

making the silent battle...not.

Posted by silentbattle - 04 Dec 2009 04:12

Because isn't that why I'm here? And silent battles are always more difficult to fight. There are very few people in the "real world" (you know, the one where people lie, cheat, steal, and are) that I can talk to about this - so this is my chance, I guess.

I'm in my late 20s, single. I learned in Eretz Yisroel for a bunch of years, and had tremendous success, both in learning, in middos, and general personal growth.

When I came back to america, though, things were different. I didn't have the same social framework of the yeshiva that I'd gotten used to. Most of my friends were married, in a different country/state, or both. And the few friends who were still around were crazy busy with their own things. So there I was, lonely, without any support system to speak of, having trouble with dating, and full of the standard drives that guys have. And no real outlet for any of my emotional and physical needs.

Speaking to Uri and reading his posts, yes, I suppose I have a deeper neediness, and to me, "loneliness" includes that - the feeling of not having people to rely on, not feeling wanted, needed, etc.

So I started going to various websites - I started by using them as fuel for fantasies, but eventually ended up meeting women in real life. And while I was honest with them, and made sure they were aware that it could never become something truly serious (how ironic, that my being frum influenced me even while I was doing these terrible aveiros!), I got involved in one unhealthy relationship after another. They provided a fleeting comfort, and even some support, but nothing lasting, and in retrospect, it's no surprise that my dating wasn't very successful (even though I wasn't in any other relationships at the time of dating, I just wasn't in a very healthy place overall).

And then...Hashem helped me. I'm very close with my rebbe, but I could never bring myself to tell him about this, even though I wished he would somehow find out. Well, he did - and I was horrified, but amazingly relieved at the same time. He directed me to a therapist, and the therapist mentioned this website - so here I am.

So, the major issue I'm dealing with is not meeting people in real life - but while I'm at it, my therapist recommended trying for complete abstinence - and I thought, "why not?" After all, if I'm looking to improve myself on a ruchniyos level, then I should try to stop mz"l too, right? And, so far, so good. Clearly, Hashem has been helping me. I've been clean over a month from unhealthy relationships, and something like 11 days on the WOH.

Thank you, everyone, for being part of this group.

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Re: making the silent battle...not.

Posted by trying123 - 05 Dec 2010 05:54

Can you elaborate on the part about how growing up with love and respect caused "life" to mean difficulty, I would appreciate it...

Because I don't really understand that..

But either way I think that if when we discover evidence that concretely disproves our primitive view of life we should take note of it.

I know that I am sometimes overwhelmed with relief that I forget to go back and compare my new experiences to my old way of thinking and adjust it.

Much Success

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Re: making the silent battle...not.

Posted by silentbattle - 05 Dec 2010 06:29

Oops - rather significant typo there :-[:D

Thanks!

Hm. A good point. In other words, actively show your new circumstances to your old fears, yes?

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Re: making the silent battle...not.

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 05 Dec 2010 14:26

[silentbattle wrote on 05 Dec 2010 05:04:](#)

Thoughts, comments, disagreements, etc, all welcome...

I am anxiously awaiting the answer! Your description matches my past, too!

--Eye.

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Re: making the silent battle...not.

Posted by silentbattle - 08 Dec 2010 20:22

OK, just thinking out loud. There's a lot of pain in my past, and although I've done a lot of work in moving forward with life, the pain is still there. And pain and fear go hand in hand.

And especially when something in particular happens to bring aspects of that pain close to home (without going into specifics), the pain and fear rises to the surface. Panic, almost. The scary part is that although there are certain things that bring the fear out more strongly, to some extent, it's pain and fear connected with life in general.

So, what to do?

I think that the first step has to be accepting the fear - realizing that the fear is there, and that it is exerting considerable influence over me. When the fear and pain seeps in, I start becoming needier, more sensitive (to my own needs), I withdraw, I shut down. When I start to realize why I'm doing these things, it makes it easier to act in a more healthy fashion. I believe that I can say, "yes, I have pain connected to x,y,and z going on in my life, but that doesn't mean I have to collapse."

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Re: making the silent battle...not.

Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 08 Dec 2010 20:44

speaking to someone you trust and who can listen well would probably help alleviate some of the pain you feel. when pain is held inside the heart it grows 'a beard and payos' and assumes larger proportions. telling the right person how you feel and what associations a certain event can trigger would probably help you see it more objectively and accept it for what it is - fear. as you said.

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Re: making the silent battle...not.

Posted by silentbattle - 09 Dec 2010 07:12

Thank you, ZS. I do have several people I can talk to, but I'm using GYE as a way of examining how I feel, and getting some feedback.

