

Dov Quotes

Posted by gibbor120 - 03 Nov 2011 14:42

Dear fellow GYEers,

Dov has some great posts, and it's hard to go around finding them when you need them. I started to gather them under my "links" thread, but today I finally reached the max for the length of one post. (Apparently, the limit is 50,000 characters.)

I think it makes sense to start a thread dedicated to those dov posts which many of us find so powerful. I would appreciate if we could keep this thread free of other stuff so as not to dilute it.

I suppose we could also discuss dov's posts here, but refrain from shmoozing about cholint, monster trucking, possums... The forum has special and fun places to discuss all that stuff.

P.S. I Just added a dov quotes thread to the [Married Section](#).

I think the need for an index is loooong overdue. So.... without further ado:

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Re: Dov

Posted by thatguyoverthere - 01 Sep 2013 13:10

[inastruggle wrote:](#)

Gibbor, I say this in the nicest way but please stop having conversations on this thread. We want

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Re: Dov
Posted by gibbor120 - 03 Sep 2013 20:53
That was my fault...

[gibbor120 wrote:](#)

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Re: Dov
Posted by tryingtoshteig - 03 Sep 2013 21:08

[gibbor120 wrote:](#)

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I suppose we could also discuss dov's posts here, but refrain from shmoozing about cholint,

monster trucking, possums... The forum has special and fun places to discuss all that stuff.

Gibor, if you are going to quote yourself, you are in the wrong thread.

guardyoureyes.com/forum/20-Important-Threads/214619-Gibbors-Insights

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Re: Dov "Quotes"
Posted by gibbor120 - 18 Oct 2013 00:40

Definition of Lust

[Dov wrote:](#)

For me, the verb 'to lust' means exactly what it says in the dictionary: having a strong desire. It's not a sexual issue to me, but a desire issue. If I want something outside myself, whether it be erotic pleasure, sweet food, lots of money, a person to agree with me or like me, or kavod...it is lust. Lust is just lust. Desire - the gimmes - I, I, Me, etc. There is really no end to it for me no matter how I try to limit it. It blocks me from G-d and people and from myself and by nature, I do not even realize it is happening most of the time! It's bitter to be on the take, if one is an addict - even if he or she is not acting out.

Sure, the sexual kind of lust is a more immediate problem so it gets all the attention...for if I run after *sexual* lust at all, I quickly lose myself in it and make my life and others miserable. But as recovery goes on, it really begins to not matter as much *what* I am lusting after. They are all intolerable and they all lead to eachother in the end, anyhow, so they all gotta go. But Hashem is not through with me yet, so I'm growing one day at a time in all of them.

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Re: Dov Quotes

Posted by gibbor120 - 30 Oct 2013 19:59

Do I need to "Figure it Out"? - The Role of Character Defects in Addiction

[Dov wrote:](#)

Disclaimer:

Sorry this is a real megillah. And it is still 5 months till Purim...

[letmelive wrote:](#)

Is it important to know what inner emotional lacking is causing me to act out? Now of course if I did know I'd be able to address that lacking and maybe one day totally rid myself of that void through something positive...and the funniest part is that acting out never ever got me to that ends and never will all it does is creates more inner strife that makes me want to get to the elusive ends again but again I take the wrong path.

What ends am I looking for?

You write a poignant and sharp thing, here.

I'd strongly suggest that *why* you do these things is not likely to get you to finally stop now. At this point, I suggest that it is probably enough just to admit the simple truth that you do these things because you love the way looking at porn and the way masturbating feels. Simple truth. Hashem *loves* Emess, and so should we.

More about stopping, in a minute (it can surely wait a minute, cuz our pants are on right this

The search for "*Gevalt, why do I do this?!*" is often a dead end of the ego, and nothing more...until after one is clean for a few months. I will explain why that is so, for addicts. And I suggest that even if you are *not* an addict (which may be quite likely), it is probably a wise course for you, too. For I am assuming that you have tried many times already to be clean and failed, no? So here we go:

You may know that the bulk of the 12 steps go on and on about our character defects and fixing the past, and some explain that this is proof that the 12 step program is basically all about figuring ourselves out so that we can save ourselves. But it's not.

Here is a line in AA that be"H can save you a load of trouble:

"But the actual or potential alcoholic with hardly an exception, *will be absolutely unable to stop drinking on the basis of self-knowledge*. This is a point we wish to emphasize and re-emphasize...as it has been revealed to us out of bitter experience." (AA, Ch. 3) (italics theirs)

So then **why does so much of the program seem to revolve around self-analysis and understanding?!** Good question, no?

If that's where you are sitting right now, I'd like to suggest another possibility - a way that that I and other guys I know work the 12 steps. Lots of folks claim that 12 steps is about 'figuring out the problem that gets us to use alcohol/sex+lust and eradicating it', or something...but that is apparently a misreading of AA, so here goes:

There are two separate things: 1- *stopping* drinking/drugging; and

2- *not restarting* drinking/drugging.

