

Tryin'

Posted by cordnoy - 23 Jun 2013 09:41

Shalom

I am in my 40s married with children

Recently, I decided to get help on a serious level with my addiction .

My mind wanders and the tayva builds.

It would be easy to blame this on the lack of excitement in marriage intimacy, but I had done this at times before marriage, and at times, when marriage bedroom was good, I'd still fall. Perhaps it still is the reason, but marriage stuff is probably not gettin' better anytime soon.

I have more to write, but as this is my first post, id like to hear some suggestions first please.

Thank you so much

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Re: Tryin'

Posted by Dov - 15 May 2016 22:43

[mggsbms wrote on 15 May 2016 18:20:](#)

[Dov wrote on 15 May 2016 18:00:](#)

[mggsbms wrote on 15 May 2016 16:25:](#)

I should really shut up because arguing about these things will for sure not get me sober. But..

If I only focus on today what is my motivation. To be normal just today ? I'll handle one crazy day. It's a bunch of crazy days that are the problem. It's running the risk of acting out before my daughter's chupah that scares me to death.

One day at a time may be a tool, for some people. For lots of GYE people it may be a powerful gimmick to trick the yetzer hora into leaving me alone or something...but for me it is simple and literal. I am alive now and there is no such thing as "many days" or "a bunch of days". This does not mean that I do not plan for tomorrow or for next week. Rather, it simply means that I train myself to do **today's** job today, and tomorrow's job **tomorrow**....not any other way.

It's really an entirely different way of living - of being - for me. In addition it was ironically all 'in the moment': I could sacrifice many tomorrows for the comforting lust would give me right then...but the *lifestyle* filled me with worry about the future, regrets about the past, and terror of getting caught in a lie. Terror of whether I will be satisfied sexually tomorrow - or ever. Worried about how my kids will turn out or if moshiach will chas v'sholom come before I finally "do Teshuva gemura"...it was very dramatic, very exciting, and very stupid.

Now my emotions come, they wash over me and I stand outside myself observing me having them...and my sponsor helped me see that feelings are not reality, but just feelings. They do not move me into tomorrow, and not into yesterday. They just *are*. This is how I *feel* right now.

Perhaps my daughter will be married in 5 days like you, and there is fear and worry and regret and dissatisfaction, and excitement, and resentment. But all those things are fantasy - just like the naked women I was looking at in the porn, just like the sex scenes playing in my head while I masturbated...not reality. They were there because I needed excitement - or crisis.

Now I am learning to accept G-d's Will as it comes. And by 'G-d's Will' I certainly do not mean 'the mitzvos', and neither does Hashem! G-d's most pervasive and relevant 'Will' is simply how the events of my life are unfolding right now - today. Life on Life's terms, as they say in AA. This is obvious to anyone who really thinks it over. The GR"A calls it the contents of the dot in the 'Beis' in bereishis...the Zohar (and gemora) calls it "istakla b'orayso uboro almo". All of history is in the Torah - not the mitzvos, but what people call 'divrei reshus' is all G-d's Will as somehow expressed in the Torah: how fat you are, how rich or poor you are, if your daughter is happy or smart or not, or if the caterer is nuts or good or how much money you will need to spend, or save, your health and the traffic for all your guests and family the day of the wedding, the photographer being a jerk, someone vomiting on your (geneidigeh) machteinisteh in the mitzva tantz (c"v!...heheh), etc, etc...all factors that will have **far more severe and noticeable consequences** than what time *sof z'man kriyas Shma* will be....this is G-d's Will. The ikkar of G-

d's Will that we have a horrid time accepting.

It's not about whether we choose to sin or not. It is whether we choose to live with the times - to accept G-d's Will today. Life as it really **is**....or if we whine our way through it whispering regrets and worries and disappointments all the way through. *White-knuckling through **life*** is our big problem, not white-knuckling through *sobriety*.

I know that once a person works the 12 steps and learns that he or she does not need to white-knuckle through **life** any more, they will find that *staying sober* is no problem at all....

And without acceptance of today being more than enough for me to think about, none of this is even touchable.

None of it.

It's the basis for real living.

Great stuff ! And I get all that - that's a far cry from actually living it.

My point is, is there a motivating factor for me to work towards such a mindset ? There got to be a reason for me to take the minute to minute effort of living life on life's terms. And that is because living life on my terms has gotten me to a place where I can act out in crazy ways or crazy times.

Ok...let's backtrack. Why is it that you are asking what your motivation will be?

From a frum/moral point of view the motivation might be simply that without this correction to your way of living, you suck. In other words, you will keep sinning, will go to hell, are a fake, not so good, etc. But the reason that this motivation is useless in reality is simple: If **that** were truly a motivation for you *then you would not be masturbating and using porn so much in the first place*. So, saying that I will try to do it because *Hashem* wants me to change is circular and silly. Sort of the way the RMBa"N writes that there cannot logically be a mitzvah to believe in G-d.

