

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 - 01 Jan 2012 12:29

24. SA Net. (This is an E-mail group to communicate with other SA members.)

Contact SA headquarters, saico@sa.org, for more information.

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Re: Additional tools for recovery
Posted by gibbor120 - 01 Jan 2012 16:03

[Eye.nonymous wrote on 01 Jan 2012 12:20:](#)

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Very true. Thank you for this wonderful list!

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Re: Additional tools for recovery
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 01 Jan 2012 22:14

[gibbor120 wrote on 01 Jan 2012 16:03:](#)

Very true. Thank you for this wonderful list!

You're welcome.

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Re: Additional tools for recovery

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 02 Jan 2012 12:42

25. Step 1 meetings.

What is a step 1 meeting?

Step 1 is: We admitted that we were powerless over lust--that our lives had become unmanageable.

A step 1 meeting is when a person in recovery admits his powerless over lust. He takes the floor for the majority of the meeting, and tells his story. If I understand correctly, this is an innovation of the SA program.

The point is to tell it like it is (probably for the first time ever) and send it away. To quote the White Book: "Mere catharsis or even honest self-disclosure misses the mark if that's all it is. The aim is to bring our diseased attitudes and misdeeds to the light of others and G-d to be done with them."

Through telling one's story, the destructive and progressive nature of one's illness should become apparrant. The general outline should be, "How it used to be [and how things got progressively worse], what happened [to bring a person into recovery], and hope for the future." One should not be too explicit, or too vague either.

For me, this was a powerful experience. My sponsor recommended that I not read from a written 1st-step (as many people do). Rather, I should speak as best as I can from the heart. In the course of my story, I mentioned the line which brought me into recovery which I heard from Duvid Chaim at a GYE get-together, from something I have seen written as "The SA welcome statement." It said, through our addiction we have learned, "Don't talk, don't trust, don't feel." At that point, to my own surprise, I broke down crying. This is how the disease of sexaholism has destroyed me. I have spent my whole life in isolation. I have spent my whole life thinking I just lacked self-confidence, or I just needed to take a public-speaking course, but nothing ever helped. I have always felt apart-FROM the rest of humanity. And, THIS was the reason. And, HERE is a solution. Finally!

If I ever start wondering if I REALLY have a problem with sex-addiction, I just remind myself of this moment. Yes, I am powerless over lust, and my life has become unmanageable.

--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery
Posted by Blind Beggar - 02 Jan 2012 13:45

This is what I was referring to when I wrote this:

[Blind Beggar wrote on 02 Dec 2011 07:11:](#)

I saw this post a few days ago. It really is awesome so I am going to quote it for everyone to see again:

[Eye.nonymous wrote on 31 Oct 2011 19:47:](#)

I had this image of myself as a decrepit old man, sitting all alone, hunched over in the dark in front of a computer screen, pathetic, glued to these images. No real human being in sight--no wife, no kids, no friends. No life. Just me and these 2-dimensional images.

The Big Book also points out that addicts have no friends, no life, no connections. The only time I saw someone cry in an SA meeting was when he was trying to say that quote from the Big Book and couldn't get the words out.

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Re: Additional tools for recovery
Posted by gibbor120 - 02 Jan 2012 15:59

Wow powerful! I can relate.

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Re: Additional tools for recovery
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 03 Jan 2012 18:00

26. Check meetings.

What are these?

A check meeting can be called at any time by a group member in difficulty, or by the group if

they see a member in difficulty. It is a special meeting to help this person with his specific issue in the context of the 12-step program.

I have never seen one of these, and apparently it was a new idea to many other people who attended the tools of recovery workshop. Discuss it with your group before doing one.

At any rate, take notice throughout the meeting who is dealing with which issues. Make a point to be in touch with them afterwards and lend some moral support.

--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 03 Jan 2012 18:02

Here's another summary so far:

IMPROVE RELATION WITH SELF

EMERGENCY TOOLS

1. Short prayer, "I'm powerless, please G-d help me!"
2. Move somewhere else. (Get away from the trigger!)
3. Pick up litter.
4. Sing (or hum) a favorite tune. Or listen to music.
5. Call someone from the program or the forum NOW. (Or post)
5. Get to a meeting AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. (Get to the forum)
6. When you're angry: Ask yourself, "What am I ashamed of right now?"