1- **Stopping drinking** is done by an addict one way:

Having enough pain to be brought to one's knees - or senses - that he cannot afford to use his drug of choice any more *no matter what* the reason/motivation/excuse may be. And no matter how powerful a coping mechanism the addictive behavior may be - he cannot possibly continue using it.

That requires a lot of pain, and a lot of humility. Often it takes a lot of humiliation, too. The drug is so precious to us (it really is dear to us, even with all the pain).

2- **Staying clean** is done by an addict one way:

Admitting that it took a lot of pain to get us to stop and that we'd never have stopped if we did not *have* to, no matter how frum or good we happen to be, as people.

In other words, pain and humility keep us clean, at least indirectly.

The problem is that addicts *forget* the pain and *lose* the humility. We eventually lose our 1st step admission and forget that we can't successsfully control and enjoy drink/lust. We think we are like other people. How do we ever forget that we are different and cannot successfully ue lust fun?

By feeling other pains of life and getting distracted.

Life comes with pain. But the pain I refer to, that *really* gets us desperate again (and forgetful!) - is psychic/emotional pain. That is **not** given to us by other people or by circumstances. Only we have that power. It is produced by our own character defects (attitudes). Jealousies, resentments, self-centered fears...they are all very powerful, and they are children of our pride, fear, ego. We filter people and circumstances through them and out the other side there comes excruciating pain.

That pain takes the form of resentments we cannot bear, guilt that we need to numb, fears that

get us desperate. Hey, lots of things happen in life and we filter it all through our defects of character...and get pain we cannot tolerate. We addicts cannot handle what our character defects do to us in the course of normal life. We just don't take pain well.

So the program's steps focus on how life can be tolerable and suggests surrendering our lives to G-d. Letting go of ourselves and what we want, to His care. That is step 3, and it has *nothing* whatsoever to do with **stopping drinking**.

But there is a problem: our character defects. They have been called 'the human ego'. (Perhaps that is what Moshe Rabbeinu - and only Moshe Rabbeinu - got rid of, that made him the only clear lens [aspaklaria hame'iroh] for nevu'oh?) They do not **allow** us to surrender ourselves truly to Hashem - because we don't want to. And no matter how frum or good we are, we really do want to resent, to nurse a criticism, to sulk in self-pity, to replay beating someone else over in our heads, to feel the familiar rush of fear and trauma caused by a tragedy...*they have become the very fabric of reality and life for us!* The proof of that is that we can't just let go of those things when we feel them even though they hurt!

And that is what steps 4-10 are for. They are *only* there to enable step 3 to develop in us. We will never have a pure step 3, ever.

The character analysis in steps 4 and 6, the admission and sharing in step 5, and the cleaning house by gift of Hashem in step 7, are all only here to enable step 3.

...And the only purpose of having a step 3 is that it will enable us to **stay clean**.

We could never have **gotten** clean through character analysis - and those who insist on doing just that, are simply trying to 'do it themselves'. And just as we all tried to manage our porning and lusting by fighting and eventually masturbating it away (see the 'Nuclear Reset Button'), it will not work, either. It's actually playing G-d - "Anything but surrender!"

So again, as Bill wrote:

"But the actual or potential alcoholic with hardly an exception, *will be absolutely unable to stop drinking on the basis of self-knowledge*. This is a point we wish to emphasize and re-emphasize...as it has been revealed to us out of bitter experience."

Is this making any sense? Or are people still getting confused by thinking that step 3 is the way we **stop** us from drinking/lusting?

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Re: Dov "Quotes"

Posted by gibbor120 - 01 Nov 2013 17:39

The Failure of Self-Centeredness in Making Life Work (from today's chizzuk email)

Dov replies to someone who claims the 'religious approach' is not for him:

What got me into trouble with lust was not that I was violating the halacha. It's also why I have been quoted as saying: "I don't really care exactly which lav suicide is - I'm not interested in it for other reasons!". True, violating the halacha was horrifying and devastating to me. But that didn't stop me from getting worse. That's just a fact.

What eventually stopped me was that I saw I was really going to lose the life I chose for myself: a life that included having a conscience, integrity, some kind of 'good'-ness (Torah, etc.), and in which I'd be a part of something - like a marriage, community, and a family of my very own, for example. Those were not religious choices, per se. It was just me. The fact that any normal religion includes all these things in it's description of healthy living, is just a side-issue for me. I chose them for myself. Perhaps yiddishkeit helped create those desires within me, perhaps other things did. I think it's irrelevant.