For if you don't already believe, then G-d obviously knows that you do not believe that the command to believe in Him is coming from Him, anyway! He doesn't waste time cuz He isn't silly. Really.

From a practical point of view (the only one that works for most addicts I know, myself included - and I know I am a ma'amin) the motivation to change might be that I cannot keep living this way. Not that **Hashem** cannot stand me living this way (for then I will just try *doing Teshuvah* more sincerely, between 'terrible' sprees), and not that **my wife** cannot stand me living this way (for them I will really just *hide* better).

The problem comes when an innocent GYE guy comes here and is told a few things that imply that recovery is dogma, like a religion. "You need to accept you are powerless (do the 1st step)", etc. In fact, even just telling a guy that he really must stop masturbating and using porn, is generally a waste of time. C'mon folks, we all know it's wrong. We all know sneaking porn, masturbating ourselves and all the other sneaky erotic things we do are wrong - **and we always knew it!** It's tiring to hear guys say "*I didn't know till I read the shulchan aruch.*" Were they masturbating on their front porch??

I don't think so. Right from the start, if we get caught we go nuts.

Most of us always hid it, didn't we? From the first time we did it, we hid it. We **knew** it was strange, that it was compulsive. And the older we got, the more childish we realized we were being. BTW, that's why the porn places call themselves "ADULT" - it is typical of advertising that it says the exact opposite of what it really is, to eliminate the doubt (the honesty) in the hearts of those using it.

So what's gonna be your motivation? Well, does your life stink as you presently are? Is your faking, lying, and hiding driving you out of this life? Can you relate to the addicts who come to meetings because they simply NEED to have a safe haven, a place where they can finally admit, "I can't stop using my sweet drug, and even with my sweet drug, I can't seem to manage my life successfully. I am at whitt's end and have certainly lost the game of life."?

Or is it perfectionism and frumkeit that you are after - pleasing G-d....and yet you are just not yet ready to let go of the requirement to please yourself at the same time?

That's where most people are, I think. Poschim al shtei has'ipim. No way out. Oy li m'yotzri, oy li m'yitzri.

That sucks. But it's where so many of us are, no shayloah.

You wanna be there?

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Re: Tryin'

Posted by Workingguy - 15 May 2016 23:13

[Dov wrote on 15 May 2016 22:38:](#)

[realsimcha wrote on 15 May 2016 16:26:](#)

[cordnoy wrote on 15 May 2016 15:19:](#)

For us frum yiddin (and this is almost a first for me), it is a simple one. What does God want from us right at this moment? Should I resent that person? Is now the right time to take revenge? Should I look across the aisle? What is there to be afraid of? Is this the link I should click? You can't seem to wanna do His will, fine, then pray for the willingness. It didn't work. Pray again. You looked. Fine. Now, do His will.

B'hatzlachah

So, what happens when, you just don't have the strength to look at Hashems will for every second. When you feel like you just need a break from that level of intense feeling. When that itself starts making you resentful. Then What? Is there anything between living every second to fulfill the will of god and acting out? For me this was where a good movie came in. So, I don't have that now. How do I take it down a notch without losing everything? Or do I never take it down a notch?

Please read what I just posted to the other great guy badgering (just kidding) Cordnoy.

Intense focus on G-d? Intense feeling?

Do you realize that nearly every sober heroin addict and farmboy drunk who uses AA or NA is doing exactly this thing that he is referring to? Acceptance of G-d as the manager of my life and putting myself into His care is **not** 'Being a Tzaddik'. It's just doing *what most of the sober goyim in AA are doing*. Not a groiseh madreigoh, for sure.

You put the weight of the world on your poor, tired shoulders, man. The weight of the Shulchan Aruch and the weight of all the sifrei mussar and chassidus ever written. Breathe, chaver. Hashem made air free for a good reason. You gotta breathe, but it's hard to breathe when your undies are in a bunch, no?

Gevalt, chaver. It's a simple thing we are talking about here. Simple enough for any inner city dropout to grasp and do.

You can do this, I can do this. Even *Cordnoy* can do this.

Relax and do it (if you want to).

Not simple at all. Who cares who's doing it? It's a huge madreiga. And the proof is that all those people you describe only make that step when there is no other way out and when they have hit their bottom.

Which is why someone who is ready for it will grab on to it like a drowning man a piece of wood and everyone else looks at you like you're funny and crazy.

To get help when you know you have a problem and it's fatal, not such a "groise madreiga".

To know and ADMIT to yourself, G-d, and others that it's fatal- HUGE.

