

Chizzuk Needed

Posted by simchastorah - 04 Nov 2024 10:39

Shalom to all the courageous members of GYE, who deal with this nisayon that so many struggle with, bravely admitting to their issues and doing everything that they can to overcome it. I had a different thread in the past, but have not been active on it for a long time. I have been struggling recently and what I have tried has not helped. I have a filter, accountability with HHM, and have delved deeply into my inner life to try and understand the roots of my struggle. I daven passionately to Hashem in every way I know how to help me, but alas I find myself falling again and again.

My hisbonenus for today is to be mischazek in the emuna that Hashem has infinite koach and He can overcome my yetzer no problem. And ??? ?????? ????????. And that any voice in my head that tells me I'm bound to fail, ????? ??? ??????. As some explain the the ??? ????? is this thought itself, that I don't have the power to overcome the yetzer.

Yesterday I fell three times and by the end of the day I felt like I was living in hell. I finished a productive and meaningful morning seder and walked home davening to Hashem to help me not to fall. By the time I got home I felt that I had the chizzuk I needed to not fall. Even with being mchuzak I fell and wasted much precious time throughout the day trying to find cracks in my filter to squeeze out whatever filthy content I could.

But ????? ??????? and I am absolutely committed to not being ??????.

I am committing bli neder to posting here every day until I have 30 days clean from porn and masturbation.

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Re: Chizzuk Needed

Posted by odyossefchai - 21 Nov 2024 15:52

[simchastorah wrote on 21 Nov 2024 15:23:](#)

[odyossefchai wrote on 21 Nov 2024 15:04:](#)

[chaimoigen wrote on 21 Nov 2024 14:22:](#)

[simchastorah wrote on 21 Nov 2024 11:17:](#)

Day 18

I was thinking yesterday about the fact that when I have tkufos of improved kdusha they are usually precipitated by a sense of 'rock bottom.' As was this time (I truly hope that this is not just another 'this time' but whatever) where I fell a few times in one day, and the next day on my way home from the ??? ???? I said I absolutely need to do something today to stop that from happening again and I started posting again.

So I was anyways thinking about rock bottom, and then yesterday on a thread which was on fire the topic of rock bottom was brought up too.

There is this amazing ability to completely forget or ignore the terrible way that acting out causes me (I'm going to say me because I'm talking about myself but I assume that this is true for all or most) to feel. If I would always remember how awful I feel from doing it I would never fall again. But when the tayvah is there it's like all those feelings that I had, feelings of disgust, feelings of loneliness, feelings of disappointment in myself, feelings of being disconnected from Hashem - it's like they happened to someone else. And only when I have hit rock bottom does the terrible feeling somehow become something that I can 'remember' also afterwards and use in order to change my behavior. But as time goes on and the memory grows more distant I forget, until eventually I may be c'v met with a nisayon and I say to myself "this can't really be so bad."

So maybe I need a way to remember the rock-bottom? I really don't know. Chazering it doesn't really help in my experience, but maybe i haven't chazzered about it the right way? I don't know.

I have noticed that many, though not all, of the people on this site who have been clean the longest are people who identify as addicts ????? ?????, and have embraced the perspectives of SA. I am not at all convinced that there is some physical disease called being an addict, but I am sure that different people's underlying psychologic state which causes them to act out vary, and it makes sense that there should be broad categorizations of these states, and that one categorization could be called being an 'addict' more than another.

My question is, if addicts have it the worst, why do they seem to have the most success staying clean? Is it because they had the worst rock bottom, so the memory of how terrible it was stays strongest by them? Or is it that SA is just a superior program, and anyone who would join it would be that much more likely of staying clean? Or does SA only work for 'addicts'?

The nafka mina being what can I learn from SA to help me to get to that place of real change?

Loaded post with a lot of thought provoking questions.

I am not sure some of the Hanachos are correct. I personally have not found your bolded statement to be true in my experience here. I have thankfully forged a network of GYE friends who have extremely long streaks BH and do not identify as addicts. It's possible that the sampling of my experience is only because those are the guys that I speak with, and message with, etc. But I am a pretty solid student of the forums, and I don't see your statement to be accurate in my experience.