Now within me, there was also a childish expectation that all people would adore and revere me and therefore do my will. For example, my wife would please me in every way whenever I wanted, my kids would be cooperative, and any people I was beholden to in the working world

would give me the respect (and the leeway when I deserved no respect) that I felt I was entitled to. I also expected to become a Gadol b'Torah - and recognized as such. Instead... well, it was beginning to become clear that I was just a regular guy among regular people. Unacceptable! If I wasn't going to be recognized as a gadol b'Torah and tzaddik, could I at least be recognized as a porn star? Sounds really crazy... it is really crazy... but that's where I was in my desires, for a time. Life wasn't supposed to be like this.

When life was obviously not happening the way I expected it to - mainly cuz every real person actually has their own will - I needed some pretty powerful coping tools. The best and most reliable one I could find was associated with a part of my body that I could control using lust and gave me tremendous pleasure. To hell with everyone else - I had it made for those moments! Problem solved, sort of....

OK. So then Lust - my secret best friend and god - turned on me. And here is where I guess the real G-d finally begins to come into the picture. See, I was accustomed to years of secret self-pleasuring and self-saving via manipulation of others. My wife couldn't find out about the things that (I rationalized) my dissatisfaction with her was making me do. It'd ruin it all, cuz she wouldn't understand - though in my heart I expected her to understand fully! Of course she had no chance competing against the schmutz already in my head - those women appear to have no will of their own, no babies, no aging, nor any real life either, of course! They'd always be mine! Wow. Now that was a 'higher power' I could really hang onto!

While I was busy keeping my self comfortable and managing everything around me to serve that holy end, I was unconsciously building myself up as the center of my universe... and things got screwier and screwier in my life! To be honest, I was shocked about this! After all, I was such a nice guy to everyone and did real great favors for some people, seemed quite selfless at times, learned quite a bit, and was very religious - but it was still all about the experience (even Torah/serving Hashem). It was about "the feeling". The "d'veikus". I was at the center of it all! Not G-d, nor His Will. Sorry that I can't explain it any better.

Now, I could have gone on that way forever, I guess. Perhaps many do. Maybe it's really OK for them. It's not that it was wrong, immoral, or whatever. But as it turned out, Self-Preservation, as I saw it, steamrolled all those nice considerations - no more! Here's how:

I was turning to my drug in progressive ways, and lying like crazy to cover it up. I knew I was not the man my wife, children, co-workers or friends saw, at all. If you suggest that it was all just religious guilt, I say no way. The things I had to do were in no way compatible with a faithful lifestyle as a husband and father. I'd never do any of those things with real people I knew

watching. I discovered the hard way that porn, unbridled self-pleasuring with lust and animal-like sexuality are simply not compatible with any kind of normal life at all.

Now if you propose that it's all society's fault, I say maybe you could go off to a place where they live that way and see how it goes. Really. The communes of the 60's tried it; many societies tried it. The biggest problem - and this is what "ruined it all" for me - is that it's all based on self-centeredness. Wills were eventually again at war... the "acceptance" and "free love" of others that they tried to use as a defense to the self-will problem eventually gave way. There is no escape from that fact that every real person has their own, differing will. Disunity breeds strife, and there is apparently no fascism for sex... I tried it. The petite dictator himself! It turned out that you really do get more with honey (giving) than you do with vinegar (demanding), and no addict I know has real honey. Cash is a poor honey substitute, if you know what I mean. We all went through this failure process, in some small way. That's what brings many people to recovery. Looking for a life that works. And that is precisely why the focus on G-d and on people other than myself is the answer to me and to so many other addicts of all kinds. It has much less to do with religion, and more to do with the abject failure of self-centeredness in making life work. Without working the steps in my real life, there is no ego deflation for me, just more quiet desperation. I ain't goin back there, ever.

If you want your life to be yet another experiment in getting the self-centered approach to work, I say: go for it. But if it has been working pretty well till now, then why are you here? Why are you displeased? Were you really happy before, and came to Recovery just for more kicks? If your angst is really about "staying clean" for the sake of "staying clean", I have no answers for you. I tried that approach and got nowhere but deeper into hell.

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Re: Dov "Quotes"
Posted by gibbor120 - 01 Nov 2013 17:55

The Problem is Lust, The Answer is Love (emphasis mine)

[Dov wrote:](#)

[cordnoy wrote:](#)

Dov,

I understand where you are headed and what you are saying.

I have heard and seen you and others say this countless of times that lust must be tamed at all costs....even regarding the wife.

100% accurate and true.

The question, however, which was posed was simply...ba'asher hu sham...focus emotional and sexual relationship purely on wife. Yes, is it preferable that one should not have these lustful thoughts at all (especially to us addicts, or us non-addicts); but **if we are having 'em, focus on the wife only.**

Thanks

As I respond, I pray you have what some do not have: the ability not to take things so dang)

First, I can't imagine ever 'taming' lust. You may see this as nitpicking or 'catching' you in words, but I don't. I don't know what *you* meant - but *I* can't talk or think that way, and that is all I am saying. Lust (and I do not mean 'the yetzer hora') is far, far more powerful than I am when I use it. When I use it, I am idiotically getting onto a wild horse - and I don't even know how to ride a *tame* horsie. It's just stupid - so now, with G-d's help for just today, I don't ride it. I let go of the **struggle**, be"H. That's not 'taming'.

