

Torah AND the 12-Steps

Posted by Dov - 08 Jun 2009 21:53

HeiligeH PinteleH Yid, Aaron4, Hoping, etc, etc.,

What I am about to share is for me, not necessarily for you. You may feel completely differently or flat-out disagree and **Kol Hakavod, precious brothers!**

This drash/mussar section of the thread is enlightening and really beautiful, as others have posted. **However, in the spirit of "veHachayos Ratzon Vashov"**, I need to take a deep breath and back up at times like this. I need to remember that (beautiful and true) Torah insights into what the YH is doing, what we are doing, how we do it, etc., never helped me get sober when I was acting out. They are just a luxury we can "afford" in sobriety. They still, are not my mainstay, just a chizzuk and part of my "pay'rosayhem ba'olam hazeh", perhaps...but...

Sof Davar, when a "nisayon" occurs for me, what saves me is **plain and poshut** the Ribono Shel Olam. Not **my** tefillah, nor my efforts against the YH. They may be hishtadlus, like going to work, battle, etc. All I know is that **I** let Him in, calling out to Him in my **worst** moment because **I** do not want to act out and (eventually) die. He does the rest.

In retrospect there is glory in recovery and I *can* appreciate the beauty of what has happened, yes. But in the moment (*and before it*) I can't afford to think of myself as doing any tikkunim, fulfilling a mitzvah/prophecy/whatever. The most frustrating days for my acting out used to be (bedavka) aseres yemei teshuvah, sefira (especially *yesod* days!). These things put the struggle on my plate. When I struggle within a **Torah** context it just proves too complicated for me and I struggle. When I struggle, I get in trouble. And "trouble" is *really* bad for my health.

I do not think of myself, in sobriety or in acting out, as reflecting anything good or bad about this generation or the Jewish people. I am a holy yid like you and any other yid, who is also just another addict in recovery. In that respect I am very much like the goy sitting next to me at the meeting, who may be my sponsor or sponsee.

Sorry if anyone finds this offending or upsetting. It is not the truth, just what works for me so far. It may change tomorrow! Still, today I need to be honest about what works and what doesn't, so far, for me. Much love and admiration for each of you - Dov

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Re: Torah AND the 12-Steps

Posted by the.guard - 11 Jun 2009 08:36

DOV you are a big boy I know you can handle this .There is nothing HOLY about 12 steps it is a technique or a tool as much as hypnosis or meditation.

YES we need CPR but why does youe NESHAMA CRAVE CPR?? WHY DO YOU NEED TO BE HOLY??

BECAUSE YOU ARE A HOLY YID NOT A HOLY MONKEY!!! YOUR NESHAMA craves KIR_VAES ELOKIM!!!

Barditchev,

You are not to blame, because you have no idea what the 12-Steps are all about, **but** before you make comments like this to our holy Dov, maybe do a little research into what the 12-Steps are really all about and why Rabbi Twerski believes so strongly in them, and why they help millions of people. You will be amazed to find that **THEY ARE HOLY**. They are **ALL ABOUT KIRVAS ELOKIM**. But it's a much more BASIC kirvas Elokim than what you are probably used to. It's about "getting off the tractor trailer and onto the bicycle" - as Dov once so beautifully explained. It's the **ABCs** of Kirvas Elokim! You see, even with all the complicated Torah and Mussar, it is very easy in our **small generation** to entirely "miss the point".

Please, PLEASE, Barditchev, read Chizuk e-mails 438, 439, 444, 445 and 446 on [this page](#). This may sound like a lot of reading, but PLEASE do it for **my sake** and for Dov's sake and for everyone here's sake. I love your attitude, but I want it to be in-line with the core beliefs of this website and forum so you can continue to inspire so many of us - for hopefully years to come, IY"H!

Let me just quote from [this article](#):

What the original AAs were shooting for - and what they aimed their program at - was not mere sobriety. That would have been the "common-sense" approach, the way of worldly wisdom, the reasonable-level-of-aspiration gambit. But the founders of AA were men moved by inspiration.

They were coming at the problem with the uncommon sense of men under guidance.

The common-sense approach had already been tried and it had failed. If you set a drunk's level of aspiration at mere abstinence - "Why don't you be a good fellow, use your will power; and give the stuff up" - it did not work. The poor candidate for reform was back drinking again in short order. The discovery that launched AA in the first place was that if an alcoholic were somehow to be rocketed into a state way beyond abstinence, if he were to achieve a real spiritual conversion, an utterly new relationship with God, then permanent abstinence would automatically occur as a blessed and life-saving by-product. That was how it happened with Bill. That was how it happened with Dr. Bob. That was how it happened with most of the first hundred members.

