

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 - 21 May 2012 11:41

152. Share your experience, strength, and hope.

In other words share about your past, present, and future. (Don't over-do the experience, though.) Your goal in sharing should be to lift the other person, to leave him (or them) better than you found them.

If you tell them just all about your miseries, you'll just make them more miserable.

It's so easy to focus on the negativity, and overlook the blessings in our life, and I think that's part of what feeds addiction. We need to start doing the opposite (and share that with others), and I think that's part of recovery.

--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 22 May 2012 16:19

153. Give your sobriety date.

Or, state your length of sobriety.

Until I started keeping track of my sobriety, I didn't realize just how sick I was. I thought I had a problem maybe once every month or so. But then, when I signed up for the 90-day chart, I noticed that I had a hard time at first keeping clean for a week (I finally had an accurate picture of my sickness).

Also, stating your sobriety date helps you feel more accountable to stay sober. Sometimes the thought of announcing to a group, "I'm Elyah, and I'm a sexaholic. I've been sober for one day," when I had previously been sober for a good number of months, has kept me sober.

I think there's a lot of discussion on this forum about not getting caught up in counting days. I think, without counting days, there's really no way to tell how you're really doing. True, quality is what counts. But, I think if a person has trouble adding up quantity sobriety, it's a good indication that there probably isn't really any quality sobriety either.

Keep track of the days, but don't obsess about it. Don't think that just because you've broken your record you've made it to safety. Don't think that just because you passed the magic 90-day

mark that you're cured (I have now made it beyond 90-days for my third time).

If you're having trouble, don't think one more day of sobriety will solve all your addiction problems. You've got to dig deeper than that, and you've got to pull out as many tools as you can to keep your sobriety. There's a lot more to do for the sake of recovery than just to strengthen your resolve to stay clean for one more day.

And, I have heard people lamenting the fact that they fell after X amount of clean days, and they'll never regain what they had. Such as, "I was clean for six months and then I fell, and it took me five years to get back to the same place." Perhaps I exaggerate about that a little. The way I see it, however, is that I used to fall a couple of times a week. I was taking a high enough dose of recovery to stay clean for a few months. I definitely gained something. However, it wasn't enough. So, after a fall, I increase the dose and move forward. I didn't lose the tools I had gained; I just needed to add to them.

--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery

Posted by Blind Beggar - 23 May 2012 04:39

153:

I agree with every word. 15 days on the Chart for the umpteenth time. 425 days sober.

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Re: Additional tools for recovery

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 23 May 2012 16:47

154. Quit preaching - tell them about the illness.

Here's what I had in my notes on this one:

Simply put: We have an on-switch in our brains for lust, and it works well. We also have an off-switch for lust, but it's broken.

A CT scan of someone watching porn looks the same as a CT scan of a crack cocaine user.

A little bit of lust creates a craving for more and more, until we act out.

The only solution is not to lust.

I'll add: Bill W. started off trying to help other alcoholics by telling them about his spiritual experience, and that had very little effect (the only one it helped was himself). It wasn't until he started sharing the exact nature of this malady, and his own story of being powerless over alcohol, that he started to keep other alcoholics sober, too.

--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 24 May 2012 11:33

155. Find your own Dr. Bob.

In other words, in case you're not familiar with AA history, you need someone you can share deeply with. It's nice to have a list of phone numbers and to be able to reach someone when you're suffering from a lust attack or just to say hello. But, besides a bunch of new acquaintances, you should also look for someone in whom you can share and confide on a deeper and more personal level.

--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 25 May 2012 06:38

156. Laugh.

Sobriety, and life, is supposed to be positive and enjoyable. Although it is necessary to be aware of our problem (or, problems), it is not healthy to obsess about it. One should reflect upon it at certain times throughout the day, but most of the time we should be focusing on, and living in the solution.

Even when we think about our problems, we should not be wallowing in self-pity. Rather, the main focus should be--what positive actions can I take to move forward?

Make an effort to do those healthy activities in life that bring you enjoyment.

Also, here's an abridged version of the Serenity Prayer I saw in a list of AA Slogans: "Lighten up!"

--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 28 May 2012 19:48

Time for yet another summary:

[Carrying the Message](#)

- 151. Call two newcomers every day
- 152. Share your experience, strength, and hope
- 153. Give your sobriety date
- 154. Quit preaching - tell them about the illness
- 155. Find your own Dr. Bob
- 156. Laugh

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Re: Additional tools for recovery

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 28 May 2012 19:54

So far, that was the end of the official list I received at the Additional Tools for Recovery Workshop.

Finished, but not complete.

I have a few more I wanted to add (and one I forgot, too).