[It [b]used to be the way you wrote, in the pre-HHM era of GYE. It seems from the threads that guys who were solidly stuck in the mud only got out by admitting they were addicts and working the steps. But more recently [probably "post HHM"] it seems that things are very different. There are dozens and dozens (probably more) of guys who were deep in and got out. The other programs and methods on the site are helpful, the forums, connections; the subsequent

relationships and mentorships, the learned ability to create paradigm shifts and so much more , all this have contributed to many guys breaking free without SA. I learned a lot from reading about SA, probably everyone can. But I think the majority of guys who come here can try other methods of breaking free first, with a lot of hope.

I say that after having spoken with and BH helping a lot of new guys, the way I was helped BH. I'm sure there are people who may pile on me now to point out that their experience is very different.]

Much more importantly, with regards to your question - I think you are asking a few questions. Why don't the terrible feelings post-fall last. Why doesn't the memory of those horrible feelings act as a deterrent? What can I do to stay motivated long term? Does the answer depend on hitting "rock bottom"? On recognizing and internalizing that your problem is unmanageable? Are there other ways? These are profoundly important questions. I can tell you what I think, maybe a bit later.

Probably the most important answer, maybe the only important answer for you, friend, is what **you** think.

Hang on. Day 18 is CHAI. Thats full of **hope**.

Here's a warm hand, from someone looking towards,

Chaim

I have to agree with Harav Chaim over here.

For those who aren't addicts (even if we feel like addicts sometimes, and feel completely irredeemable, hopeless etc) it's usually not the case.

Having a good shmooze with HHM very quickly changed my mindset. I'm not even sure how to articulate what he told me but his point was that I'm not addicted but I feel depressed and run to P for that yummy acceptance feeling that we don't know how to get from our wives. A short speech from him (and a few follow ups) made it clear that within a few short weeks, this whole (25 year) episode, can be very easily cleaned up. And it doesn't need white knuckling, knassim, abstinence or any other extreme measures.

You should call him and he will guide you.

It works.

I have b'h been in touch with HHM for the last 20 months around. We have had many talks. I'm

not asking a question about whether I'm addicted, I think the fact that I went 6 months clean without pain is a strong indicator that I'm not. I'm asking what lessons there are to learn from those people who do identify as addicts.

What makes you think you are an addict?

I thought I was but now I realize I'm not.

Obviously some people are and their process to recovery is completely different.

But the vast majority of people here are strugglers (some severe strugglers like in my case) but not addicts

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Re: Chizzuk Needed

Posted by simchastorah - 21 Nov 2024 15:57

@odyosefchai I'm sorry to be sharp but are you reading what I'm writing? I literally wrote something which is a proof that I am not an addict. Please read what I wrote.

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Re: Chizzuk Needed

Posted by wantingbetter - 21 Nov 2024 16:36

[simchastorah wrote on 21 Nov 2024 15:57:](#)

@odyosefchai I'm sorry to be sharp but are you reading what I'm writing? I literally wrote something which is a proof that I am not an addict. Please read what I wrote.

I think the fact that I went 6 months clean without pain is a strong indicator that I'm not. I'm asking what lessons there are to learn from those people who do identify as addicts.

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Re: Chizzuk Needed

Posted by chaimoigen - 21 Nov 2024 16:46

To clarify- regarding what you wrote:

Interesting I would have thought that most people here with who are let's say in the 1000 day ball park are people who **were seriously involved before**, maybe I'm way off.

Many of the people that I've been in touch with **were very seriously involved** . Many have decades of negative behavior that persisted through tears, prayer, therapy and more. That does not necessarily define them as addicts, though. And doesn't necessitate the 12 Steps. And similarly there are many who had more moderate behaviors that they couldn't shake, until they managed to.

For example, read Ish Migrodno's "Marriage From Gan Eden" story to read how deeply and terribly mired he was, and then read his thread "Gardener of Grodno" to learn how he broke free. Vehkam's "Work In Progress". Lots of other less dramatic threads too ... lots to learn.

I don't necessarily want to get into a discuss concerning the definition of an addict here. (There
). I think it's important to know that many, many people were deep in the sticky, hazy darkness, on one level or another, for years. And have gotten out.

As Redfaced wrote yesterday: Behind every thread of someone who has broken free is person who once thought that it was impossible.

