

Questions awaiting an answer

Posted by Shulem - 11 Jul 2011 05:38

Im in my mid-20's, married to a beautiful women and now a father to a beautiful wonderful 1-year old child. When I married I didn't know (almost) anything about sex! My wife -as well as me - is very frum dressed, and although it bothers me that she's dressed so frum, i cannot do anything to it because of her and my family. When I realized it all (about sex, nit about my wife), I found myself starring on other women on the street.... Found myself at the computer and watching videos of girls (not porn). Of course it got worse and lately I called some hotline. Then I found guardyoureyes. Now I'm working on my self with GUE's help, but I have many questions which doesnt make sense to me, can someone clarify?

1. As far as what I've read here, and in the handbook guide, it seems like we are from the 'less people' who are having these difficulties. And we got some kind of 'addiction'. Really? If I, in my innocent situation, (not knowing anything before marrige and having a real beautfiul wife) got to this point, when NOTHING was missing to me, and it's still not, baruch Hashem, then who is not addicted??? And if almost all people are having this problem, why is it an addiction? It's just like loving food,

So you'll say "ok but eating food never gets you to eat something worse vs this habit where it's almost always getting worse", maybe it's because you know you're doing something wrong so automatically you're feeling bad about it and doing even worse things.!

If I'm not mistaken, even rabbi twersky said that this isn't something you can 'clear' yourself from it. Because it's not like alcohol or drugs addiction. So maybe it isn't an addiction? I know I'm being a little off here, but even all dr's are talking about 'addiction', I still want to understand why this would be an addiction rather then a bad habit. And if really everybody has this addiction, then somthing is wrong here.....

2. Im reading here about this addiction that it's some kind of 'healing our feelings", that we're doing it to get out of some thoughts or problems in our life. I'm terribly honest, I'm almost NEVER masturbating because of any if these. Just that I'm getting a craving for it and doing it!!! Whenever i feel like it and my wife wouldn't be ready for me, or I just feel that I need 'someone else'.

3. Does the fact that my wife isn't wearing AT ALL how I'd like her to be dressed have an effect on this? Me and my wife are having great sex life, but she's really frum and doesn't really know

whats bothering me. Because I'm not telling her, because I know she won't be able to dress differently anyway. If this may have an effect of what happened to me, Is it a general chinuch problem? Or this shouldn't be a cause to this, and it's just that I'm an addict.

4. So does this all also means that I simply cannot protect my kids from this risk in their future lives in any way????

5. Did the riboinoi shel oilom really wanted to put me in such a difficult spot?

6. It's mentioned in the handbook 2 things I want to challenge: 1. You should always prevent from looking on women. In my eyes, it's not just impossible, but also not what the Torah way is. "vloi susiree achrei..." doesn't necessarily mean "not looking". In fact, the Torah doesn't say "don't look" but rather "don't follow your look"! So, A. how am I suppose to watch my eyes? And B. It sounds to me that the people who live in more challenging places like the city etc.. Are somehow stronger in this points. They can behave themselves much more then somebody who isn't used to look on women. It should've been the opposite? Or maybe it is? I really don't think so. 2. It's mentioned that this is an addiction which build with the time every time I saw something un-appropriate. So I'd really never be free of it unless I'm not looking?

Disclaimer: I'm a happy Jew, always having emuna, while struggling with this problem. I definitely gotbsome great advice here, included the 90-day therapy, but I'm a real thinker and would like to know the answer to these questions. Thanks in advance.

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Re: Questions awaiting an answer
Posted by heuni memass - 11 Jul 2011 19:39

Welcome aboard Shulem,

From your post it's hard to understand your struggles with these issues. Other than you being unhappy with your wife's dressing I don't hear much more. Therefore it is hard to answer much of your questions you asked... If you write a bit more about your struggles in these areas, it may be easier for the chevra to answer what's bothering you.

Stick around and keep on posting.

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Re: Questions awaiting an answer

Posted by alexeliezer - 11 Jul 2011 20:40

Welcome Shulem!

I'm no expert, but I am a recovering addict and will offer some short and simple answers to your questions, many of which deserve more in-depth treatment. If something I say isn't clear, please let me know. If you want to elaborate, let me know where.

1. As far as what I've read here, and in the handbook guide, it seems like we are from the 'less people' who are having these difficulties. And we got some kind of 'addiction'. Really? If I, in my innocent situation, (not knowing anything before marriage and having a real beautiful wife) got to this point, when NOTHING was missing to me, and it's still not, baruch Hashem, then who is not addicted???

I suspect there are a great many of us. I can't guess how many, but if someone said millions, I wouldn't argue.

