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Posted by gibbor120 - 25 Aug 2011 19:16

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Re: Links of gibbor120

Posted by gibbor120 - 25 Aug 2011 19:16

GREAT QUOTES FROM DOV

Taking responsibility to "surrender"

[dov wrote on 02 Nov 2011 00:07:](#)

Yeah, it's a head-spinner, this "facing that the responsibility is entirely and totally our own - to let go completely and let Hashem run the show for us," thing.

But the funny thing is: It works.

Surrendering the nisayon completely, works for a time. But eventually, if continue to be honest with ourselves (for those who work the steps that comes naturally, whether they intentionally try to be or not), something funny happens:

When we stop *analyzing* and start **doing** - *writing* out our stepwork, *sharing* the stuff we are told to share with others, and taking the *actions* that recovering people before us took, *things change all over the place!* We discover that figuring everything out is just another lust obsession we have. Taking action that is not always easy or comfortable is the way things get better.

Or we can just continue to suffer worse stuff...

As the novi once said to us, "Kir'u levavchem, v'al bigdeichem."

May I also always remember that.

Self-Knowledge vs. Self-Honesty (from daily dose)

The 12-Steps typically shy away from engaging much in deep analysis of what our deep motivations are in our acting out. To me, such study is likely to be mental 'self pleasuring' (sorry for being crass) and often just another righteous attempt at being independent of G-d, again... just like we were while were acting out. During early recovery I believe it is particularly silly and even toxic.

Over the years, I have seen many people give up recovery completely just to satisfy their desire/need to hang onto (what I believe their pride considers) "their right to do only what they understand," and to be able to take credit for their recovery.

As far as I am concerned, the various 'self-help routines' promoted out there might work fine for many people - but not for me. So that's what I share.

And I see the work behind the 2nd and 4th steps as very different than such analysis. As Bill wrote in AA (where he introduces the steps), "we discovered that self-knowledge was not the key to recovery" (I paraphrase) - rather, it is self-acceptance and self-honesty that we needed. And the depth of the knowledge is irrelevant. It is the simple acceptance of the unadulterated truth about ourselves that is the only thing that matters, for it helps us give up and become dependent upon Hashem, for a change.

So why the self-analysis in step 2 and 4?

Because it is not analysis and understanding that we are after, it is honesty and facts. While it may seem semantics to some, it works for me, while the old way did not. In the 'good old days' my 24/7 inner occupation was self-understanding - learning maseches "me" - so that I could beat this thing... really so that I could finally control it rather than to be truly rid of it. It was always supposed to have been my buddy. I always craved having the power to use it without it using me. That was my true goal. When you boil it down, I still just wanted to lust - but without paying the price. Like my many attempts at enjoying masturbation - without actually spilling seed, 'chalilah'. Oops! Too far... That way never ever worked. It was all about finally figuring it all out. It was playing a game and lying to myself. It was just another sick part of my addiction, nothing more.

Nowadays, rather than trying to figure everything out, I need to simply face facts about myself and about reality. I am told by recovery people that admitting the truth about myself and my situation will open the door to getting better. I am a sick person getting better.

We need to accept that there are sick values, attitudes, and thought processes that are driving our addictive behaviors. Everyone I have met who is in successful recovery, admits more and more that they are sick - meaning that they come to see that their thinking and attitudes are

perverted. Addiction demystified. OK, maybe it must remain a bit mysterious - we do not really gain control over ourselves just because we understand how sick we are. Rather, accepting the true extent and manifestations of our own ill-ness helps us do one precious thing: give up on our own ability to beat it. To rely totally on Hashem to enable us to succeed. Much as we are supposed to in parnossah.

As long as it was just an aveiro that we did, it was a 'pet project' of ours - and we failed miserably. But once it became a disease, we saw that we were the problem, not the girls in skimpy dresses, nor the yetzer hara, nor anything else. We need fixing, and we need it badly.

We had - and have work to do.

Taken from the Captian Kirk post. (very relevant to me)

[dov wrote on 21 Jul 2011 23:21:](#)

Those who just get caught and stay clean out of fear of further humiliation never, ever stay better. Getting humiliated into sobriety does not work, until there is some humility added. Humilty (in *hachno'oh* to the truth) is the underpinning of the steps.

On meeting real people:

[dov wrote on 28 Oct 2011 04:04:](#)

Dear Yossi

Not sure where you are going with this. Are you bashing GYE? I hope not. We agree that a
) to true

addiction. I feel that insisting upon doing my recovery work b'chashai (secretly) is a tom-fool of a way to expect to outgrow a lifestyle of secret sexual adventure. As Chaza "I put it so nicely, "ein kateigor na'asoh saneigor". For many reasons:

1- Doing it that way puts me *just* where I want to be: in the driver's seat, defining myself based on my own research and offering myself my own *favorite* solutions. [Hey, that's exactly what all we frum liars have been doing all these years: trying our guts out to stop by gimmicks and compromises that "seem right for me". Who we are kidding eventually becomes clear...]