Another point - one of the primary fears/sources of pain I have is the fear that I'm not good enough. That I won't succeed. That I *can't* succeed. Obviously, once this fear gets up to speed, it leads me down a dark path.

I think that one of the first steps, again, is to accept the fear, and actually get on with living my

life, reminding myself that it's *just* a fear.

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Re: making the silent battle...not.

Posted by Dov - 09 Dec 2010 15:20

[silentbattle wrote on 08 Dec 2010 20:22:](#)

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Wow. Zemmy posted a beauty:

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So Mr. Silent-hakisaki-Ninja-sifu-dude, I don't get it. Have you a 4th step in your life, yet? And especially, a 5-7th? These are indispensable tools for me and other folks....you are starting it with what you posted, but the tachlis of admitting and knowing the truth about ourselves and our defects is very limited - the solution is doing 6 and 7.

Write it(4), share it(5), and ask Him to help you give it up and get clear on whether you are sick of the fear, pride, or whatever else is wrong with you here - of if you are really not ready at all to give it up and would rather hold onto the familiar smelly blanket of those character , then give it up, to the best of your ability(7). That's the way we do it...my 2cents.

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Re: making the silent battle...not.
Posted by Dov - 09 Dec 2010 16:07

One more thing:

Do you believe that Hashem has schlepped you all this distance and carried you so far from where you could be, just to drop you on your butt now?

Are you drinking or something?

defects(6)....and if you **are** ready to shove off into new territory

He is obviously completely wild about you (figure of speech, forgive me) and will *stay* that way.

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Re: making the silent battle...not.

Posted by silentbattle - 09 Dec 2010 22:30

To be honest, I've never really done the 12 steps, although I've used some of the wisdom in them. Maybe i need to spend more time working on the steps.

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Re: making the silent battle...not.

Posted by silentbattle - 13 Dec 2010 13:01

A thought I've been considering recently: For many of us, life experiences have taught us not to expect to find happiness in life. I know for me, that's true. So, I felt a burning drive to make sure I could find as much "happiness" as possible for myself. To give myself as much pleasure as possible. Kind of like a man who knows that his food supply could disappear at any moment.

The problem is that every time we act out, we're reinforcing that desperate mindset. We're agreeing that we can't expect happiness, and it's valid for us to feel desperate, and so we need to get pleasure now, any way we can.

And the more we reinforce that feeling, the more difficult it is to escape from.

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Re: making the silent battle...not.

Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 13 Dec 2010 15:16

very true, SB, imho. it seems to me that the missing piece in this thought-cycle is the trust we should have that we will be 'provided for' by Hashem and to some extent trust in other people as well, especially a spouse.

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Re: making the silent battle...not.
Posted by briut - 13 Dec 2010 16:29

SB: I agree 1000%. (not a typo)

I'd only add that when I refrain from giving that "pleasure" to myself, I often come to ask Hashem to give me a substitute one, or even a superior one. And when His [superior] choices for me don't immediately feel as good [in that moment], I can start to feel pretty down.

So for me, the trickiest part is remembering that "I can't always get what I want, but... I can get what I need." [ha'mayvin mayvin] After all, who knows better, me or TBGU?

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Re: making the silent battle...not.
Posted by silentbattle - 13 Dec 2010 20:25

Thanks, Briut...is it possible that that feeling, as well, comes from a worry about a lack of pleasure in life, a fear of deprivation?

ZS - how do you work on feeling that more? I've been htinking about setting aside a few minutes every day to focus on remembering that hashem, my wife, life itself, are good...and that I can be happy.

More, that the ability to be happy lies in me. Darn, that's hard to remember sometimes, and harder to do.

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Re: making the silent battle...not.
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 13 Dec 2010 20:33

This idea, finding more pleasure in life, is something I've been thinking about recently.

I noticed that I often feel like some sort of piece of machinery in the great big machine that is life. I noticed it most poignantly at bed time one night--put one kid to bed, right on to the next one, done, now the next one. Move along, do your job.

When it came to our baby, I rocked him to sleep. My job was done, and I was about to place him in his crib. Then, the thought came to mind--just enjoy this for a moment. A little baby asleep in my arms. I'm his tahte, he fell asleep in my arms. And, (I know this may be cliché, but it's what I did and it worked:) I thought of a few couples I know who are not so fortunate to have children. I'm glad to finally put this baby to sleep and get on with life. But, how would THEY feel just to be blessed with a baby? To hold their own baby in their own arms. To rock him to sleep. This was already a couple of weeks ago, but I think I almost cried at the thought. Not sad, but tears of joy and appreciation.

--Eye.

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