Maybe you just refer to the fact that whether one calls it taming, beating, controlling or whatever, in the end, lust is not in charge any more and so you might as well call that 'tamed', or 'defanged'. A lot of guys see it that way. But I know that since the process in me is subtly different, taming is a word that will set me right back into the seat of the beis hamidrash I sat in back in the day when I was heilige yid **who masturbates my brains out**. I can't afford to go back there no matter how badly I may wish for the sweet porn and fantasy again.

Sorry, that was a mouthful there, and just a side-point.

Second, about the lusting on the wife, I mean this, and even though you think you know what I mean and where I am going with this, bear (dov) with me:
I love you, cordnoy!

If i dream about using hookers and that's one of my favorite porn and mind-fantasies when masturbating - then what you *are* saying is that "from now on, my wife is my hooker. Not that I tell her to pretend she is one...but that will I make her that in my head, so that I pour my lust into my sex with her, which is mutar." That is what "*if we are having 'em, forcus them on the wife only,*" means.

I hear what lizhensk wrote about you taking baby steps, or what u say about ba'asher hu shom. But I wonder how close it is to just excusing plain old *porn-fantasy lusting*? I can't make my wife my whore, period. Doing that is not a 'baby step', but rather it is just an excuse for doing the same thing and putting a hechser on it.

Now, the man who sees the main issue here as being tahara/issur/chet/teshuvah, will agree with lizhensk that "doing this kind of thing *is* less assur - maybe even completely mutar! So that is progress!" And of course, in principle, that is 100% correct in that perspective.

But I see the problem I have as being a stupidity, insanity, pervertedness: addiction. Not about being good or bad, loved by Hashem or hated. I am certain that Hashem sees no difference between recovery from addiction that is to alcohol (which is mutar, technically) or to porn and whores (which is assur). As Chaza"l tell us, chamira sakanta me'isura. (and 'chamira' there does
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It turns out that the frum yid who you see as making true progress in avodas Hashem *can* make his wife his whore at least for a while, while the goy (or frum yid) who is a sexaholic like I am, does not/cannot do that in recovery.

So I am not suggesting 'cold turkey'. I am **suggesting recognizing our lust desires and fantasies as our actual problems and blemishes. Once that is accepted, the next job is to**

love our wives. Not to pretend that we are going to be sexual with them 'purely out of love'. We won't. But rather to just strengthen our love muscle. **Taking actions of real love everywhere and with everyone - w/ wife over all other people even our children - is the only real answer to lust.** Gevura isn't the answer, at all.

Eventually, our desires and fantasies will need to be let go of. Sorry, but there is no other way. It's terrifying, I know. Absolutely terrifying. I can feel it in my gut sometimes. But there ain't no easy way out. No 'softer and easier way', as AA puts it. Using our wives for lust is just searching for that softer, easier way.

Was that beating you up, corduroy? Oops, I mean, 'cordnoy'!

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Re: Dov

Posted by gibbor120 - 21 Nov 2013 01:48

Nuclear Reset Button

The "Nuclear Reset Button" idea is about how we unfortunately thrive on that very honest state we do feel after masturbating ourselves, and that no matter how holy we feel in that state, it is all part of the same sick cycle. It suggests further, that **since we sincerely crave feelings of pure kedusha and hate the feeling of struggling with lust, we end up masturbating ourselves in order to get out of the struggle and into that holy, connected and honest state we often feel after masturbating.** It's one of the only ways we know of that practically guarantees plugging into kedusha and teshuvah (with a 'v') again. A dirty cycle in which t'shukah (with a 'k') for avodas Hashem and kedusha leads us to end up masturbating again for years and decades.

Honesty with G-d leads us to admit the truth to Him instead of prattling party lines to Him about how "we just do not want to be nichshal in zera levatola chulila and are only concerned with His Torah being kept and therefore do not wish to become tomei, blah, blah. etc... He knows it is silly nahrishkeit. Your simple honesty is far better than all the heilige-sounding pronouncements.

We guys do far better to just admit to Him all the truth. How we want to use the shmutz because we love the way it feels when we are using it, but are afraid of what it will do to us and the way we feel afterward, etc. He of course knows it all, already! Why play with Him?

So honesty works because it creates a relationship that is real, for a change. Same with people.

