

Help

Posted by Daniel - 02 May 2012 02:00

I feel I'm in great need of that feeling of being wanted (by a girl)...I'm 19, in college, mast. a couple times a week, but i realize when im wanted and talking to people, i really dont have the urge any longer and just a lot better in my avoda. However, when im talking to anyone, i feel down, like a creep, even though im not, and my sexual urges surge as well. I know its a problem that im dependent on the external factors of other people talking to me and not internally confident but still...

someone help me out here...

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Re: Help

Posted by alexeliezer - 02 May 2012 14:45

Daniel,

Welcome to the forum. I read through your brief post above and find it very confusing. Perhaps that's why no one has responded. Not really sure what you're trying to say. Would you please clarify what's going on for you and what your questions are?

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Re: Help

Posted by kidushashem - 02 May 2012 15:21

[Daniel wrote on 02 May 2012 02:00:](#)

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Hey Daniel,

Firstly, welcome to the GYE community!

Yeah, being dependent on others for your sexual sobriety is not recommended or healthy. We will do our best to help you but you must know that healing will only take place through your own initiative.

Your first job is to determine what kind of help you need. To determine this, you need to know whether your problem is addiction or something not as serious. This can be done by taking the addiction test on the SA website.

Once you've decided what kind of help you need, get it!

Posting, asking questions and answering other people's questions is always a good idea. Forging healthy relationships and getting out of solitude is a must and it sounds like you definitely need that interaction.

Welcome,

KH

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Re: Help

Posted by Daniel - 06 May 2012 19:24

I'm not really addicted, I have gone for 6 months without inappropriate material and mast.

I feel my level of sobriety is always parallel to my emotions inside; How I feel about myself, Am i wanted by other people (females), my confidence and self esteem. Get my problem now? My life isn't really dependent on porn and such, but im more emotionally dependent in that sense.

sorry i cant be more clear.

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Re: Help

Posted by Dov - 06 May 2012 20:26

I discovered in marriage that my girl will only really desire me once I become sure in myself. And dependence on her is actually the biggest turn off. Of course, I am married to a mature adult....there are plenty immature 19 year olds out there who are insecure and dependent children inside and would be overjoyed to find someone else who is equally immature and dependent. Self-assuredness isn't even in their lexicon. All they see as good and right is a guy who is as dependent as they are, to share the immaturity with...they call it sex.

That's whay there is so much divorce. As the two people grow up, they realize they never belonged with this person, **at all!** The only thing they shared at all was their own dependence - **on anybody!** The rest of them is left flapping in the wind...that's no picnic.

So I wish you luck if you go *that* way.

But you are posting here - a thing few men in your position ever do. It shows that you want someting beyond the desire being dumped on you by society and your hormones. That says a lot of good about you, Daniel (I assume that is your real name). If you choose to grow up (as I am trying to, too!) you will learn that growing up will 'net' you the best girls in the pack - the ones who are real adults. A great life will follow for both of you that way.

Hatzlocha!

- Dov

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Re: Help

Posted by kidushashem - 07 May 2012 20:37

[Daniel wrote on 06 May 2012 19:24:](#)

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Daniel, maybe I'm missing something, but it sounds to me like you *are* and addict. Why do you think I watched porn and masturbated? It's because I had emotional issues that could be "solved" quickly by masturbating or watching porn. It sounds to me like that's exactly what your issue is.

If I'm wrong and you're sure that you're not addicted, great! But you won't get the help you need here. You need to go to a competent therapist or Rav and get help with your dependency issue or whatever it is you need to solve. Figure out what the name of your problem is and go to a place/source that deals with *that* problem.

I would recommend though that you take the SA test anyway b/c you might be in denial. A lot of people find it hard to admit that they're addicted.

Take care,

KH

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Re: Help

Posted by Dov - 07 May 2012 21:50

Excuse me, Kiddushashem, but I feel I must say that I feel what you wrote may not be accurate. I believe that people generally masturbate or look at porn because it feels so good, and not because they are addicts. I sincerely doubt that the bulk of the porn industry is supported by addicts. I know for a fact that most of the plain old people who get "men's magazines" are not addicts. It is obvious that stag parties and nude bars are not supported mainly by addicts, either. And neither are prostitutes, for that matter.

These industries are *mostly* used by guys who just like the way those things feel, period.

I remember that (being an addict already as a teenager) I was shocked when I was once sitting in my barber shop and saw a man *who I knew*, looking at dirty magazines while waiting his turn, then get called for his turn and calmly put it down and walk to the say "Hi there!" to the barber! Two very different sounding things shocked me:

1- How can they actually pick up the magazine here?! I'd be sooo embarrassed that I'd never be able to do it! Of course, I was dying to sneak a look in the magazine - dying - but it was so embarrassing!

2- How could he just **plunk** the magazine down when they called him for his turn?! For me, those sweet beautiful images were GOLD. I'd have pretended *not* to hear the barber, or be sitting off in a corner so I could enjoy the images undisturbed, or acted magnanimous motioning for the guy next to me to go ahead, saying "Oh you must have been here first, buddy. Go ahead."