2- By never having another real person to face *who isn't us*, we never end up really having to face ourselves. [Convenient, no? Ask Captain Kirk, he'll tell you all about it. ;)]

3- By never admitting it all to another person, we never really admit it to *Hashem*. [Say, haven't I been davening shacharis, mincha, and ma'ariv all these years? Doesn't He really know everything about me anyhow? Well, apparently he is not that powerful a personal force in my life if I can still hide in the bathroom on my knees and masturbate to my sweet goddesses of schmutz... Nu.]

4- By never *meeting* real people face to face who have been there, done that, and *are making it through life without acting out with lust today*, I never actually have to face the fact that it really *is* possible to live without it. We all keep on *doing* it precisely because we believe in our hearts that we cannot live without it. Period. That's why we keep doing it. [Phew! Saved by the bell again.]

5- By hiding behind a username and never peeping out from behind it to meet and create real relationships with real, sober people, we are doomed to forget. A friend of mine says "this is a disease of forgetting."

Far from bashing GYE - my point is that GYE is great as a 'gateway' medication for addicts. Good things start here. Friendships in person and by phone, and lots of other things become available to those who want them. GYE can also be also a great help to non-addicts who are swimming in desire and despondency. But again, a certain degree of 'coming out' is the price we all must pay for real friendships. One can pretend his 'friend's' name is really "Taikwondo613Help!" for only so long. Eventually it just gets stupid saying the fake name even just in writing, kal v'chomer on the phone. But some folks are just not ready to take that step. It's a kichsak'l self-imposed 'prison', if you ask me.

I did not get clean and sober on GYE. The recovery I have been given so far, Hashem is giving me through SA. IN SA I am a bit anonymous. The frummies I know there from my home town know where I live, and most of my identity, of course. Hey, I just met a guy there three nights ago who I have been davening next to for two years! One might say that only now do we *really* know each other.

But to all the majority of the members in the SA meetings I attend, nobody knows my whole identity. All they know is that I am a recovering pervert and that my name is Dov. Funny name. Maybe they think it is "Taikwondo613Help!" in Hebrew! ;D

Anyway, we in SA are mostly anonymous, and it still works. Why? **Because we are physically present.** That is *real* enough. 'Virtual' is a bigger limitation than it seems to be.

Dov's Longest Post (a good one too)[dov wrote on 24 Oct 2011 03:38:](#)

Agree 100% with everything you wrote, Serene, and see no stirah with *anything* I wrote.

And here is a three-day long post, by far my longest, and quite preposterous. It was fun, so enjoy!

Al derech avodah, I might be able to explain where the fuzziness lies here. I know too many sweet and good chassidishe/yeshivishe and otherwise frum guys who are sex addicts. They are (as am I) completely unable to stop, and are very confused. The fact that what they are doing is assur makes no difference in their struggle - it could be assur, it could be mutar - either way they do not stop even though it is endangering or even destroying their family life, their integrity, their olam habo, their olam hazeh, their sanity, whatever...

The insistence that a Jew learn the *derech* to recover *avka* from Torah is a major block to many of these guys. Major. The reason I call it a block is not simply because it has not worked for them till now (which is also true). But rather, the reason I call on them to *avka* take a secular approach to recovery is this:

Most of us learned how to use porn, fantasy, and to masturbate ourselves WHILE we were defining our relationship with Hashem and WHILE we were defining what Torah *means* to us. This is why what they (we) have often felt so sure was destined to be our answer repeatedly failed as a working way out for us. Absolute devotion to Hashem and His Torah with *hisbatlus gemurah* simply did not work for many of us. For if it did, why are half of us even here at all? Hey, I am not a *ba'al kichsatah* on this and am not asking for anyone to agree with me on anything. I am simply reflecting the experience of many, and spelling out what many simply fear to face. If you see it in you, don't give up - seek for the truth about yourself, instead of more truth about Torah, Hashem, or other people. Self-honesty has been the missing ingredient for us all along. Of course, hiding from others and faking to get by has been poisoning us, too.

Yes, yes, yes, **of course** Torah is the answer. Because Torah (and Hashem's Will) *includes* *derech Eretz*. And Torah is His *Tif'eres*, the *mitzvos* are *shaife' d'malkah* - the *Zohar haKadosh* calls them *kevayochol* "limbs of Hashem's *Malchus*". So what of 'secular recovery work'?

The **approach** is key here, **not** the content. Sure the content can be found in Torah - but we don't find it! Only addicts do! This is why for many, the 12 steps work succeeds where the best shrinks and 'recovery programs' fail! The content that is actually needed, is just not the stuff that the 'oilem' typically focuses on in *Yiddishkeit*. Certainly not *normal* people in the oilem.

No matter what Rav Twerski writes, Torah authorities cannot speak undiluted program concepts from the pulpit. The Torah community must uphold a standard, and *should not* naturally cater to the truly spiritually sick people. A *rov* cannot speak of many of the things that I and others share about, even though it saved my marriage and my life - simply because they are not the typical Torah *derech*. They would irreversibly damage the normal people by sending them the wrong message.

For example, if your personal experience in the steps is one that you believe a goy could not *possibly* understand, then you and I have very different steps. Humanity and self-honesty is included in Torah values, I believe. And the steps are about self-honesty much more than anything else. And a goy can be as honest with himself as any Jew, if he needs to be. So, they can recover.

