

Help With a Shift in Perspective?

Posted by workingonme - 11 Jun 2012 22:28

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i've been fighting this battle for a few years now with little success. Not much has changed in terms of my reactions to a test in this area or my desire to kick it. i know i want to fight and be successful in this area, but i dont know how to nurture that idea so that it moves from a simple concept to something that i live every day.

i've stumbled across a possible source for why i dont think i'm growing in this area: i dont think of looking at pritzus or being mz"l as an aveirah or as an inhibitor to my connection with Hashem. I guess i'll elaborate a bit. I'm 20 now and come from a non-frum family and background (getting religious over the past 5 or so years). While this is not an excuse by any means, it has affected my avodas Hashem in many ways, some good and some bad. For instance, i certainly feel an excitement about avodas Hashem that i might not have if i was raised frum. But my background also leaves me with stark lack of education in regards to perspectives on certain issues, especially this area.

The more i've thought about it over that past few weeks, i realized that until now i havent thought of being mz"l as an averah, but i do see something wrong with it. However, i think this is more a product of western society's viewpoint on sexuality. In my early teens, i didnt look at porn on the internet or at all because it was taboo. it was a subject no one ever spoke about with me and i never spoke about with anyone. That worked fine until the hormones of teenage life kicked in and then i started looking around. But as i got older and more religious, this area just stayed as taboo and the mindset of "as long as you dont affect anyone else, its okay" stayed with me and besides for a sense of guilt, i just continued on my way down this destructive path...

i know that this is an aveirah but *knowing* information and **living** based on that information are two completely different things. so i guess what i'm looking for is just some feedback on how i go about shifting my perspective on this area and i guess connecting with Hashem in general...

i know its gonna be work, but what else are we here for?

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Re: Help With a Shift in Perspective?

Posted by workingonme - 16 Oct 2012 20:14

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B"H things have gone well the past few days. yesterday for the first time in a while, when i thought about looking around i decided to fight back by thinking that i didnt want to and removed myself from the situation. usually, instead of thinking, i just follow my hormones but B"H at least this one time, Hashem gave me the ability to think clearly and act with intention.

things in my life will be a bit stressful for the next week and a half with schoolwork so with Hashems help i'll be able to stay busy, which im incredibly thankful for.

i hope everyone's rosh chodesh is meaningful.

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Re: Help With a Shift in Perspective?  
Posted by nederman - 17 Oct 2012 03:11

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Good for you. Make sure you keep a mental note of these successive so you can think about them when a big temptation hits.

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Re: Help With a Shift in Perspective?  
Posted by workingonme - 27 Dec 2012 03:09

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For the umpteenth time, I'm back. things have been status quo. trying to get momentum going but struggle with those first steps. the passion is there for a day or two and then gone. like rav volbe says in alei shor, emotional response is there and then gone. i've been thinking a lot recently. just sitting down and thinking. i'm trying to hone in on why i'm struggling to leave this aspect of my life. as for the origins, i couldn't tell you why i started as a young teen (probably the hormones but just a guess) but i think i've figured out a large portion of why i'm continuing now: i'm searching for something real; for real closeness and real connection.

and yet, i try and seek it out through pritzus and through other supplementary activities (i.e. mutar ones like reading). but like eating candy to try and satisfy a true hunger, the appetite is never satisfied, as we know chazal tell us about the eiver katan. but like of the momentary sweetness of the candy, the fleeting feelings of acting out dont create a real connection to Hashem, which is what i'm really after.

so where to from now. i know this means i need to find a source of real connection to Hashem.

through learning. through davening. its the "off time" (whatever that means in the world of avodas Hashem) that has tripped me up for the past 5 years. its the off time that creates the biggest opportunity for connection to reality but also contains the potential for a tenuous encounter with an intense emotional experience through pritzus.

realities: i cant be in a yeshiva. i'm not old enough for dating and dont want to throw an eishes chayil into my struggles in this area. i have college classes to attend. i dont yet have anyone i know that i feel comfortable opening up to about this topic for a variety of reasons. but i want to find that real connection.

i know learning is probably the ikkur here and i have set goals accordingly. posting is also a plus but i dont know how to commit to a posting schedule, as these fall apart quickly.

i guess this post was more for me to get some thoughts out. but if you have any chizuk, i appreciate it.

hatzlocha.

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Re: Help With a Shift in Perspective?

Posted by workingonme - 21 Mar 2013 05:22

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I hope everyone's biur chometz is going well. we still have a couple of days left.

