

been doing better, but been better

Posted by strugglingandstrivngBT - 05 Dec 2011 03:18

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I cant seem to push more than a week. I have the little slips and they add up and I have so much tension that I get afraid that I cant make it and fall. I get so scared that I wont be able to make it or I'll be stuck wanting adn I give in. How do I make it past that point. How do I tell myself it will be ok and push onward. and how do I stop the small slips. I have a really strong filter system up but I'm constantly trying to sneak past it adn that itself builds up the pressure. I need to stop. im ready. now what? and when it builds up what do I do?

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Re: been doing better, but been better

Posted by gibbor120 - 11 Jan 2012 17:35

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I personally try to avoid saying that I am or am not an addict. Whether I am or not depends on who's definition I use and generally just drives me nuts. It seems to me that many, perhaps most, of the tools that work for what we'll call 'full blown addicts' work just as well for non-addicts. (hold the tomatoes please)

I am on one of the phone calls, and the 12 step tools seem to help *me*. That's all that really matters. Does it make sense to endlessly ask myself if I'm an addict or not. I try to do what works. I don't think there is much to be gained by plopping myself into one category or another. (ok, yes I do still wonder sometimes if I am or not, but I don't think it helps me at all).

The only thing I will say about myself is this. I tried to stop on my own for years and was unsuccessful. I truly beleive that I cannot stay 'sober' without help from my wife and my (relatively) newly found friends here on GYE, by opening up to them and telling the truth about myself, and accepting (not just saying) that G-d runs the world and not me. AND being happy with that. If that makes me an addict - so be it. If not - so be it.

Oh, and THANKS GUYS! You are truly an amazing chevra to be part of!

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Re: been doing better, but been better

Posted by strugglingandstrivngBT - 11 Jan 2012 17:51

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somehow I meant for my post to agree with everything you said, but I dont think I said it so well...I think you also inspired me to start doing Rabbi Dr Twerski's 10 step program in one of his books, and incorporating recovery into it. maybe also 12 step ideas. I dunno. I wish I could feel more of a connection to guys on here, but the whole internet thing makes it a bit more impersonal and more false emotionally, yet more honest on my end intellectually.

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Re: been doing better, but been better

Posted by gibbor120 - 11 Jan 2012 18:11

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I can't remember if you said that you spoke to ppl here on the phone or even met them in person. That can make a BIG difference.

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Re: been doing better, but been better

Posted by strugglingandstrivngBT - 11 Jan 2012 18:41

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once or twice on the phone with someone. not so frequently. I want to commit to talking to someone more regularly..

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Re: been doing better, but been better

Posted by gibbor120 - 11 Jan 2012 19:01

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What are you waiting for?

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Re: been doing better, but been better

Posted by strugglingandstrivngBT - 11 Jan 2012 19:10

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not sure...im a bit procrastinaty right now. I said I wanted lunch half hour ago and havent left the internet..thats not even something to have a yetzer hara to not do.

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Re: been doing better, but been better  
Posted by Dov - 11 Jan 2012 21:40

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Well said!!

[strugglingandstrivngBT wrote on 11 Jan 2012 14:25:](#)

...my oppinion is most Jews who think they are addicted to porn are not. clinical addiction ruins lives not because the bar is set so high, but because the individial has sank so low.....now, the fact that we know its wrong and continue to use to cover up emotional failings means that an addictive model fits our cases, but it does not mean we are an addict. Now, there are definitely some on here that are addicts, and I dont mean to diagnose anyone but myself. but I cant without self deception admit I am a full blown addict. I have a spiritual and emotional problem that exasperates yet is caused by a psychiatric disorder that HAS been diagnosed and I do admit to (ocd). this is not about denial, its about truth. sorry if this offends or upsets anyone.

Well, you certainly have not offended *me*, for I agree with you wholeheartedly and have said as much many times on this forum. I believe that most of the frum guys who like looking at porn and masturbating enough to actually *do* it, are not addicts the way I experience addiction, even though they have a compulsion to lust in some way.

The line that divides it for most people I meet seems to be whether our behavior - or obsessions - are interrupting our lives and yet we cannot stop, even though it messes things up. By "cannot stop" I mean that we have exhausted all avenues, yet are still in the toilet. Sure, one could say that "you should have tried *harder!*" - but we have not, and apparently *will* not. All evidence points to a continuation (till it becomes physically impossible due to old age, etc.).

Another litmus test may be this: What is fair to the family? How long (in years) is it right to "keep

plugging away fighting the good fight"? How many sacred bonds and trusts must be violated for a wife to simply leave her husband? This is an individual thing, of course, not Torah- or doctor-mandated. And how much should the *children* be made to suffer not *really* having a father (or mother)? How long do they have to be duped in this way?

And if it is a bochur (or bachurah), then the question may be: How many years do they want to futz around giving a shot to all the therapists, medications (I tried them both), and well-meaning rabbonim? Isn't it important to try safe, tried and proven extreme measures to get their life on a different footing *before* the relative end of marriageable (or child-bearing) years? Nu?

Sure, we all want to get '*better*' - I wanted to get better badly for 15-20 years while really trying to be good (the best) in yeshivah, doing some work in kiruv, raising a family.... but I experienced the big difference in the rather sudden arrival of **my need** to stop, though I obviously had to admit that I could not quit. No rebbi would have had a clue about what to tell me to do, then. And they all *know* it - except for the ones who are addicts in recovery themselves...

