

To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by obormottel - 02 Nov 2011 07:09

Ninety one days ago I was miserable and despondent. I was in a relapse from an attempted (and quite short-lived) sobriety effort. As always, the renewed filth-a-thon was dragging me deeper than ever before, forcing to search out darker and darker fantasies and visions. The lowest point of that particular escapade was arguably from the lower ones in my adult life: the night before, I got up in front of the whole shul and made a public "siyum" on a maseches I haven't finished learning. And it hit me really hard: the realization that I had no integrity left, that I can lie to dozens of people who are my friends, my Rabbis, my sons' teachers; that I can say the wonderful words of Hadran Aloch and know that I am lying....and all because pictures and videos of people doing all kinds of deviant acts take up so much of my life, that I am only faithful to god of orgasm. That is my only true commitment, for which I would lie, deceive, manipulate, throw a fit over, neglect responsibility, assign blame.

By then, I have already instinctively made the first step: I acknowledged my problem for what it is, admitted that I am powerless to stop it, and wrote to my Rebbe begging for help. I may have davened that day for Siyata d'Shmaya, too: because while browsing some Israeli website, I saw a GYE banner.

Ninety one days later, I am, by the Grace of G-d, ninety days clean from intentional watching of pornography and masturbation.

Poischim b'cvoid achsanya: I owe hakoras hatziv to the Riboinoi shel Oilom and Rabbeinu Guard Meshichoi, and the GYE family. I love bickering with Dov, shmoozing with Bardichev, exchanging thoughts with Alexeliezer, Zemiroshabbos, Gevura shebeYesod, Gibbor120, Yosef Hatzadik, Shmeichel.....and everyone else whose name is omitted solely due to space constraints. Thank you! Thank you to Mordechai, who pledged \$90 to GYE if I stay clean for 90 days. Thanks to our newest moderator, UAJ, for a consistent flow of good ideas.

Thanks to all the new guys (can you even see me, I'm so high up in the clouds?) for letting me rant and vent on your threads.

Originally, I was going to wait till the end of ninety days and refer back to the handbook, and to the "GYE in the Nutshell" for whether I need additional help. Thank G-d I realize now I will always need additional help.

So I hope to use this thread as an interactive journal (like so many people here have) and take you guys with me to

SOBRIETY AND BEYOND!

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by gibbor120 - 14 May 2012 19:01

Hi Mottel,

Can I ask some questions? Will telling your wife likely lead you to stay sober or lose your sobriety? What will you gain by telling her? What will you lose?

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by obormottel - 14 May 2012 19:52

Ok, it's decided: no need to tell the wife.

Thank you all.

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by Nesher - 16 May 2012 14:46

Obormottel. Perhaps you should consider Taphsic with a heavier knass. And you should phrase it in a way that even when intentionally looking for any inappropriate material is a fall. Since you sounds like you are unemployed, a financial knass will be a good extra deterrent.

www.guardyoureyes.com/articles/tips-suggestions/item/the-taphsic-method-made-simple

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by obormottel - 16 May 2012 15:35

[Nesher wrote on 16 May 2012 14:46:](#)

Obormottel. Perhaps you should consider Taphsic with a heavier knass. And you should phrase it in a way that even when intentionally looking for any inappropriate material is a fall. Since you sounds like you are unemployed, a financial knass will be a good extra deterrent.

<http://www.guardyoureyes.com/articles/tips-suggestions/item/the-taphsic-method-made-simple>

Thanks! I stay away from swearing, but my "double-fence" does include a heavy financial knass if I don't put on my hat and jacket and say a kapitel tehillim before acting out.

When I made this stipulation originally, my mind was on masturbating which would always come as a follow-up to watching porn. In my mind, the two are inseparable.

This latest episode didn't include porn (and I barely started touching myself before I stopped), but it did include inappropriate and explicit images. So it is a nice progression for me: Even though my "allergy" was flared up by what I saw on the screen, and I compulsively reached into my pants, I was able to stop and shut down the computer, and zip up and not go ahead with feeding the obsession.

So thanks again, everyone, for helping clear this out. Let me update my "double-fence" in light of the new development of my tiny progressive victory over lust:

If I get an urge to watch any inappropriate websites, including "partially clothed" models, I may do so as long as I put on my hat and jacket beforehand, and say a kappitel tehillim. If I end up watching (even without masturbating) for more than 1 minute, I shall go to the mikva the following morning and pay 10 times the admission fee.

If I act out (either by watching, or by touching, or both) without "hat, jacket, tehillim" first, I shall go to the mikva the following morning and pay 100 times the mikva fee.

I shall go to the mikva after loosing my image sobriety even if it didn't bring me to mz"l.

I guess that should close the gaps in my original double-fence.

Thanks again for everyone's input.

Mottel

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by obormottel - 16 May 2012 15:51

I saw something from Dov on another thread and it spoke to me. So here it is:

Addiction as AA's typically describe it, is not *hard* to stop - it is ***impossible*** to stop. It is ***not*** the normal desire we all have for sex or sexual pleasure. It is an allergy. The guy that doesn't forget the dirty scene, that thinks all about the pretty girl even after she goes away, who lives with an undercurrent of concern about about how good or bad sex with his wife will be...twisted. Ad kan dvorov.

Dennis Praeger once said on his show that every normal man gets a sexual response at the sight of a beautiful woman, but this response disappears in fifteen seconds. Obviously, he wasn't talking about sex addicts.

Since, if it doesn't, and I carry this image with me till the next time I'm about to orgasm,

I AM TWISTED.