I have, b"H, very close relationships with so many frum Jews in recovery over the past ten+ years and it seems to me that, ironically, we frum yidden in recovery typically have a *much* harder time being honest with ourselves than the average goy does, in recovery. We often love cheshboning ourselves into a pretzel, driven to interpret Torah ideas to explain us and the entire recovery thing, and thus we complicate the simple. Elokim boro es ho'odom yoshor, v'heim bikshu cheshbonos rabim...

I read parts of Kuntress uma'ayon mibeis Hashem, by R' RaShaB, zt"l. Nu. Perhaps you have, too. Perhaps we could compare notes on that sefer, which touches on this issue a bit. But still, it would not change the facts of what I keep seeing guys experience. The ones who keep trying to do it *in a way that seems to them like the Torah they are familiar with*, get complicated to pieces, and fail. But the ones who accept simple principles in a secular (that means spiritual but not religiously dogmatic) context make it, over and over. And they stay frum and grow in all aspects of avodas Hashem. Not just from being clean - but from being honest with themselves, with others, and with their G-d.

And the goal of any frum yid's recovery is usually to live a real life of an ehrlicher Yid, and nothing else! But then why are we driven to lust and act out our lust? Why are we all here? The addiction confuses so many here *to see it differently than they view alcohol or drug addiction* simply because zera levatola *happens* to be **assur**! It turns out to be practically irrelevant, in the end. The real problem is that we are out of control and can't stop. That sickens and frightens us, makes us lie, and ruins our relationships with Hashem and with people, especially with the ones we are 'closest' to. It is the difference between the guys who are just ba'alei tayvoh and masturbate cuz it's fun, and those sad ones (like me) who do it habitually and compulsively, while it takes over little parts of their thinking and their lives. One is quite normal, while the other is sick, sick, sick.

And the recovery that I am familiar with is based completely on the acceptance of the fact that *even if porn-viewing and compulsive sex (with myself or others) were **mutar***, I *still* have no other option but to stop...even though I can't seem to stop. And all the yiddishkeit I have is on a wishy-washy foundation. No Tatty wants that for His child.

As far as Torah describing the addict clearly in a few select places, that may be so - but that was not my point. Sure, aspects of the thinking and process of addiction and recovery are all over the place in Torah. So? Where is it all put together? And who uses it? I went to rabbonim and to shrinks - and none of them had any idea what my problem was! Cuz none of them were addicts - only one had the guts to tell me I was very messed up and need professional help of some kind. Nu. So two years later I got the help...

My point is that the word "teshuvah" applied to an addict is vastly confusing for a good yid who happens to be a sex or lust addict. **Azivas hacheit** simply does not **happen** for an addict - we become "periodics". The hachno'oh needed to really give it up completely just does not exist because there we have too much mental and emotional *pain* when trying to give up our sweet addiction! What, after all, can Torah promise us in return for such a sacrifice? To an addict, all the platitudes of Olam haBoh, madreigos, and the glory of conquest l'Shem Shomayim, fall on deaf ears - or deaf hearts. We really believe there is no substitute for it. And we all know that *giving it up* is the only way, and **that** takes a gift from Hashem. The White book of SA puts it nicely: "When we prayed, it was always, "Take it away G-d, so that I do not have to give it up!"

And **Charotah** has no context, at all. What *charotah* do I really have if the truth is that I, poor guy, still want to use porn, fantasy, and masturbation again *more than anything else in the world*?! The addict knows that he will feel just as crazy for it again in a day, a week, a month, maybe a few months...off to the races again....how can he talk of 'charotah' or of 'kabolah al ha'haboh'?

And **vidui**? Puleeze. How weak is a vidui that a guy feels he is only willing to do if he can keep his head deep inside a paper bag? That's what "SpunkyTeshuvahbrovah" is: a paper bag over my head in a virtual setting. Ooh, so safe. So 'safe' from everyone but ourselves.

Here we are among others who know exactly what it means to see your tzitzis dragging on the floor while masturbating on the bathroom floor and fling them behind us so we don't see them in the act....who know just what it is like to sneak a peek at porn on the internet (during bein hazmanim only, of course). We are fellow frum yidden! And yet so many are of us are *still* hiding behind **usernames**! OK, some use them because it's the style on forums, I know. But I also know that most guys (not all) are *deathly* afraid - some viscerally unable - to actually admit their real names here. Heck, posting at all is such a hard thing for many to do. And of those few who can or do post with their real first names (see my Captain Kirk thingy if you still can't fall asleep yet), most of them would still not consider actually **meeting** another recovering yid in

their community to talk of the truth about themselves with...that's why I say this vidui has 'short legs'.

Besides being a mitzvah, vidui is a powerful tool to help a person let go of his current sickness and get free of his past mistakes. The Tzetel Kotton speaks of it, and countless addicts the world over use it properly as one of many program tools. Yet some frum guys bring with them a RMB"M that says that speaking out my mistakes or my ills to another person is **assur** if they are only bein odom laMokom! It's a busha to the King to publicly admit my transgressing of His Will!