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Re: Torah AND the 12-Steps

Posted by Dov - 11 Jun 2009 12:49

Dear heilige's

1- thanks for the chizzuk efshar letaken, etc, - a very close fellow addict in my homegroup told me exactly the same thing last night, "what else do you expect from an addict, but gam zeh yaavor!". It was helpful then and **again helpful now**, as most good ideas are just that: good ideas. I typically "forget" the "right thinking" **quickly and often** and need frequent chazorah over the course of the day, week, year, life...

2- Sweet berdichever - thanks for the clarity. We may disagree less or more, idunno, really. As far as your point about the holy monkey thing, I could not agree more. However, here is how I look at it:

The reason I lust/lusted, acted out, etc. is *precisely* because I am a holy yid! I was looking for what I eventually found in the steps and is waiting for me in the Torah: a true, full, and intimate relationship with Hashem (my Higher Power). As an addict, particular of this variety, I took the easy way out and made lust my god, serving it daily, religiously, and without fail. The 12 steps just helped mesee there really *is* a way to connect with the *real* G-d, that's all. BTW, I should really give some credit to acting out, because had I not done enough and gotten into so much trouble, I'd possibly never have been forced to look elsewhere than lust! This is how I understand Rabbeinu Yona's intro to Shaarei Teshuva: Tov veYashar Hashem, Al Kein Yoreh

Chato'im Baderech" Hashem is Good and Fair, that's why He **Throws** (yoreh like by Har sinai: yaroh-yiyareh="shot down") the one making mistakes (choteh/sinner) onto the derech, meaning the derech of teshuvah to Him. The result of the addicts misdirected striving for connection reek **havoc** and failure (boruch Hashem!) and he is always (eventually) forced to find Hashem, often with loud (not quiet) desperation. Most people do not understand this and see the reaching for Hashem as the opposite of their addiction. Really it is the same reaching for the same motive, just to the Right Place.

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Re: Torah AND the 12-Steps
Posted by Efshar Letaken - 11 Jun 2009 15:34

Thanks Reb Dov,

This is more of the Reb Dov I look forward hearing every day.

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Re: Torah AND the 12-Steps
Posted by Ykv_schwartz - 11 Jun 2009 20:45

I must say this thread is getting so exciting. What did rashkebehag do to deserve the most exciting thread? :D

Honestly, it is getting hard to follow what each person is coming to argue with the next, as often happens on these threads. And I am not sure that bardichev's point was fully understood. So, bardichev correct of I am making wrong assertions in your statements, but I am just trying to create clarity.

I think we need to understand what bardichev was coming to address. He was commenting on a particular post dov sent out earlier stating how learning maamarei chazal are pointless. bardichev was explaining in his usual language how that is not true.

In his second post he explained how the 12 steps are not holy. Only the Torah is Holy. What he meant by that is 12 steps are just techniques, but it would be ludicrous to submit ourselves to every diyuk in the 12 steps (which even the experts cannot agree what some of these things mean) over the enlightenment of the Torah. The Torah is our life. The Torah is the world. To separate our lives from Torah would be committing suicide. This is not a matter of opinion. This is not about "what works for me". This is about understanding the world from an objective standpoint.

The main issue he was addressing is that we are not only justified but rather healthy Jews by wanting to understand maamarei chazal through our addiction. How beautiful.

Now I think the larger picture is this. Every person needs to define his goals and understand what he wants out of recovery. I do not think a goy can understand kedusha. This is a commandment for Jews. For Jews that have sunken into p**n and related sins, the essence of the yid has been tampered. My goal is to become a yid. How in the world can a goy teach you to become a yid? My goal is kedusha to the top. If I do not strive for it, I will not get there. I will plateau out and fall, c"v. I need to understand my **obligation** as a yid. I need to understand what G-d wants from us as he expressed through his Torah, not based on "well of course G-d would say...". My Goal is kedusha. My goal is coming closer and closer to Hashem. I have read 12 steps over and over, and I **do** know them. But they in no way describe the relationship with G-d that you will find in Rabeinu Yona. So there are great limitations.

