

i'm sitting with my tefillin on....

Posted by afreshstart39 - 27 Aug 2013 21:54

...and got nothing to say!!!

tefilah for me is just a no go,

every time i daven i feel like a failure because i know that i must daven but when i do i feel literally nothing and that makes me upset because i cant connect to hashem,

when i use my own words its better, better, but i keep getting the feeling that he isn't listening

i feel that the only times i ever felt that He answered or was at least listening was when i prayed with my own words, even then i still feel disconnected from him,

i thought that being clean would open some door for me in this area but it hasn't, i will hopefully stay clean because of the pain that i was in when i wasn't but its so hard to let go and let god when i don't feel anything for it at all

anyone have any advice?

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Re: i'm sitting with my tefillin on....

Posted by chesky - 28 Aug 2013 14:25

[afreshstart39 wrote:](#)

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feelings shmeelings!

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If you are have expectations from recovery, then that is not letting go. You are expecting HaShem to give you recovery according to YOUR rules and give you the feelings YOU want.

[afreshstart39 wrote:](#)

anyone have any advice?

Yes, stop feeling!

I so identify with everything you wrote. You can go back to my posts from three years ago and you will find stuff pretty much the same, and I learnt that just like my feelings for lust, all my feelings about how HaShem relates to me etc ARE SIMPLY NOT TRUE. (The reality is that He loves us unconditionally).

I admit that I am powerless over these feelings. They also make my life unmanageable (thank you for reminding me by sharing where these feelings took you).

May HaShem grant us a day of sobriety and samity.

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Re: i'm sitting with my tefillin on....

Posted by Pidaini - 28 Aug 2013 14:36

Thanks chesky, we are always so busy with how we feel and use that as our measurement to happiness. We need to let go about how things are going to feel and live the life we are given!!

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Re: i'm sitting with my tefillin on....

Posted by afreshstart39 - 28 Aug 2013 17:59

how do you measure anything without some type of feelings?

i understand that i cant control the type of feelings i will have, but how long can i continue to daven without feeling anything?

i go on on these streaks of making minyan everyday, and it wears off, so i realized that i was praying only to fit the mold of life i am in, but even when i try and tap into real tefillah and learn about it and apply the principles of it, the streak only lasts so long and then withers away,

if we cant rely on these feelings we have to measure the world around us, how do we do anything?

how can i trust in hashem if i cant feel something? how can i walk around saying that belief is important whether or not you feel it, and that emunah is on His terms not mine? all that takes away any motivation i have to continue doing what i am doing, to continue to be clean and to be sane.

without my feelings i wouldn't be clean today!

so those same feelings that are helping me be clean today, are non existant when it comes to tefilah, so why should i bother with the tefilah? it just makes me more frustrated with it that causes me stress and can chas v'shalom cause a trigger.

dont get me wrong, i believe in hashem and i believe that when i feel the inspiration to pray i will use my own words to talk to him, but regular tefilah just makes me feel like a failure, and when i feel like a failure i fall.

and it doesn't help that i live in a frum environment where you are some kind of apikores if you dont daven the way everyone else does.

i also believe that there are no longer any apikorsim anymore, because this generation is fueled by emotions and feelings and the apikorsim were from an an age that was fueled by intellectual ability.

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Re: i'm sitting with my tefillin on....

Posted by chesky - 28 Aug 2013 18:51

[afreshstart39 wrote:](#)

without my feelings i wouldn't be clean today!

My friend, I so relate to where you are coming from. I was and am so dependent on my feelings and emotions that I had no idea that they were not reality.

if you are like i was and am, I can assure you that based on the line i quoted, that your feelings which are keeping you clean today *are also going to make you act-out*. i am no wise-guy or shrink; just plain experience and learning it the hard way, that those feelings which I was and am sooooo dependent on as you described so well yourself, are what made my life unmanageable.

And believe me accepting this it was a hard one to swallow. I felt like i was being told that i had lived a lie my whole life. It took a long time to admit defeat and it did not happen in one day. It is a progress which i have only just begun, one day at a time.