You can do it too.

And I know you will, chaver.

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Re: Chizzuk Needed

Posted by wantingbetter - 21 Nov 2024 16:49

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*sheetoasts

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Re: Chizzuk Needed

Posted by BenHashemBH - 21 Nov 2024 17:38

[simchastorah wrote on 21 Nov 2024 15:22:](#)

I have seen in ????? though I don't remember where that the forgetfulness is literally something supernatural which is to enable continued ??????. That being said it seems that there are people who remain motivated to stay clean because of how bad things got. I'm not sure how these two things fit. Maybe there is some ?? ???? that can be overcome and one must learn to overcome it, and those who really really suffered sometimes learn to access that deep layer of self that allows them to overcome the ????? I don't know, happy to hear your thoughts about it.

Shalom Chaver,

Here is an excerpt from Chapter 8 of Rabbi Naftali Horowitz's book *You Revealed*. I hope you find it enlightening. There is much more surrounding this topic in the rest of Ch 8 and the nearby chapters. Kol Tov.

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"You" as Chooser

From the writings of Rav Dessler, we can derive another practical definition of "you" - the "chooser." All growth in life involves making good choices in the face of challenge and adversity - and "you" are the one who is choosing.

choices

Rav Dessler (*Kuntress HaBechirah*, Part 1, Ch.1) illustrates this idea with an example: A man smokes a pack of cigarettes a day. Every night, he wakes up with chest pains and vows never to smoke another cigarette again. When he awakens in the morning, his addiction soon makes itself felt and he craves a smoke. At first, he resists, but, as the craving grows, he says to himself, "I will smoke just one cigarette. After all, one alone can't hurt me," and he lights up. Not long afterward, the urge returns and he uses the same rationalization for the second one

and the third. That night, the pain returns and he repeats the vow. Were this man to experience acute pain immediately upon taking his first puff, he would surely give up smoking altogether. The fact that the pain is delayed allows the cycle of self-deception to continue as he tells himself that "one cigarette won't hurt me."

Rav Dessler asks: What causes a person to adopt the fallacious argument of "one cigarette won't harm me," and ignore the truth that "one cigarette will lead to another," which he knows from firsthand experience is the reality? Rav Dessler argues that it can't be that the man's will to

smoke is perverting his reasoning process, leading him to conclude that the pleasure of smoking makes it worth the subsequent pain. If that were so, why the self-deception of "one cigarette won't harm me"? He should simply smoke with the full knowledge that it will hurt later.

He concludes that there is something other than the two competing wills that determines his choice. That something else is the person himself. HE is the one who chooses to deflect his mind from the truth and adopt the fallacy that one cigarette won't harm him. He could instead say to himself, "What is the point of pretending? If I smoke this one then I will wake up tonight with chest pains." Instead, HE deceives himself into believing that it will only be one.

Rav Dessler bestows the title of "fools" upon those who claim that the will to smoke is the true cause of this ridiculous daily routine. He argues that the will to live is surely greater than the will to smoke and a greater will should overpower a weaker one. The person himself, however, has the power to deliberately ignore the truth and accept falsehood in its place. The outcome of this is that when a person makes the claim, "I smoke because I am powerless to stop," the response should be, "No, you smoke because you choose to and you have no one to blame but yourself."

Rav Dessler teaches that choice lies completely in our hands and there are no forces that control us. People who have never challenged the pull of their harmful physical desires won't ever be able to understand this, because they are convinced that they are at the mercy of those compulsive needs. Such people have never made a free-choice decision and live under the illusion that human action is controlled by external or internal forces.

With his poignant words, Rav Dessler brings forth an axiom held by successful people and lacking in those who are unsuccessful: "I am fully responsible for my actions because I alone am in control of choices." While there is a small subset of people who are choice-impaired due to various life circumstances, the majority of us are fully responsible for the choices we make.

People sometimes say things like, "I can't help myself. I am controlled by my anger/anxiety/fear/indecision/addiction/shortcomings," and the like. Blaming is a common theme in today's culture and it has perhaps even become socially incorrect to require that a person accept full responsibility for his actions. We may try to lay the blame on our society, upbringing, boss, weaknesses, addictions, or the "system," but we must realize that by doing so we are choking off any opportunity for growth. Successful people never hide behind excuses. We all make mistakes; the difference between success and failure is whether or not we take ownership of those mistakes. Even if in certain circumstances we may not be responsible for what happened to us, we do remain fully responsible for our responses and resulting actions.