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Re: Tryin'

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Yeah ... I guess the perfectionist in me that wants to feel unique and special and worthy and "different than those other guys" was in the drivers seat when I wrote that. Thanks for taking the time.

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[Dov wrote on 15 May 2016 22:43:](#)

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That sucks. But it's where so many of us are, no shaylo.

You wanna be there?

I haven't hit rock bottom. Obviously. Life still sucks when I act out. I do realize life in sobriety is so so so much better and sweeter. I want an incentive to work the steps because I know it's better for me. Focusing on all the good life has to offer when I'm sober is that incentive. Is it wrong ??

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Re: Tryin'

Posted by cordnoy - 15 May 2016 23:23

It's not wrong, but for some people, it won't be the changer.

Did you not know before that life is good when sober? Maybe, maybe not.

We can't provide the incentive.

We can share what works for us.

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Re: Tryin'

Posted by mggsbms - 15 May 2016 23:38

[cordnoy wrote on 15 May 2016 23:23:](#)

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So then what will ?

Life was great in my 33 years of sobriety, then I lost my way. But I didn't have tools to get sober. Now I think I do. So i need to remember how good life was and could still be to do the step work.

I'll provide the incentive you provide the chizuk.

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Re: Tryin'

Posted by cordnoy - 16 May 2016 00:21

[mggsbms wrote on 15 May 2016 23:38:](#)

[cordnoy wrote on 15 May 2016 23:23:](#)

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Chizuk is for the gye emails and some other threads. No coddling here. This is hardcore.

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Re: Tryin'

Posted by mggsbms - 16 May 2016 00:33

Ok never mind...

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Re: Tryin'

Posted by markz - 16 May 2016 00:38

[mggsbms wrote on 21 Aug 1974 16:51:](#)

Ok never mind...

Are you leaving this hardcore thread?

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Re: Tryin'

Posted by mggsbms - 16 May 2016 00:40

[markz wrote on 16 May 2016 00:38:](#)

[mggsbms wrote on 21 Aug 1974 16:51:](#)

Ok never mind...

Are you leaving this hardcore thread?

How can I ? I'll just do without the choizek ..oops I mean chizuk

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Re: Tryin'

Posted by skeptical - 16 May 2016 16:24

I believe that nobody really can say what made them finally decide to actually change the tide.

I believe that if we are tuned in, Hashem makes something click in our minds, and we take a step in the right direction.

I believe that it's very much like a child who stands for the first time. He was incapable of doing that before that moment, but Hashem made something click, and then he was ready.

Let your mind "live" around the types of behaviors you want to follow, and eventually it will click for you too, b'ezras Hashem.

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Re: Tryin'

Posted by Dov - 16 May 2016 21:50

[mggsbms wrote on 16 May 2016 00:33:](#)

Ok never mind...So then what will ?

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I'll provide the incentive you provide the chizuk.

OK, here is some chizzuk, and I am serious, no games:

There is a way you can become motivated to do these things, and that is **by not acting out your lust**. It actually works in reverse for some people (actually for most people it works both ways). Admittedly, this is a scary-sounding path, but I guarantee it will not kill you. My heart tells me, based on your particular writing, that it will help.

I do not know if you are married, I apologize but i forgot. If you are, then drop sex for a few months completely. If you are actually able to speak with your wife about this and she is happy to join you in your efforts even at the cost of dropping sex for a few months, then you are very lucky. Do it. Make a formal agreement (my wife and I did it in writing) that between this date and that date, there will be no sex. Hand-holding plenty, light kissing, sure, and lots of closeness...but nothing sexual. Just calm, close friendship as husband and wife. Lots of real intimacy is what the two of you will get, in return.

And yes, she should go to the mikvah as normal. We had to make some agreements about how to behave the night my wife went to the mikvah during those months in order to relieve the sexual triggers and pressure from the inner 'clock' for both of us (especially me)...but be"H - and with a little help from a close and understanding (and sober) friend - you will be able to do this together right. If she agrees and is OK with being very patient with you and participating.

Shockingly, it will end up being the easiest period of sobriety you have ever had. The exact opposite of what so many GYE guys would suggest. But I know it from experience and the experience of all the other guys I know who have done it. If you are begging for a way out and for a 'bottom', then assume that sex of any kind is toxic to you. Just for a few months. It is worth a try. It will wake up inside you a *dependence upon G-d* that you never knew you even had.

And one month is not enough for this to work, at all. Most of us will simply revert to holding our breath, as we have many, many times trying to white-knuckle our way through the '90-day wall of honor'. We will simply tell ourselves, "Nah, I can hold out w/o sex this month and maybe next month, because I am sure that Shprintza (your wife) will give me even more sex than ever then anyhow, admiring my self-control." This will not do. It will ruin the entire effect and waste the entire experience (just like 90-day charts often do). Three months is worthwhile, at the least.