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Re: i'm sitting with my tefillin on....

Posted by RoshYeshivasSon - 28 Aug 2013 19:22

afreshstart39

because this generation is fueled by emotions and feelings and the apikorsim were from an age that was fueled by intellectual ability.

I disagree; I think this generation is fueled **MORE** by the intellect than many others, with the possible exception of medieval Spain. Think about it. The last decade or so is the first in which the general population in the western world is mainly well-educated. People have to think that something makes sense to them before they accept it. This creates many problems because to "know" something scientifically can be very different than accepting something rationally (for example, the statement "The Taj Mahal is a beautiful building" cannot be scientifically proven, yet it is a truth of the world we are rational to accept), and this is a distinction that people have a very hard time understanding.

On the other hand, maybe the STABILITY of people's intellect has taken a turn for the worse, as evidenced by the boom of the mental-health profession. But how can we know whether this is truly new or simply newly addressed?

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Re: i'm sitting with my tefillin on....

Posted by afreshstart39 - 28 Aug 2013 19:39

so my day-to-day work should be on not feeling? instead of not acting out?

how am i supposed to go through a day with not feeling?

how should i have faith in God and not feel? wouldn't that be the great lie of just doing it because the rabbi said to do it? i have done that in my past, and i cant do it anymore. i cant "believe" just because i am supposed to believe, i cant just daven because i am supposed to daven, that's the type of things that is destroying our youth today. the youth feel that emunah,

torah, and tefilah are just being rammed down our throat for no rhyme or reason. they acquire a bad taste in their mouth for anything Jewish because they are told that their feelings are not important and that as long as they keep it in line they will be okay, and baruch hashem for those who break out of that system and rebel, because they at least have a chance to see how to change it all for themselves, although it is sad that they all usually fall into bad places, but the ones that fake their Judaism is worse, because they are too scared to do anything on their own and they go through the system very bitter, and that is why we are seeing all the issues today with the divorce rate skyrocketing and molestation out of control and that is why a lot of us are here on this site, because we needed to find a way for us to cope with the phony lives we were fed, and fell to porn and sex addiction because of it, and then we realized we destroyed ourselves and then on GYE we started to realize that there is more to everything in this life, there's more to life itself, there is more to Judaism than just fitting in and looking the part, metoch lo lishma... has been perverted to mean "fake it till you make it", but the faking is killing us and forcing us to find other ways to feel better.

i am ready to give up porn, and masturbation, and even sex with my wife, and i am willing to give up my feelings that go with them, and i am even willing to give up feelings that are wrong and destructive, and replace them with positive ones even if that takes work, but to give up on feelings itself i cant do.

i just cant do that, that to me is a zombie existence and is destroying society and that will cause me to act out, because repressing my feelings, even the difficult ones will just sit inside until it explodes and i'm off to the races again acting out.

i understand that as an addict i cannot trust all my feelings and i need to learn how to channel my emotions into positive things but to give it up? that will literally kill me, that will force me back to porn, and internet cafes etc...

i know this because i have tried this countless times. my whole life since i started with this acting out business i have been trying to find a way out of it, and many times i just said to myself, "dont think or feel just do, dont think or feel just do" all i did was fall fall fall fall all the way down.

my clean streak now is only because i am learning to deal with my emotions and although some of my emotions are difficult, like fear, it is slowly being channeled towards healthy good things. the feelings give me a reading of where i am holding

when i feel terrible when i pray, the answer will not be to just pray and just do it, that is stupid. how can i do that when for years and years all i ever felt when i prayed was this terrible

disconnect. i would never ever pray again ever if it means that i will go back into porn!

again that is referring to regular prayer. i pray all the time with my own words, and that helps me a lot, but tefillin and tallis and the three times daily are not just a waste of time for me, it hurts me and i want nothing to do with it.

i feel that sometimes we would be better off in times before the first beis hamikdash was destroyed and tall the prayers were personal. today i just feel like a dead zombie in shul. the only enjoyment i get in shul is the singing part because i like to sing and i like music, that's all!

i am sorry for the rant but that's the way i "feel". again i don't think this is apikorses because they don't really exist anymore.

i hear that the mantra is if you want to be clean badly enough then you will d anything!

that is correct and true that is what what brought me back to sobriety, but asking me not to feel is like asking me not to breathe, however badly i want to not breathe i will breathe even if the air is not so perfect we all still need to breathe, and my emotions are like that, i just need to figure out my clean emotions, and so far tefilah is only bringing me bad air, and bad emotions that will make me act out.

tefilalh itself is not making me act out, but the feelings it brings up for me are the type that make me want to escape and and act out.