HAVING A PROGRAM

7. Participate in the fellowship of the program.
8. Take the Step Zero questionnaire.
9. Admit complete defeat.
10. Answer the 20 Questions found in the White Book (pg 8).
11. Get a sponsor.
12. Treat your sponsor's suggestions as orders.
13. Work the steps (all 12 of them!).
14. Have a daily program (but not one's own).
15. Read the "Just for Today" card every morning.
16. Live in the solution (and not in the problem).

MEETINGS

17. Don't lust, and go to meetings.
18. Home group.
19. 90 meetings in 90 days (temporary measure).
20. Start a meeting.
21. Take on a commitment.
22. 5 meetings a week (regular program).
23. Telephone meetings.
24. SA Net.
25. Step 1 meetings.
26. Check meetings.

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Re: Additional tools for recovery
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 04 Jan 2012 12:14

IMPROVE RELATION WITH SELF

BASIC SELF CARE

27. Zero tolerance for lust

Lust is not good for a lust addict.

To quote a section of the White Book:

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We stop practicing our compulsion in all its forms. We can't be "sober" in one area while acting out in another. There can be no relief from the obsession of lust while still practicing the acts of lust in any form...

We stop feeding lust. We get rid of all the materials and other triggers under our control. We stop feeding lust through the eyes, the fantasy, and the memory. We stop relishing the language of lust, resentment, and rage. We stop living only and always inside our own heads. One of the fringe benefits of going to a lot of meetings is that it gets us out of ourselves.

As we become aware of other addictions that are part of our lives, we pray for willingness to surrender each one.

There can be no true recovery from addiction if we allow it to persist in any area, whether in our thinking or in our acting out.

What we are really saying when we start meeting with others is, "I have to stop; please help me."

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You might ask, "How is it possible to stop, if we are powerless over lust?" I'll try to offer a few approaches to this question in the next post.

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Re: Additional tools for recovery
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 04 Jan 2012 12:44

"How can I stop lusting if I am powerless over lust?" Here are a few suggested answers:

1. I can't stop ON MY OWN. When I reach out to other people for help, and when I reach out to G-d in prayer (soon enough and often enough), and through the tools of recovery, I will gain access to a power GREATER THAN MYSELF and THAT POWER will overcome the lust.
2. Also, when we try to FIGHT lust--to perhaps play with it without losing control, we ultimately can't win. We have to whole-heartedly make a firm decision to GIVE UP LUST. It's hard to explain; play with this awhile and you'll see.
3. Our ultimate goal in recovery is to become more aware of our perceptions and motives. It's hard to stop lusting when we're one click away from a p*rn site. As we become more aware, we

realize that when I went to the computer to look at the news, I was really feeling weak against lust and it was just an excuse to drift over to p*rn. As we become more aware, we realize that our wife said something which offended us at breakfast, and so we're feeling unsettled, and so if we let this feeling simmer we're going to look at p*rn some time within the next few days. We need to look out for all the events, and all the unpleasant feelings, which lead us to lust; deal with them, it's a lot easier. As we progress in recovery, we (usually) catch ourselves further and further away from the point of no return.

4. Recovery is a progressive battle over lust. Some people might be able to stop everything all of a sudden. But, I think for a lot of people, the struggle is more like this: We should strive for longer and longer periods of clean time. We should strive to refrain from the more obvious forms of acting out and, in time, work on the more subtle or more habitual behaviors. The main thing, though, is to ADMIT THAT ALL LUST IS DAMAGING. Even if right now you are clean from m*sturbation and p*rnography, but you can't stop yourself from looking at women on the street, ACCEPT that this is something you should strive to STOP ENTIRELY, although you are unable at the moment to refrain from this. And, try to make gradual, slow progress.

I think if people set their ideals too high at the beginning, and every little incident of lust is thought of as a huge fall, a person gets too discouraged and gives up the struggle.