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Re: Chizzuk Needed

Posted by parev - 21 Nov 2024 18:17

[wantingbetter wrote on 21 Nov 2024 16:36:](#)

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I think the fact that I went 6 months clean without pain is a strong indicator that I'm not. I'm asking what lessons there are to learn from those people who do identify as addicts.

Just wanna say, that I was always very confused about myself.

Some tekufos were very shtark and others I was failing terribly.

Till I heard the term "A Periodical"

Some of the founding members of AA had years of clean periods [a story in the big book describes someone who had 25 years clean - until he retired and died before 60 via overdose]

Sometimes we maintain sobriety because circumstances make it easier - the big test is when the situation gets rough - that's the litmus test between Sobriety and Recovery

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Re: Chizzuk Needed

Posted by chancy - 21 Nov 2024 18:33

Dear SImcehs Torah, I posted this in another thread, but im not sure you will read that, so im posting it here as well.

I hope this will help you as it helped me.

and what it does to you, and how if you continue this path you will not get anywhere with the things you want to do. Your life will be ruined and wasted and thats a real effing shame to yourself.

Sit there as long as you feel some resolve to get out of this, if you can make that resolve get more powerful then continue. If not, do it again tomorrow.

You will get better, I promise you.

With Love

Chancy

Finally someone ?????? ??????. Thank you for this. (and nice to hear from you)

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Re: Chizzuk Needed

Posted by chaimoigen - 21 Nov 2024 20:05

[simchastorah wrote on 21 Nov 2024 15:35:](#)

Regarding how I myself fell off of my clean streak, which like I've mentioned a few times was for 6 months and literally went without a hitch - my parents got divorced during my clean streak. I went to visit my mother. At the time her house was quite dysfunctional in a number of ways. She had unfiltered internet, I was out of my element, without my wife and kids, with nothing to do but be in a room by myself. Being back without my wife in kids in my mother's house kind of put me back into the mindset of my painful teenage years. I was not ready for that level of challenge, and I fell. That was around a year ago. Since then I think the longest clean streak I had was around a month, I haven't been keeping track. There have been a number of times where it was around 2 weeks, and lately, before 2.5 weeks ago there were a few 2 week stretches in a row. I am hopeful that by being back on GYE I'll be able to get back into the swing of being clean, and I hope to G-d that this time I'll be more prepared for a difficult situation which may come up.

[Edited]

Have you analyzed what triggers you to “go looking”?

Being prepared for difficult situations doesn't just mean locking in a mindset of how negative P&M is, or trying to build up willpower towards facing the inevitable Nisayon.

It can also often mean developing an understanding if there are ways that you sometime **actually utilize** the negative stuff **for a purpose** (not consciously but actively). Perhaps to numb and distract from pain, to sooth or regulate. To provide some kind of emotional security blanket when certain triggers hit, to deal with the sharp edge of loneliness, self-loathing, or anxiety.

Knowing what the bad stuff **does for you** (positively) is a big step towards honestly figuring out if and how you really are ready to stop. Because you have to be honestly ready to stop using it **towards those ends**, and to also ready to learn new ways to deal with those difficult situations...

Until you get there, ramping up the motivation the knowledge of how **bad** P&M is for you won't necessarily help fpr when you hit a situation of the kind in which you've conditioned yourself to to use P&M **as a solution**.

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Re: Chizzuk Needed

Posted by chosemyshem - 21 Nov 2024 21:17

[simchastorah wrote on 21 Nov 2024 11:17:](#)

Day 18

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The nafka mina being what can I learn from SA to help me to get to that place of real change?

Great questions. Really thought provoking.

I dislike the question of "addiction" because I feel like wondering whether or not I'm an addict wasted a non-insignificant amount of time for. The way I look at it now is there's a hierarchy of tools. Why not start with the easy stuff (posting, accountability, F2F) and if they don't work then worry about SA. The easy stuff can be pretty darn powerful.