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Re: i'm sitting with my tefillin on....

Posted by afreshstart39 - 28 Aug 2013 19:58

[RoshYeshivasSon wrote:](#)

afreshstart39

because this generation is fueled by emotions and feelings and the apikorsim were from an age that was fueled by intellectual ability.

I disagree; I think this generation is fueled **MORE** by the intellect than many others, with the possible exception of medieval Spain. Think about it. The last decade or so is the first in which the general population in the western world is mainly well-educated. People have to think that something makes sense to them before they accept it. This creates many problems because to "know" something scientifically can be very different than accepting something rationally (for example, the statement "The Taj Mahal is a beautiful building" cannot be scientifically proven, yet it is a truth of the world we are rational to accept), and this is a distinction that people have a very hard time understanding.

On the other hand, maybe the STABILITY of people's intellect has taken a turn for the worse, as evidenced by the boom of the mental-health profession. But how can we know whether this is truly new or simply newly addressed?

i guess it may seem to some that today's age is getting into more intellectual levels, but its mainly wrong i am sorry. the only ones left are the few professors at large and the ones that are learning (the way they are supposed too) in Yeshivah.

just look at who is idolized in today's generation, actors and models (our own poison) and athletes. these are the people we are dying to get their autographs and we hope we meet them in a public space so we can go back and tell everyone about it. even a yeshiveshe guy who goes around saying things like movies are maves and stuff like that, will be excited to tell his friends the next day "i saw a prussed actor on my street yesterday, whuuut..." we dont say these things when it comes to science or philosophy, we dont run after them for their autographs, as we mature maybe we learn to appreciate them but not that it is a motivator in our lives, the top motivators today are sex, money, and power! when we hear a good vort, we feel good about it if we get it (otherwise we say things like "teef teef")

your proof about the taj mahal is really a proof to my side, just because we can't prove that the taj mahal is a beautiful building we must use our emotional senses to judge

information and intellectual abilities are two different things, we have a lot more information

today, but we are fueled by feeling and emotion

if that werent true then Hollywood and the porn business would be out on their heads

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Re: i'm sitting with my tefillin on....

Posted by RoshYeshivasSon - 28 Aug 2013 20:16

AFS29

the youth feel

I must admit being a little puzzled at how you quote "The youth."

I know plenty of "youth" that don't fit your caricatures. In fact, most of them don't.

Many times when people accuse others of being "fakers," they are either frustrated themselves at their inability to preform similarly, or are frustrated at human failings that are universal among mankind; the fact that someone steals does not make his worldview false or his speeches fake, it simply tells us that he is human.

If people would understand that, we wouldn't need these "unrealistic over-the-top Gedolim book" Genre.

Or maybe they are the cause.

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Re: i'm sitting with my tefillin on....

Posted by RoshYeshivasSon - 28 Aug 2013 20:21

I think your mostly right about being driven mainly by emotion, but I think it was always that way, and a little less so today.

You think porn, if available, would not have been just as abused in any other century? I don't know how we could know.

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Re: i'm sitting with my tefillin on....

Posted by Pidaini - 28 Aug 2013 21:53

AFS39, first Chesky brought up a very important point. perhaps we are using feelings differently, but let me ask you this, when you are going to wake up in the morning feeling any negative way, or in just a plain bad mood, what is going to stop you from falling?

Do you think that Gedolim never feel down? Do you think that life is going exactly as they want? If yes I have news for you, it's just not like that.

