

Journal of the hopeless

Posted by MosheF - 03 Nov 2010 13:16

I call this journal of the hopeless because that's basically what I am. Tried almost everything but don't seem to have the ability to commit to anything or open up to anyone. It's probably a physiological disuse but I can't help it.

I am locked in a vicious cycle of good, bad and ugly days. Every time a few good days pass, I get the good feeling and forget about my effort of recovery even though I know it won't last. Fact is I can't stop acting out and can't help myself.

I'm bothered when I read posts on GYE because most of them focus on positive recovery, as they should. Maybe because misery loves company, I want to see some other miserable addicts like me. It seems that GYE and the chizuk emails are full of people who were addicted, bumped into GYE or SA one day and stayed (almost) sober ever since. There is very little hopelessness here, there have got to be more people like me who feel so hopeless and don't just recover with the first thing they do. Years ago, I thought I was the only guy in the world with this problem until I found out that many suffer with this addiction, but today I believe I'm the only guy in the world who cannot recover.

On the optimistic side, I've been actively trying to stop my 15 year addiction for more than 4 or 5 years and through the work I've done over the last few years (SA, phone conferences, GYE and therapy), I am way more in touch with my feelings, I see the very clear link between my fears of facing daily life/disconnection to life and my acting out. I clearly see that I run to porn as a drug to make myself feel better and that acting out is my drug. I am afraid of so many things that don't even make sense. A few years ago, I didn't believe any of that, it was all just a yetzer hora.

I am also having some more up time, meaning that although I act out on a regular basis, the hours of living life have increased dramatically and the hours spent in isolation are decreasing slowly.

I have a very hard time posting on GYE, every time I want to post, I find another excuse why not to or why to wait or what people will think etc.

For one week bli neder, I am going to post twice a day on this thread, I don't care who reads it (I do care). I am going to post about what is going on at that time and admit when I fall, and fall I will. Statically, I fall about 5 times a week.

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Re: Journal of the hopeless
Posted by Kedusha - 17 Nov 2010 14:49

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Re: Journal of the hopeless
Posted by silentbattle - 17 Nov 2010 14:54

Fantastic! keep on rocking!

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Good idea! Much better than being toast, in this world and the next!
Re: Journal of the hopeless
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 17 Nov 2010 20:00

[MosheF wrote on 17 Nov 2010 14:32:](#)

I am finding myself browsing inappropriate stuff and need to stop doing that. I came here instead and posted something, I am going to get to work now.

THAT'S GREAT!

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Re: Journal of the hopeless
Posted by MosheF - 18 Nov 2010 13:52

Friends, I am going to Israel for a week and will not post until I get back. Thanks for all you help, will be back iy'h Sunday a week.

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Re: Journal of the hopeless
Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 18 Nov 2010 15:02

have a safe trip!

enjoy

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Re: Journal of the hopeless
Posted by Dov - 18 Nov 2010 22:47

), I hope you will be able to pop in to see Reb Tzvi-Meyer Zilverberg, Shlit"a. He is the ikkar of yerushalayim, as far as I am concerned. We rented an apartment in Mattersdorf just to be with him for all Shabbos davenings - it is life-changing, though the davening is a bit 'wild and crazy', actually...if you are a yekky you may need to take a valium first....maybe two.

He gives an hour yiddish talk at somewhere near 12 or 1pm erev Shabbos in the "Beis Midrash Ramoh" in the neighborhood called Gush Shmonim (I think) not far from rehov Bar-ilan (I think)....people will help you find it (I think too much!).

Really, even if you do not understand a blessed word of yiddish, seeing and hearing him speak will change you a bit, I bet. He speaks english and is actually mostly american, but prefers yiddish for reasons that Reb b can explain to you.

Whatever you do, my brocha is that you do not look for geographical solutions and pretend that you are a different person while you are there - if you do, I believe that whatever benefits you get there will *a/so* be 'pretend' - and evaporate when you get back. Yechhhh.

It's an inside job....hatzlocha!!

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Re: Journal of the hopeless

Posted by silentbattle - 22 Nov 2010 06:24

Hey - hope your trip to israel is good for you in every way!

Reb Dov- Oftentimes, when put into a different environment, we feel very different - how would you recommend that a person in Israel best utilize his or her time to really grow, without pretending to be a different person?

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Re: Journal of the hopeless

Posted by Dov - 23 Nov 2010 04:40

Wow, what a question...wish I really knew how to do that.

It could be that spending a few minutes after each geshmak, indescribably erezysroelische-
tefillah thinking a minute or two about who I am going be with and what I am going to be doing
in chutz la'aretz after I leave back from this gan-eyden to my humble house in good-old
('fragrant') New York. Really...if I spent a minute or two every day in EY, thinking about exactly
your question - not rhetorically "Gevalt! How *could* I!?", but maybe something like,
"Hmmm....how *will* I?", might be enough to bring us down to earth.