Ashrei sh'bo v'talmudo beyodo? They will come to Shomayim and say "I couldn't get free of my addiction to prostitutes, schmutz, or masturbation because *the tools were assur*! So here I come with my 15,000 sins - **and a RMB"M**! Then they'll tell him that the RMB"M was not talking about addicts!

Ashrei sh'bo vetalmudo**do** beyodo, indeed.

My life was *drek* punctuated by 'religious victories', my wife and children were fooled, and I never realized that ***the RMB"M was not referring to addicts in the first place!*** He was not referring to a person who is sick in the head.

Ooh, but admitting we are idiots or nuts is just too insulting. "Hashem, what do You expect from me? To even let go of my *self-respect* for recovery?! Heck, it'd be chilul Hashem, for I am a ben Torah and known in the community! (And RBs"O, if You are not sure of this, please just see Ch 5 of Hilchos Deyos.)"

Ein milim.

Does any of this address the issue?

Finally, I will share two Torah thoughts about recovery and addiction, be"H. Some may not like them.

The Sfas Emes describes (via the Zohar that refers to No'ach as "Shabbos") that Noach was a tzaddik who needed syu'ah. He walked **with** Hashem, cuz he could not walk **before** Him. He needed direct Divine assistance to be a tzaddik, says the Sfas Emess.

) was different. He *could*

walk before Hashem, and did in his lifetime.

Now, I admit I cannot approach a real havonoh of Noach, and what he did with the drinking after the mabul and what tikkunim he was trying to achieve for the b'riyah after the eitz haDa'as, and it's nutty to say he was an addict of *any* kind! But...

Noach's *derech*, I see as a model for the recovering addict. Yes, I can be a tzaddik - but dependent on Hashem. Passive, like Shabbos. Relying on kedusha from above, like Shabbos. Nukvah, like Shabbos. Naturally 'Osah Retzon Ba'aloh'....like Shabbos - it's naturally 'kidshoh vekaymoh'. And when an addict relies on his *own* da'as, he soon ends up drunk and naked in a tent somewhere (if he is lucky).

This is upsetting to some, who say it's unfair. They are not willing to 'just' be a tzaddik like Avraham Avinu (even though the initials on his briefcase were AA). Noach. Nu, he was sort of like a goy, no? They feel it'd be an abrogation or failure of their very Jewishness. (Even though the Sfas Emess refers to contemporary tzaddikim in this bechinah, as well!) Well, to this I say that these people are not ready for recovery anyway. They put their '*madreigo*' first, and their *hachno'oh* second. That might be avodas *atzmi*, not avodas Hashem, anyway. Basics, basics.

):

I see the analogy of yetzias mitzrayim applying to Hashem taking us out of the house of slaves,

as most do. But with one difference that few choose to talk of:

I see the comparison of the addict (that means me) most closely to what Hashem did for **Par'oh**, rather than for the B'nei Yisra'el. Par'oh promises over and over again that he'll let go. But he holds on. He even swears that Hashem is 100% right, and that he is dead wrong, yet then hangs onto his beliefs that the Jews *can't* possibly be given up!

He makes a bankrupt fool of himself over and over again, with every makkoh....and still doesn't just let go! How much he suffered! How unmanageable his life and kingdom became! Yet he just could not accept it.... this is my story, and that of most addicts I know. We are exactly the same. "Es asher his'alalti bemitzrayim" - "how I played with/made fools of mitzrayim" We were deep into dotage. It is disgusting, really. How I am 100% devoted and running after seeing the right picture of a selfish and shameless prusteh shiksa and feeling myself to my orgasm - it all becomes so *precious* and *beautiful* to me, even with the lying and fakery it usually entails, not to mention my little mess on the floor... How debonair.

Then Par'oh seems to finally hit bottom. He suddenly realizes that **he cannot afford** to keep holding onto his precious Jews! He *runs* to recovery. "Go! Go! Get out of my hair now!"

This time he is really contrite. He takes action, puts on a filter, tells his wife all about it, starts going to meetings, a shrink, whatever.

But it does not last long. As soon as he sees the first glimmer of freedom, he interprets it in the funniest way:

"I am cured! Maybe I was a bit ill before, but now, finally, I see things rationally and I am in control!" We see that Par'oh felt cured of his Jew-fetish! So...how did he react? The RaMBa"N points out, "what kind of fruitcake lunatic (OK, so I paraphrase a bit) would surge forward *into a miraculously split sea* after his quarry? Did he actually think it was split for *him*, to catch them?!" What does this mean? It means he was reduced to an idiot and a fool. A Captain Ahab crazy with 'Jew-fever', he was.

How did *that* happen? Didn't he just 'let those people go'?