I tried something new a little while ago. I decided to take the filter off of my phone. The first few days were rough, but not really worse than the average week, as I always seem to find a hole in the filter on my computer etc. But after the initial rough patch, I went 8 days without a fall. This number is still quite low but its the longest streak i've had in more than 2 years (gladly/sadly its a mix of the two).

Its been another rough couple of days but i think this little experiment definitively demonstrated that working through this nisayon (at least for me) cant just be about changing the outside factors (i.e. the chitzoniyos). i know thats a part of it but the larger part has to be making internal changes. I dunno if i've posted about this before but I know that making those internal shifts are

slow, difficult and i'm not entirely sure how to go about making them. i'm sure its through learning, davening, chesed etc. but its still soooo tough to get the momentum going.

but i hope everyone's nissan has been going well and that Pesach allows us all to work for the cheirus that Hashem helps us get.

hatzlocha.

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Re: Help With a Shift in Perspective?  
Posted by Dov - 25 Mar 2013 09:01

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I have found (and continue to find) that opening up real relationships with real people helps tremendously. The greater the shame, the greater the lying, so the more impotent the relationships are...including with Hashem. If we are not honest with any person, then it is likely that we are not really honest with Hashem, either - because we are surely not honest with ourselves.

Facing ourselves with another person is the only real way to face ourselves...**then** comes Hashem - not before.

You can do it! And it is worth it!

- Dov

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Re: Help With a Shift in Perspective?  
Posted by workingonme - 28 May 2013 06:35

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Back after a few month hiatus. Things have been down, to put it plainly. I've been relaxed on

what I do online and the post-fall mindset if more nonchalant than anything. Its the self-induced sickness of being apathetic and pathetic.

What do I do now? Since being on the outskirts of GUE and finally joining over the past few years, I dont know how many times i've asked this question and had no response, but its too high to remember. Its sad, unmotivated, confused and a thousand other adjectives but its the truth, as tough of a pill as this is to swallow.

To be honest, as embarrassed as I'll be initially, i want so badly to have someone I know to open up to. But I dont know of anyone that I could speak with. My parents and siblings arent religious so I dont know how it would go or if I'd feel comfortable speaking about something like this with them. I have close, frum friends where I'm at college but I dont feel close enough with any of them to open up about this. I've tried having partners through email etc. but the technology creates/establishes a sense of distance that doesnt create any accountability. It sounds crazy that I cant just have Hashem as my partner in this and open up to Him, but I think its that give and take that I need, and probably want.

If anyone has any help, i'd sure appreciate it because things are going nowhere fast by me.

Hatzlocha.

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Re: Help With a Shift in Perspective?  
Posted by inastruggle - 28 May 2013 06:48

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maybe you can talk to someone on the phone?

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Re: Help With a Shift in Perspective?  
Posted by some\_guy - 28 May 2013 23:26

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I was in a position a lot like your's. I was M multiple times everyday, usually using my family's

computer to look up P. I was depressed to the point that I thought suicide would be better than this torture. Eventually I had to tell someone. The local Chabad rabbi was (and still is) helping me return to Judaism. I opened up to him and told him about the M, the P, the depression, the constant desires, etc. He hugged me tightly as I cried. I can't accurately describe what he did. I doubt even he knows what he did. The way he cared was the most genuine emotion I have ever felt. It helped in ways I may never truly understand. Ever since then he has been helping me to the best of his abilities.

Was there anyone who helped you when you were trying to become frum? That is who I suggest you talk to. The embarrassment and shame will hurt like nothing else, but in the end he will get you clean and happy.

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Re: Help With a Shift in Perspective?

Posted by Chachaman - 30 May 2013 21:15

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Shalom workingonme! From reading through your past threads, it seems like you basically you're on the right track as far as proper attitude goes.

I know what it's like to have nonreligious family--I'm 17, but I'll be in YU next year, so Baruch Hashem I'll be in a more religious environment.

For me, the ikkar in my recovery was two things:

#1 Understanding the emotional issues that led me to lust in the first place. I think it was a combination of social anxiety and isolation, which resulted from me going to a public school and not really having too many frum friends that I could relate too. (I totally identify with you. What you are doing right now, being religious when your family isn't, is INCREDIBLE, AWESOME, AMAZING. (My mom is religious, so Baruch Hashem I've had at least 1/2 my time in a religious environment)). If one discovers what gap exists in their life that they need this issue, one can work on solving the gap and thus not need the "solution" any more. An important yesod is that this issue, for me at least, is about "starting to live" by having more emunah, relying on Hashem, getting off the computer, adding more healthy activities to my life, etc.