That's proven by the fact that when it comes down to actually *doing* this, three months seems suicidally stupid to us and crazy. And 'just unnecessary'. Four months is even better, as we did, be"H.

Now, of course dropping sex temporarily is not enough. So, regardless of whether you are, or are *not* married, during this period (and I think 3 months is usually right for starters) you can agree not masturbate even once nor to ever touch yourself in a sexual way. Simply agree that come hell or high water you will adhere to that. I realized that I was looking down at my privates while urinating...that was part of why the bathroom was so often the 'secret hideaway' I and most of us use for sex with ourselves (masturbation). I stopped looking at my privates, except when genuinely necessary. I did not become fastidious and OCD about it - if it was helpful to

look, then I looked - but I just calmly gave it up as a bad habit among many others.

Part of this includes no sexual fantasies. As soon as you become aware that you are running the mental video - just drop them, surrender them, give them up. Pray sincerely for all the men and women in the porn you were remembering, or the person you were fantasizing about and ask Hashem to please, please give **them** everything they will need in this lifetime that He is giving them to make this life precious and truly good for them. No need to pity them and pray that Hashem should get them to finally stop being so pritzus...for who is the one worshiping them? Me. So instead of looking down at them at all, I would do better to admit that had I been born in their shoes and had *their* upbringing, I'd likely be the same as they turned out or perhaps even worse. So we are equals in some respect - screwed up people on G-d's earth.

Now, if you find that this sincere praying does not help you move on without the fantasy, then call an understanding (sober) friend and admit the entire desire. Rav Elimelech zy"a writes just this (and he isn't even talking to addicts - certainly addicts would benefit by it). Don't squeeze your eyes tight and beg G-d to take your desires away...no fast and 'desperate shukeling' - none of that will help. It will only hurt...badly. As the Shulchan Aruch writes, "*It is essential **not** to believe that the **intensity** of your prayers is what is making it work instead of the simple charity (Chessed) from G-d that you can never deserve anyway.*" (I paraphrase) And the ShaLo"H actually writes this is Pshat in Hashem telling Moshe Rabbeinu "Mah titz'ak elai?" - He meant to say to Moshe that he should not daven so hard. For if he does, the bnei Yisroel will likely believe that Kriyas Yam suf happened because of *Moshe's* will, not because of *Hashem's* Will!

As addicts, we more than any other people, I think, need to recuse or disqualify ourselves from G-d's decision-making process in a very practical and concrete way. One way of doing this is to quit self-pleasuring. Recovering addicts who choose the 12 steps, agree (as AA suggests in Ch 5) to abandon ourselves to G-d as much as we are able (it will only be a little, surely), and to let go of people and life and let G-d do His Will. We try to do the best we can, and yet leave the outcomes completely to Him and Him alone. This is radically different from how we were till now. I assume you may agree. Trying to do that and failing, is always because of our character defects - and that is why steps 4-7 follow step 3 immediately. If you find this is the issue, then avail yourself of those steps exactly as they are written, and you will find relief, chaver. It really works, if you really work it. As we are, we are only comfortable in the Driver's seat - we determine when we will orgasm, by masturbating ourselves on demand, for example. When the going gets tough, we masturbate...no? And that is just the tip of the iceberg of our controlling. Gevalt, we need G-d, perhaps more than anybody does.

I assume, mggsbms, that perhaps you do not see it that way, but rather you may see yourself as just masturbating or porning because of the desire coming on of it's own, unrelated to 'life problems'. You may not really buy that sex with yourself is and always has been primarily an

escape from life, G-d, yourself, your circumstances....**but I believe that by removing (all) sex and all acting out from your life for a few months, the truth will declare itself for you clearly, irrespective of whether you are or are not an addict.**

How does that sound to you? Doable? You looked for help and I sincerely believe this will bring you over the bridge you can't cross, to the bottom-line you feel you need to see. I believe that if you do it, you will find the truth about yourself. And it may be quite pleasant. You may discover that you are not an addict at all. Either way, it will probably be good for you.

You are a very good man. Hatzlocha whatever you do!

- Dov

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Re: Tryin'

Posted by mggsbms - 16 May 2016 22:40

Thanks Dov I'm touched by your heartfelt sincere advice. A lot to digest but it makes sense. I'm not sure I'm ready to jump so will see.

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Re: Tryin'

Posted by cordnoy - 17 May 2016 00:20

In short, Dov instructed as follows:

1. No sex for three or four months (preferably in writing).
2. No masturbation or looking at privates.
3. No fantasies. If yes, stop, surrender, pray for them, or call a friend and relate entire episode.

4. Do steps 4-7.

Is this correct?

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