Simple. He decided that if he were no longer sick - if he was actually able to let go of his Jews, that proves that he is no longer powerless over his lust to keep Jews. He **has** truly learned his lesson. So now he can recapture them and not fall prey to insane suffering - if they cost him too much next time, he'll just let them go! Just like the smoker: He says to nagging relatives who say, "Harry, you're *addicted!*" that he "could **easily** give smoking up *at any time!* So shut up!" Hmm. Touchy, isn't he? Then he coughs his guts up one night too many and decides to test himself. And behold! He gives it up for *a whole week!* Will this guy quit? Maybe. But if he is truly an addict, he will most likely take a lesson from his success that he can now control and enjoy it like a gentleman, like everyone else. Just a single smoke after dinner, once in a while. Of course, soon he is back at the races chain smoking again, and his 'control' phase is a distant memory a raspy year or two later.

Par'oh ran after his Jews as soon as he saw he *could* let them go! "If I **can** let them go, then **why quit!**? Control and enjoy it!"

Get it?

This is my story, and I am not alone.

Par'oh ends up in Nineveh, helping the horses (and people!) do teshuvah of some kind - and (and lots of non-addicts, too) learn that it was never the last drink (schmutzfest) that got them in trouble, but it was always and only *the 1st one!* We - if we are indeed addicts - are powerless to control the *first* drink we take. That takes a lot of humility (or humiliation) to admit. Admitting we are actually powerless over the first drink is not normal. Normal people (even normal yidden!!) can take a drink of lust without ending up in the toilet bowl. Not me. That is the 1st step of a long, slow, and beautiful recovery.

Have a nice day!

Getting Honest:

[dov wrote on 09 Oct 2011 03:35:](#)

Just wrote this to a guy. It may be relevant here, cuz "living mussar" sounds easier than it really is, as I am sure you know. Heck, we have been failing at doing just that doe years, most of us....But *what is it?* Maybe this is the the first step to finding out:

Getting honest with someone else is important for everyone, for only by getting honest with another person can we ever have a *chance* of finally getting honest with *ourselves* and with *Hashem*.

The real reason our desperate and heartfelt tefillos have not bee working when it comes to this stuff (as many peiople have reported here), is that ***we are lying most of the time***. Lying to ourselves, and hence, lying to G-d. That obviously can't work. We do not even know we are lying! But that is no 'loophole' - the tefillos are not really real. HaOdom yir'ah lo'einayim - vaHashem yir'eh *laIivov*. Tzoreif kilyoseinu....this is precisely what we just finished asking Him for.

Go for it. Let's use each other!

So it's a process and takes time, but mostly practice.

Captian Kirk:

[dov wrote on 21 Jul 2011 23:21:](#)

OK, so you are making a point that divulging all aspects of our identity is the only way to make a full disclosure of self and be truly honest with others.

But we all know that is not true. We all know that we do *not* have to tell a friend *all* about us, in order to be close with him. There are other ways to get truly intimate.

So you are trying to be *docheh* my words with straw. Intimacy is not what I am talking about here, at all.

Please bear with me and I'll tell you about Captain Kirk in a minute.

First, I will share that I have seen dozens of guys who have had the hardest time just saying their right name on a phone call. I have heard the hesitating, quiet voice on the other end of the line finally admit that "yes, my name - the one the real people in my everyday life know me by - is Pinchas". It is a terrible strain for some - and I hear myself in their trembling. That same hesitancy - fear mixed with shame. It's mine, too. It's just that in my case it is behind me - in theirs it is still in front of them.

What is really going on here?

I have seen frum guys *finally* drag themselves into live meetings and start off the first few meetings using a 'fakish' name - their English name that no one who knows their frum persona really uses. *Only to later change their names in the meetings to the Hebrew name that their wife and friends use* - cuz they began to see the perverts in the room *are* like they are, that *they* need what the guys in the room have been given just as desperately as they do. No difference in that respect. That is when the walls go down and the real juicy work can finally begin. *Until then, they are still unattached to what goes on in the meeting, for on some level [b]it is not really Pinchas who is sitting there, but 'Robert' (the bad guy who is subject to porn worship).* [/b]

How to bring them together?

Which brings me to Captain Kirk.

There was once an episode of Star Trek in which there was a time travel shtick, and the Kirk of the present, went 10 years into the past. Now, there was another Kirk then, too, right?

That was a big problem. The scientists told him that normally two of the same people cannot coexist. It just does not happen. But as this was an exception (it was a TV show and they were getting paid \$15,000 per episode) as long as the old Kirk did not actually meet the present Kirk, all would be fine. However, if they *actually met each other*, the entire Time-Space Continuum would be 'ripped asunder' (chas veSholom). Under no circumstances could they be allowed to meet!

I do not remember what actually happened to Mr Shatner, but everything turned out OK for there were another few seasons of the show (and also we are all still here, no?). But my point is just this:

How does a frum guy get all drawn into his very private porn, admitting by his actions its awesome, sweet power for him, and privately have sex with himself (masturbate) with such intensity and imaginative pleasure and power? OK, so he has shame, self-loathing, and sadness afterward. But how does he do both tefillin, teaching Torah, being mekareiv and really davening for others hard and really crying for the churban, and really working on his middos....**and** masturbating himself with a fantasy that could *only* mean he (secretly) also worships the beauty and power of those naked shiksas and the act of sex? **How does such a contradiction survive in him?**

How does it survive in us?