No doubt about it.

If I clearly recall pornographic scenes I watched as teenager, and I can bring up in my mind 20,000 scenes I've watched since then, I AM TWISTED.

If fantasizing about being with my wife works me up into a frenzy, so that I masturbate one, two, or even three times before we get together, and then spend the next day re-living last night's experience, and masturbate some more, I AM TWISTED.

I have to stop fooling myself that I am simply hypersexual, or even that I am regular guy with red blood. Regular guys don't identify with above. I do.

That's all I got.

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by Dov - 16 May 2012 17:20

Yes. Yyasher kochacho. A bit rough at the edges perhaps, but still sweet music.

Now, for the guys out there who are reacting to your post by saying "Gevalt! Don't be so hard on yourself. You **are** a good guy, and Hashem **does** like you! Don't say these things!" ...I ask you the following, Mottel:

Does what you realized and wrote about make you feel like a worthless piece of garbage that Hashem is probably nauseated with? Will you now throw in the towel on yourself based on this ?

Or...

Does it make you feel like maybe, just maybe, you see things a bit *more* as Hashem does - that the two of you see *more* eye-to-eye and that this can allow you to have a more honest and real relationship with your G-d?

Or does it do something else for you?

OK, thanks. Ciao!

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by obormottel - 16 May 2012 18:42

I didn't start seeing myself as a worthless piece of garbage in light of the above realization.

The feelings of unworthiness and inadequacy still visit with me often enough, though.

As recently as last Thursday I spent the whole morning in bed contemplating my sorry state of sexaholism, which in turn brought me to search for images etc (as reported above).

The point of writing this latest exercise was to remind myself of my condition, because hardly a day goes by that I don't delude myself into thinking "I am not a sexaholic".

A guy in my meeting yesterday, after accepting his 1-year chip, said: "It's finally sinking in that I may be a sexaholic".

So it is with me, too. I don't think Hashem hates me any more now than He did (not) when I was in active addiction. And the point was certainly not to throw in a towel.

I think it was more of a reality check for me.

I took the 10 criteria for porn addiction (above) and wrote down in a notebook why I think each criterion applies to me.

I didn't start hating myself after qualifying for 10 out of 10 (I don't like me much anyways), but it reminded me that I am, indeed, addicted, powerless, and insane.

Same with the little Dov quote above. A reality check, is all. Cptn Kirk moment, if you will.

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by Dov - 16 May 2012 21:14

So much for the "self-esteem is our biggest problem" chevra. Thanks for making that clear, Obbermottel.

So many people get fooled by the self-esteem uber alles trick. They spend all their time trying to look for positive things about themselves - and they never discover that the most positive thing about ourselves will be an acceptance of the unvarnished truth. It is the closest thing to Hashem's Will. Chosamo Emess. It's beautiful.

Rav Noach zt"l used to tell a story abt a man (not a yid, BTW) who seemed very happy...and he was missing a leg. Rav Noach (always trying to learn from anyone) asked him, "So, what's your secret to happiness? Doesn't your problem bother you?"

The man answered with the facts: "When I was 11, a wagon rolled over my leg and cut it off. I

saw it laying there and immediately realized that my life was either *over* without two legs like everyone else had - or I was actually going to **live** my life *without* that leg anyway. I, at 11, decided to live my life anyway. And from that moment my acceptance made me able to live a great life *as I really am* - a man with only one leg."

In AA (p. 30) Bill wrote, "We are like men who have lost their legs - they do not grow new ones." Acceptance of the truth about ourselves - in any and every issue, not just addiction - is the only path to happiness. Denial means more pain and wreckage. "Ignorance is bliss" meets real life and the fandango ensues...stuff hits the fan...not a pretty picture.

But acceptance is beautiful.

Knowing the truth and *accepting* the truth are two seperate things...but accepting it won't ever happen until we at least *know* it, first. Accepting means not fighting it, admitting it is G-d's Will. Living life on life's terms. Finally.

It turns out that Pride - *expecting* to be great...yet seeing our mediocrity in some areas - is our big enemy. It makes us bitter and hate ourselves. It makes us assume G-d is disgusted with us, as well. And it's all pride, the opposite of the holy grail called "self-esteem".

The greatness I can achieve is G-d's doing, not mine. When **He** is at the center of my ambition, it all goes well for me and others in *ruchiyus* and in *gashmiyus*. When **I** am at the center, I end up masturbating and making lots of people who depend on me (mainly my family) miserable. Without acceptance, I end up just struggling with and hating the truth. And *working with the truth* is G-d's Will for me.

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by E-Tek - 17 May 2012 00:41

Wow. I am in awe of what's going on in this thread. And a bit jealous.

I'm going to post my thoughts on this in my own thread, so as to not clutter this one. But I had to speak up.

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by Dov - 17 May 2012 03:37

Sorry I got on the old, well-worn soap box again, Obbermottel.

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by ontheedgeman - 17 May 2012 03:57

okay it's official, we're all nuts.

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by Dov - 17 May 2012 16:55

Let's make a lechayim.....where's bards?

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by obormottel - 17 May 2012 22:21

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by tehylimzugger - 18 May 2012 08:13

No. he said "where's bards"

Here's a lechayim from bards for erev shabbos:

[The wrote on 02 Mar 2012 06:53:](#)

ok everyone off the forum

go home mikvah shave flowers shabbos

joking about the shave

but no jokes about the mik or the flowers

LCHAIM YIDDEN

OY YOY SHABBOS KODESH!!

bardichev

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