The difference was that *this guy was not an addict*. Maybe he was just a rosho, I don't know. (Last time I checked that was *G-d's* determination and business, not mine, b"H!) But **I** - not that guy - was the one who was making a huge, huge deal of the pornography's power and importance...cuz to me - an addict - it is that way. I *worshipped* it - he just *liked* it!

Addicts get *into 'the zone'* when searching out and then using our precious porn or whatever...gambling, alcohol, cocaine, whatever - and it is precious to us. That's the difference.

To most of the world out there it is nice, pretty, or fun. To addicts, it is vitality and life itself - or at least it feels like it to us at the time. That's why we can't stop and normals can.

And all this is why I do not equate porn, sex, and lust addiction with the YH (though it may use it, too), and neither do I equate recovery with Teshuvah (though it can certainly lead a person to eventually do Teshuvah, too). It is a twisting of human nature, rather than a poor bechirah or an aveiroh problem. It is an illness. It is thus Derech Eretz and *not* Torah (though Derech Eretz can *lead* to Torah) , and come before (Kodmah l')Torah, of course. And it is also why I can have a goy as a sponsor and why I can sponsor goyim - just as easily as Jews. It is a **living** problem *because of how I abuse* the porn, sex and lust.

You point out some of this stuff to Daniel above - but I am taking it all the way, I think. He may *not* be an addict. Instead, he may just need to do Teshuvah. He may just need chizzuk and kedusha - not mesiras nefesh (that is, "surrender") and recovery.

But...he may **be** indeed be an addict. Only he can know that. Like you said, "Why not take SA's Questions?". But I must tell you that I can't believe that every jew who masturbates or struggles with porn is an addict.

Gevalt, enough of my tiring prattle, point made. If you disagree, I respect that 100%. It's just that this is the way I see it. And being in recovery for a bunch of years and meeting many addicts in and out of recovery has only makes it seem all the clearer to me.

Thanks for hearing me out, KH.

- Dov

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Re: Help

Posted by kidushashem - 08 May 2012 10:21

Dov,

I agree with what you say. I don't think that Daniel *must* be an addict because he masturbates. But I think that people who masturbate in order to solve emotional issues (especially having to do with relationships), tend to become hooked very quickly. I know that I was addicted from the very beginning (my masturbation and porn served as emotional "cures"). It doesn't sound like Daniel masturbates just because it "feels good". It sounds to me like there is something much deeper going on.

Regardless, since I am taking the liberty of assuming that Daniel is new to the recovery scene (correct me if I'm wrong, Daniel), I would prefer to err to the side of caution and get him to re/consider the possibility that he's an addict.

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Re: Help

Posted by Machshovo Tova - 08 May 2012 14:36

The distinction between one who is addicted to something and one who just 'likes' the same thing, can perhaps be understood by the following episode:

A man walks into a shrink's office.

- Yes, what can I do for you?

- My wife sent me here.

- Why did she send you here?

- Because I like pancakes.

- Because you like pancakes? I also like pancakes.

- You also like pancakes?! Come to my house! I have a whole basement full of pancakes!!!

('Food' for thought.)

MT

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Re: Help

Posted by kidushashem - 08 May 2012 18:46

great story, not sure I agree with the quantitative definition though...

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Re: Help

Posted by obormottel - 08 May 2012 19:15

It's not quantitative definition. The guy with the basement full of pancakes is **obsessed**, and that is the main difference.

Good moshol, MT, and pearls of wisdom from Dov, as usual.

I have a friend who was telling me at my Shabbos table how on one of his out-of-town trips he stumbled upon advertisement for a legal brothel. To him, it was an amusing story: that a place like a brothel can advertise in print like a legit business.

To me, it told something about him: he had no compulsion to check the brothel out. That's why instead of secretly ripping out the page with the ad, he left it on the receptionist's desk, and moved on, and then later told me what happened as a matter of fact.

But if I had come upon something like this? I'd hord the magazine or at least the ad; I'd make an attempt to visit the place; and I would certainly keep it a secret, because sharing it with other people would remove the power that it held over me, and this power is dear to me, because I worship it. Even if I never ended up going to this house of ill repute, I would cherish the fantasy that the full color ad would create in my head.

And this is arguably the difference between people who are amused by this sort of thing (even if it leads them to masturbate or even go to a prostitute), and addicts, who are controlled by it, and whose life becomes unmanageable as a result.

But only I can know this about me.

Hope Daniel finds what works for him.

Mottel

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Re: Help

Posted by Daniel - 09 May 2012 05:31

Okay, so I'm definitely not on the compulsive side. I admit, i like porn, like dov said, which normal man doesnt?

In my six months in yeshiva where i really made a commitment not to fool around with myself and with girls, I was in another world, it was like being 9 years old again where you would quickly turn your eyes away from anything inappropriate and deeply critisize how anyone would like something like that.

Catch my drift?

Unfortunately, I'm now in college (YU for that matter), not the most spiritual of places, but better than the secular college i was at last year in la where I physically felt my neshama burn as my eyes witnessed all the beautiful creations of G-d around the campus. (lol)

So now, I dont think i have so much encounters with shmiras einayim problems BH.

