

Stopping addiction without 12 steps??

Posted by Avrom - 04 Mar 2013 17:18

Lets assume I'm addicted. But I'm able to stop - for 90+ days (thaphsik etc.) Does the addiction dry out by itself (and lusting returns to normal y"h) or are the 12 steps the only hope??

You may ask: "if you can hold it in, who cares that youre addicted??" I want to know if the urge will stay on this level. If it does i need to do something to help me control it.

Also will the "90+ days clean" perhaps prove that i'm not a addict??

Truth is I'm not even close to to 90 days, but need to know if this is a option??

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Re: Stopping addiction without 12 steps??

Posted by mr. emunah - 04 Mar 2013 20:44

i think that I am a pickle and i will never be a cucumber again...

It defiantely gets easier as it gets along, but it's still there lurking in the shadows... we can't afford even a little bit of lust, we have to be constantly al hamishmor

but that's what being jewish is all about

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Re: Stopping addiction without 12 steps??

Posted by moish u.k. - 04 Mar 2013 22:11

I am speaking for myself, as an addict.

The only thing that given me relief from the disease is the 12 step program.

It works when i work it. I stop working it, it stops working.

I tell you what; if you can find an easier way, you'll become a very very rich man...

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Re: Stopping addiction without 12 steps??

Posted by Dov - 04 Mar 2013 23:23

[Avrom wrote:](#)

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You may ask: "if you can hold it in, who cares that youre addicted??" I want to know if the urge will stay on this level. If it does i need to do something to help me control it.

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Good G-d, chaver, you are geshmak - but thinking too much.

"Does it prove this, or that? Am I or aren't I? Does it go away, or doesn't it? I have to know." Why? Gevalt. It's all just never-ending fodder for the thinking, thinking, thinking mill. Mental diarrhea. I have it, too...we all do. So what?

The first and last lines are important, I figure. First of all, what in the world do you mean by 'addicted'? If you do not know if you *can* stop, then who says you are an addict at all?

But then how does *any* alcoholic **know** he is an addict? Certainly not everyone who ever gets drunk is an addict. So how do some end up needing 12 steps or other drastic tools, yet most live with OK without any help at all?

The answer is simple: does it make *your* life unmanageable? Can *you* stand it any more? If you can, then it's apparently not that much of a problem for you. As far as addiction and the 12 steps are concerned, the question is not whether it is an intolerable problem for your father, mother, wife, child, or even for G-d. The issue here is whether it is intolerable to *you* yet. If it is, then you have a 1st step. If it is not, then you have something else.

Of course, if you feel in your heart that it will **become** intolerable eventually and that your goose is basically cooked already...then why not go for some serious recovery tool now? It's good sense. Who says you need the 12 steps? Open up to a trusted Rov, parent, or shrink about everything - do not leave out a detail - or go to 12 step meetings, counseling, hypnotism, whatever. Do *something*! If nothing you are actually doing about it changes then you know one thing for certain: nothing will change.

Figuring this out won't allow you to escape, if you are an addict. And it certainly will not make you any better, either. In fact, doing this kind of stuff (while nothing you are doing really *changes*) is precisely how you got into this mess, isn't it? Why stay?

The last line is telling, too. You are not even close to 90 days yet...so why think at all about the issue?

How many years do you still have to try? Is a few months a big deal at this point? I doubt it. Go - and without so much thinking, chaver.

Hatzlocha.

- Dov

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Re: Stopping addiction without 12 steps??

Posted by Avrom - 05 Mar 2013 00:42

[Dov wrote:](#)

How many years do you still have to try? Is a few months a big deal at this point? I doubt it. Go - and without so much thinking, chaver.

The reason i posed this question now: I started dating. There is the possibility that i will get engaged/married iyh soon. I want to get out of the death-zone before that! So the coming 3 months mean a great deal to me!

Also about definition of an addict. Most stories i have seen, that talk about life becoming unmanageable, usually involve wife, children job etc. As a bochur, living a double life is no big deal. So no, life has not become unmanageable as of now. Thinking what will be when i get married and have children and and.. is not so realistic. Is there any way for me to know NOW? (-before the disaster has struck)

Avrom

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Re: Stopping addiction without 12 steps??
Posted by skeptical - 05 Mar 2013 01:03

I agree with Dov on this one.

Personally, the 12 steps are not for me and I'm not into the I-can't-help-myself-I-have-an-addiction thing. However, staying clean for 90 days doesn't prove anything other than the fact that you have the willpower if you really want. And really, that is no small thing! If you are able to stop for X amount of time, you can stop for *any* amount of time. If you don't do something for a long time, the desire to do it will diminish somewhat, but thinking to yourself that you've finally beaten it is a trick of the yetzer harah's to get you to fall.

