

Sporadic Failures revisited

Posted by Levtahor - 01 Apr 2009 23:23

I posted about 5 months ago regarding my all-too-long experience with this problem. I mentioned how it usually rears its ugly head during Bein haZmanim, which has now arrived. Unfortunately the Zman itself has been far from perfect in this regard (a problem I hadn't had before), but there's still lots of 'potential' for Bein haZmanim to be worse. There are *so* many logical reasons why it's so terrible for me (apart from the obvious ones), and yet - I feel helpless to resist. (As I type, I've been procrastinating posting because I've been busy failing to fight the Yetzer...) I had to access K9 for a certain reason (they've just upgraded, put in some useful new features), and I wasn't able to convince myself to put in a password that I wouldn't know. Hopefully by the end of this evening I will have gotten over that hurdle, but only because I've allowed myself to sink again! I've had various moments of inspiration over the past few weeks, but not enough to last when it counts! Any tips? (I know, there are a lot of pointers on the rest of the site, some of which I know thoroughly, others that I should review...) I'm glad I managed to actually type up a post, and make some half-hearted attempt at normalcy, but I'm not currently strong enough to do anything much more concrete. (I wonder if I'll even be able to be serious enough to read any responses properly - as is I'm just very vaguely skimming the Chizuk emails)

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Re: Sporadic Failures revisited

Posted by gettinghelp - 01 Apr 2009 23:50

From the very core of yourself ask Hashem ,beg Hashem,plead with Hashem for help,real help and see the nissim start to happen.It is a slow process that works,and brings out the real you and makes you closer to Hashem.Take the first baby step now on the road to a life of kiddushahAsk for help,and you will get help.I know this first hand.After 30 years I am getting the help I need and deserve,B"H!!!

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Re: Sporadic Failures revisited

Posted by Levtahor - 02 Apr 2009 00:10

I've gone through a lot of the baby steps before...

Well, my 'consolation prize' for tonight, is that after failing tonight, I am of course much more ready to put strict settings on K9, etc.

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Re: Sporadic Failures revisited
Posted by mevakesh - 02 Apr 2009 01:21

Hi Lev Tahor,

Have you tried a 12 step program?

I would check out SA's website at sa.org for more information.

A 12 step program is by far the most consistent method of overcoming addiction, including sexual addiction. If you are serious about changing your life, you should strongly consider looking into the SA program. There are even many SA groups that are primarily frequented by frum jews like us.

If you need more info, please let us know.

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Re: Sporadic Failures revisited
Posted by Ano Nymous - 02 Apr 2009 06:00

Lev Tahor,

What you really NEED is not the filter. You need to overhaul your entire attitude and outlook. Playing games with filters, offering yourself "rewards" and "consolation prizes" which consist of feeding your lust is not what you need. I've been there and done that. What you really need is to train yourself to stop lusting altogether. Of course, this is easier said than done. That's what this forum (and an SA group if you need one) can and WILL help you do. But before anyone can help you, you have to really and truly want the help. Keep trying and you will succeed!

Re: Sporadic Failures revisited

Posted by Ykv_schwartz - 02 Apr 2009 11:19

Lev Tahor,

I took the time to read all your old posts and try to understand you as much as possible. As I read your story, tears rolled down my cheeks as I envisioned your pain. We have all been there and we all know what it is like. Each one of us are unique and have unique challenges, but there are common themes that run throughout. I will try to advise as much as possible.

I think we need to think both in the **short term** and **long term**. Short term means finding the right '*tricks*' that will hold you out in the best fashion over the next few weeks. We need to figure out what will help you day to day. But, like you have seen for yourself an addiction is an addiction. It keeps coming back. To remove it from within is very difficult. To remain abstinent and clean for 6 months is not the solution to remaining clean forever. The spirit can reawaken. It needs to be healed internally. There needs to be some concrete solution that will help you in the long run.