My answer to myself is simple. We learn to lie a little. We lie to others and we lie to ourselves. We'll quit really soon. We won't do it any more when we are twenty....or fifty. Never on Shabbos. Never with masturbation. Etc. All lies, to ourselves. And over time, we learn to lie more and more without even noticing it, just as you cannot see yourself grow.

When we are being *good*, we feel good about ourselves and we wish we could forget the bad stuff we did last night - we call that a *hirhur teshuvah*. Really it is just so we do not hate ourselves so badly, but that's OK. We learn not to face it *right now* by pretending that we are 'forgiven' by Hashem. That way, one persona does not invade the other so much. It gets put off till the next time, if we are lucky.

When we are being 'bad', we wish we could forget how devoted we are to Hashem and His Torah and to our wives and children and to honesty with society - because it just feels so good to do the porn and we really see no way out of it. We know we need it and do not in a million years believe there is really an alternative for us, in the end. We end up 'ignoring' our kedusha during the act. That is lying to ourselves, and again, one persona does not see the other simultaneously. Pretending we are really rotten to the core is a much more comfortable way to act out. Nu. Who wants to hurt so much?

We walk about for years and are tortured inside, for we know the dichotomy we are hiding - we *are* the dichotomy. But we do not really know what to do. We fight to make one side gain mastery over the other and call that *hisgabrus al hayeitzer*. And we fall. Then we assume we are horrible Jews, and assume that Hashem agrees with us about that. That mistake is a hard one to shake...(see step 2)

So now about the time-travel dilemma.

When we open up to others under a username (or fake English name in a meeting) and share the entire truth (which most rarely do) about our addiction, we are still *hiding our 'good' persona - the real me*. It's OK to let them know the horrible dirt - yeah, all of it - as long as they do not know the 'good' persona *too* well. The two are just incompatible.

Thos who got caught by their wives or children know exactly what I am talking about. They understand why they getting caught was so effective for a time - the desire to use the porn left them as a result of getting both personae dragged into the room at the same time. The horror of getting caught with my pants down by a co-worker, son, daughter, or wife is truly intolerable to anyone who has experienced it. Why?

Because the hypocrisy is mercilessly forced to come to a bitter end. The Time-Space Continuum has ripped asunder. We look frantically for a place to bury ourselves. It's hell.

It is the two Kirks being forced to see each other by a third party - ***and only a party who knows both personae can possibly do that***. Till that happens, we are all players. Lying a bit about the '*real*' us' to ourselves and to others.

Some of us insist on solving our problem without bringing the two personae together. Perhaps

they are just avoiding the terribly painful end of their hypocrisy, perhaps not. I do not know what is best for another. But in my own case, I got caught, and it still didn't help. After a few weeks I was back at it and it got worse and worse until I couldn't take it any more. I was begging for someone to rip off my cover and get me real! My wife could not do that, for she does not understand what I am talking about when I describe the desperation to get the sweet porn in my mind and heart and does not understand the allergy to it that I have.

So I needed real meetings - with real addicts. Perverts for decades who chose the path of sobriety *because they had no choice*. Just like me. People who can hear both sides of me. And I use my real name, wear my normal Jewish outfit, and talk with them freely about my real life.

And that flows out into being real with everybody else in my life, whether they know about my problem, or not.

And that is why so many of us are OK with *goyim* in meetings, but shrink into a corner when they meet a frum yid. There is a common strong desire to avoid and evade. And I do not blame them, for I had that, too. Here is a guy who can bring them even closer to the true full self! It's more pain to go through. But more healing, too.

Interestingly, I have seen newly recovering program-guys meet people from the meeting in public places just 'out of the blue' and *totally ignore them*, as if they didn't know them at all. Those guys did not remain sober. I think they may have been shocked by the cross-over from their 'meeting life' into their 'real life'. They were not willing to smile discreetly and say a polite "Hi" to the other guy. Instead, here was trouble - "so get away from me quick." Oy vavoi.

This is *precisely* why AA has a strong tradition of real anonymity. We do *not* reveal the identity of anyone *else* we meet in the rooms to non-members. Ever. But it's not about shame, at all. It's because sharing the secrets of **others** will not help *their* recovery at all! Only the truth that **they** want to share will help them.

Those who just get caught and stay clean out of fear of further humiliation never, ever stay better. Getting humiliated into sobriety does not work, until there is some humility added. Humility (in *hachno'oh* to the truth) is the underpinning of the steps.

And that is why 'accountability groups' are nice but will ultimately fail, as long as they are based on avoiding shame - which they can easily become all about.

And that is why opening up to the wife (and remaining consistently open with her) is so very powerful - when done at the right time. It is powerful medicine for my recovery and powerful medicine for the marriage. Honesty there removes yet another layer of hiding **from ourselves** that has to go to the boards for true freedom.

Sharing my credit card number and address would not do *any* of these things for me, and neither would pulling up my pant-leg. It's not about compromising my *security*, nor my anonymity. It's not about getting hurt nor for the sake of being punished for all my wrongs until I can finally be good. This is not Teshuvah and it is not sigufim. It's all and only about being the real me with everyone that I *can* be, to the extent that I can be without violating the health of my family and others. We do the best we can in that, and ask Hashem to make it work right. And it works, period.