If your guard is down and you do fall, battle-wise you could be back where you started.

Like Dov said, don't think too much. Just do what you have to do and be happy that you're doing the right thing!

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Re: Stopping addiction without 12 steps??
Posted by mr. emunah - 05 Mar 2013 01:09

dear chaver,

I was pretty hooked on Ma*****g before I got Married, I wanted very much to be clean for a significant amount of time before my chasunah (when this nisayon will be over...) I wasn't very successful until I managed to chop off part of my finger in an accident in camp (b"h the doctor was pretty succesful in re-attaching it) and from then until my chasuna I was clean (a total of a bit more than 40 days, I actulay really didn't want to act out then because I wasn't suposed to go to the Mikva with my wound) WOW! a hug from hashem, the very hand that used to sin was cut off - just like the gemara said! there was no way I'd ever sin agin, well a few days after sheva brachos *bang* I fell, it was pretty devastating...

I'm not suggesting putting off marriage, but I would suggest taking recovery by the horns,

to quote Rabbi Frand at the Siyum Hashas, (which i was never ever going to fall after, ever again, oops)

WHAT"S YOUR PLAN?

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Re: Stopping addiction without 12 steps??
Posted by skeptical - 05 Mar 2013 01:14

Getting married will not cure you. There is no easy fix except working on yourself.

(I remember when I got married, I was a little upset that I hadn't been able to beat the yetzer harah on my own before the "ultimate cure" of marriage. How foolish that thought was!)

You CAN stop, but it will take work. Now is the time to start.

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Re: Stopping addiction without 12 steps??

Posted by gibbor120 - 05 Mar 2013 02:53

Just a couple of quick points.

1) Marriage often makes things worse, not better. Do NOT assume that marriage will help. You can read many posts here to that effect. Rabbi Twerski suggests not even dating until you have . Point being, it WILL affect your marriage.

2) A person can be an addict even if he has a long period of sobriety. I once managed to go a full year sober, but it didn't last.

I'm no expert in the big book, but I think there is a story about an alcoholic who realized that if he didn't sober up, he'd lose his business. He stayed sober until he retired (about 25 years!) and then became a drunk once again.

If you are an addict, a period of sobriety does not change that fact.

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Re: Stopping addiction without 12 steps??

Posted by skeptical - 05 Mar 2013 03:05

1) "Marriage is like Miracle Grow. It could make existing issues grow really big really quick!"

2) If the measure of an addict is that he *may* reoffend, I wonder if I'm a speedaholic because I have gotten tickets in the past for going over the speed limit and I can't say for certain that I will never get another ticket for speeding in my lifetime.

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Re: Stopping addiction without 12 steps??

Posted by Avrom - 05 Mar 2013 03:06

[skeptical wrote:](#)

I agree with Dov on this one.

However, staying clean for 90 days doesn't prove anything. All it means is that you can have the willpower if you really want to. (...) but thinking to yourself that you've finally beaten it is a trick of the yetzer harah's to get you to fall.

I do realise that the yetzer hora will not let go until my final day. I have to accepted that. But my question was regarding addiction: True - 90 days won't kill the y'h!! But will they prove that i'm not addicted??

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Re: Stopping addiction without 12 steps??

Posted by mr. emunah - 05 Mar 2013 03:12

no,

but it will let you find yourself a bit.

one day at a time

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Re: Stopping addiction without 12 steps??

Posted by skeptical - 05 Mar 2013 03:26

Addiction, yetzer harah - It's the same thing, really.

As long as you realize the yetzer harah is most probably here to stay, why dwell on semantics?
Just do what you have to do!

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Re: Stopping addiction without 12 steps??

Posted by mr. emunah - 05 Mar 2013 03:29

and don't do what you shan't

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Re: Stopping addiction without 12 steps??

Posted by gibbor120 - 05 Mar 2013 03:40

[skeptical wrote:](#)

2) If the measure of an addict is that he *may* reoffend, I wonder if I'm a speedaholic because I have gotten tickets in the past for going over the speed limit and I can't say for certain that I will never get another ticket for speeding in my lifetime.

I hope you didn't get that "definition" from me. That is not what I meant. I just meant to point out that it is **possible** to be an addict and have a relatively long streak of sobriety. That's all.

You can find all sorts of definitions on this site of what an "addict" is. I don't want to debate that. But, ***If*** someone ***is*** an addict (insert your definition here) he can still attain 90 days or more of sobriety and remain an addict.

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