Long Term

Many of us on this site will attest to the fact that the real solution is not about trying harder. It is not about constant self control. It is not about learning how to always saying no. All of these things are important and are necessary for growth. But the real solution comes by changing yourself. It comes by understanding yourself. It comes by creating a bond with Hashem. It comes by polishing your "*Lev Tahor*" and letting it shine. There is much more to say. If you have been keeping up with the chizzuk emails you will understand better. This all sounds so lofty and imaginative. Is it really possible? Are there people who have changed themselves? The answer is Yes. Many on this site can tell you about these changes. But it doesn't come automatically. It comes with work.

But the real question is how to attain this. The best possible solutions are either 12 step groups or actual therapy. You mentioned that you have self esteem issues and you feel this is related to the addiction. I know all about it. I have been there as well. Trying to uncover these aspects of yourself and heal them on your own is difficult. Get help. You said that you have already revealed this to your parents. Kol Hakavod. I would speak to them more about this. They are your parents. They can help. And they may even encourage you to get professional help. You spoke about your fears of getting married. I would like to advise to solve this now. Marriage compounds the problem even more when the guilt factor multiplies. And addiction feeds off guilt, as crazy as that sounds. So the issue can begin to escalate. The self esteem issue gets

bigger and the viscous cycle is set into motion. By getting professional help and/or 12 steps you will feel better that you are actually doing something about it. Take the time now and think this over. Remind yourself how much you want to change. How much you want to separate from this addiction. And remind yourself that the easiest method is getting help. I will remind you what Guard has told you in the past, *"Believe me Lev tahor, you don't want to go down the path of addiction. It's pain, pain and more pain, until life becomes unmanageable. We can help you at that stage too, but we don't want you getting there."*

Short Term

In the meantime we need tricks that will hold you over. I would like to throw the question right back at you. You are a smart guy. You have even proven self control in the past. So you know yourself. You just seem to lose touch with the true self. So I ask you, "what do you think will work for you?" What advice do you have for yourself? What Gedarim should you plan on putting in place? Do you have a bein hazmanim schedule? What should be your mussar sefer? What aspects of avodas Hashem should you focus on? What should you do to create kedusha? This is personal. Asks yourself what you need and of course think out loud as we all read your posts.

Closing Remarks

Amongst the more perplexing commandments in the Torah is the Mitzvah of stoning the Bein Sorer U'moreh. We addicts can learn a lot from the bein sorer u'moreh. The Ben Soreh U'Moreh, as we know, is a 13 year old boy who steals lots of meat and wine from his father (and mother according to some) and then eats that meat in his father property. His parents warn him and he does not listen. He is then brought to Beis Din and is warned again. If he continues in his evil ways he is sentenced to death. Why? There are lots of things wrong with this child. He steals, has no regard for authority and he is a glutton. But what is the root issue that the Torah sentenced him to death. The answer is ADDICTION. He is an uncontrollable addict. He is addicted to food in an unmanageable way. He is willing to even steal from his own parents and eat in their own house. He lost all barriers. But still, he has not actually done anything that terrible yet. So why kill him now. On this the mishna states, "???? ?? ?? ????", He is judged for what will be in the future. And the Gemara brings a braisa that explains even further; He will eventually empty his father's bank account, then try to kill his father and then go out and do highway robbery. Why? To get more money and feed his physical desires even more. Today we would call that an ADDICT

Now, the Gemara brings a machlokes as to whether this has ever happened. Rabbi Shimon (Bar Yochai) says it never happened and is impossible to ever happen. So why did the Torah write it? To learn and receive reward. What can we learn from this. The power of

addiction. The Torah says it will only get worse, unless there is serious intervention. many of us on this site will tell you that first hand. Judge your present now for what can be in the future and make the right decisions.

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Re: Sporadic Failures revisited

Posted by the.guard - 02 Apr 2009 11:48

Yaakov, I can't tell you how much I value your help on this forum. What a beautiful and inspiring piece from the heart! I am certain it will end up in a Chizuk e-mail. I am saving it by me to inspire others as well.

Thank you so much, and may you continue to be a source of inspiration to us all for many years to come!