The point is that we do not choose our lives, and it is never going to go exactly the way we wanted. Hashem runs the world, and He runs it with infinite wisdom that we cannot ever fathom to comprehend. He puts us exactly where we are supposed to be, in which setting, with all our feelings, and it's all perfectly good.

We have expectations of how things are going to look when we do things right, and based on those expectations we judge if we did the right thing. Do you realize how twisted that is, how selfcentered we are?

Hashem told us to rely on him, accept with love what I give you with love. A lot of times we don't "feel" the connection, but as long as we know that we are in the hands of the All Powerfull, why do we need to feel anything? I could feel down, but I am able to run life normally because I know that it is that very same Hashem who is making feel that way, and I don't need to know why, it doesn't make a difference.

Just a humble opinion of someone who used to take feelings way too seriously.

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Re: i'm sitting with my tefillin on....

Posted by MendelZ - 28 Aug 2013 23:39

I think Pidaini is right on the money.

Feelings are great. Ahavas Hashem and Yiras Hashem are the feelings that we should all have. The problem is that we are used to looking at every single thing through the prism of our own self, from the IDEA that "we like to feel good/we don't like to feel bad". From that vantage point, "feelings" are just us being aware of our own self-driven made up version of reality, a reality where we are important INDEPENDENT of Hashem and what He wants from us. (And that is just plain ridiculous.)

So unless we can see the truth - that Hashem is the sole power Who creates my experience moment by moment with love, wisdom and benevolence - until we SEE that as true, our feelings are basically "feelings shmeelings". (Once we see the truth of what we really are - a being designed to serve, then our "self" is much, much less about ego and we can simply live life without NEEDING to feel good. Feelings are no longer something that demands my attention. I can be fine with feeling not so good because my identity, my very essence, is not made up of whether or not I "feel" good.)

Whenever we start getting really busy with our "feelings", that is an indication that we should rethink our most basic premise. Are we and the way we want things to be really that important? Maybe Hashem's vision for us is just a little more perfect, a little more right, a little more worthwhile.

Does that make any sense?

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Re: i'm sitting with my tefillin on....

Posted by afreshstart39 - 29 Aug 2013 05:52

i am beginning to understand what you all are driving at, but i am left with no other option,

what is the alternative to not feeling?

in a way roshyeshivahson is right, i believe and see what i believe and see based on what i experienced for myself, and i know that i cant go back to that place of faking it, that place caused me to fall,

so i cant feel because that is being too self absorbed but i cant fake it because that will make me fall, so what is left, and i am sorry to say it like this, but don't tell me that whats left is LIFE!!! because line never worked and is plain silly,

perhaps i should stop feeling, i see what you are saying that feelings are an expression of how we want the world to look to us, and they don't exactly match up with what hashem wants from us, so please please please tell me my options, this is what i have been searching for my whole life! everyone here seems to get this that you just do it and let go and let god and whatever but it never has made any sense to me, anytime i let go it was just a blank wall staring back at me and although i know that there is hashem, i cant live with that knowledge and keep it up in my head, i need something more, and if i cant feel what am i supposed to do

i hope you can hear me reaching out to you, this pain has gripped me for a very long time and i think it is from the place where i got into porn to begin with, i feel alone and disconnected from god and so i learn how to feel god again through chassidus or whatever but that's just feeling, so over here that's a problem, so tell me what i am supposed to do?????????

i am not asking to just feel good all the time i am asking for that feeling that there is something something and if the option is 'so who cares how you feel' or "feelings shmeelings" what the hell is left????!!!!!!!!!

to fake it? that's whats left? give me all the pain in the world as long as i know that the davening

and things i do are reaching someplace that i am doing something because that's killing me,

whats funny is when i don't pray like normal i am fine, i don't break down, when i get up in the morning and i feel down, i think about getting through this day and this day alone and that the days is almost over, you can do it, remember the miserable pain you were in when you were looking at porn and freaking out every time you saw a girl (thank god for charedim, and their segregation or else i don't know what i would have done), i think about all the productive things i am going to do today, because i know that i am talented and good at what i do, and i know that hashem wants me to be good and to keep doing good, but when i pray the tefilah three times a day i am in an empty place and i cant help but to keep thinking that is is just so stupid, what am i doing here this is so totally utterly meaningless i could be doing something productive instead of wasting my time here, hashem knows me, and i do talk to him, so why are we here.