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Re: Dov "Quotes"

Posted by gibbor120 - 03 Dec 2013 01:59

[Dov wrote:](#)

Tolerating Imperfection (emphasis mine)

Precious things are not gained overnight. Yetzias mitzrayim was a big, fat, jump - a completely undeserved gift to us 49th-levelers. After the free jump, it was almost completely lost to us and

we had to grow slowly from zero for 49 days before getting the Torah... then we lost much of it just 40 days later with our eigel.... Then we did some tshuvah and lost much of that by the complaining and those yummy quails... followed by more growth and d'galim and we were finally ready to go into Eretz Yisroel - only to lost almost everything with the meraglim... did a lot of teshuva again (the hard way, thanks to the ma'apilim) - only to have Korach's 'help' to almost lose the little they had left (a connection with Moshe Rabeinu)... Oh, boy. The goyim have an easy out: "Those Jews were losers!" Our version of the lesson is so very different, and has been borne-out by historical comparisons of our peoples: The really precious stuff takes time and is obviously worth the ups and downs of real life.

Time is needed, if we are to have any hope of actually growing into these lofty 'madreigos' we talk about. (I call them all Sobriety="Derech Eretz" - which is before "Torah" even begins.) We need to allow ourselves space to be screw-ups in many ways. Not in dangerous ways (like our addiction) - that obviously must stop (for today) for there to be hope. **But as far as purity, living well, and happiness are concerned, tolerating imperfection means tolerating some ugliness in ourselves. And in others, too. We have some ugliness. Getting it out in the open is the only way I know to start to get free of it.** Ignoring our ugliness may be encouraging, (as in, "you are such a tzaddik!") but it's still a lie. And I believe that lies get us nowhere.... or worse. They just substitute feeling better for getting better. Many of the folks I have met in meetings have been focused on feeling better, rather than on becoming more useful. They don't usually get much better.

If they only knew how great it feels to actually be able trust themselves and have some integrity for a change, they'd know that there is simply no contest here. Lust simply has nothing to sell. I am still an addict, believe that I am powerless and could lose it all tomorrow, but have still learned to trust myself to stay with Hashem and to use Him to stay sober and useful to Him and to His people today. And it's a great way to live so far.

Someone asks Dov:

"How can we tolerate our imperfections while working on them, without temporarily avoiding the problem by making ourselves feel better?"

Dov Replies:

I believe that when I first began to accept my imperfections without shame, I began to

become freed from them. I found that looking at my face in a mirror was no longer a disgusting experience, soon after doing my 4th step inventory. **It was a true discovery - totally unexpected. It was actually the last thing I expected, for I had always thought (as do many I have met here on GYE) that facing, writing down, and freely admitting my defects of character would be shaming and lead to self-loathing.** Little did I know, that I had already been living with all those defects all these years, hating myself for it, and trying to run and hide from them!

The only thing really missing was acceptance of the facts about me by admitting them freely, even to others. I could then find it a bit easier to stop running from myself by hiding in lust, porn and masturbation adventures.

A bit counter-intuitive, no?

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Re: Dov
Posted by gibbor120 - 14 Dec 2013 00:13

We Need "Real" People to "Get Real" With G-d

[Dov wrote:](#)

In the sincere interest of helping you work out what's best for you I will now swing the pendulum back the other way. Not al tzad that you are an addict - for that's probably irrelevant at this point - but just to tame our beloved black-and-white thinking. I do this here a lot and it has helped me and many others arrive at the truth...usually somewhere in the middle-ground of all the 'philosophy'. Here goes:

Your plan is sincere, but let's remember that you didn't come here because you were just trying to be more ruchni. Rather, you were habitually using porn and masturbating yourself - so what really brought you specifically *here* was too much preoccupation with sex on demand, too much fooling yourself and others, and doing too much holy but useless 'Teshuvah' - and the fact that with all that, you are still here, desperate *again*. And I relate oh so well to all that!

So.

Have you ever sat back and wondered **why** success has eluded you and so many of us? Surely just trying the same things again - '*but better **this time!***' is a mistake. But *why* is it failing? You asked for a suggestion to make your spiritual pursuits more tangible. So here is my tangible suggestion:

All the things you mentioned here are done in your own head and heart - all by yourself. All alone.

Sure, sure, some interaction with other real humans *is* technically included under the broad rubric of your ruchniyusdikeh hopes and plans you listed above - and I am certain you *do* believe in mitzvos ben odom lachaveiro. But using other people to do Hashem's Will is not what I mean. There is a *reason* that your basic effort revolves entirely around inner battles and your attitude toward Hashem.

It's because isolation is what we know. We 'get into mussar and chassidus or whatever, and use Torah and religion to validate even deeper isolation. But this time it becomes self-righteous isolation. We end up feeling much closer to Hashem - *and* more crazy. That's not what you want, is it?