That being said, I never did SA. But I have gained so much from Dov's perspective on the struggle. 1000% worth your time to listen to the workshops linked in my signature (give the big book a read too while you're at it.)

I'll give you some super quick highlights of what I think I got from it that I think anyone can benefit from. This is something I'm just trying to put into defined thought now so forgive me if I'm senseless. Here goes:

1) Hashem will help me get out. 2) The fact that he hasn't helped me enough (as I viewed it) until now isn't a proof because until now I was not open to the help. 3) The problem is not porn the problem is me and the way I live my life. 4) The main work is opening up my life to Hashem's help - being ready to give up my ratzon and all that entails so that I can live my life with Hashem. I think that's the main yesod very roughly.

Other important ideas too like: Get really honest. If you're just talking to yourself and the computer you're probably not being really honest. Many other ideas too. And we're talking about a lifetime of avodah, not a few minutes work. But someone who lives with the closeness to Hashem created by living the life described will be in a very good place long term.

Re: rock bottom. See Dov's nuclear reset post (which is not true all the time, but a very good point.) What I've been noticing recently is porn caused me pain, but the pain was outweighed by the pull to it. Now that the pull weakened, thinking about not wanting to go back to the pain is somewhat motivating. I try to focus on the pleasure of being clean, not the pain of being dirty though.

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Re: Chizzuk Needed

Posted by simchastorah - 22 Nov 2024 06:00

Day 19

Thanks for the responses, especially if you addressed the questions.

I want to make it clear that I am not considering going to SA, am not concerned that I'm an addict, and don't even particularly care what an addict is. What I do care about is hearing what has helped people long term, because short term was not a problem for me in the past.

To summarize the response, and sorry if you feel I'm not doing justice, feel free to let me know:

ChaimOigen:

Identify the source of the problem and the triggers

Chancy:

Reflect deeply on where you want to go and how your behavior is affecting your getting there

ChooseMyShem:

Fix my relationship with Hashem, learn to rely on Him, be deeply honest

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Re: Chizzuk Needed

Posted by iwillmanage - 22 Nov 2024 10:10

[chaimoigen wrote on 21 Nov 2024 14:22:](#)

Loaded post with a lot of thought provoking questions.

I am not sure some of the Hanachos are correct. I personally have not found your bolded statement to be true in my experience here. I have thankfully forged a network of GYE friends who have extremely long streaks BH and do not identify as addicts. It's possible that the sampling of my experience is only because those are the guys that I speak with, and message with, etc. But I am a pretty solid student of the forums, and I don't see your statement to be accurate in my experience.

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I say that after having spoken with and BH helping a lot of new guys, the way I was helped BH. I'm sure there are people who may pile on me now to point out that their experience is very different.

It's worth mentioning that even in the 'post HHM era' there are those that don't find recovery until joining SA. I think there's a risk here of people not making progress, falling again and again whilst being injected with the constant chizzuk boosts of 'you're winning if you're fighting' and the like, and they're sure that if the HHM method works for others it must work for them too. It doesn't occur to them that for whatever reason, they're case might be different. That was my experience in any case. Being in touch with HHM daily for months but not breaking free (although I was 'clean' for a few months), I didn't dream that I was different to the others who it was working for. Better off, in fact. I'm grateful to him and others for suggesting that I join SA where I found my path to recovery. I'll be celebrating 6 months in a few days.

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Re: Chizzuk Needed

Posted by chosemyshem - 22 Nov 2024 17:51

[simchastorah wrote on 22 Nov 2024 06:00:](#)

Day 19

To summarize the response, and sorry if you feel I'm not doing justice, feel free to let me know:

ChoøseMyShem:

Fix my relationship with Hashem, learn to rely on Him, be deeply honest

I think I'd tweak that and say it's not about "fixing" as much as removing the self-imposed barriers.

" ?????????????????? ?????????????????? ?????????? ??????????"

I'd also mention one other point. SA has a tremendously strong community. Those guys you see who are long term clean are also probably going to meetings (in person, with their real name and real face) twice a week for 20 years. That's a tremendously helpful thing.

But why listen to me - I've never done SA. Take a couple hours and listen to Dov's 12 step workshops - he's a real expert. And then call him after with questions.

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