On the other hand, if a person has a particularly difficult struggle giving up a particular behavior, such as watching "innocent" movies (with triggering scenes), and instead of admitting to the problem this person builds up a whole philosophy how watching movies is vital to his existence and absolutely impossible to do without and really there IS nothing wrong with movies (despite the triggering scenes) then, I think this person is going to spend a long time not getting very far in recovery. Despite the difficulties, a person can always find ways to make gradual progress. But to start, we have to admit to the problem.

I hope this has been helpful.

--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery
Posted by gibbor120 - 04 Jan 2012 16:05

A couple of things you said from your last 2 posts resonated with me. I like many others here 'fought' with lust for years. I remember being clean for a few weeks and even a few months and then being in the check out line at the grocery store and seeing the magazines on display. I would in my mind turn to Hashem and say 'it's not fair, I have been so good for a time, and now you just put it right in front of me'. This stuff is everywhere. It's just not possible to be good.

I would 'struggle' not to look and that would start my mind turning. I would fight the lust or so I thought for a time until it overcame me. Perhaps even many days later, but I would struggle from that time that I was in line at the grocery store.

I think this is what dov means when he says that the 'struggle' itself is toxic. I realized that viewing it as an epic struggle, set me up for failure. Now i (try to) not even give it the time of day. One day I was in line with all the shmutzy magazines. I immediately started texting someone from GYE. It kept my mind focused on something else entirely so I did not have to struggle. I could just chose to let go and not be goreis it at all.

The same is true when I see someone on the street or in my office. Instead of thinking, oy vey, I really want to look, but can't. I just 'let go' and move on. I don't let the 'struggle' into my head. As long as I am 'struggling', I am in trouble.

It's like the story someone posted a while ago...

[YVY wrote on 06 Jun 2011 19:40:](#)

A Rebbe and his Chassid were traveling together. At one point, they came to a river with a strong current. As the men were preparing to cross the river, they saw a very young and beautiful woman also attempting to cross. The young woman asked if they could help her.

The Rebbe carried this woman on his shoulder, forded the river and let her down on the other bank. The Chassid was very disturbed, but said nothing.

They both were walking and the Rebbe noticed that his Chassid was suddenly silent and enquired "Is something the matter, you seem very upset?"

The Chassid replied, "As Yidden, we are not permitted to touch a woman, how could you then carry that woman on your shoulders?"

The Rebbe replied, "I left the woman a long time ago at the bank, however, you seem to be carrying her still."

I see I went long. I will start another post to deal with the concept of powerlessness...

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Re: Additional tools for recovery

Posted by gibbor120 - 04 Jan 2012 16:15

... as promised. again, if I am correct in my understanding, powerlessness means we are powerless to 'use' porn, fantasy, lust, whatever and then just hit the pause button and resume 'normal' life. Once we take a sip, it starts to eat at us and we eventually get to a point where we cannot stop, even when we 'want' to stop. A non-addict, can look at porn, then when it's time to do something else, they close the magazine or browser window etc. and go back to life. With us, it is an obsession. Once we start, we can't stop (except on very rare occasions).

We may stop for a short time to take care of something, but it's in our head already and we *will* almost always eventually act out, and even get into a pattern of acting out until somehow we snap out of that pattern for a short time. Then it's just a matter of time until the next trigger sets

off the next lust attack and the process repeats itself.

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Re: Additional tools for recovery

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 05 Jan 2012 06:28

28. Avoid all known triggers--people, places, and things.

Take detours when necessary.

On this, I will also add an example of something less obvious that was a particularly difficult struggle for me: Watch out for that BIG MITZVAH (trigger in disguise)! Well, if I just call and say "Hi" (or send an E-mail) to so-and-so (girl from my class 20 years ago), it would be such a big kiddush Hashem that she knows I'm religious now. Just think--how often do you have these thoughts about the guys from your class? You can probably add your own examples.

--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 06 Jan 2012 07:22

29. Abstain from all mood-altering chemicals.

This includes drugs and alcohol, and it also includes sugar and caffeine (for example), and probably also food colorings--they also alter one's mood.

The healthiest state of mind for a man of recovery is to have stable moods and stable emotions.

--Elyah

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