And if almost all people are having this problem, why is it an addiction? It's just like loving food,

People certainly get addicted to food. I know of at least two groups to help (Overeaters Anonymous, and Food Addicts)

So you'll say "ok but eating food never gets you to eat something worse vs this habit where it's almost always getting worse", maybe it's because you know you're doing something wrong so automatically you're feeling bad about it and doing even worse things.!

Lust addiction can, but doesn't necessarily lead to worse things, but it does continue to intensify until it completely takes over your mind and can destroy your life. Food addiction does lead to serious physical disease, and can also lead to more intense bingeing.

If I'm not mistaken, even rabbi twersky said that this isn't something you can 'clear' yourself from it. Because it's not like alcohol or drugs addiction. So maybe it isn't an addiction? I know I'm being a little off here, but even all dr's are talking about 'addiction', I still want to understand why this would be an addiction rather than a bad habit. And if really everybody has this addiction, then something is wrong here.....

You can't "clear" yourself from this because that is the nature of addiction. The brain is permanently changed. You can only be in recovery.

This is certainly an addiction by every definition. And the simplest definition I've come across is "continued use despite harm." And yes, something is wrong here. The world has gone lust crazy.

2. Im reading here about this addiction that it's some kind of 'healing our feelings', that we're doing it to get out of some thoughts or problems in our life. I'm terribly honest, I'm almost NEVER masturbating because of any if these. Just that I'm getting a craving for it and doing it!!! Whenever i feel like it and my wife wouldn't be ready for me, or I just feel that I need 'someone else'.

There are many reasons people fall into addiction. Some just try something pleasurable too often and become addicted. Others use the pleasurable thing as medicine to soothe their aches, and become addicted. The end result is the same, and in large measure, so is the pathway out.

3. Does the fact that my wife isn't wearing AT ALL how I'd like her to be dressed have an effect on this? Me and my wife are having great sex life, but she's really frum and doesn't really know what's bothering me. Because I'm not telling her, because I know she won't be able to dress differently anyway. If this may have an effect of what happened to me, Is it a general chinuch problem? Or this shouldn't be a cause to this, and it's just that I'm an addict.

We hear from this yetzer often on this site. Most likely it gave you an encouraging excuse to look at other women.

I can relate to wanting something mutar to look at. How about lingerie that she wears for you in the bedroom sometimes?

4. So does this all also means that I simply cannot protect my kids from this risk in their future lives in any way????

You can lead by example, and teach your sons early about shmiras eynayim. Ultimately, they'll have to fight their own battles.

5. Did the riboinoi shel oilom really wanted to put me in such a difficult spot?

Every nisayon is only to help us grow. Hashem never gives us a test we cannot pass.

6. It's mentioned in the handbook 2 things I want to challenge: 1. You should always prevent from looking on women. In my eyes, it's not just impossible, but also not what the Torah way is. "vloi susiree achrei..." doesn't necessarily mean "not looking". In fact, the Torah doesn't say "don't look" but rather "don't follow your look"! So, A. how am I suppose to watch my eyes?

We addicts are different. When we look, it's like an alcoholic taking that first drink. It's nothing to do with religion.

And B. It sounds to me that the people who live in more challenging places like the city etc.. Are somehow stronger in this points. They can behave themselves much more then somebody who isn't used to look on women. It should've been the opposite? Or maybe it is? I really don't think so.

I lived and worked in the city and my eyes were swimming in shmutz and I never got enough.

2. It's mentioned that this is an addiction which build with the time every time I saw something un-appropriate. So I'd really never be free of it unless I'm not looking?

As I mentioned above, looking is like taking that first drink. So yes, you'll only be free if you're not looking.

Hatzlocho on your journey and welcome again :D

Alex

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Re: Questions awaiting an answer
Posted by Shulem - 11 Jul 2011 21:13

Hi Alex,

You did answer in part, but I still want to understand...

So I'm having this addiction simply because Hashem wanted to and it doesn't come from anything that may happen(ed), I.e. My feeling that my wife isn't dressed as I want, a stronger "chinuch" not to be leaded by my feelings but to do what Hashem wants, which unfortunately I learned the opposite when I was a child, for any reason.

Also, I'm not getting carried away by any women i see, although i like to look, I wont just get hot from anything i see. It's just that after a while not having relation I have my desire to have sex but I cannot do it with my wife because 1. She isn't ready for me at the moment, 2. I want now something hotter then my wife, again, I believe, (and I'm not sure if I'm wrong) because she isn't dressing AT LEAST like most of our community. We're talking about dressed one step less then ultra ultra ultra.

