

The Problem With The G-d of MY Own Understanding

Posted by Elya K - 16 May 2021 02:40

The Twelve Steps G-d of my own understanding convinces me that I don't need prayer books and holidays, rules and laws to confine me to one way of thinking. I can have my own understanding of G-d and I'm sure whatever I decide will be Ok.

This is the thinking of many people in SA today. SA is my new religion, my G-d and if I just listen to my non-Jewish sponsor or my non-religious anymore sponsor, everything will be OK. I'm OK, you're OK! My mental health supersedes everything and if I want to check my emails on Shabbos or call my sponsor, even if I'm not being triggered. It's OK. It's what I want in the moment that counts. After all, Shabbos and Yom Tov are long, boring days and what else do I have to do but check my emails and YouTube videos.

I was thinking about this logic the other day and realized that a part of me feels this way and another part of me feels that if I suddenly start being Mechalel Shabbos and Yom Tov I will begin to do other things which are not permitted and sink lower and lower until I completely forget G-d's laws and become G-d myself. So I have a dilemma. Do I take the leap into the dark side of creating my own Judaism? I'm sure my fellow SA friends will approve. After all, my mental health is what is most important.

But, if my mental health is most important what will I do with the guilt and shame of suddenly giving up on my religion? That won't be very mentally healthy, will it? I'll be torn by doubt, am I really doing the right thing? What will I do with that voice?

This is a very real dilemma which is a plague in itself. Step 11 tells us through prayer and meditation to develop a relationship with G-D as we understand HIM and ask only that we do HIS will. The G-d of the Jews will for us is to keep the Torah and Mitzvos and our sages have given us a broad spectrum of things to say during davening with Kavanah to help us with this struggle and a set of rules and laws to keep us believing where we are today is where we're supposed to be.

I won't allow a non-Jewish thought process of making up my own prayers deter me from getting closer to my Creator.

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Re: The Problem With The G-d of MY Own Understanding

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 16 May 2021 11:19

There are many frum guys in SA that can probably help you reconcile this issue and help you

benefit from SA while remaining an erliche yid.

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Re: The Problem With The G-d of MY Own Understanding

Posted by wilnevergiveup - 28 May 2021 13:47

Rabbi Twerski a"h in his book "Teshuva Through Recovery" explains it really well, I'd suggest you get your hands on a copy of that book.

I believe "G-d as I understand Him" means in whatever G-d I believe in. It's not to say that I can choose which G-d to believe in, rather to say that whichever G-d I do believe in can help me recover as long as He is a higher power. If you do believe in G-d, it follows that you would try to do your best to do His will. If you can choose what His will is and what is not, then He is not G-d (look in up in the dictionary). You can call him G-d but you are really talking about something else.

If we believe in G-d, we should try to do as He says. When we say "G-d as I understand Him" we are not denying the existence of G-d, on the contrary, we are acknowledging Him, just not specifying what He said (possibly in order for AA to include all religions). If we acknowledge that He exists, we should probably figure out what he says. When we figure that out, we should probably follow it.

The G-d of the Jews will for us is to keep the Torah and Mitzvos and our sages have given us a broad spectrum of things to say during davening with Kavanah to help us with this struggle and a set of rules and laws to keep us believing where we are today is where we're supposed to be.

There is only one G-d, if there would be more, they would not be called G-d. The question isn't which G-d you believe in, rather what you believe is His will.

I won't allow a non-Jewish thought process of making up my own prayers deter me from getting closer to my Creator.

What is non-Jewish about making up our own prayers?

But hey, you probably know all this already so whatever. I just felt like I needed to respond because it seems like a misunderstanding about the whole concept.

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Re: The Problem With The G-d of MY Own Understanding
Posted by anonymous.lost.everything - 04 Oct 2021 19:01

[Elya K wrote on 16 May 2021 02:40:](#)

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You are so right. This used to bother me too. Then I learned cognitive therapy and I understand what really goes on inside people's brains, and then I realized that a group approach is the only viable approach today. The Torah provides hilchos nazir for this problem, but we choose not to take advantage of them today, so we're stuck with the group approach. And it can work very well, actually. But the literature, like everything else, is subject to interpretation.

To illustrate, I'm just getting into SA and to me it says that I have to _do_ my religion. I have to stop giving myself discounts on what _I_ believe is my duty. And this led me to increase my commitment to Judaism because I know I have to _do_ the SA program in order to stay alive. That means I must act like a Jew while leaning on the fellowship to handle the negative effects of that distorted religion (I distort it.)

But the danger of reading into the text and doing the wrong thing is very real. There are a lot of metaphors, analogies and mysteries in the 12-step literature. It doesn't give an analytical person a warm and fuzzy feeling. It took me years of analyzing it before I decided that it was a necessary approach.

The other day I called my sponsor about a trigger I had, and his response totally surprised me. It's very folkloristic, but it's also very rooted in results. It's an experimental approach.

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Re: The Problem With The G-d of MY Own Understanding
Posted by baaltshuvah5782@gmail.com - 18 May 2023 19:34

rabbi shais taub on it

www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/1761295/jewish/God-of-Our-Understanding-Jewish-Spirituality-and-Recovery-from-Addiction.htm

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Re: The Problem With The G-d of MY Own Understanding
Posted by ezraw - 14 Aug 2024 16:21

This is a very complex question that cannot in my opinion be handled through a chat, and one that I had trouble with myself for a while. Still working on it in fact. But the thing that helped me the most in this regard was calling religious old-timer's and having very long talks. The best advice I can give you is talk with Dov (or any other religious old-timer with long sobriety) and ask them for advice.

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Re: The Problem With The G-d of MY Own Understanding
Posted by parev - 14 Aug 2024 17:00

There are 3 points

One is that the 12 steps are based on surrendering to a higher power - and for that matter the meeting can serve as a HP

Two The 12 steps is contingent on serving the GD of our belief - see step 11 where this is explicit

Three Yesh Elokim whether you like it or not - and you will have to answer yourself at some point...

If you don't believe in Hashem - don't blame it on recovery.

Plenty people don't believe in Him but why bring recovery into it.

If you believe you have the right to be mechalel shabbos for recovery - **that means you believe in Hashem and the tora**, but hold that you have a legit heter. If the heter is legit - great, and if not who are you duping?

Honesty is the key in recovery - dont dupe yourself and do what GD wants you to do.

There is another separate point of a problem that many have [and I have no Idea why]

They think of god hates thrm and is waiting to toss them in Hell, or he is a loving forgiving god that thinks hell is a swear word and it doesnt exist.

What's wrong with the emes that Hasem Kiel rachum vchanun - gam zu letova, and gehenom is a CHESSED [and dont forget that he did another MASSIVE chessed and created teshuva]

But Yesh did vyesh dayan so that there should be nahama dchisufa etc...

I LOVE HASHEM and always did.

He is NOT on my step 4

[And my sponsor is reading this!!!!!!]

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Re: The Problem With The G-d of MY Own Understanding
Posted by yitzchokm - 14 Aug 2024 20:33

See in the following link in step 3 how Rabbi Dr. Twerski explains "G-d as we understood him". You will see that this whole discussion is meaningless. You simply didn't understand the intention of this clause.

<https://twerskicenter.org/2021/12/12/judaism-and-the-12-steps/>

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Re: The Problem With The G-d of MY Own Understanding
Posted by parev - 14 Aug 2024 21:48

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Re: The Problem With The G-d of MY Own Understanding
Posted by yitzchokm - 14 Aug 2024 22:32

[parev wrote on 14 Aug 2024 21:48:](#)

[yitzchokm wrote on 14 Aug 2024 20:33:](#)

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