We have searched alone for porn, we have masturbated alone, we 'fought it' alone - *and we try recovering/getting better alone, as well.*

The common denominator here, is taking the luxury of *remaining in the comfort of our own heads*. Being the ultimate and sole arbiters of our 'madreiga'. Many of us have been doing that for years and know no other way. And 99% of what people call 'the Torah's solution' is assumed to be in the mind. But that path just ratifies isolation - our best friend! Going it alone seems to be the only thing we believe will make all things possible.

Think about it. Few of us see this at all. But in recovery, we discover that there are relationships - and then there are real relationships. Torah clearly creates and even *defines* spiritual growth

by real actions and real relationships. If you do not see examples of that, I can give a few, but [In short, Kibud and mora av v'eim are not defined by how we feel about our parents anywhere. They are clearly defined in terms of behavior. And the reason the relationship we have with our parents is [i]on the ben odom laMakon side [/i]of the luchos is because the real relationship we all develop with our physical parents is what creates our real relationship with Hashem. (I posted elsewhere at length about the life cycle and how it is designed to create a relationship with Hashem)]. do not want this megillah to become unreadably long...

Just because you may be taking a step back from the addiction thing and the 12 steps (and I agree that it may be a good idea for you to step back) does not mean you cannot *learn* from the successes of the addicts. And the main thing addicts learn to do from the very start is this: run from the comfort of isolation.

Ruchnius is great, and there is a **ton** of room for inner work in recovery, to be sure! But even if you are not an addict, I suggest that the ikkar path you will find all the goodies you are looking for is through making real relationships. Bringiong more realness into the relationships you already have. Find safe, trustworthy people you can talk to without feeling they'd look down at you for being weho you are and having done what you have done. Opening up to real, safe, successfully recovering people and telling them all the truth about your shameful sexual escapades and your desires that keep coming up and bothring you and especially exactly what's doing with you today, is a great place to start! Shame is the enemy.

But that is only a start. For in the process of making those *recovery* relationships, you will most likely discover that many of your *other* relationships (in family, home, yeshivah, work, etc.) have never really been as *real* as you thought they were. Including your relationship with G-d.

Yes, it may sound funny, but our relationship with G-d is not nearly as real as we often think it is. As frummies, we refer to that as 'the madreiga of our emunah is lacking'. But we see that tanno'im had that problem, too.

Rabban Yochanon ben Zakai blessed his talmidim - who were tanno'im!! - that they should feel about G-d watching them, the same way they feel about *people* watching them. They were insulted and let him know it. And he said 'Too bad. You ain't there yet, brothers.' He said people take other people far, far more seriously than they take Hashem.

The way out of that is not more time sitting on a mountaintop - nor more time sitting with a

chovos halevavos (though they may help a bit, we have already done plenty of those!). The way out is through **people**. The 12 steps are first about starting to correct the way we interact with other people, then about rectifying all we may have done wrong to other people, and only then about connecting up well with our G-d.

We addicts first find our G-d in the 3rd step. But we admit we really don't have a serious and proper relationship with Him yet, till we first take real actions to take our relationships with His people (that is *all* people) seriously and properly.

In the process of doing all that, we gain a thing we never really had: Self Honesty and real spirituality.

If there is anything I have learned from recovery about ruchiyus, it is that I can't start with honesty to Hashem. It's just more pretend, like the porn is. Fantasy and the power of porn is the sweet, pretend-relationships, right? Honesty with Hashem only comes a long while **after** I learn to quit faking out other people and myself. And that takes more than a few weeks or months of real work.

Please don't put the cart before the horse, chaver. This work is simple, simple, simple. Honesty with people leads to more honesty with ourselves, and that will lead us to more honesty with our Only Eternal and Best Friend, Hashem. Think about it and use your seichel, get eitzos if you like - and then just do it.

Instead of starting with t'filloh or deep study of yourself or G-d, just open up to safe real people about yourself and your struggles; look a bit at your relationships with others and take the actions of real love and real connection with them. And go on from there wherever it leads you. You do not really run your life, Hashem does. You let Him do that by getting the brain the heck out of His way. As the Kotzker would say: Hashem is *only* found where people let Him in. Our deep thinking and trying to figure it all out and gain his'orerus, is actually one of the main things not letting Hashem in. For it just leads us to more comfy, warm, heilige...isolation.

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Re: Dov
Posted by Pidaini - 15 Dec 2013 02:39

I find this line to be the most important for this site (as Dov says most of "us" are not addicts)

[Dov wrote:](#)

Just because you may be taking a step back from the addiction thing and the 12 steps (and I agree that it may be a good idea for you to step back) does not mean you cannot learn from the successes of the addicts. And the main thing addicts learn to do from the very start is this: run from the comfort of isolation.

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Re: Dov
Posted by gibbor120 - 15 Dec 2013 10:25

No need to apologize. This thread is about highlighting dovisms... Which is exactly what you did.