The thing that really strikes me about what you ask is this: I bet most of us pretend we are in

gan-eden while we are there, withdrawing back into bochur-hood in that respect...leaving 90% or our daily reality "behind us" - only to get rudely kicked in the behind when we get splashed on with cold, muddy, chutz la'aret reality when we get here. It is a let-down that is most damaging to many frum sex and lust addicts like me. It's terrible, really.

So I am struck that you even entertain the possibility that we might need to temper our ecstasy while we are floating around in EY. Most of the folks I know (especially the raging addicts) see their time in EY as an opportunity to run around like maniacs and gather up as much 'chizzuk' as they are able, to 'bring back' with them to cold, muddy chutz la'aretz. Sadly, they discover they had a big hole in their pockets, and soon after returning the sad reality dawns on us that we are just as screwed up as we were before, of course.

Nu. Of course, sobriety and recovery means more reality. So the farther along I am in recovery, the more of the 'real me' will be present while I am in the Holy Land, and the more will come back home with me, too.

Hope that helped.

You are truly funkadelic, SecretNinjaWarriorDude!

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Re: Journal of the hopeless

Posted by MosheF - 25 Nov 2010 14:40

Hi guys, I got back a few days earlier than I originally planned. No, I did not go to R' Zvi Meir, when I was in the Mir, I went a few times but never felt anything.

I had an amazing time and loved every minute except for one little thing; I acted out almost every night. I have a hard time falling asleep when I travel east because of the time difference, and for reasons I don't understand myself, I acted out almost every night. I was happy, enjoying myself and I left most of my daily worries in the US but I still acted out. I bought a novel to keep my occupied at night but it didn't help.

I'm back to work and going to try posting and keeping in touch again.

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Re: Journal of the hopeless
Posted by Kedusha - 25 Nov 2010 16:04

Dear Moshe,

What was the purpose of your trip?

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Re: Journal of the hopeless
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 25 Nov 2010 19:23

[MosheF wrote on 25 Nov 2010 14:40:](#)

I was happy, enjoying myself and I left most of my daily worries in the US but I still acted out. I bought a novel to keep my occupied at night but it didn't help.

The way DC explains it (expounding the Big Book), the acting out is just a symptom. Beneath that is

Restlessness Irritability and Discontent. RID. That's what drives us to act out.

(So... I might as well go the whole 9 yards...)

Beneath that is Ego. We get restless, basically, when things don't go OUR WAY.

Or, when we're riding high on an ego trip--everything seems to be going our way.

In other words, we feel rid equally from bad times and from good times.

So, a big part of our work is to try to have more HUMILITY.

Accept when things don't go our way. Not get carried away when things go well.

(This has been a recording)

--Eye.

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Re: Journal of the hopeless
Posted by Dov - 25 Nov 2010 20:27

Disclaimers (anyone remember "RAGE"?):

1- Please pardon my liberal use of the "you" word in this post, not my normal derech. It just flowed better that way, may Hashem protect me from mistakes.

2- I love you, Moshe - especially because you are in the same kind of trouble I am in.

3- Gevalt! I am not suggesting that Learning Torah is a waste of time for anyone, least of all for an addict. As far as I can see, for me, a yid, living means being with Hashem. That is impossible, as RMCh"L explains, without learning Torah and doing the mitzvos. (Importantly, he explains in Derech Hashem and elsewhere that it's *not* that the Torah and mitzvos are the heiche timzei for deveikus and Olam haba, but that they are the stuff that deveikus and Olam haba are *actually constructed with*. This, I believe, is what Rav Dessler meant with his yesod that the personality and priorities a person has in Olam hazeh is carried into the afterlife. That's because what we do here *makes* our Olam haba, itself - it's not just a *reaction* to what we do here. As the RMB"N wrote in his iggeres, "when you accustom yourself in the trait of humility...Chayei haOlam habah will be upon you" - he doesn't write that "then *you will merit* chayei haOlam haba", but that "it will be upon you" - meaning: right now! Even though RMCh"L seems to say the Torah and Mitzvos are the vehicles for deveikus and chayei haOlam haba, he means that from a *practice* point of view - he later clarifies that he rejects the idea that Olam haba is an reaction, or 's'char for Torah and mitzvos, in favor of the idea that they are the natural state for a yid doing those things. In other words, they are what Olam haba is made of. We are human **beings**, not human **doings**. And paradoxically, the only way to change what we **be** is to change what we **do**.)

All I am trying to say in the post below is that sobriety - living without our drug one day at a time - is not a moral issue to us, really. It is a necessity and exactly the same as the reason we breathe. You do not really breathe *for Hashem*, do you? And by the same token you do not *stop* breathing because it would be an aveiro to kill yourself, right?

Same here. Until we as individuals actually feel and see our sobriety as a matter of self-preservation in *some* respect, it will not have the value it needs to have for us to not reach for our drug. That is why I believe that it being an aveiro, no matter how chamur, just doesn't cut it.