I think I also used this to ease stress--I was in a stressful, high-pressure academic environment, so perhaps being very busy with school isn't necessarily the penicillin we need. However, free time is also very bad--we must avoid spending free time on the internet.

#2 Filters are essential. It is very daunting to think "oh no, I won't have that for the rest of my life!", so for a while my Y"H had me maintain a few loopholes in my filter. By taking it one day at a time, Hashem's hands, so I don't need to worry about the past or future.

Also, don't be discouraged. It's taken me like a year and a half to get to where I am today, and I'm 11 days clean but very hopeful for the future. GYE is a great place, and I definitely recommend spending time reading through a lot of the posts on this forum, a lot of common questions are dealt with.

a time--I'm staying clean for TODAY, the past and future (and even the present I haven't tried phone conferences, but it seems like they're for opening up. I think step 1 is admitting that we have a problem, and that admission requires opening up, saying "I, Robert [that's my first name], have a problem, and I'm not going to try hiding it any longer, because the hiding contributes to the problem in the first place.] I think a forum or email creates distance, but not necessarily a phone conversation.

Anyway, keep us posted! Perhaps try posting on a more regular schedule, or at least go on GYE when you're feeling weak.

--Robert

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Re: Help With a Shift in Perspective?  
Posted by gibbor120 - 30 May 2013 21:37

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Hi WOM,

I think you just need to bite the bullet and talk to someone. There are many people on this forum that would be happy to speak with you.

It sounds like you are ready to take this step but are afraid to jump in. Have you ever stood at the edge of a cold pool afraid to take the plunge? The best advice is to ... JUST JUMP IN!

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Re: Help With a Shift in Perspective?  
Posted by workingonme - 28 Jan 2015 20:23

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hmm. it's been a long while. a long long while. I've remained on the periphery for a while and things have been same ol' same ol'. I wanted to pose a question for anyone reading. I've been thinking as to the source of the issues that I'm having in this area and I've logic-ed myself into a corner. Here's the thought process: As a human being, there are many needs. Physical, emotional etc. One such need is sexual (I say need b/c as much desire as there is, I think need is an accurate descriptor). In the past, Jews have gotten married at younger ages (late teens etc.) and now that I'm in my early twenties, I feel this part of the human condition/experience is "off limits" despite being a need in that same human experience.

As I know you can't logic yourself out of issues relating to shemiras habris, this logical impediment is in my way, meaning that because the sexual realm (within the halachic realm) is off limits b/c I'm not married, the need has to be filled in some other way. To put it in terms I've seen on the forum, without some form of release/expression, biology seems to dictate that your going to be white-knuckling your way until you get married. And this doesn't work.

So. I'm wondering if people can comment on this b/c I feel like I've built this logical construct that provides me with a rationalization to keep indulging (in spite of halacha) and I think there are perspectives that I haven't considered (though maybe this is too logical...)

thanks!

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Re: Help With a Shift in Perspective?  
Posted by cordnoy - 28 Jan 2015 20:52

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welcome back,

while I didn't read your thread (yet), and therefore I don't know your precise issues, but I think you are doin' a bit of justification, and the truth is - we are all good at it. Just talk to all the married fellows who claim they are not gettin' enough, and it is their wives' fault - somethin' that I have said many a time. We can justify to our heart's content, but ultimately, we are the fools. The bottom line is that most of us are doin' this as an escape mechanism for somethin' in our life that's not goin' right, and if it's adversely affectin' our life, we need to make a commitment to right the ship.

Lookin' forward to hear more from you

b'hatzlachah

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Re: Help With a Shift in Perspective?  
Posted by skeptical - 28 Jan 2015 22:27

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There are single guys on here who are clean, and they are not white-knuckling it.

We may try to justify our actions with the argument that this is a normal bodily need. However, getting so preoccupied with it that it completely takes over our lives is not normal.

It's a normal bodily need to eat. To crave food all the time and stuff ourselves with it whenever the opportunity arises is not normal.

The truth is, unlike with food, it is totally possible to live a happy, normal life without any sexual release. It is not needed.

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Re: Help With a Shift in Perspective?  
Posted by shomer bro - 28 Jan 2015 22:56

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The "need" to release is usually an effect caused by something in our lives. It could be stress, anger, loneliness, boredom, etc. But it in and of itself is not a need in our lives. Rather, it's an indication of something else that's either lacking or off kilter in our lives.

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