Now I am not denying you can gain a lot from 12 steps. I have used the 12 steps myself to get myself out of my slump and I am forever grateful. I think it is a wonderful system. I have only spoken highly about it, and continue to support it. I would suggest it to almost anyone. I even found lots of wisdom in them. However, to those familiar with the Torah, there is not much great chiddushiim (except for the parts that are not really true.) But my goal was not to live by 12 steps. If there was an idea that I did not agree with, so move on. No harm. 12 steps was a very helpful framework where I used it as a springboard for traditional Jewish thought. But CHAS V'SHALOM should I replace it with TORAH.

I think it is a terrible mistake to quote R' Twerski in this context. He has written in some of his letters how the bottom line is to increase yiras shamayim. The 12 steps helps a person get focused again. But yiras shamayim is the goal. There is even the famous letter he wrote to a p**n addict to learn mesillas yesharim to heal himself from his addiction. Apparently, R' Twerski understands that a Jew needs to keep his goals in focus and can in fact get healed from sifrei mussar (which even I think is extreme).

There is a well known concept from Rav Yisroel salanter that when the gemara says to bring the yetzer hara into the beis medresh, it means to learn all about the yetzer hara you are dealing with. I think that is what we are doing here when we dwell on a gemara. This in fact gives a person Siyata D'Shmaya. Like Battlewron wrote the other day, even if you do not see the impact of your tefillos and torah it is there. I am convinced that I have been saved through my Torah. I am not going to elaborate on the amazing journey of my recovery, but I can say it was miraculous.

It could be we all misunderstood Dov and so it is beneficial that we spoke this out for clarity.

But I should explain something further and perhaps this is what Dov was addressing. A person has to know how far his addiction has taken him. For myself and others it was a very bad aveira that I have done for 15 years of life as I lived an otherwise happy life. What brought me guilt and sadness was that I could not live life like a Jew. My life was under control. But there are people that have fallen so deep. Their desires were so strong. Their whole lives are upside down. Almost in jail. They have hit level 3 addicts. This is scary. facing divorces. Theses people would gain very little encouragement from maamarei chazal. Their hearts are so closed and they are truly subhuman. My impression is that Dov's addiction has brought him down to level 3. Dov, correct me if I am wrong. And the truth is that is why his story is so inspiring. a person who fell so low, and even after 11 years continues tio have MAJOR struggles, is yet continuing to fight and never give up. He managed to remain sober throughout all those hard years of difficult nisyonos. That is amazing. This gives great hope to many people who are no where near Dov was. And for such a person this is pikuach nefesh. This may not have to do with an aveira anymore. These kind of people (not DOv, I know he learns torah) probably do not learn Torah on a regular basis and probably cannot feel any type of spirituality of emotional feeling.

But, Dov, if after 11 years you still feel the need to attend 12 steps you continue to have major impulses could it be you need to move on to something else or do you believe you have an internal defect that cannot be cured? Do not answer if you do not want to. But I know you are honest and open.

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Re: Torah AND the 12-Steps
Posted by Efshar Letaken - 11 Jun 2009 21:28

Wow! Reb Ykv,

As usual we can rely on you to save the day with your Ingenious Clarity on the issues.

Its one thing to have "Bina" but to have the "Daas" to come down with such a clear Psak is amazing.

I was struggling to understand bardichives Me'Halich on this one I have to admit I didn't get what he was trying to say. you all know I'm a big bardicher chusid usually but you just brought this whole issue to a great Klurkeit.

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Re: Torah AND the 12-Steps
Posted by the.guard - 11 Jun 2009 22:34

I'm sorry I didn't get a chance to read everyone's replies above - I've been super busy, but I just want to write the following to Barditchev,

Heiliger Barditchev,

I agree with you that the Torah we learn, even while addicted, are part of the zechusim that we accumulate for Hashem to help us to ultimately find the right tools to break free. And I also agree with you that once we are stable, or even in the process, we need Torah - and our goal should be to get back to Torah, which is our life. However, the forum is a place where people discuss healing from this addiction. Almost everyone on the forum tried Torah for years, you included, and it wasn't a tool on its own to help them break free. We can talk about all types of things on the forum, Chesed, Avodah, Torah, but the main focus on the forum needs to be what TOOLS we can use to break free. Torah doesn't function as a tool in this regard, only for those who did not reach levels of addiction yet. Maybe in previous generations they still knew how to use Torah to understand how to break free of such things, but we are too small today to do this on our own... So if you want to discuss Torah on the forum, it is important to make it clear that it isn't a tool on its own in cases of addiction. None of the 18 tools of the handbook talk about "learning more" (although #6 includes this idea a bit).