MISCELLANEOUS

- 157. 12 Steps to Insanity

Sometimes, the best way to appreciate sobriety and recovery is to consider what the opposite

looks like. Here is a piece called "12 Steps to Insanity":

12 STEPS TO INSANITY

1. We admitted we were powerless over nothing - that we could manage our lives perfectly. We could also perfectly manage the lives of those around us.
2. Came to believe that there was no power greater than ourselves and that the rest of the world was insane.
3. Made a decision to have our loved ones turn their wills and lives over to our care even though they couldn't understand us at all.
4. Made a searching and fearless inventory of everyone we knew.
5. Admitted to the whole world the exact nature of everyone else's wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to make others give us the respect we thought we deserved.
7. Demanded that others do our will because we were always enlightened.
8. Made a list of all the persons who had harmed us and became willing to go to any length to get even with them all.
9. Got direct revenge on such people wherever possible except when to do so would cost us our lives or at least a jail sentence.
10. Continued to take inventory of others, and when they were wrong promptly and repeatedly told them about it.
11. Sought through complaining and self-medication to improve our relations with others as we could not understand them at all, asking only that they do things our way.
12. Having had a complete physical, emotional, and spiritual breakdown as a result of these steps, we tried to blame others and get sympathy in all our affairs.

--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery
Posted by mifatfait - 28 May 2012 21:03

R' Elya, profound. Thanks.

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Re: Additional tools for recovery

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 29 May 2012 13:06

158. The pre-recovery promises

In the same spirit of the previous tool, here's a piece called, "Pre-recovery Promises." It is adapted from part of the Big Book where some the promises of recovery are written:

PRE-RECOVERY PROMISES

If we are lackadaisical about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we even get started. We are going to know new anger and a new sense of despair. We will not recognize the future nor wish to open the door on it. We will comprehend the word hopeless. We will know discouragement. No matter how far up or down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experiences will be an obstacle to others. That feeling of usefulness and self-worth will disappear. We will lose interest in selfless things and gain interest in ourselves. Self-denial will slip away. Our whole attitude and outlook, full of despair, will remain the same. We will be unable to handle situations which we used to think we were in control of. We suddenly realized that we were doing for ourselves the things G-d would not do for us. Are these actually real promises? We think so. Unfortunately they are being fulfilled among us, often slowly, often quickly. They will always happen to us if we allow them.

--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery

Posted by tehillimzugger - 30 May 2012 12:29

[Eye.nonymous wrote on 28 May 2012 19:54:](#)

12 STEPS TO INSANITY

1. We admitted we were powerless over nothing - that we could manage our lives perfectly. We could also perfectly manage the lives of those around us.
2. Came to believe that there was no power greater than ourselves and that the rest of the world was insane.
3. Made a decision to have our loved ones turn their wills and lives over to our care even though they couldn't understand us at all.
4. Made a searching and fearless inventory of everyone we knew.
5. Admitted to the whole world the exact nature of everyone else's wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to make others give us the respect we thought we deserved.
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8. Made a list of all the persons who had harmed us and became willing to go to any length to get even with them all.
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11. Sought through complaining and self-medication to improve our relations with others as we could not understand them at all, asking only that they do things our way.

12. Having had a complete physical, emotional, and spiritual breakdown as a result of these steps, we tried to blame others and get sympathy in all our affairs.

--Elyah

YEAH!!!

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Re: Additional tools for recovery

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 30 May 2012 13:59

159. Hang out with your own gender

This was actually in the original list under "friendships," and I can't believe I somehow skipped it.

This has many applications.

I hear a common addict rationalization (and, indeed, I have used it myself), IT WOULD BE SUCH A BIG KIDDISH HASHEM if I, a frum (and recovering!) yid, would mingle a little bit here and just say how wonderfully I am doing and even just show everyone (especially the females) that frum (and recovering!) yidden can socialize just fine just like any normal person.

Well, here's a litmus test. How strong is that same desire to be a Kiddush Hashem by socializing with other males? The thought has probably never crossed your mind.

So, whether it's the opposite gender in recovery (note the GYE mechtza), at work, on the street, in the classroom, in your old E-mail contacts, "friends" on facebook (if you haven't deleted your account yet), etc., or hosting seminary students and being such a good example for 'kiruv purposes' (that was my favorite one when I saw someone do it), **STICK TO YOUR OWN GENDER!**

--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 31 May 2012 12:25

160. Write yourself a letter (and a reply)

I have used this tool in extreme emergency situations when I really needed to reach someone but was unable to do so. I wrote a letter as to what was bothering me and how I was feeling, and then I stopped and read the letter as if someone else had written it to me. Then I wrote a response as if I were writing to someone else.

If possible, it's better to deal with real people, as this tool runs the risk of staying stuck in your own head (which is part of the problem). Nevertheless, I have found it to be very helpful in case of emergency.

--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 01 Jun 2012 06:14

161. Slogans of Recovery

At times when I least feel like reading recovery literature (in the mood for lighter reading), but I know I need to, I pull out a huge list of AA Slogans and just browse through them. I posted a whole bunch of them on this thread a long time ago:

[400 AA Slogans \(also applicable to GYE\)](#)

--Elyah

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