

Other destructive addictions

Posted by chasid - 17 May 2009 15:56

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Hello Everyone.

I thought some people would like to talk about other internet addictions. Not everyone has an addiction to pornography. They could always have addiction to others things that effect their health and spiritual well being.

When I was a young bloke, I had an addiction to participating in debates on the internet. At first I would put the time limit at 10pm. That would pass as the discussion was deemed more important than a good night's sleep. Before I knew it, it was 6am. I'd rush to bed, hoping to get 2 hours of sleep. Sometimes this would work, sometimes not, as in, I would be found sleeping till the late hours of the morning. This eventually led to a very bad habit that lasted 3-4 years.

Currently this addiction has been revisiting me the past few weeks in a new fashion. I feel the need to read every single newspaper article you can imagine after night seder. It is ruining my sleep. It is ruining my morning seder. I have been threaten to be thrown out of the yeshiva but it is not helping. The only reason I can think I am facing this issue right now is because of my late night habit in my younger years. I have almost no interest in the topic discussed in the newspaper. However, when I start reading that interview in between Tony Blair or Avigdor Lieberman and JPost, I can't get to sleep till I finish it. I have no interest in it. I do not discuss these topics with anyone. The secular topics I normally discuss would be about technology or work. I am going to get married soon and need a way of making sure this habit doesn't effect anyone long or short term. I do not want to be kicked out of yeshiva over it. I do not want to be put to shame in front of my future family that I was kicked out of yeshiva. But I am going crazy these past few weeks over going to sleep in between the hours of 1am - 4am. Shabbat is completely normal for me, normal patterns.

I remember my first year in yeshiva. I was asleep every night by 10:30pm and one of the first boys in synagogue constantly. For this reason I am going crazy over this habit that started revisiting me a few weeks ago. I do not know what to do.

BTW, I found this website by reading about it in the newspaper.

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Re: Other destructive addictions  
Posted by the.guard - 17 May 2009 16:27

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I think Hashem gave you this addiction just so you should find our site. Now that you did, you can break free of the other addiction as well :-)

See Tool #2 of the [The GuardYourEyes Handbook](#) for ideas on how you can break this addiction using vows in a very safe and effective way.

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Re: Other destructive addictions  
Posted by Ezra512 - 17 May 2009 18:04

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B"H

Chassid,

You have managed to hit my problem spot on. I too struggle to not get tied up in all this information. I have tried to set myself a 15 min rule for reading not Torah things on the internet but it lately hasn't been so successful. Maybe we can update each other about our travails similar to the general updates on this website.

Sincerely,

Ezra

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Re: Other destructive addictions  
Posted by perfectnose - 17 May 2009 18:09

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how does someone define internet addiction. Porn in the long run is a destructive behavior so any type of dependence is road to all types of problems., but the internet has such good on it. I was researching recently how to teach my son how to swim and there are websites that teach you to how to teach your kids to swim (no more \$60 an hour lessons), Lehavdil, I saw somewhere on this forum that gedolim are addicted to torah. so remain with a question what is internet addiction and how distructive can it be?

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Re: Other destructive addictions  
Posted by the.guard - 17 May 2009 19:58

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Dear Perfectnose, please read the handbook. We are not dealing with an addiction to internet or to any particular behavior or another. The common denominator is an addiction to "Lust". And for us, lust is poison.

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Re: Other destructive addictions  
Posted by aaron4 - 18 May 2009 12:54

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It's interesting that Perfectnose brought up addiction to Torah (I haven't seen it elsewhere on the site). I was just talking about this to my Rav last week. He deals with addiction experts in the course of helping people (sign of the times) and one expert said that after many years in the field, he can identify an addictive personality. However sometimes this can be manifested as addiction to Torah! I had a hard time digesting this. Although we all know that Hashem gives us character traits that can be used for good or bad (don't become a murderer C"V, become a shochet and use it for good, etc) it can't be that simple to do in practice or we'd be discussing ways to "infect" others with our wonderful addiction to Torah rather than discussing how to eradicate a disease. Obviously the threshold for expressing personality traits in a negative way is much lower, much easier, than expressing them in a positive way. But the point is there nonetheless - it can be done and we're uniquely suited to it! So let's make it happen! All we have to do is take the first step today...

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Re: Other destructive addictions  
Posted by the.guard - 18 May 2009 13:49

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Yes, I'm sure many of our Gedolim developed an addiction to Torah. (Think of the "Rogatchover" whose wife had to help him put on his coat for his son's wedding, and while his arm got stuck for a second while putting it on, he groaned "*Tzar gidul banim*").

And I think that "Chasid", who claimed yesterday that he is addicted to finishing every single news article in every newspaper until the end - even if it doesn't interest him, he has tremendous potential to change and channel this addiction of his into a real addiction for Torah!! Imagine not being able to put down the sefer until you finish all the teshuvos :-)

The only time an addiction becomes bad, is if it interferes with things that the TORAH itself expects us to prioritize over learning... such as: Family, Chinuch, Shabbos, Tefillah, Parnassa, etc... (each person in their situation).

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Re: Other destructive addictions  
Posted by aaron4 - 18 May 2009 14:24

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I agree...and wouldn't it be incredible if this site became the catalyst for the ultimate Kiddush Shaim Shomayim where all of us learned not only how to slip out of the menuval's grasp but also how to channel our powerful character traits to become like the Rogatchover!

But how?? In my experience, although a step by step approach is nice, organized and appealing to many (myself included), and it would be great to get the menuval out of our lives ) and then work on growth in Torah, in practice it can't work that way. The way to accomplish step 1 is to work on step 2. The more you talk about breaking an addiction to lust, and more lust, the more you end up talking about lust! And that's just another one of the Y"H's tricks (please understand this in context - I do not mean that a 12 step "house cleaning" should not be done, etc). What we need to so is talk about what "turns us on" in Torah. Anyone?

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Re: Other destructive addictions  
Posted by chl - 22 May 2009 05:15

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bs"d

I have the same problem as "chassid", reading the news late at night, without any real interest. I think it is another way to get a little rest from my sadness. Just like watching a movie, or a show; anything but having to be alone with myself.

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Re: Other destructive addictions  
Posted by the.guard - 22 May 2009 10:45

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Just like watching a movie, or a show; anything but having to be alone with myself.

People who have trouble being alone with themselves may suffer from self-esteem issues. Rabbi Twerski used to have this very problem. Listen to Rabbi Twerski discuss his own personal struggle with self-esteem [over here](#). Very interesting!

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Re: Other destructive addictions  
Posted by Emes - 22 May 2009 12:23

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An aside on addiction to Torah...

My Rosh Yeshivah enjoyed telling the ma'aseh of [Rav Eliezer Gordon](#) who walked past the Beis Medrash and heard a Torah discussion through the window. He then climbed **through the window** to take part in the discussion!

Rav Gordon said of himself 'I am a *shicker* when it comes to Torah'...

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Re: Other destructive addictions  
Posted by Elya K - 24 May 2009 04:47

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Addiction can be defined two ways, the good way and the bad way. Addiction to Torah can be a spiritual high people get from learning. There can also be a negative addiction to Torah where people

pile Chumrah over Chumrah upon themselves and then expect others to follow suit. This leads to being hyper vigilant where you're constantly looking at everyone else and judging what they're doing. This leads to addictive types of behavior because you build up resentments very quickly.

I've written a book about addiction to work and the differences between good and bad addiction.

You can buy it on Amazon.

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Re: Other destructive addictions  
Posted by the.guard - 24 May 2009 10:48

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Wow, Elya, we didn't know you were an author. What's the link to your book?

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