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Re: Dov Quotes
Posted by gibbor120 - 28 Dec 2013 00:12

Acceptance - Being at Peace With the Facts
sorry for that hijack

[Dov wrote:](#)

Hi Doc,

One option here is the one I and many others have taken. Gibor alluded to it, I think, but I am suggesting breaking things into smaller pieces. It may sound not as frum, but I don;t think it is:

Long before trying to focus on 'humbly serving G-d', make *humility* a goal in itself - G-d-service or no G-d-service. There is a lot on that in the 12 step literature, like in AA, the 12 and 12 on steps 3 and 7, and elsewhere. A drop of humility really makes life less heavy, less tense, and a lot more fun for ourselves and for all those around us.

But even before that, i have to do something first:

Accept G-d's Will for me. And that has nothing directly to do with being frum. It's more about accepting the Torah - not yet the mitzvos, for actually, the majority of the Torah is *not* about mitzvos!

"Istakloh b'oraiso ubara almoh" means that for everything that happens in this world, in your life, there is a *remez* in the Torah. It's somewhere in there, as the GR"A and many others spend time explaining. How fat you are, how much money you have, make or don't make today is in there. How much money you have made till now, how your wife has treated you, whether you are married yet, how many children you have, you health, your wife's health, how the guy next to you drives this evening on his way to work, how his wife treats him that affects his mood and the way he will drive and the traffic jam it will cause affecting the lives of 2-3 thousand people w/you on the freeway this morning, how your hair looks if you have any, what rebbi and teachers your kids have and their moods today, and whether your boss is nice to you or not, etc, etc... today and every day forever...they are all tailored expressions of His Will for you.

I'd estimate there are 10,000 variables at the very least (maybe more like 100,000) and are the ways His Will specified for *you* will be expressed today. Now, how many mitzvos and halachos really come your way on a given day? 200-300 or so, at most?

With mitzvos, we frummies consider whether to accept His will, meaning whether to keep it - to *do* it - or not to do it. But at it's core, the 3rd step is not about that! Its is about accepting His Will for us. Not *doing* it, but just accepting that His Will *is* at work through the day throughout our lives, on all those myriad factors that make up our real lives: How we look, what happens to us, what we've got, have't got, etc...

Most of those things we see and know, *but do not **accept***. This stuff is very basic and deceptively obvious. But as Mesilas Yeshorim points out, to the extent that it is obvious, people ignore it. There are amputees who know they are missing a leg, wear a prosthesis to hide it, and cry over their disfigured body every now and then - they may know they are amputees, but do not accept it yet. So they suffer terribly...maybe forever.

But there are many amputees who readily admit it. If they ever see a person who has recently lost their leg, these are the folks who will go over and say, "Hi, I'm Sammy, and I'm an amputee, too. It's OK. My life is just fine," and start up a candid discussion with the unaccepting one. It changes lives. All because they accept the facts about themselves.

But to do that, an amputee needs to lose the *shame* of having a leg missing. Some people (you will see it here) deal with it by shunning labels and say, "I wouldn't ever say 'I am an amputee' - because that is not what I am *at my core*." Gibberish. Being an amputee does not define me as *a person*. It's just a true thing *about me*. And also, it is not disgusting, either - even if you, him, and most people in this room might think that it is! I do not accept that, and know that it is not disgusting. Acceptance means coming to peace with it, with the facts.

And BTW, it's the same with 'addict'. I am an addict. A sex and lust addict. If i know it but do not *accept* it, then I will be trying to run from myself. Here on GYE we call that, "struggling". And I will fail. But if I *accept* it, then I am accepting G-d's Will **for me**. I am a Jew, a father, a husband, a xyz shul member, am short, fat, a kolel man, a sex addict, and lots of other things. Now that I truly and fully accept it - I can start to learn what addicts do to live right. But not before.

Sorry I strayed to addiction. My main point is that before accepting avodas Hashem, how about spending a few months just trying to **accept** the Will of Hashem for you? Your life circumstances, your limitations, your people. As they all *are*. Just for a while. Not *knowing* them, but **accepting** them.

If you are already doing that, I contend that you would not be falling. Lust would not find a foothold in your mind. You'd be too busy **living** life rather than trying to *outsmart* it. I am not accusing you of being a bad guy - just normal.

It may be the first way you will really start to learn about G-d in your life. Works for me...

Just a thought to consider. Not changing from davening or anything else, but just a change on focus for a good while.

And a few months after that you can start to talk about focusing on serving G-d humbly, and actually get some traction there. And pray for me please.

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Re: Dov

Posted by gibbor120 - 03 Feb 2014 22:09

Dating and Addict vs. Normal Yetzer Hora

[Dov wrote:](#)

That may be good advice, but it's gotta be only a start, at best. There is simply no way that just resisting the desire to chase and enjoy porn or masturbate one's self is going to change a habitual porn-worshiper and masturbater enough to...to what?

