

Powerless

Posted by waydown - 31 Aug 2015 19:05

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Can someone please explain the concept of powerlessness in laymans terms. If Cordnoy or Avraham from the 120 call is reading this I'd love to hear your explanation.

Here are my questions;

So we keep on saying that we are used to two choices either give in or fight but there is a third choice that we are powerless. What does that mean practically?

Say we are in the pizza store, at an amusement park, work etc.. and we are faced with lust. Ok so now we say we are powerless now what? I realize I don't want the lust but I am powerless. Ok so now can we just look and lust at the attractive female? After all hey we are powerless. It sounds like a feel good thing to me. It sounds like ok yes we don't want to do it so we just say he we are powerless then we can do what we want. Don't we still need to have the altitude that no we must fight lust? I just don't get what feeling defeat mean? Now what?

Unless you mean ok on the granular level when faced with a challenge yes we must fight. But our altitude about the fight must be that we can't win the fight alone. We must be part of a group reach out to others, reach out to hashem most importantly. So before we fight the battle we have to have a mindset that we need air power together witha our own gorund forces because we are powerless. But of course when faced with a challenge we must say no we are in power to stop us form falling. I am not so sure this solution is what you guys mean though.

Also you guys keep on saying "till now we thought we can't survive without our lust. But once we realize we are powerless we see we don't need the lust and we won't die." Well why is that connected to the powerless factor. Say I think I am powerful and I say lets declare war and go by a perido of time without giving into my lust, I will still realize that I don't need the lust and won't die. I don't see why admitting one is powerless is a key to realizng we won't die without lust.

Basiclly I need someone to explain the powerless rule in laymans terms because I just don't get it. Note I am not against that whitebook or SA handbook but please I don't relate to physcological jargon. I need it more lamasa. I just don't understand that lingo. Please explain

this in simple terms. I am not knocking at all that approach, I just don't speak that language and don't get it. So I need some help for us simpletons.

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Re: Powerless

Posted by cordnoy - 01 Sep 2015 02:34

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[waydown wrote:](#)

Hard to understand what you mean exactly because once the itch is there davening alone won't take it away. I guess I just don't fully grasp the concept. I'll take your word for it though.

You wrote: davening alone won't take it away. Implicit in that is that you are attempting to do something to take it away. That is exactly the point of what we are not doing. We are not taking it away. We are telling God we can't.....You deal with it....And please don't ask me what will happen next.

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Re: Powerless

Posted by waydown - 01 Sep 2015 03:34

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Ok well I guess I lack in emuna then. Because logically that's surely hard to grasp. By simply asking Hashem to deal with it magic problem solved. Sounds nice & simple.

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Re: Powerless

Posted by cordnoy - 01 Sep 2015 10:04

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[waydown wrote:](#)

Ok well I guess I lack in emuna then. Because logically that's surely hard to grasp. By simply

asking hashem to deal with it magic probelm solved. Sounds nice & simple.

Very little to do with emunah....at least in the beginning.

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Re: Powerless

Posted by waydown - 01 Sep 2015 14:10

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If its not based on emuna how the heck am I suppose to believe that because I say hashem I am powerless its in your hands then all is good?

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Re: Powerless

Posted by Shlomo24 - 01 Sep 2015 16:44

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who said that we will have instant results?! also i have found, even though i have sufficient emunah issues, that my higher power takes away the lust if i truly surrender. why is that? b/c higher power and religion have nothing to do with each other, if they were the same thing then no atheist would be sober. after a while some people incorporate the two, some people do it right away. but for me, at least right now, hashem is not my higher power. maybe in the future. but i have too many misconceptions and negative feelings of hashem (hence the emunah issues) to have hashem as my higher power. i'm still frum btw.

additionally, if hashem can create the world, then you think he can't take away a lustful thought?

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Re: Powerless

Posted by MJB - 01 Sep 2015 17:49

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I wrote this in my 90 day thread perhaps this can help:

[MBJ wrote:](#)

So powerlessness is pretty basic for me to understand. Powerless means for me, not that I have no control at all. I just have no control once I start. Meaning taking that first sip can end in nothing, or it can end in a giant fall.

Either way I am powerless to control the outcome once I start.

I do have the power to not take the first sip. I have the power to close the bottle at the first whiff of lust.

But what is surrender? What am I surrendering? Who am I surrendering to?

So I was reading the white book and now I think I understand. I used to think I was surrendering my lust. But that just doesn't work for me. After all don't they say that one of the mistakes is asking G-d to take it away so we don't have to. Removing lust has to come from us, we have to want it.

So what I understand now is that I am surrendering the right to do the bad thought or action. I say to myself or to my higher power, I have no right or entitlement to this thought, feeling, or action. It could be lust, resentment, anger whatever. But I acknowledge that this thing does not belong in me. I am not entitled. When I make that acknowledgement, it become much easier to let it go.