Do you get what I am talking about?

(Really I know you were just playing devil's advocate, YosefhaTzaddik, but I humored you to get it all out there be"H. May it be helpful to someone, Amein.)

Avodas Hashem Gone Awry:

[dov wrote on 27 Sep 2011 17:02:](#)

Look at how many of the beautiful and essential aspects of a proper avodas Hashem, I use in my addiction for my lust and sex:

1- tzniyus (kept it private, hidden);

2- t'midus (consistency and regularity);

3- kavonah (focus - and what focus/kavonah we have while searching and finding the sweetest porn we can and then using it for just the right fantasy!);

4- Yichud hama'aseh (putting real life, the kids, job, wife, all on 'hold' once I start to plan the evening's escapades - that is true yichud hama'aseh [misused, of course] - see Chovos haLevavos);

5- Mesiras nefesh (taking so many risks for it - I endangered my job, marriage, respect of the community, chillul haShem, and even my bodily safety and often overlooking or tolerating tremendous physical discomfort just to get my fix, many, many times);

6- kana'us (I'd get resentful at those hindering my attachment to my sweet, loving, porn women [ie, my wife and kids] and often lash out at them);

7- Deveikus (being attached to it as to a chain, it eventually takes over my thought, context of living, relationships and motivations for living); and more...

and...

[dov wrote on 27 Sep 2011 17:02:](#)

Hopelessness is the only hope we have.

On Pride...[dov wrote on 07 Aug 2011 05:24:](#)

...we may admit that we have so much pride, that others must be idiots, unworthy of our trouble, and unfairly demanding on us. We need desperately to learn how to *connect* and be *useful*, rather than see everyone else as 'competition';

...we may admit that the main reason we feel we are such failures in past, present and future, is because (in our pride) we cannot accept that **we are in fact mediocre in many ways!** We put expectations on ourselves that Hashem never intended - then we find we cannot live with ourselves - cuz we are living as someone else! We cannot get comfortable in our *own* skin, because we insist on wearing someone else's! Perhaps we heard a mussar schmooze - and

misused it, got yelled at by a raging parent and internalized it, whatever. Oohh, those things may be hard to die. We'd rather blame *ourselves* for moshiach not coming yet, for our parents' marriages falling apart, for our wives unhappiness, for not being an *outstanding* guy in the beis midrash or the respected talmid chochom we 'should be already' or the posek ha'ir yet... We'd rather fantasize that we really should be those things or that we have all that power, *livro olamos ulhacharivon...just* what the nochosh tempted us with back in the garden. Nu.

Pride destroys us on the inside - and they told us we needed **more self-esteem** to 'feel better'. How wrong. What we needed was to get **right-sized**. To really accept Hashem's Will for us (step 3). Our biggest obstacle was and is our *pride*, not our failures themselves. Hashem forgives aveiros and mistakes - He does not have much sympathy for pride, as the sforim tell us. Many of us have pride in spades, and we do not even know it. And for prideful people like me, there is no pleasure like the pleasure of **getting right-sized**, and knowing who I really am and being reasonably sure about what Hashem really expects from me today.

Actions not Thoughts...[dov wrote on 14 Aug 2011 23:28:](#)

It sounds nice, but it is all just theory and useless, thinking and cheshboinos - until it is out into real action.

Enough theory. Thinking about the problem is poison. It has its limited place - but this feels to me like trying to figure it out and beat it with new insight....it doesn't work for any addict I know.

We need to take the actions and the feelings and thinking will follow, as a gift. That is the experience of most people I know. And I spent a decade learning about this and only got sicker and sicker. It was disgusting and silly.

What real actions can you take according to your idea above? Now. Today.

Go to it, man. And quit figuring it (you) all out. It is a waste of more time and just mental

masturbation. In my experience.

You are thinking too much...

[dov wrote on 11 Aug 2011 18:26:](#)

Yeah. You are thinking too much, as you are always doing (if you are anything like me), and you are convinced that you need to 'understand' something in order to succeed at getting better.

Make in-person friends with another person in successful recovery from a problem like yours and speak daily with that person at the beginning of the day (before or after davening or breakfast) and then again near the end of the day sometime. It doesn't need to be every day, but most days would be great.

Love yourself, take good care of yourself, and stop burdening your poor self with the weight of the world. Nobody really understands all the stuff you are struggling to gain mastery over. Least of all, you.

Learn what to do, not what to think.

You cannot think yourself into right living. You can only live yourself into right thinking. (*emphasis mine*) Hashem will give you the gift of right-thinking. But it will be a gift that you will be able to hold onto only after you take the right actions without needing to understand.

Na'aseh venishma is not a mitzvah anywhere in the Torah, but it underlies *everything*. Especially recovery.

Trust G-d, period.

[dov wrote on 28 Aug 2011 04:15:](#)

A filter is not recovery. It doesn't even come close to anything like recovery. If anyone who really has a chronic problem "works on their problem" just by putting on a filter, they are kidding themselves.

In that way, putting on a filter will actually perpetuate their problem and mess up their recovery completely - they will think that putting on a filter is all the real action they need to take.

