

The 12 Steps in Jewish practice

Posted by DavidT - 05 Dec 2019 16:31

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Many people are asking how they can start working on themselves with the 12 step program. There are also many questioning how to incorporate the steps with our Torah values.

I put together a short overview of the program based on true Jewish values, all of which can be verified by many sources. I hope this can help many to start working the program and eventually succeed in reaching freedom cleanliness and great heights BE"H!

## **12 Step Program**

1. Admit that by yourself you are powerless over the yetzer hara and your life has become unmanageable without Hashem's assistance.
2. Come to believe and proclaim with Emunah that Hashem can help you do things that you cannot do yourself and he could restore you to sanity.
3. Make a decision to rely and turn your will and your life over to the care of Hashem.
4. Make a searching and fearless cheshbon hanefesh of yourself.
5. Admit to Hashem, to yourself, and to another human being the exact nature of your wrongs.
6. Be entirely ready and have a strong will to have Hashem remove all your defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Hashem to remove all your shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons you have harmed, become willing and plan how to ask forgiveness and make amends to them all.
9. Make direct amends and ask forgiveness to all such people wherever possible, except when doing so would injure them or others.
10. Continue to make a cheshbon hanefesh and when you are wrong promptly admit it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve your conscious contact with Hashem, praying only for knowledge of His will for you and for the power to carry that out.

12. Try to carry this message to help other people, and practice these principles in all your affairs.

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Re: The 12 Steps in Jewish practice  
Posted by sleepy - 05 Dec 2019 17:47

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Re: The 12 Steps in Jewish practice  
Posted by sleepy - 05 Dec 2019 17:51

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Re: The 12 Steps in Jewish practice  
Posted by Tzvi5 - 05 Dec 2019 18:04

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[DavidT wrote on 05 Dec 2019 16:31:](#)

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gemaras they can be explained in other ways. (This "admission" is not a chidush if one learned the gemara that one is anyways powerless over the yeitzer.) Eilmale hkbh ozro doesnt require one to ask for help. On a practical note when one acts in a "grube" way he becomes grub and its very difficult to exercise free will. The method he can use to resensitize himself is teshuva. On a practical level if one "understands" how holy is neshama is and what his actions have caused he can be motivated and his teshuva will have an endurance. Ps understanding means having a grasp on all of the details and they all make sense (ie: the difficulties with such positions are resolved) I'm not trying to offend anyone, however I will state my oppinon as i believe there are people who can benefit from it ,regardless if people think I'm preaching.

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Re: The 12 Steps in Jewish practice  
Posted by sleepy - 05 Dec 2019 18:06

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great point!

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Re: The 12 Steps in Jewish practice  
Posted by Tzvi5 - 05 Dec 2019 18:07

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[sleepy wrote on 05 Dec 2019 17:51:](#)

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Can you please post the shalah posed to the rav along with his teshuva as well as the name of the rav?

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Re: The 12 Steps in Jewish practice  
Posted by sleepy - 05 Dec 2019 18:09

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maybe my name and social too? (: sorry ,top secret.

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Re: The 12 Steps in Jewish practice

Posted by DavidT - 05 Dec 2019 18:27

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@[sleepy](#) Maybe, (in order to help your brothers here) you can post the basis in a nutshell so people can get some understanding in what cases the 12 steps is not a good idea...

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Re: The 12 Steps in Jewish practice

Posted by DavidT - 05 Dec 2019 18:35

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[Tzvi5 wrote on 05 Dec 2019 18:04:](#)

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R' Avigdor Miller writes that it is possible to lose free will in one area, while still having free will in other areas of behavior. We also know from R' Volbe, R' Dessler, R' Miller, and R'

Nachman that although every Jew has some sort of choice, he may not have choice over his behavior. The only choice he may have is to learn how to choose better than the way he is choosing right now, by joining SA (etc), talking to a partner or Rebbe, or in other ways. We also saw from R' Volbe that some Jews never even learned how to choose in the first place, and they are held responsible for not learning how to have free will, but they still have no free will over their actual actions at the end of the day, making it correct to say that they are "powerless" to stop. We also see from the Gemara in Kidushin 30b that even Tzadikim who have free will and want to choose good are still powerless to the overwhelming power of their evil inclination

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Re: The 12 Steps in Jewish practice  
Posted by sleepy - 05 Dec 2019 18:49

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[DavidT wrote on 05 Dec 2019 18:27:](#)

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Posted by Tzvi5 - 05 Dec 2019 18:54

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Can you post the original quote from the sefer from Rabbi volbe?

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Posted by DavidT - 05 Dec 2019 18:55

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[sleepy wrote on 05 Dec 2019 18:49:](#)

[DavidT wrote on 05 Dec 2019 18:27:](#)



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@sleepy, you just did step 9

"Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others"

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Re: The 12 Steps in Jewish practice  
Posted by DavidT - 05 Dec 2019 18:58

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Can you post the original quote from the sefer from Rabbi volbe?

Here are the words of the Mashgiach, R' Shlomo Volbe, who qualifies for us what free will is, and what it is not: Source-See R' Volbe in Alei Shor, volume one, p. 156 8 "It is clear from this that free will isn't something that is on the daily schedule of a Jew. Rather, free will is a trait that needs to be learned and acquired....and it takes a lot of work to be able to have "free will".... We are able to acquire this trait with hard work, and that is why we are held responsible to learn it.

According to this concept, we have arrived at a major idea in how to relate to ourselves and to other Jews-we should relate to ourselves and to other Jews as if they have no free will, and that their behavior is governed by his natural temperance, education, habits, and interests....

The great Rishonim indeed teach us that the idea of "free will" is the cornerstone for the whole Torah, and no one argues on this. However, a mistake leaked out amongst the simple Jews of our nation that "free will" means that any Jew has the power to choose good or bad, yes or no, in any situation that ever occurs-and this is a complete mistake." According to R' Volbe above, who bases himself on Rabbeinu Yonah and R' Yisrael Salanter, Jews do not have "free choice" automatically. "Free choice" is something that needs to be learned, and maintained throughout one's life by learning mussar, prayer, and working on one's self. Therefore, any Jew who has not yet learned "free will" simply doesn't have "free will".

This doesn't mean he can shoot and steal and do whatever he wants-because as R' Volbe also mentioned, every Jew is responsible for learning how to choose freely. It comes out that according to R' Volbe, an alcoholic Jew may not have free will to stop drinking, and at the very same he is obligated to do whatever he can to find and learn "free will" so that he can eventually stop.

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Re: The 12 Steps in Jewish practice  
Posted by sleepy - 05 Dec 2019 18:59

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DavidT wrote:

**@sleepy, you just did step 9**

***"Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others"***

Sleepy wrote:

just like my parents taught me

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Re: The 12 Steps in Jewish practice  
Posted by Tzvi5 - 05 Dec 2019 18:59

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[DavidT wrote on 05 Dec 2019 18:35:](#)

[Tzvi5 wrote on 05 Dec 2019 18:04:](#)

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"If one lost his free will" is it possible to regain it (going to sa doesnt seem to accomplish that, for every day he's declaring himself powerless)

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