Dear Lev tahor,

We are here for you and we'll help you through this. Be strong and take Yaakov's amazing advice!

For advice on how to make K9 work best, [see here](#). But do you know the story of Dumbo the flying elephant? The feather he held while flying is like your filter. When Dumbo lost it, he was sure he was doomed. But then his mouse trainer told him the secret, that he really could fly on this own. The feather was just a "trick" to get him to believe he could do it alone. What I mean to say is, the change needs to come from within. And it's there. You have it in you. But of course we are still at the stage where we need the feather....

Here's an idea that can really help. Make a vow for a week to take a ten minute walk before each time you fall. See how that works for you.

If you are in Bein Hazmanim mode, you have to indeed be much more careful. Make a list of fences that you think you should make. Maybe make a neder for a week not to use the computer unless someone else is home, or in the room.

You need a PLAN. A Battle plan. You are up against a sly menuval. Make yourself a schedule for each day, with learning and things to keep you busy.

We are here for you. Keep posting (or better yet, stay away from the computer as much as you can :-)

Daven to Hashem for help. He really listens.

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Re: Sporadic Failures revisited

Posted by Levtahor - 02 Apr 2009 13:35

Thank you all for your personal replies. I'm really touched. I will hopefully respond later (or even more hopefully, keep busy, away from the computer, as GUE said).

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Re: Sporadic Failures revisited

Posted by jack - 02 Apr 2009 13:35

dear ykv, from everything i've read here in the past 7 1/2 months, i have not been able to come up with a connection between the torah and addiction.this is noone's fault - it is MY fault for not seeing. BUT, with your explanation of the ben sorer umoreh, i think i finally have the connection i've been looking for. thank you so much.

i'm going on 7 1/2 months with one slip.i am NOT going to say 'nida is coming - what am i going to do?' i'm going to say 'TODAY, what can i do?'

NEXT MONTH, I TURN 50!

jack

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Re: Sporadic Failures revisited
Posted by the.guard - 02 Apr 2009 15:48

Dear Jack, I think that today's Chizuk e-mail (#446 on [this page](#)) can also help show us how the 12-Steps and Torah are really one and the same. After all, there is only ONE truth.

Study today's Chizuk e-mail again and again. If you internalize it, you will find that you can learn how it won't even be a struggle anymore. I felt special *siyata dishmaya* in writing today's Chizuk e-mail, and I beleieve it is one of the most beautiful I have ever written. (However, i have Boruch to thank for teaching me all this). I would love to hear your feedback on it - and also Yaakov and

Jack, you are an inspiration to us all. How fortunate you are to have merited Teshuvah before you turn 50, like i mentioned many times before. Keep inspiring us all till 120!

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Re: Sporadic Failures revisited
Posted by jack - 02 Apr 2009 18:16

there is one aspect of personality that i am learning about in therapy that i would like to share with the olam. i have obsessions.i think ALL addicts have obsessions.obsessions can be on anything - and they can be very harmful.where do obsessions come from, what is their source, and how do they originate? they are not present in 'normal' mentally healthy people.they come because of a problem that happened way back when.if we can learn about why we individually have these obsessions, we can fight them.that is the course i'm following right now in therapy.

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Battleworn's feedback

Re: Sporadic Failures revisited
Posted by boruch - 03 Apr 2009 09:11

[guardureyes wrote on 02 Apr 2009 15:48:](#)

I felt special *siyata dishmaya* in writing today's Chizuk e-mail, and I beleieve it is one of the most beautiful I have ever written.

Reading yesterday's chizzuk email, it seems to me that the special siyata dishmaya you had was that you connected in a very deep way to the real yesodos and fundamentals of what it means to live in awareness of Hashem, which as you have beautifully explained is the essence of the program. That is a very rare gift.

Devorim hayootzim min halev nichnosin lelev.

I really related fully to that part of your email, it was coming from your own experience, strength and hope.

