

ISNT GUARD YOUR EYES FOCUSING TOO MUCH ON THE PROB

Posted by Chabadguy - 03 Mar 2013 06:41

I might just be the only guy here who had this strange feeling but ill share it with you anyways. there are times when i feel i have these issues BECAUSE of guard your eyes. before this website it was a little issue i had that once in a while i had a taavah like most males to look at bad stuff and moved on in life. i guess i didnt think too much about it.

now suddenly comes this guard your eyes website with loads of emails telling me im an addict and that i need help and stuff and slowly but surely, not necessarily because of gye, things got worse.

ill tell you the truth - the other day as i saw the gye email arrive my entire attention was focused on taavos and yes i acted out. shouldnt we just manage with chizuk emails that just tell us what to think about - like inspiration without CONSTANTLY thinking about our issue.

My question is shouldnt we just go 'vaaseh tov' and the sur merah will disappear because we are too busy on the good.

sincerely,

indecisive

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Re: ISNT GUARD YOUR EYES FOCUSING TOO MUCH ON THE PROB

Posted by me3 - 03 Mar 2013 21:01

I think you're the first guy to blame his issues on the GYE website. We have had people who blamed their parents, wives, siblings and friends, but blamed GYE? I think you are the first.

Since I'm already at -2 on the Karma rating (probably thanks to Guard & Kedusha) I'll avoid

really yelling. However, since you feel that the Chizuk emails are so triggering perhaps you can paste to your thread the particular chizuk email in question that was so triggering so we can judge. Who knows maybe Guard will agree with you and take that email out of the rotation? It certainly wouldn't be the first time he's exercised poor judgement!

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Re: ISNT GUARD YOUR EYES FOCUSING TOO MUCH ON THE PROB

Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 03 Mar 2013 21:10

Aren't there two different emails? Perhaps the "Shmiras Einayim" email which is more chizuk oriented would be better for you rather than the "chizuk" email which is more addiction oriented.

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Re: ISNT GUARD YOUR EYES FOCUSING TOO MUCH ON THE PROB

Posted by Dov - 04 Mar 2013 00:08

YES!! You are 1000% (is that possible?) right, chaver! (with a disclaimer that follows later)

In fact, I *just* emailed this to a guy.

He wrote me (and I paraphrase, of course, for privacy):

"While for many addicts all they need to focus on is their addiction, I believe I have a lot of work to do on the fundamentals of my relationship with my wife, myself, my family and the RBSO. Sure, if I keep medicating myself with porn and by having sex with myself (masturbation) I'll never get *close* to seriously resolving these relationship issues - but on the other hand, it seems that if my relationship issues improve, it will make it a lot easier for me to stay clean! Kind of a funny cycle?"

I wrote him back (with lots of additions here):

"You just missed the entire 12-step program, chaver. Maybe becs you were confused by the stuff so many people on GYE varf about 'being koveish the Y"H' and 'the battle for *how many* days they are tahor'. **Yes, that talk works great for some...**but backfires terribly for others.

As far as the recovery that I am familiar with and have been living sober with so far, **there is not a *single* step in the 12 steps that is about stopping drinking/acting out.** In fact, "alcohol/lust" is only mentioned *once*, only in the beginning of the 1st step as a simple admission that we have discovered after years of falling on our faces (with very good and holy efforts), that we have lost and can't control and enjoy alcohol/lust like normal people seem to be able to. That's it. So we obviously are ready to give up alcohol/lusting. It does not work for us...but now what? How do we live life without it and without the glorious struggle we have come to know, love, and hate so much? What else is there?

That's the only thing the rest of the steps are about. How to live without needing to act out again. It really seems impossible. It is impossible. That's why we need to learn how to use G-d. But not to 'stop us from 'drinking' again - nut to live life without needing to drink, as we have needed to, till now.

So after that admission, there is nothing in *any* of the steps that is about beating (or even fighting) drinking/drugging/lusting. The 12 steps are **ONLY** about restoring normal relationships with ourselves, with people, and with our G-d. There is nothing else in them **BUT** that!

Actually, addicts are the very **last** people who 'need to keep their focus on staying clean'. If we focus on "*not lusting, fantasizing, etc. all the time*", we really just focuse on lust fantasy and our penises (all for tahara and for 'proper tikkun of midas Yesod', of course!)...and *that* will help us stay sober? Obviously not. So I'm with you, chabadguy/indescicive/whateveryourrealnameis (mine is Dov): When I wrestle with a muddy person I get covered in mud, period.

I think the alcoholics got it very right, indeed. They are k'dai to learn from.

For that reason, counting the days we are clean - though helpful for some - is horrible for many people. Now do not get me wrong! GYE is great. The 90-day chart thing is great for some people. But there are some for whom *all that attention to the problem is the greater poison*. For them, counting is just 'holding their breath'. A contest with lust. Valiant, holy - silly, immature, and poison.