"Phew! I had an alligator in my basement that would sneak up at night and bite my leg. Then someone gave me a great idea and I finally shut the basement door! Finally I can sleep at night."

This alligator-fellow is a weirdo. Who wants an freaking alligator in their basement?! Eventually it will chew through the door, and everybody knows that. Gotta get it outta there.

A filter is only as strong as my acceptance that I cannot afford to test it. Once I test it, I might as well not have it at all. My alligator will eventually get through, guaranteed.

So I say, get any decent filter (I like K-9), and throw away the key, give it to your mother, wife, brother, anybody. Then realize that the filter is just a reminder, nothing more. Evidence to myself that **I do not want to screw up my life with crazy obsession with porn and sex with myself, any more. Nor with the struggle against it - which is just as poisonous.**
(emphasis mine)

Recovery is my main work now - not learning, not my marriage, not my davening or anything else - just recovery. For it is obvious to any ba'al seichel that if an addict does not get deep into real recovery and take real steps and do real recovery work, he will not have any of those important parts of life anyhow!

In other words, either I will learn how to use a relationship with G-d to save me, or I am finished.

Ratzon Alone Is Not Enough

[dov wrote on 27 Mar 2011 21:15:](#)

Dear 'Nafshi',

You wrote that you have had trouble since sixth grade. Would you care to elaborate on exactly what the 'trouble' was? I find it very hard to believe (and don't you, too?) that any effort or sincerity on your part can sensibly be expected to overcome a decade of wrong thinking about sex. For crying out loud, if you have been making a god out of porn and orgasm as many of us have since around that age - and exercising worship of sexual power by regular masturbation....how do you expect to "beat this"? With sincerity? Whose sincerity? Your fox is watching your henhouse, my friend.

If you can elaborate, great. Then I believe you can begin to consider that ratzon - no matter how sincere - is not nearly enough. Hey, anyone can punch the waves. You are going to need some kind of a real plan of action, if you want results. And if you are anything like me and others I know, you may also need to start getting something quite the opposite of the 'privacy' (ie., secrecy) that you have been getting till now: openness and help.

Hatzlocha - and much love to you,

Dov

If you are uncomfortable with doing that on the forum, you can PM me (or anyone else OK with that, for that matter).

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Re: Links of gibbor120

Posted by gibbor120 - 25 Aug 2011 19:16

BARDIFACTS (coined by ZS)

GREAT Bardichev quote!

[bardichev wrote on 16 Sep 2011 02:53:](#)

join our family

fighting lust with brotherhood and simcha

[bardichev wrote on 27 Sep 2011 17:48:](#)

gue- fighting lust with cholint ...one kishka at a time...

[ZemiroShabbos wrote on 28 Sep 2011 15:47:](#)

and this Antique Bardifact:

[bardichev wrote on 27 Aug 2009 15:56:](#)

DONT LOVE SOMETHING THAT CANT LOVE YOU BACK

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Re: Links of gibbor120

Posted by gibbor120 - 25 Aug 2011 19:16

post 5

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Re: Links of gibbor120

Posted by tehillimzugger - 25 Aug 2011 19:19

what the...

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Re: Links of gibbor120

Posted by Dov - 28 Oct 2011 15:57

A very special friend of mine just sent me here. Is he trying to kill me? I need a bardyguard.

Get it? "*bardy*"guard?

HEH, HEH...

...never mind...

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Re: Links of gibbor120

Posted by gibbor120 - 28 Oct 2011 16:00

This is my own little place for keeping stuff that's precious to me. I used to do the same for other "precious" stuff :-[. Anyway, you have a big place here. I would say you should be honored, but that would get me into trouble real fast ;).

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Re: Links of gibbor120

Posted by gibbor120 - 28 Oct 2011 16:46

This just in.... my head that is.

Lust is rooted in gaivah NOT taivah.

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Re: Links of gibbor120

Posted by wishing for the real me - 30 Oct 2011 02:44

I'll be your guard, except that you are my target to annoy this week. Last week was bard and he passed.

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Re: Links of gibbor120

Posted by bardichev - 30 Oct 2011 17:18

PLEASE DON'T IGNORE ME

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Re: Links of gibbor120

Posted by wishing for the real me - 30 Oct 2011 17:23

Who is ignoring you? Dov and Kedusha are ignoring me. Do you see a pattern in who I am bothering?

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Re: Links of gibbor120

Posted by Dov - 31 Oct 2011 03:35

Dear "Real Me",

If you are really the real you, why not share your real first name? Is it really you?

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Re: Links of gibbor120

Posted by wishing for the real me - 31 Oct 2011 03:44

Nope, its not.

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Re: Links of gibbor120

Posted by Dov - 31 Oct 2011 03:46

Well, then maybe you can get some help to find out who *is*?

Stay cool 8)

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Re: Links of gibbor120

Posted by gibbor120 - 31 Oct 2011 13:43

[Real Me wrote on 30 Oct 2011 17:23:](#)

Do you see a pattern in who I am bothering?

We don't *bother* here, we *BROTHER* here. Welcome brother. Speak your mind.

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