Who knows? Maybe I am an addict. I dont know if an addict can go for six months clean cold turkey though.

The reason why i brought this post up is bc i was recently talking to someone, (again my emotional dependency, btw, yes, i totally agree on the marriage part which is why i am not looking to get married within the next two-three years minimum or at least until i get my act together), so anyways, off tangent again, when i was speaking to this female, I just felt so good about myself; mamash had no urges the whole week. Zip zilch nothing. I just didnt want to look at that stuff while i was talking to her. But, didn't fall through in the end and now im in the normal cycle again.

I definately have had my spurts of being sober, however long they may have been; 2 weeks here, a month here, another week here, 3 weeks there etc...I know its wrong as a jew to do these things, but most of us live paradoxal lives and we just dont have the faith firing within us every day.

what do you guys think?

Sorry it takes me a while to respond. Busy with finals and such.

Thanks

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Re: Help

Posted by Dov - 09 May 2012 20:26

I bet the reason you felt no compulsion while you were engaged with her was that you were too busy treating her like a **human being**. That is a rarity for many guys - even non-addicts. Our culture has trained us to view the most essential thing that makes a woman relevant as being her breasts, face, or body - this is ill. It's not reality at all, as they are, actually, people. The magazines teach us that they are sex objects and fun factories, period. If they have real personalities, it is made to be impressed - so that we will eventually get physical pleasure from them. And fat or otherwise unattractive women are naturally viewed by many of us as *hardly being women, at all*.

This is not the way G-d looks at women. And he does look at women, just like He looks at all of us. He certainly sees them as people. And as Jews, if they are, and as mothers, wives, sisters, friends etc. to other people.

This is a machlosh many of us have. And sex/lust addicts have it the worst of anyone.

So. Enough out of me.

Continued Hatzlocha!

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Re: Help

Posted by Daniel - 10 May 2012 03:59

Words of wisdom dov. On the dot. It's so hard to rewire your brain correctly in our current society and western culture.

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Re: Help

Posted by kidushashem - 10 May 2012 16:08

Daniel, here's how addiction is defined in the White Book. I hope it helps:

General Aspects of the Addiction

Our experiences have revealed three aspects of our condition that commonly identify addictions: **tolerance, abstinence, and withdrawal**. If someone has experienced these three phenomena in some area of his or her life, that person is generally regarded as being addicted. When we apply this test to ourselves, we identify as being addicted to lust, sex, relationships, or various combinations of these-for starters.

Tolerance

The term tolerance refers to the tendency to tolerate more of the drug or activity and get less from its use, hence the need for increasing dosage to maintain or recapture the desired effect. With addictions other than drugs, tolerance refers to a need for increasing amounts of obsessive thinking, interaction, or activity, with less and less effect. In short, we resort to the drug more, with diminishing satisfaction. We see how this applies in our case when we remember how our lust or sexual activity escalated over the years, crossing one line after another, first in our thought life, then in our behavior. For example, those early masturbatory fantasies were seldom enough; we graduated to seeking increasingly potent varieties. And if we got hooked on pictures, we found ourselves seeking ever-more-explicit images to use. If we began by dating for romance, it often escalated into seeking more promiscuous liaisons. Exposing ourselves in fantasy progressed to doing it in public. We needed more and more of our "drug."

Abstinence

The term abstinence refers to the phenomenon where the typical addict tries to quit using the addictive agent or activity. Perhaps we should call it attempted abstinence. We swear off-again and again. Something inside tells us we

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should stop. How many times did we say we had to stop? How many times did we actually try stopping? Some of us "stopped" every time we acted out!

Withdrawal

The term withdrawal is applied to the symptoms the addict may experience when deprived of the drug or activity. Such symptoms can be physical, emotional, or both. This gives rise to the deception and demand that we've got to have sex. But this is no different from the drug addict feeling he'll die without his fix. It is simply not true; not feeding the hunger doesn't kill us.

Some of us look back on our transition to sobriety as a time when we were in a state of shock, in which our whole system had to slowly recover from the trauma of a lifetime of self-inflicted injury. Sobriety involves a new and unfamiliar way of life, like driving in a foreign country without knowing the language or customs. Only this is a whole new inner terrain. Without the drug, we begin to feel what's really going on inside. It takes time to adjust to all this, and the support of others in the fellowship is vital. Journeying this new road together helps take the fear out of withdrawal. We see that others who have gone before us have discovered that sex is truly optional, once they surrendered lust and the expectation of sex. And their comfort and joy are genuine; they are neither abnormal nor deprived. Married members discover they can go into periods of voluntary abstinence to recover from lust and find them surprisingly effective and rewarding experiences. Yes, there is life after lust! And life after sex!

We see that the practice of our addiction includes the whole range from sporadic or periodic to continuous acting out, sometimes all within the same individual. But regardless of our particular pattern, it involves the addictive elements of tolerance, abstinence, and withdrawal, though we probably are not aware of them at the time. And if we switch addictions-not uncommon for those trying to quit one the addictive process is the same.

P.S. Although hard to accomplish, many have been sober for long periods of time, as addicts. I wouldn't say that your 6 month sobriety streak means you are definitely not an addict.

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