result of the program, although in the past the same situation would have driven you to high levels of anxiety and resentment and would have compelled you to act out.

--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 15 Dec 2011 07:44

9. Admit complete defeat. Realize there is nothing you can do **on your own** to overcome lust.

Do this regularly--at least daily; keep fresh in your mind that you need help--a program of recovery. Don't wait until after a fall to remember and then, after a few days, to forget about it again until another fall.

--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 16 Dec 2011 07:22

10. Answer the 20 Questions found in the White Book (pg 8) to gauge the severity of your addiction.

For your convenience, I'll put the 20 questions right here (count how many times you answer "yes"):

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Twenty Questions

1. Have you ever thought you needed help for your sexual thinking or behavior?
2. ...That you'd be better off if you didn't keep "giving in"?

3. ...That sex or stimuli are controlling you?
4. Have you ever tried to stop or limit doing what you felt was wrong in your sexual behavior?
5. Do you resort to sex to escape, relieve anxiety, or because you can't cope?
6. Do you feel guilt, remorse, afterward?
7. Has your pursuit of sex become more compulsive?
8. Does it interfere with relations with your spouse?
9. Do you have to resort to images or memories during sex?
10. Does an irresistible impulse arise when the other party makes the overtures or sex is offered?
11. Do you keep going from one relationship or lover to another?
12. Do you feel the right relationship would help you stop lusting, masturbating, or being so promiscuous?
13. Do you have a destructive need-a desperate sexual or emotional need for someone?
14. Does pursuit of sex make you careless for your self or the welfare of your family or others?
15. Has your effectiveness or concentration decreased as sex has become more compulsive?
16. Do you lose time from work for it?
17. Do you turn to a lower environment when pursuing sex?
18. Do you want to get away from the sex partner as soon as possible after the act?
19. Although your spouse is sexually compatible, do you still masturbate or have sex with others?
20. Have you ever been arrested for a sex-related offense?

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If you answered "yes"...

1-5 times, Lust may be causing a few problems in your life and you probably have more of it than most people. You may or may not be a lust addict.

5-10 times, You may well be a lust addict. Attend SA meetings and see if you identify [see if you identify with "Daily Dose of Dov"].

More than 10 times, Good indication you are a lust addict.

--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery
Posted by gibbor120 - 16 Dec 2011 14:35

I scored a 12 :-[. Thanks.

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Re: Additional tools for recovery
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 18 Dec 2011 12:54

11. Get a sponsor.

Choose someone who has got something that you want to have, too--he should have quantity clean time, and also quality clean time. A sponsor is someone who has found the road to recovery, and will happily share that road with you--IF YOU ARE WILLING TO TAKE DIRECTIONS (and if you are willing to put in the effort). A sponsor is not a free psychotherapist and he is also not a professional debating team to convince you that his program of recovery works, that you need to follow his program, or that his program of recovery is certified kosher to

your satisfaction. If that is what you are interested in, don't waste your time or his.

In SA a sponsor is someone whom you speak to regularly and guides you through the 12 steps.

On the forum, I'm sure you can also find members with long-term sobriety who are willing to guide you along the road to recovery--either through private messages, E-mail, and even by phone. It is advantageous to pick one person as your main source of guidance; this will prevent you from being blown aimlessly in every which way from all the differences of opinion you are likely to encounter here. I don't mean to discredit any particular method, but no matter what you are doing, in order to have progress you need persistence and consistency. Pick one way--whichever way you see has produced the results you are interested in having for yourself--and give it a fair chance.

--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery
Posted by gibbor120 - 18 Dec 2011 16:14

[Eye.nonymous wrote on 18 Dec 2011 12:54:](#)

11. Get a sponsor.

From what I understand, it is quite difficult to get a sponsor without attending SA meetings. Most people here, would not qualify. The ones who would, are in SA, and often have left the forum already.

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Re: Additional tools for recovery

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 19 Dec 2011 13:20

Once you have found a sponsor...

12. Treat your sponsor's suggestions as **orders**.

G-d is the pilot, your sponsor is the co-pilot, and you're in the back seat.