So maybe Im not addicted?

And, last question; how do we teach our kids shmiras ainaiyim?

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Re: Questions awaiting an answer
Posted by silentbattle - 11 Jul 2011 21:16

Hi - I'll try to address some of your issues, but right now I'm heading out, so I'll just make one or two points. When we talk about the underlying reasons that some people have for having a stronger urge to act out, because of emotional issues, that's not what we think of when we need to act out, we just feel the urge. However, very often, the reason why we feel the need to act out is because we need something to ease our own pain.

As far as the way your wife dresses, I'm going to ask you a direct question: When she's with you, alone, at night, I'm assuming she doesn't "dress frum." So why does it bother you that she dresses so conservatively when she's outside, and other people see her?

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Re: Questions awaiting an answer
Posted by ZemiroShabbos - 11 Jul 2011 22:04

Welcome to our community, you have finally come home!

Once you've arrived, there's

no turning back. Everyone here will just grab a hold of you and pull you up with them!

[GYE Program in a Nutshell](#): *(Right Click the link and press "Save Link/Target As" to save the PDF file to your computer).*

'Guard Your Eyes' offers a unique approach to helping people by recognizing that there are many different levels in the struggle for "*Shmiras Ainayim*" and "*Shmiras Habris*". After studying the experience of hundreds of religious strugglers over the past few years, we put together the suggestions and recommendations that we feel are best for the various levels. We divided the tools, features and services that GYE offers into 8 different levels. This "[GYE Program in a Nutshell](#)" can help people quickly identify at what level of the struggle they are at, and which tools and features would help them most at their particular level.

Here are some quick things you can do to help you jump straight into recovery:

1) Make sure to install a strong filter. It will be almost impossible to break free of this while having all the garbage within a mouse click away. See [this page](#) for one good filter option, along with instructions on how to install it best – and give away the password to our "filter Gabai"... See [this page](#) for another 20 (or so) filter ideas and information... We also **highly advise** installing "Reporting Software" such as webchaver.org to give you some accountability, because filters alone are usually not sufficient and they can often be bypassed.

2) Join the [daily Chizuk e-mail lists](#) to get fresh chizuk every day.

3) Scientific studies have shown that it takes 90 days to change a neural thought pattern that was ingrained in the brain through addictive behaviors. Did you join the [90 day chart](#) on-line? Sign up [over here](#).

4) Post away on this forum! You will get tons of daily Chizuk and support. This disease can't be beat alone. It works best when you **get out of isolation!**

5) GuardYourEyes also offers many free anonymous phone conferences where you can join a

group of other from Yidden, along with an experienced sponsor. See www.guardyoureyes.org > Tools > Phone Conferences for many different options. Our conferences are taking place every day, morning, noon and night... Joining a phone group would be a tremendous step in the right direction for you and help you learn freedom from this addiction. Not only will you learn the secret of the 12-Steps – which is known to be the world's most powerful program for beating addiction having helped millions world wide, but the daily call will be another way of GETTING OUT OF ISOLATION and connecting with others who are going through what you are.

6) If you need more general guidance, write to our e-mail helpline at gye.help@gmail.com or call our hotline at 646-600-8100.

7) Download and read the "[Guard Your Eyes Handbook](#)". This handbook outlines the GYE approach in detail, and makes our network much more effective and helpful for people. **The handbook has two parts:**

A) The first part, "**Attitude & Perspective**", details 30 basic principles to help us maintain the proper attitude and perspective on this struggle. Here are some examples: Understanding what we are up against, what it is that Hashem wants from us, how we can use this struggle for tremendous growth, how we can deal with bad thoughts, discovering how to redirect the power of our souls, understanding that every little bit counts, learning how to bounce back up after a fall, and so on and so forth...

The second part, "**The 18 Tools**", detail suggested tools and techniques, in progressive order, beginning with the most basic and fundamental approaches to dealing with this addiction, and continuing down through increasingly earnest and powerful methods. No matter what level our addiction may have advanced to, we will be able to find the right tools to break free in this handbook!

May Hashem be with you!

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Re: Questions awaiting an answer
Posted by silentbattle - 11 Jul 2011 23:38

OK, I have a few more minutes now. Before anything else, it's important to realize that a lot (probably most) of the people here had similar questions to you when they came here, even if they don't pose them in the systematic way that you did. We feel strange being told we have a problem, certainly an "addiction." We can come up with all sorts of elaborate explanations of why we're NOT addicts. My personal approach was that it didn't matter - I had certain behaviors I wanted to stop, and using this approach would help me best. Eventually, I came to accept that my problem was probably something like an addiction. Especially when I realized that term "compulsion" definitely applied to what I was doing - we feel compelled to do something, and we certainly find it difficult to resist it!