Yes, porn-on-the-brain is a condition that makes it impossible to date properly. But I think a rule that 'any guy who has masturbated should not be dating for x-amount of time' makes no sense, at all. And this is why:

The first question to answer here here is, **are** we talking about a guy who has been worshipping images of naked women and worshipping his penis and self-pleasuring on-demand as part of a long-standing love affair with fantasy (or with real fantasy women), **or not**? That was me for about 20 years...11 of them married and in hell.

So...

If we are talking about a man who is an addict and has a long-standing chronic, progressive 'problem'...then *vadai even staying clean forever* will not fix him. He needs some sort of real help. Negative sobriety is just not going down-hill. It's great, holy, and super...but *corrects nothing*. Such a guy should not be dating! He is fooling himself and probably way too disoriented by her body, his fantasies, and his adventures last night in his bed or shower, to have the soundness of mind to decide anything as huge as who to marry, right now. He needs a significant period of clean time, and a real correction of his attitudes toward women, toward his need for sex, toward other things, too, probably. And without those changes, he is like a man running full speed in pitch-darkness. He's probably gonna screw up badly and be very, very sad. Just staying clean will not save him.

But if we are just talking about a normal guy who has a yetzer hora, eyeballs, and privates, and struggles with his desires (as the Torah and sforim tell us to) even if he is not perfectly successful - then that is just a normal person! And if he came to GYE or wherever and was inculcated with the nonsense that 'anything less than perfect success against his yetzer hora proves that you have an *addiction*'...then I believe he has been very badly misled.

He should be dating like anyone *else* should be dating...no difference.

People just need to be a little more honest with themselves, either way. The best way for that to actually happen, is to open up to another safe, understanding, person. They can help you know if your problem is within the realm of normal. **But it has been well-known for a long time that religious fascination with ultimate purity has made many young men into fastidiously obsessive sexual anorexics...and they end up thinking about sex and lust far more in the long-run than they would have otherwise.**

Hey, did that go on too long?

Does anyone in the parsha hear me at all?

Does anyone on the parsha care?

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Re: Dov

Posted by gibbor120 - 08 Feb 2014 00:44

What is a Sobriety Date?

Someone asked Dov:

Dov, they say you've been clean in SA for 13 years. Does that mean that you did not make even ONE mistake?

Dov Replies:

No, it does not mean that. I use the sobriety definition of SA as explained to me by my sponsor and others. My sobriety date only means that by the grace (chessed chinam) of Hashem, I have never masturbated or been with anyone other than my wife since that date. It is truly a very narrow definition of sobriety and does not measure my recovery in any reliable way. I do not believe it is meant to. That having been said, the value of a sobriety date is in the fact that it doesn't happen by holding one's breath... that is, one cannot be sober for a very long time unless there is also recovery. And as recovery does not progress while a person is actively using their drug, sobriety is indispensable. To me, sobriety is like breathing - and recovery is like living.

Given the nature of this particular addiction/drug - the natural capacity to lust and be sexual - it is not likely that anyone will actually stay sober for very long without active recovery. For me, that means meetings, sponsorship (service), and working (not just studying) the steps. Hence the value people place on long-term sobriety. That's what SA calls "progressive freedom (or the more goyishe word: 'victory') over lust." It is assumed that an addict in recovery either progresses or regresses in their freedom from lust as a motivation in their life. There does not seem to be much room for stagnation. Maybe there is room for a bit of it (we have all coasted occasionally), but not much... and we never know how much slack we will be 'given'. No worries though, cuz if we are lucky, lust will soon kick us in the behind unceremoniously and help us right back into serious recovery.

I have lusted many times, have looked at pornography a number of times, have done many things which were part of my acting-out behaviors many times over the years - in sobriety. The point is, that I reacted to that by: making my calls for help to people and to my G-d earlier and earlier which helped me learn to surrender earlier and earlier; using the slips as opportunities to get more aware of my powerlessness (living a better 1st step); by admitting freely in every meeting I went to that I was not perfect and indeed having a problem and exactly what behaviors it was; and by not giving up. **When I asked my sponsor if I should change my sobriety date he would say, "You want to define your own sobriety? Why bother? If you keep playing around you will lose your sobriety pretty soon anyway! And if you go back to zero, you will probably figure you might as well try your hand at some serious acting out - if you are at zero, anyway!"** That helped me come to my senses, alright!

My sobriety is far from a perfect one. But Hashem has helped me remember how precious sobriety is to me today. He has been helping me run from risky curiosity and other thoughts, talk, and actions that might damage my precious sobriety. And today our life is far better than I could have ever dreamed - for me and my entire family - without any other motivation than recovery. I ask Him to help me stay sober so that I can continue to recover (and live) and to help me stay in recovery so that I can remain sober (and not die). And my freedom from lust is increasing, it seems, though I am obviously still an addict and my life still cannot work while I pursue lust.

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