Dov and I don't disagree with you, but we want to keep the focus on how to break free. Otherwise, we'll end up with people trying to learn more and more, and become frumer and frumer, but crying under their desk just the same :-)

Thank you for understanding.

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Re: Torah AND the 12-Steps

Posted by bardichev - 11 Jun 2009 22:49

YOU ARE 100% RIGHT.

I UNDERSTAND WHERE THE "HEILEGER"GUARD IS COMING FROM.

YOUR "MEHALECH" IS DO SOMETHING EFFECTIVE TO BREAK FREE. I HAVE NO NEED TO JUDGE DOV.

I have many times on this forum said clearly no one should judge dov or me bardichev.

MAYBE IT IS MY POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARDS ALL THAT I DO THAT MAKES IT EASIER FOR ME

BUT I NEED TO REALIZE PEOPLE HAVE DIFFERENT APPROACHES.

ALL I WANTED TO HEAR FROM SOME PEOPLE IS THAT IT (12 STEPS) IS A VERY EFFECTIVE BIDI-EVED

NOW I KNOW IT CAN'T BE PACKAGED AS A BIDI-EVED IT WONT WORK

LMASHAL IN AMERICA MOST YESHIVOS OFFER MANDATORY HIGH SCHOOL IS IT
LKATCHUILA? NO.

DO WE NEED IT ?YES WOULD IT BE BETTER IF WE ALL SAT AND LEARNED ALL DAY
YES BUT IT IS NEEDED AS A VERY IMPORTANT BDIEVED.

ONE MORE NEKUDAH AND I WILL LET YOU GO DO YOUR HEILIGE AVODAH

B'H I WAS MATZLIACH IN YESHIVA (MORE OR LESS BARDICHEV STYLE)

UNFORTUNATELY MANY PEOPLE FEEL SO MERUCHAK FROM TORAH

THEY DON'T REALIZE IT IS REALLY THE KEY AND THEY HAVE A CHELEK IN IT .

EVEN IF IT IS TWO MISHNAS A DAY A SEDER IN KITZUR SHULCHAN ARUCH.

THEY ARE SO FAR FROM TORAH THAT WHEN WE SAY HAMAOR SHEBAH MACHZIRO
LIMUTAV THEY THINK YOU ARE SELLING THEM THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE

THANKS A MILLION

humble and happy

bardichev

ps i read ALL the reccomended e mails i also reccomend that people should read all of dovs and some of my posts

pps I sent you the ben ish chai I quoted

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Re: Torah AND the 12-Steps
Posted by Dov - 12 Jun 2009 00:55

Hi echai!

Yup, it's a long one...

I love the way berdichever stated it and actually agree that the 12 step derech is a bidieved! It feels nice to agree w/someone you love.

BUT (there is always a "but") this is true only in a strictly objective sense. Sort of like: is the Taryag mitzvos as we have them bidieved? Of course they are! As the mekubalim explain, the only mitzvah per se, to remebly nahama dekisufah, was that of eitz hada'as. Since the failure of Adam to choose rightly, that mitzvah is expanded to 613 for Kiyum on a lower level, to eventually reach the higher, more objectively natural level. (The second Luchos, the mostly tevadigeh nature of Yehoshua's conquest, and other things - like the shevirah itself - are also framed this way by some baalei machshova.) I believe the RMCHL, ShaLoH and Nefesh Hachayim agree with this, but please correct me if I am wrong (again).

This means the following:

I do not accept that I have fallen off the wagon and am lost from the derech hashem **for me**. (BTW, I actually used to feel that I **was lost from Hashem's plan for me** after leaving yeshiva in eretz yisroel in 1982! That was a terrible and devastating period for me, but that is another

story...)