So: if you feel like focusing on **living** rather than on your bris kodesh, then by all means go for

it, man! Let go of focusing on the problem, as best you can. Learn how to relax about the perfection-in-kedusha issue, how not to make a big stinking deal abt having fallen in the past and about every woman that walks by as though she is 'a *nisayon*' not a *person* (stupid, but typical!) And practice just *letting the desires slip away the way they came: 'accidentally'*. Like we pass road-kill. We notice it, admit it is there, and then we pass it by. It's OK, chaver. She's not your, you do not really need it, and the extra erotic hour and orgasm of today is really not necessary. What our bodies tell us (that is is *absolutely* necessary) is nothing but a lie. We *can* let that juicy news story go by...and get on with real life without knowing or seeing it. Etc...

And you may *not* be a true addict - as *most* people here are probably not, either. You mostlikely 'just' have a yetzer hora, not an addiction. So? That's normal! But there is no reason you cannot do what the *successfully* recovering addicts do: focus on the real life Hashem is giving you today and learn how to take it **with both hands!** That is **all** the 12 steps are about. Nothing more.

And if you are **not** an addict, you probably do not need to use the 12 steps to learn to do that and can use many other great tools to great effect. Just learn how to get to work *living*, chaver, and - hatzlocha with it! Get help, man. It's probably impossible to do on our own.

Disclaimer:

If you *are* an addict, then it may be time to recognize that you *are* **already** *focused* on your struggle with your privates and with your kedusha and with the images of the women that walk by and on your lust fantasies *anyway*, and you carry them all over with you. If nothing really changes, then obviously nothing is likely to change the familiar cycle will continue - no matter how much you want to be good. That's an addict, for you.

And most people who dabble in porn, masturbating themselves (and alcohol) are not addicts!

Self-honesty is the key. Look at the wreckage and own it, if it is there. Yet honesty is the very thing we are so often weakest in! *Especially* the frum sex addict - who has been faking everywhere he goes for decade or more. That is why it is so precious to open up to a trusted rebbi, parent, friend, or shrink. Not that they can help you - they probably can't. But opening up to another real person (not a silly username fake person like us makes us able to really see ourselves and what we are **really** doing, for a change. Opening up is the ticket out of denial and the cycle of self-pity and losership, be"H. He usually does not help us till we are ready to be honest. For if He did, we'd abuse the gift anyhow.

Hatzlocha!!

- Dov

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Re: ISNT GUARD YOUR EYES FOCUSING TOO MUCH ON THE PROB

Posted by Chabadguy - 04 Mar 2013 04:17

It's not a particular email but just the general focus on 'breaking free' and whats developed is that i now look at this whole situation as a massive monster threatening to swallow me alive and therefore have become terrified of it. whereas before it was a slight problem that i felt i could fix quickly.

if you want better ratings - give encouragement and real solutions. i am not blaming gye just the tactic used. and after reading dovs post below i realize that its pretty damn hard to cater to so many different levels with one website.

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Re: ISNT GUARD YOUR EYES FOCUSING TOO MUCH ON THE PROB

Posted by Chabadguy - 04 Mar 2013 04:19

thanks dov, so what do you think i should take a break from the emails/website and move on to chassidus, inspiration and getting back into real life without this monster (i think) ive cooked up for myself

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Re: ISNT GUARD YOUR EYES FOCUSING TOO MUCH ON THE PROB

Posted by Dov - 04 Mar 2013 10:10

Sorry, but it was your 'chassidus', 'inspiration' and 'real life' that got you into this mess to begin

with.

Yes, that's what I said. Our religious identity *itself*, usually developed *in tandem* with our sexual acting out...this is no coincidence, my friend. We saw yiddishkeit - and real life - wrongly. So it fed our habit. Living without the sweet porn and sex with ourselves is just too great a sacrifice for many guys to make. Life such as it is for them is just too cold and scary a place to be without the comfort.

Ring a bell?

So the solutions involve changing the way we live. Not 'being better Jews' - we tried that...we do not have a clue how to do that, really. For doing that has led so many of us deeper into isolation and our habit. Rather, learning how to really accept G-d and ourselves as we are, and how to accept other people as they are. That is different.

Many of us grew in Torah and avodah in order to make life manageable, to manage our lives by deserving better, by ignoring olam hazeh more, by being 'good'. Nu. If that works, great! But for many, it is just manipulating G-d. A dead end.

So what's different?