In other words the surrender doesn't make it go away, the surrender allows me to take it away.

This goes back to the realization that shocked me early on, that I will not die without sex, or porn, or masturbation. By the same token I will not die without lust, fantasy, anger or resentment. That surrender is such a freeing beautiful thing. I was just in a tough spot, so I surrendered several thoughts and actions even multiple times as they kept repeating themselves. It was so incredibly liberating. It just made me smile.

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Re: Powerless

Posted by waydown - 01 Sep 2015 19:52

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Well the not die thing I totally don't get. Why is that connected to powerless. Those of us who thought oh we had power fought and won some battles realized that the we won't die without lust either. I recentley fought the idea that I can't fall asleep with masterbation and realized that I don't masterbation to fall asleep. So yes I won't die without it. Why do you need the feel

powerless to come to the realization that we won't die without it?

Re the general powerlessness, I totally get how after the first drink we powerless. Once it kicks in its like we passed by a devil. Or as R shayis Taub explains thats where our obsession kicks in. But you guys seem to argue that no even that first drink we are powerless. And this notion of leaving it to a higher power makes zero sense if you are an atheist. Athiests believe there is no higher power so what and whom are you leaving it to? And logically what the heck is the whole thing suppose to mean. Say I sit near a pretty girl in work. Every day before I come in I say oh some higher power will help me. Now when she flirts magic I won't lust any more. This whole higher power thing just defies logic. Why should it help? It makes no sense. Unless you go with an emuna or bderech shrotzim lelch molichaim asi. But without judiasm its all just mush physiology feel good stuff. Sorry I don't mean to knock it I just don't get it.

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Re: Powerless

Posted by waydown - 01 Sep 2015 20:10

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So who is this magic higher power if not hashem? Do you mean every human has a power within him that he nver thought he had? If not what does all this mean.

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Re: Powerless

Posted by eslaasos - 01 Sep 2015 20:14

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[waydown wrote:](#)

And this notion of leaving it to a higher power makes zero sense if you are an atheist. Athiests believe there is no higher power so what and whom are you leaving it to?

My therapist told me last night that if you push AA they can't decide if Higher Power means G-d and he asked me the same question, except he asked if it's avodah zarah or paganism? His point was that the 12 steps can be helpful but is not the final answer.

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Re: Powerless

Posted by Bigmoish - 01 Sep 2015 20:17

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Have you read the "big book?"

It discusses this very issue in the chapter called "We agnostics."

I can offer you my opinion, but why not read what AA has to say about it first, before listening to the opinion of a random anonymous sex addict?

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Re: Powerless

Posted by cordnoy - 01 Sep 2015 20:17

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Read the chapter called "We Agnostics."

It isn't the Bible by the way.

Also read the introduction, where it says that the program is best explained by workin' it.

You don't wanna? That's fine as well.

Your prerogative.

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Re: Powerless

Posted by eslaasos - 01 Sep 2015 20:38

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[Bigmoish wrote:](#)

Have you read the "big book?"

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It discusses this very issue in the chapter called "We agnostics."

I can offer you my opinion, but why not read what AA has to say about it first, before listening to the opinion of a random anonymous sex addict?

Hi Moish,

I don't know if your post was directed to me or waydown, but I have now read that chapter, and am indeed interested in the opinion of a random anonymous addiction fighter.

Just one point, that chapter was addressing agnostics and atheists. Waydown is neither.

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Re: Powerless

Posted by waydown - 01 Sep 2015 20:41

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I will gladly read that suggested chapter?

Re, "the program is best explained by workin' it." How does one work on it? Isn't the work all about changing our mind and altitude? How does one change his mind if there is no logic?

Re "you don't wanna" Well is that fine? I surely don't want to live a life of a lust addict. Now my question is what are my choices? Its not like there is a variet of treatments out there and you pick what works best with your DNA. It seems like there is either the 12 steps or nothing. If my choices are take it or leave it then I have to take it. I just don't get what I am taking.

Perhaps someone has a link to R Shayas Taub on how leaving it to a higher authority helps us recover?? I listened to his shuir last nite and it was a complete blow out absolutley amazing!!!!

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Re: Powerless

Posted by Bigmoish - 01 Sep 2015 21:05

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[eslaasos wrote:](#)

Just one point, that chapter was addressing agnostics and atheists. Waydown is neither.

I honestly have no idea what waydown's level of religious conviction is, but, as in the selection of his post that you quoted, he is asking from the perspective of an atheist.

Regarding my opinion, I am far from an expert or a scholar in matters pertaining to the 12 steps, but I personally understand "higher power" to mean God, Hashem, Master of the Universe, etc.

To me, that chapter sounds more like it's offering "diehard" atheists a loophole so they can still work the program without having to admit that they believe in God.

Now that you've read it, what do you think?

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