--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 20 Dec 2011 13:59

This was from an SA conference, so I can't really offer an alternative for this one:

13. Work the steps (all 12 of them!)

Otherwise, it's sort of like taking half a dose of penacilin; it doesn't help.

Again, to quote the Sandy B recordings, "The goal is to stay sober AND HAPPY."

A person might be able to stay sober on the first 3 steps. But, the dramatic improvements, the personality change, the lasting happiness and serenity that are the promises of the 12-steps, are mainly the results of steps 4-12.

And, not everyone can endure a life without happiness and serenity. It may be just a matter of

time until they act out again, or they might even switch to other addictive behaviors to fill the need that lust had been filling, and they might yet feel content for having "conquered" lust.

I will add: Quite a few of our disappointments and failures are, in fact, the result of our own self-destructive behavior; a lot of our difficulties actually will get better as we progress in recovery. To be realistic, however, the steps don't promise to turn all of one's life experiences into happy and successful ones. But when we face such challenges, we will have the tools to keep calm despite them.

--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery
Posted by gibbor120 - 20 Dec 2011 17:15

Thanks Elyah, I really like this list! I am trying to work the steps and I find it quite helpful.

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Re: Additional tools for recovery
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 20 Dec 2011 18:27

Another point about doing all 12 steps: It is better to get through the steps fairly quickly (the Duvid Chaim phone groups take you through the 12 steps in about 4 months, which is pretty good), than to wait forever on one step until doing it perfectly before moving on to the next one.

The steps are a work in progress, a new game-plan for living. In time, you'll learn how to incorporate the steps into your life more thoroughly and more deeply. Step 1, admitting powerlessness, is really the only step that can be done 100%. And even then, we need to keep reminding ourselves about it. (And even regarding step 1, little by little, you'll find it is more far-reaching than you thought at first).

--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 20 Dec 2011 18:46

Another point about a sponsor--why it is important to seek guidance from someone who has already traveled along the road to recovery and can show you how to do it:

The practical applications of the Big Book might not be readily apparant to you on your own. There's an oral tradition, of sorts, which goes along with the Big Book, and you're likely to miss it. (Before I joined the Duvid Chaim phone conferences, I read the Big Book a number of times on my own and it didn't make such a big difference. I didn't understand what the big deal was about the 12-steps).

--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 21 Dec 2011 09:41

14. Have a daily program (but not one's own).

Your daily routine should include specific and regular recovery-related activities: Certain AA/SA prayers to say at certain times of the day (immediatly after waking up, or right after shacharis. I have a few such prayers tucked into my siddur--see bottom of post), certain things to remind yourself of, calling one's sponsor, perhaps making a certain number of calls to fellow program members, gratitude lists, reading a bit from AA/SA literature, and attending meetings (if not daily, at least once or twice a week). Also, if a person is on step 4 for example, his daily routine can include spending some time doing the work necessary for this step. All this should be worked out with a sponsor, and not figured out on one's own.

Also, a person should have a general plan set out for the whole day (but don't go crazy, and

accept that G-d may have different plans in mind for your day). Addicts, in particular, don't do well with unstructured time; if left to our own devices, we would spend all day lying around in bed (or surfing around the internet).

Make a plan the day before, and review it at the start of the day.

--Elyah

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Beginning of Day Prayer (BB 86-87)

O G-d, please direct my thinking, so that it may be divorced from self-pity and from dishonest and self-seeking motives. Let me make every decision and begin every action in You and continue it only through Your Inspiration. Throughout this day, show me the next step to take and to trust in Your care of me and my problems. Free me from all self-will and self-sufficiency. Help me to neither seek nor pray for selfish ends.

3rd Step Prayer:

"G-d, I offer myself to You - to build with me and to do with me as You will. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Your will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Your Power, Your Love, and Your Way of life. May I do Your will always!". (BB p 63)

7th Step Prayer:

"My Creator, I am now willing that You should have all of me, good and bad. I pray that You now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to You and my fellows. Grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do Your bidding. Amen." (BB pg 76)

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