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Re: ISNT GUARD YOUR EYES FOCUSING TOO MUCH ON THE PROB

Posted by tryingtobeme - 04 Mar 2013 11:13

I would like to respond two fold. Chabadguy, if I understand correctly, what you suggest for yourself is what the Rebbe suggested for such an issue. He was of the opinion that focusing on a problem will only worsen it, and it is better to wait on doing teshuva until marriage (I may have butchered what the Rebbe said; I'm not sure). If that works for you great. however, if you are in fact in an addictive pattern, it is less likely to. With all due respect to the Rebbe, he did not see the content we are exposed to and have all around us, nor the decrepit status we stand at and the spiritual longing that ultimately gets hijacked by porn. such factors differ from each person greatly. I have found it can go both ways. That's really your call. perhaps talk to your mashpia, or someone else of that role.

Dov, not on

I'm not sure if I am disagreeing or not, but I dont like the way you phrased the last response. While I certainly cannot deny that growing religious, (please keep reading before judging this statement) can be detrimental to spiritual well being, and as such, our little "teivah" with the cheap thrills and false love of ourselves and the internet, growing with Hashem, His Torah and spiritually does not. As Rabbi Dr Twerski has said numerous times, the 12 steps are all found in Mussar/Chassidus. It just happens to be that we dont close the sefer thinking we will die if we do an averia; we (I have never actually attended, but I can imagine) do feel that way leaving a 12 step meeting. So really, it is not the Chassidus, etc that caused the problem. it is ultimately WE that caused the problem, in that we latching on to something that legitimately could help us, but we are, for whatever reason, not fully invested in the seforim, the ideas and He Who endowed such Chochma. That being said, for such a person Chassidus might not be enough. However, if one successfully changes their attitude and embrasses true humility and emuna in such ideas, accepting that this particular nekuda is something much more important to us than others, and that we really need the spiritual help that can be legitamtely found from the Torah or 12 steps (ultimately it's the same Ribbono shel Olam that helps us), I think the proper response should be gezuntehei. It is imperative that such a sincere approach is in fact taken, and I dont think everyone is capable, though I am of course in no position to say who exactly is or isnt. I havent mastered sobriety myself, and I'm personally torn between religiousity and closeness with Hashem. However, I think that it is possible, unlikely, but possible, to even go through the 12 steps with the same insincerety that religious hiding can be approached with, and therefore be equally ineffective. if that makes any sense. just some food for thought. Have a great night.

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Re: ISNT GUARD YOUR EYES FOCUSING TOO MUCH ON THE PROB
Posted by tryingtobeme - 04 Mar 2013 11:15

I just read Dov's longer post more carefully. I dont think I was disagreeing...

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Re: ISNT GUARD YOUR EYES FOCUSING TOO MUCH ON THE PROB
Posted by Dov - 04 Mar 2013 22:05

In AA, Bill wrote that our problem was never our religion, nor even the intensity of our religious

feeling! It was our sincerity and acceptance of some very basic things. We fooled ourselves and thought ourselves greater than we were/are. It is common that an addicted Jew cries with real tears over the churban one day in bentching - yet does not really believe that G-d *is* actually only Good. Deep down, he or she can truly believe that Hashem is basically a loose cannon and not really safe to trust with running his life, his sex, his money, and his relationships...in other words, he is actually alone and really *without* a G-d of his very own, no matter how frum and good he is. And then he is shocked that he was crying yesterday in L'cho Dodi with real tear of d'veikus - and is on his knees in the bathroom at work masturbating - again...it's madenning! The double life, the ruchniyus roller-coaster ride, they are terrible. "How can this happen if I am so good?"

It is easy for us loving, good people to sit back and sincerely say: "Gevalt! That's *horrible* that he could feel that way - a yid yet! Read him some Tanya or whatever, quick! We need to convince him that he really *does* have a G-d who is his very own Best Eternal Friend who is 100% on his side always and forever!" - but if we ourselves are regularly and cyclically masturbating and using sweet porn, it is likely that with all our religious trappings, we are lacking in that very nekudah, ourselves. Not lacking in **information**, no! We do have the right info...I mean, we've got the Torah and we learn it, don't we? We do. But if we are active addicts, then we clearly do not have the precious thing that successfully recovering goyim (and Jews) in AA, NA, and SA have: a faith that really *works*. Ouch. That is not 'information', but an experience. It's certainly k'shot atzm'cho time...