Some people are more susceptible to becoming addicts than others. This is true of alcohol and any other drug, as well. Some people can use substances for a long time without it interfering with their lives, while other people's lives are extremely disrupted by it.

The term addiction has nothing to do with how many people are doing it - it has to do with whether or not it's interfering with your life, if it's out of control. If someone has an eating habit that he cannot control, that would be a problem, too. Most of us are able to push off eating, and eat in the amounts that are good for us. If we would be unable to control ourselves, there would be a problem. That's why overeater's anonymous exists.

SO the question is, is it interfering with your life in some way? Is this something you want to be part of your life, and are doing it because you're ok with it, or is it something you don't want to do, but can't stop?

As far as your kids, of course you can help them - the more emotionally healthy they are, the better off they'll be in every area, including this one.

As far as what Hashem wants, I'm not sure what your question is. You have a desire for something that you're not allowed to do, so clearly, Hashem wants you to grow past this. HOWEVER, I do not believe that Hashem wants this to be so difficult for you. One of the things you'll hopefully discover is that the goal is not to constantly fight this urge. It's to live in a way that you don't have to fight it, you just live your life in the way you want.

6. It's mentioned in the handbook 2 things I want to challenge: 1. You should always prevent from looking on women. In my eyes, it's not just impossible, but also not what the Torah way is. "vloi susiree achrei..." doesn't necessarily mean "not looking". In fact, the Torah doesn't say "don't look" but rather "don't follow your look"! So, A. how am I suppose to watch my eyes?

Please re-read this sentence you wrote. I hope you can hear the rationalization there. When you're walking down the street, women are not invisible. Even the biggest tzadik doesn't bump into women because he doesn't see them. But he doesn't keep looking at them. I can walk onto a bus full of women who are...wearing less than they should. I notice this, and I then *choose not to look at them*. This is aided by reminding myself that they have nothing to do with me.

I know I didn't address all of your questions - some of your questions I'm not exactly sure what you mean, or I'm not sure of the best way to answer them. I hope this helps a bit, though. How are you doing?

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Re: Questions awaiting an answer
Posted by Shulem - 12 Jul 2011 00:50

Hi rabbi silentbattle,

I think I need to clarify...

When my wife dresses well (sometimes on vacation etc..) I'm the happiest men on earth and I am NOT doing anything that I usually do.. So I definitely believe this is something that pushed me into this. You're asking a question that is very logical, and I asked it myself a few times. In short the answer is, when she's dressed frum and acts frum, I am building a certain 'hate' to her

personality which leads me to go do it with 'someone else'.

And don't get me wrong!!! If you would've known me you would know that we have a 'beautiful' relationship from which a lot are taking a sample, as well as my advice on Shulem bayis.

And about if I'd want it to stop? It's definitely NOT interfering my life, since I really do it only when I have a real desire and will to it, but I wanna get out of it just because I'm a Jew and I'm not allowed to do it!! So just as if I cNnot prevent myself from speaking 'lashon hora' does that mean that I have an 'addiction' to it or a yetzer hora??? Or that I don't have 'cheshek' to daven or learn, is this some kind of an 'addiction' not wanting to lean but wanting to chill?

With the fullest respect to all here, I'm a very deep thinker and b"h I came along very far in my life, in business, Shulem bayis, etc.. Being bh very successful and also helping people getting closer to hashem. Somehow my questions here weren't exactly answered. Am I just being blind on this one? Since as far as I know myself I'm very easy to listen and get convinced.

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Re: Questions awaiting an answer
Posted by silentbattle - 12 Jul 2011 01:44

When you say "dressing frum," do you mean "dressing frumpy," or "dressing messy?" Or do you mean that she's dressing in a very tznius fashion? This is important.

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Re: Questions awaiting an answer
Posted by Shulem - 12 Jul 2011 03:14

Dressing in a very tznias fashion, and because she - by herself - also knows that it doesn't appeal, she doesn't care. It's usually clean but not always. A lot of times she really don't mind if it's dirty etc..

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Re: Questions awaiting an answer

Posted by silentbattle - 12 Jul 2011 03:45

Correct me if I'm wrong (seriously, please do), but it sounds like the main problem you have is that she's dressing in a tznius fashion. In other words, you're bothered by the fact that other men aren't noticing her and seeing just how attractive her body is. That may bother you enough to make you want to act out, but the question is why it does?