At the end of the email you also asked a question, you suggested a possible answer and linked to some questions about groups. I did not get the same sense of your own experience in that part of your email and as a result I found it more difficult to relate to.

As a theoretical answer it could have been plausible enough. But it did not speak to me because for me the question was not a theoretical one. I lived that question the hard way. I tried for over 20 years to get what I needed from musar seforim and I was very unsatisfied with the results. Having joined SA and working the Steps I now know why. I shared my experience with you in my email.

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Re: Sporadic Failures revisited

Posted by boruch - 03 Apr 2009 09:48

[jack wrote on 02 Apr 2009 18:16:](#)

i have obsessions.i think ALL addicts have obsessions.obsessions can be on anything - and they can be very harmful.where do obsessions come from, what is their source, and how do they originate? they are not present in 'normal' mentally healthy people.they come because of a problem that happened way back when.if we can learn about why we individually have these obsessions, we can fight them.that is the course i'm following right now in therapy.

In mental health, confusing as it is anyway, the single word obsession, like the word compulsion has three very distinct meanings.

1) In OCD, Obsessions are intrusive and unwanted thoughts.

2) In OCPD Obsessions are an extreme pre-occupation with getting things just "right" even at the expense of the activity itself.

3) In addiction, obsession is the addict's focus on addictive and pleasurable activities, and in the process he is distracted from less pleasurable activities.

It sounds like you are referring to number 3.

Here is my own experience. I have had different types of obsessions. Some were pure indulgence, I had not lost control at all, I was perfectly capable of controlling them, but lacked the motivation. That type of obsession can respond well to therapy. In a comfortable non-threatening, supportive environment you explore and get in touch with what is really going on and then wonder of wonders "all on your own" you decide to stop.

But there is another type of obsession. An obsession that has become so compulsive that you have lost control to the extent that no matter how self-aware and how determined you are, you are nevertheless totally unable to stop. In 1939 they referred to such alcoholics as "hopeless" cases.

[quote="Alcoholics Anonymous Chapter 3 More About Alcoholism p. 38][size=2]

Some of you are thinking: "Yes, what you tell is true, but it doesn't fully apply. We admit we have some of these symptoms, but we have not gone to the extremes you fellows did, nor are we likely to, for [b][size=2]we understand ourselves so well after what you have told us that such things cannot happen again.[/b] We have not lost everything in life through drinking and we certainly do not intend to. Thanks for the information."

[b][size=2]That may be true of certain nonalcoholic people who, though drinking foolishly and heavily at the present time, are able to stop or moderate, because their brains and bodies have not been damaged as ours were. But the actual or potential alcoholic, with hardly any exception, will be absolutely unable to stop drinking on the basis of self-knowledge.[/b][/quote]

In my experience, at that point therapy has only one thing to offer. It can only help you see how helpless and hopeless you are and motivate you to join a 12 step program, which is what many therapists do for full blown cases of addiction.

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Re: Sporadic Failures revisited

Posted by battleworn - 30 Apr 2009 16:05

Lev Tahor, when you're feeling too weak to even put up a good fight, it Hashem's message to you saying "Turn to Me" Even when you can't daven you can ALWAYS have emunah and bitachon.

And **that's** the solution as it says "Vitzadik (which refers to the midah of yesod-tahara) Be'emunosoh Yich'ye" -if you live with real Emunah you'll be a Tzadik. Say to Hashem: Look what a mess I am, I'm a shadow of a man. And I'm up against a tremendous malach who also has a horrific nuclear arsenal. There's no way in the world that I stand even the slightest chance against him.

I'M TOTALLY, COMPLETELY, FULLY RELYING ON YOU AND ONLY YOU TO
SAVE ME FROM HIM.

And relying on Hashem means that you are calm (the menuval absolutely despises that) like the
Chovos Halvovos says "Menuchas nefesh habotei'ach"

I personally have very fresh experience with this. I promise you it works.

Hatzlochoh Raboh!!!

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Re: Sporadic Failures revisited
Posted by Lev tahor - 24 Apr 2011 02:39

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