People who are addicts *stay* that way because we are missing something big. And it is usually completely irrelevant how we *got* that way. Everybody has a yetzer hora and there are a lot of people who are occasionally nichshal in lust-related stuff and struggle with it - yet the overwhelming majority of them are certainly not addicts! The addicts - the ones who *stay* in the pattern and do not get out - are usually totally convinced that their problem is davka their

But as most

recovering people know, it's not. The pattern of self-medicating demonstrates (as RMB"M writes) that there is something else going on. But, sadly, just setting out to '*solve the root cause of our problem itself*' gets us nowhere! It's so tempting to 'get all psychological' or deep-

I read about that

journey here all the time, unfortunately. If true addicts are to get anywhere at all, experience indicates that **we need to be sober first**. The inner change comes later, as a gift...with work. It's called ho'odom nif'al k'fi p'ulosav. That's humbling - and very painful. So most addicts do not get better till it hurts too much. That's called 'rock bottom'. (And many of those do not choose to do whatever it takes to get better, either, and do not!)

Whatever our 'big hole' is, if we are getting clean we **do** need to take a step back and learn the basics. We stop trying to fix others, for a while. We even stop fighting with ourselves. It's not a self-help program, but a G-d-help program, these 12 steps. And they are not Torah, but Derech Eretz.

So, as usual, we come back to humility...or as you a Chabad guy might call it: bittul or hisbatlus. As a frummie, I and many others I know discover the 12 steps as a simple trip back to the real basics. Basics that are so common and so *basic*, that they are exactly the same for goyim as they are for us. *That* is how basic they need to be, if they will work.

And that pride is often why we ill people have the greatest trouble actually getting the help we need. It feels so humiliating. We tell ourselves it's apikorsish...and that is just our PRIDE talking. Rav Twerski wrote a whole book about it and hid this idea inside it. It was titled, "*Self-Improvement? - I'm Jewish!*", and was really about the 12 steps, not just 'self-improvement'. His point was not really that Jews feel they do not need mussar/chassidus or self-improvement, but rather this: it takes **painful** humility to accept that my chronic, progressive sexual self-stimulation using porn and sex with myself or others (or alcohol, overeating, spending, or gambling, or heroin), shows I am lacking in something that any human being can relate to and needs: Sanity. I can learn sanity as well from a goy as from a Jew, of course. That is a huge insult, especially to a frum Yid. "What could I **possibly** learn from **him**?! I mean -- he is a goy!"

So the 2nd step sets **Sanity** as the basic goal of recovery. Period. Not 'madreigos', not 'Teshuvah', but for a Power Greater than myself to eventually restore me to (progressive) Sanity. That's pretty humbling, no?

That is why there is no real advantage for a frum addict to having a frum (or even Jewish) sponsor. There are many great excuses for it, I know. But *requiring* him to be frum can be poison, for it reveals a holding onto preserving respectability - that's nothing but pride. If we can do this with frum yid, then I can call it "Teshuvah" and it is respectable! I see this many times. Having pride as our guide is a poor way to embark on anything, least of all, recovery. For true addicts, as long as we are convinced that our problem is "a bechina of kedushas habris", we never need to really get down to the basic hole in us. "Phew. That was close!"

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Re: ISNT GUARD YOUR EYES FOCUSING TOO MUCH ON THE PROB
Posted by tryingtobeme - 05 Mar 2013 01:24

that touched on points so close that I mamash cant let them in right now because I have to go work and cant in the high/low that true acknowledgment will cause me to feel.. more later, bezras Hashem...

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Re: ISNT GUARD YOUR EYES FOCUSING TOO MUCH ON THE PROB

Posted by chaimcharlie - 05 Mar 2013 03:34

thanks, Dov

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Re: ISNT GUARD YOUR EYES FOCUSING TOO MUCH ON THE PROB

Posted by Dov - 06 Mar 2013 06:46

And thanks you and you, too.

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Re: ISNT GUARD YOUR EYES FOCUSING TOO MUCH ON THE PROB

Posted by moish u.k. - 06 Mar 2013 18:55

Dov, that is a beautiful write up.

You took a very subtle (but very significant) point and explained it very well.

When i did my Step 2 i basically glossed over it, because as a religious person i have always "believed".

Today i realise that my so-called beliefs have been a hindrance for my recovery, rather than a help.

I have recently come to realise that actually, deep down, i don't really believe that Hashem is constantly there for me.

It was painful to admit this, but i need to be honest.

I want to believe, and i am hoping that working the 12 step program will help me get there.

So, on revisiting my Step 2 i have changed the nusach from "i believe" to "i am willing to believe".

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Re: ISNT GUARD YOUR EYES FOCUSING TOO MUCH ON THE PROB
Posted by Dov - 07 Mar 2013 06:43

...and certainly using your *yiddishkeit* to batter your weakness in *functional* emunah will fail miserably, too. It is so wonderful to know this clearly, and to realize that this is not apikorsus, but a touch of maturity. It's so humbling to learn a real faith that actually works, from sex addiction recovery. It means Hashem is really real. And that is just as true for a goy who needs to know it as it is for a Jew who really *needs* G-d, and as true in addiction and porn desire as it is in the beis hamidrash. Sweet.

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