How many times must one fail and get worse and worse till he finally admits that he is a loser at this thing?

Should we bemoan the fact that there are many here who get brainwashed into thinking they are addicts, while they are not? I think so. But who will decide what crosses that line? Not me!

But *spreading the message* is not the same as *shoving the program down peoples' throats*. For example, many have read my posts and accused me of the shoving - yet I have **never** told anyone that they are or are not an addict.

AA puts it this way (more or less):

"Our program is based on attraction rather than *promotion*." It does not work to argue with the  
- but freely  
shares the truth with anyone who reaches for it (like Noach) - and lets live (or die) all those who do not, even if they are suffering. Kol mi sh'ein bo deyah, assur lerachem olov, Chaza"l tell us. I, and every addict I know, **had** to come into recovery 'willingly' - we all had to be forced by our own hands - ein hadovor tolui ella bee. We needed to *need* to escape from ourselves - from our

sickness. Till we had no other option but to stop - but could not - we were not really ready to get this program yet.

So we owe our *acting out* the greatest thanks for forcing us into recovery, rather than our yiddishket. As long as it is a *madreigo* that we are after, we will not really come into the door. Witness so many of the guys *still* using fake names, being so 'shockingly honest' about all their deep and embarrassing secrets - yet safely still secret behind a fake name and forever faceless. Unable to meet another addict or they'll die...?

Sure, we have to start somewhere...many are not ready to meet face to face with another sick person. But Actions speak much louder than words, and those who wonder why they are still out of control and yet are still unwilling to pay any real price for getting better....have no one to blame but their lack of enough pain. When it hurts enough, they'll have to give it up and open up for real. Then there is recovery for anyone who wants it, I believe.

On the other hand, *GYE* is not a 'recovery program' in the sense of AA or SA, at all. It **is** based on promotion, and violates most of the traditions of AA. And that's great, I think, because it is *not* just for addicts, and **says** so...usually. But may it be Hashem's Will that here on the forum, we refrain from promoting the diagnosis of *others*.

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There is still one little point I don't really agree with in the above:

By secular standards I am far from addicted to porn, I just have a very high expectation for myself.

I have met many, many goyim who are in SA and the '*worst*' compulsion they have ever had is

*to look at porn and have sex with themselves (masturbation)*. Some have not even been that compulsive about the masturbation - and they came to recovery because their lives were becoming unmanageable and totally unacceptable to them. And they are not even *religious* goyim.

I have learned over and over that "The Media" does not really determine *which* compulsive use of lust is mentally 'safe' and 'OK' or 'normal' for men and women. What you imply here, I feel, is based on a sense of Jewish moral supremacy that may be true - but is completely irrelevant, here.

The powerlessness and unmanageability that the frum yiddin find in their addiction is exactly the same as that of the goyim they meet. Only in the way they *paint* it and *label* it, is there a difference.

And conversely, we both know that there are plenty of Jewish men who have looked at porn for pleasure, have even had affairs, ***and even used prostitutes*** -who are certainly ***not addicts***. They do *not* need 12 step recovery. They need Teshuvah. Hashem loves them as He does us addicts, and will accept his Teshuvah. They do not have a mental illness, but simply like the way it makes them feel and have been nichshol once or twice. The first step, as I experience it, has nothing to do with that.

This point is obvious to me. Judging an addiction by the 'severity' of the behavior is missing the point completely.

It might be nice to read "The Doctor's Opinion" in the very beginning of the book, "Alcoholics Anonymous", on this idea.

It could be argued that a frum man who uses lust behaviors is closer to being an addict because more is acceptable in the goyishe world. But I prefer to believe that it is only covered up better in the goyishe world. Compulsive use of sex and lust as a drug bites the goyim in the end as hard as it bites us. There is no easy escape behind 'societal norms', if it really is a progressive, chronic problem for the person.

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Re: been doing better, but been better  
Posted by obormottel - 12 Jan 2012 00:52

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I've stayed sober for the last 157 days only thanks to the admission that I am an addict. I have twenty-five-year-experience of compulsive masturbating and habitual looking at porn and being unable to stop no matter what.

So if at the end, I am sober today, thinking that I am an addict, then I think I'm better off than masturbate to internet pornography regularly while thinking I just have a delicate emotional build-up or whatever. And if in the end I don't fit the clinical definition, all the better. But I know that the moment when I'll doubt whether I have any control over lust, will be the moment of my downward journey to the gutter.

The program of addiction recovery works for me and millions of others, but every single one of them had to come to terms with being an addict.

I can't possibly convince anyone they are an addict, because only one's own admission is what enables the recovery.

And I, too, know many goyim without religious affiliation who found that masturbation and porn were ruining their lives, and the lives of people they cared about.

As the book says, this realization was "forced upon us in the crucible of our experience".

Stay sober, my friend. I wish you to find an unobstructed path.

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Re: been doing better, but been better  
Posted by gibbor120 - 12 Jan 2012 17:11

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[obormottel wrote on 12 Jan 2012 00:52:](#)

Stay sober, my friend. I wish you to find an unobstructed path.

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