and if the three times a day prayer is soooo important than why does everyone in the Jewish world treat it like a dirty rag? you are in and out and finito, and i know there are those who are taking it more seriously, but we all know they are rare so what are we doing for 45 minutes except sit there and feel like we are wasting time, now i read seforim alot during the tefilah to pass the time

if i could see a clear path and that i know where not feeling is going to lead me then great but if its just "well god has a different plan for you" then why all this nonsense?

i know i am rambling but i am trying to express something and i am not really sure how, i guess there are times when i do feel god and that is usually when i am inspired and doing whats right, and there are times when i am forced to do things that are nonsense and i cant connect and its all just a waste of time and i feel bad because i know that i am missing something but i just learned that i cant feel and so i am left with just being a zombie, so why would i ever do all those things? why not cut out of my life anything that will make me potentially fall?

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Re: i'm sitting with my tefillin on....

Posted by chesky - 29 Aug 2013 10:49

[afreshstart39 wrote:](#)

what is the alternative to not feeling?

I am sorry but I think that what I wrote earlier to "stop feeling" was misunderstood.

To tell me to stop feeling, is like telling me to stop breathing or telling me just to stop lusting. Obviously I cannot. These are inbuilt reactions in our system. And yes, feelings and emotions are divine gifts, if they are used correctly (just like lust and sex).

But I learnt the hard and painful way, that my addictive mind developed a dependency on emotional highs and lows which I had misconstrued as being religious emotion and spiritual connection. (I am really not generalizing here. For normal people it is probably natural to experience emotions and connect them in a balanced way with their avodas HaShem. I am not opening a debate about the place of emotions in Yiddishkeit).

And it made my life unmanageable. I could not handle the downs, and I was unaware that as much as I loved them, neither could I handle the highs, and especially bad was coping with the decline of the high which would inevitably come.

Besides for this my entire day revolved around whether I was in Hashem's good books for the day or not. Coming late for daavening, missing my chavrusa, yelling at my kids etc would make me feel bad and cause a chain reaction which would end with either acting out or freaking out. And of course acting out had its own whole place in how close or far I was (feeling) to HaShem that day. (Thank you for reminding me, I really do not want to go back there).

So yes, I love my feelings as much as I love sex. But I have a reaction to both of these which make my life unmanageable. And today I have come to believe that HaShem can help me find in Him what I was searching for in sex and emotions.

Again these are things which took a long time and willingness to let go. And yes, it was hell. Daavening, leearning, everything lost their purpose for me. But with the help of HaShem through SA today I accept myself for who I am and just for today attempt to the best of my

ability to do HaShem's will.

Today with the help of HaShem I have something much more precious than feelings; the gift of serenity .

May Hashem grant us a sober and sane day.

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Re: i'm sitting with my tefillin on....

Posted by Pidaini - 29 Aug 2013 12:28

I would like to try to say what chesky said (if I read him right) in different words.

First thing is that we are live human beings. Live Human beings feel. period. to tell a human being to stop feeling is telling him to drop dead.

BUT, those feeling that we have do not necessarily have anything to do with reality, we feel down even when everything is going good, we feel angry or hurt even when nothing really bad was done to us. Those feelings are not in our control, they are part of the greater world of which we have no control.

What is in our control is to realize that, and not act or react based on those feelings. If we know what is right we should be able to do those things regardless of what our feelings are *and that will "feel" great*. We need to accept that our life is given to us by Hashem, and He wants us to connect to Him by doing just that, realizing that we are entirely in His hands. Let go of the way we think we need to feel, and just talk directly to the source, for no reason other than connecting to that source.

That is not faking, that is the biggest truth. Hashem is the biggest truth and if we connect to Him for no other reason than just to connect to Him, then we are really alive.

as Dov would end off, Oy, am I selfish!

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Did that make any sense