[Shulem wrote on 12 Jul 2011 00:50:](#)

It's definitely NOT interfering my life, since I really do it only when I have a real desire and will to it, but I wanna get out of it just because I'm a Jew and I'm not allowed to do it!! So just as if I cNnot prevent myself from speaking 'lashon hora' does that mean that I have an 'addiction' to it or a yetzer hora???

Here's a difference - for most people, there's not much feeling of guilt after they talk lashon hora, which means that although they know it's not right, they don't really have a feeling that it's not right, on a real, emotional level. When it comes to being mz"l, though, most people do feel guilty. So there's a bad feeling, but people do it anyway.

As far as your "not getting an answer"...well, that's up to you. If you're looking for an excuse to leave, no one can stop you, and you can feel very satisfied with yourself that you saw through our feeble arguments. And yet, I hope that there's one thing that will help you stay. The people offering you these weak answers have been clean for a lot longer than you have, so maybe they're not so stupid, and maybe you could learn something from them...?

Let me ask you a few questions, and tell me how many of them you say "yes" to:

Have you found the need to move onto more things?

You keep trying to stop?

When you feel bad about giving in, do you sometimes act out again?

Do you sometimes spend a lot of time looking for or at porn, or doing similar activities?

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Re: Questions awaiting an answer

Posted by Shulem - 12 Jul 2011 04:40

My Answer is yes to all of 'em, but please understand. My point is definitely not that I'm right, I need to work on it and I am. I'm just asking If 1. Maybe this isn't an addiction but rather a bad habit, a regular bad 'midah' on which you should work on... and 2. If it's my wife's fashion (the problem), I should maybe do something about it.

Now, about the point why it bothers me, I'll try to explain it in the best possible way I can: it's basically that I don't want her to attract other men, BUT 1. attract ME, and when she doesn't, either because of her dress (in the house) or because it's dirty I feel bad to tell her, 2. I feel that if she doesn't feel important enough to look nice when going out, to feel a 'women', that part makes her very un-attractive to me. Maybe in part I want other people to see that my wife is nice, but honestly, after a lot of thought, I don't think it's the real reason. I can explain it on and on, it's the point that I know that she isn't ready and willing to be to me what I'd really like. And I'm not talking about something really 'out', but plain and simple things which I know I can't ask her.

I hope you understand my point, I can explain it more and more, in total it is about what she thinks and does about herself that un-attract her to me, and that fact that she doesn't appreciate herself shows off in a lot of ways, for example how she dressed when going out on the street

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Re: Questions awaiting an answer

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 12 Jul 2011 05:24

[Shulem wrote on 11 Jul 2011 05:38:](#)

2. Im reading here about this addiction that it's some kind of 'healing our feelings", that we're doing it to get out of some thoughts or problems in our life.

I'm terribly honest , I'm almost NEVER masturbating because of any if these.

I just feel that I need 'someone else'.

...I think that's a problem if you think you need someone else.

--Eye.

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Re: Questions awaiting an answer

Posted by helpfyi - 12 Jul 2011 18:56

[quote="Shulem" link=topic=4098.msg110975#msg110975 date=1310431824]

And about if I'd want it to stop? It's definitely NOT interfering my life, since I really do it only when I have a real desire and will to it, but I wanna get out of it just because I'm a Jew and I'm not allowed to do it!!

/quote]

Hi i have been following, here is my thought, if you can't stop when you "really do it when i have a real desire" that means you can't control it! that's what an addiction is! you said it not me! you really don't want to but do it any way! Do you eat on yom kipper bec your hungry? no! bec you can control it! this you can't! don't blame your wife you say she is pretty then why do you need to look at others? bec she dresses tzlious?? that great! its bec you see other women who look better on the out side and lust for them, that why! try to guard your eyes then you will like her, if you want to see her beauty, why does she have to dress outside on edge so your friend should see?? get her a good set of lingerie for the bed room and that should take care of your issue, but bec your still not happy with that, it LUST nothing more and you will never be happy you will just want more till it ruins your life.

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Re: Questions awaiting an answer

Posted by silentbattle - 12 Jul 2011 20:41

My point is this - if you answered yes to those questions, well, try googling the following - DSM substance dependence.

The DSM is the book that gives the current guidelines for how psychologists should diagnose different psychological issues. If you meet 3 out of 7 of the criteria, then you are considered to have a dependency on a substance. Now granted, it's not exactly the same, because that's talking about a physical substance, but the similarity should be a clue.

As far as your wife's way of dressing, the general rule is that the problem's we have are our own problems, and blaming them on someone else is generally not a good idea.

What would you do about it, anyway?

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