Of course my goal is to be Hashem's nachas ruach, his sweet eved....but *until I got sober and started to recover*, the harder I tried to get there, the farther from that I actually got! He does **not** want a miserable avodah from us.

[Kedusha wrote on 25 Nov 2010 16:04:](#)

Dear Moshe,

What was the purpose of your trip?

I hope it wasn't to 'recover'. Cuz based on my own personal experience I think getting saved from lust would be a pretty stupid reason to go to EY, the beis hamidrash, or even the Bais haMikdosh itself.

But don't take it from me. *Hashem* Himself told us this already.

"Lo baShomayim hee...

v'lo me'ever laYom hee..."

So we have established "choosing life rather than death" (what this parsha is about) is not for Eretz Yisroel, the Beis hamidrash, or Bais haMikdosh, right. It's *nowhere* but:

ki karov *eilecha* hadovor me'od - **bficha uvilvovcha la'asoso**.

Sanity and lifesaving sobriety does not come to us in the beis haMikdash - that is the place where *ruach haKodesh* is granted....a bit up the ladder from *sobriety*, indeed. It's completely the wrong place! Looking for sobriety there is exactly like the kid looking for his watch where the streetlamp is, though he lost it a block away..."cuz the light is here!" Yeah, there is plenty light in the Torah (and the mekomos hak'doshim) - but it can't help you find what you lost, for you didn't lose it there - you lost it *in your own heart*. I lost it in my own heart, too. So I had to look *there*, and no place on earth is mesugal for that, really.

I believe that the only 'segulah' for finding what I lost in my heart, is: pain. My heart speaks that language. (Theoretically, it speaks the language of Simcha, too. And Simcha is most-*certainly* the main language of the Steps and recovery. Maybe some people can even use Simcha to get their bodies into the 'door'...I couldn't.)

Sobriety came to *me* in a backroom of a very bad establishment, in the presence of a woman

(not my Bubby) - while I was acting out. Not exactly a Holy place, *not* in a holy chevra, and I certainly was *not* tahor.

But it did the trick. My first step grew out of it and saved my life, my marriage, and my family.

No, I am *not* suggesting everybody here run to the nearest woman of ill-repute to 'help them' get into recovery. But I *am* saying this:

Face it. It is not the **Torah** that is motivating you to recover - it is the **acting out**. The torture of being slapped around by lust and knowing that you are a leaf blowing in the wind of porn and schmutz. It is making you miserable and nutty. It is the only motivation that works, for many people.

Don't look into the Torah for a reason to be sober. Plenty reasons are there for normal people - but not for an addict. Look at yourself and if you are like me, *hope* that you come to see your own insanity. Admit your own misery, if you've got it. Look at the stupidity of some the things you do for lust; the lying that you do to save face and protect your ability to keep lusting; the fact that on your own it only gets worse over the long term, never better. And look at the fact that in addiction you keep trying basically the same things - and expecting much better results. That's the way we are.

Kir'u *l'avchem*, v'**al** bigdeichem!

Peeking meekly from between my *own* fingers covering over my eyes, I came to see these facts starkly and I knew: I had lost, and the contest was over.

What SA added for me was the idea that I needed to *admit* the truth openly to other people rather than just 'know it inside'. And that I had to *keep* admitting it openly to others in order to help it *stay* in my heart.

...*bfeecha* then *vilvov'cha*

Then I had to **do** the steps - not chas vesholom *talk* about them or *study* them, but *do* them. 'Step study' can easily substitute for really living them - for years. I have seen it, so look out.

...la'asoso - to *do* it.

Then life begins to slowly change, no matter *where* you live.

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Re: Journal of the hopeless

Posted by MosheF - 25 Nov 2010 21:44

[Kedusha wrote on 25 Nov 2010 16:04:](#)

What was the purpose of your trip?

Family simcha, why?

[Eye.nonymous wrote on 25 Nov 2010 19:23:](#)

The way DC explains it (expounding the Big Book), the acting out is just a symptom. Beneath that is

Restlessness Irritability and Discontent. RID. That's what drives us to act out.

Eye, I agree 100% that acting out is just a symptom. I just couldn't figure out what I was afraid of. Usually, at home or work I notice those symptoms, not that it helps, but at least I know what i'm afraid of, what isn't going I planned etc..

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Re: Journal of the hopeless
Posted by an honest mouse - 25 Nov 2010 22:08

reb moshe, all I know is about myself, but when I'm away from home by myself (I'm assuming you were by yourself, maybe you went with your family) the lack of structure, company, routine leads me to act out, i suppose just to fill the blank.

my therapist once told me something quite apt, our screensavers at the moment are lust/acting out, when not occupied with something else, without anything to stop us, that's what we gravitate to. The long term goal is to be able to stay clean on a a desert island when we're totally alone using the tools for recovery which we've picked up. I know I'm a long way off this, I still act out when I go away or when I'm sick at home alone... anyways, if I'm way off the mark feel free to ignore...

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