My "level-3 or whatever" addiction and the ensuing 12 steps **seem** to be, in retrospect, the only way I could have "found Hashem and myself". Yes, perhaps if I had learned more Torah/mesiras nefesh I may have been zocheh to accomplish the same thing w/o them, but this is not the way Hashem did it for me! I did try, and lost. I choose to believe this was my destiny. It may not be yours, so what? What my experience *has* taught me is that I and many others learned Torah rather well while they were addicts. I gave a mishnah shiur in mishna for kiruv **while in the very worst part of my addiction** sometimes even acting out the very same night. Some people, like me, would either learn and soon afterward shock themselves at how fast and far they could fall; or first fall deeply and very soon afterward feel a religious high. Nu, was that a gift? I do not know. Sadly, the high gave **me** a nechomah for my acting out and in the long run allowed me to save face enough to continue my stupid struggle. A man proudly standing against a tsunami wave. Idiot. But I did not know any better and really thought I was supposed to struggle and be patient. Patient as my relationship with my wife deteriorated under the weight of my mounting secrets; Patient as I became melumad in my twisted brand of "avodas Hashem" that was all about a new kind of "veHachayos Ratzon Vashov": looking at porn, lying, chasing lust, more lying, hiding and acting out, and then come (really) screaming and crying to Hashem, "Take me back!" Ach and Vei. Not exactly what the malochim are doing around the Merkavah, is it? So: no. Learning as an active addict did not seem to be *Maigin* for me in addiction. If anything, it made it worse **at that time**.

I do not accept that most people are addicts. I do not accept that Dovid hamelech was shayich in a personal way to, nor struggled with addiction, though he surely new of it like he knew of every other tzorah, I"a. I do not think that normal people are really made for the 12 steps as presented in the AA literature. It's actual implementation ("working them - not **reading** them) usually seems to be unnessesarily heavy for them. Nonetheless, Rav Twersky seems to operate along those very lines, using the 12 steps for everyone. That does not make sense to me, but - who am I? (AA: "We are not experts - **on anything**").

My wish is for everybody to be free of addiction and have all the fruits of the program w/o needing the steps. But it sure is nice for me to finally have a shaychus to: really living (at least a bit) for Hashem, (some) freedom from fear, emunah that really works, usefulness to people(often), a close (and growing) relationship with my Eternal and True Friend, and let's not forget good old Sanity! I needed the bidieved derech for it and - as I was - could not get it from Torah. Theoretically, maybe it's nebach for me. I choose not to accept that, though. Maybe others can afford to. But to them, instead of arguing, I'd respectfully say like the Baal Hatanya wrote: You don't win a battle with a dirge, but with lively marching music you go ahead to victory! So it is a good thing many of us just accept the facts as they are on the ground, hold our heads high, and grow using this derech as though our very lives depend on it. It may. **At that point, it is certainly better than just lechatchila, it is certainly the precious and holy derech Hashem for us!**

For R' Yaakov S. - I rarely feel I am fighting. When I do have a temptation in lust, I choose not to look at it as a YH issue. I view it like a "little tentacle" of the beast of my addiction. It had total relentless control of my life and seemed to be a sure bet for keeping it! Now, B"H, it's "body" is

locked in a "dungeon" guarded by Hashem till He decides to "recycle" it, bimheira beyamieinu. In the meantime, it's tentacles are dangerous, having a connection to the same beast (much like neshikah from a bohr to a mikvah) and can destroy me totally, though they now appear to be weak and thin. Just a "thin string", if you will. But bitter. I use the same tools in the same way as I always did, from the very beginning. It's just faster ususally, and not as big a deal as it used to be. (occasionally, like the last day or two, it has been scary. Nu, what do you expect from an addict? B'H it's getting better, and your support is appreciated)! So **I talk about it like it is the beast itself**, even though I may be able to have confidence and self-assuredness to beat it or start a new derech, who knows? It might work for a long time, but seems silly for me to try. Along the way, some people think because of the way I share and frame/describe my challenges that I am still listening to or watching or running after shmutz or acting out just like before! I know **I need to face it the same way as Dov-the-newbie**, or I'll trip, get stuck, fool myself, act out, and eventually - die. (I once sat through a long verbal thrashing about selfishness because I shared that I believed in some way I was still selfish and disrespectful to my wife. Whew. The guy had 2 years of sobriety and I had five but kept me mouth shut tight, even afterward. Who knows, maybe it was good for me or him!) Better to be a (safe) fool in peoples eyes for a few minutes than to Hashem (permanently). I do owe *you* the explanation, though.

Hoping some of this megillah was helpful,

Dov

I have no evidence I will ever be cured. I **do not know** if what they say: "Once an addict, always an addict", is true. I just choose to apply it to myself for lack of a reason not to. I assume I'll be going to meetings till I die, which is good because it seems I am more pleasant to live with when I have meetings in my life. I get to help addicts, too, just by being there. If I somehow become certain that I am cured, I may not go to meetings any more and hope to let you and others know. If you think you are cured, gezunterheit and I assume **you are right** until proven otherwise. It is not clear to me exactly what the litmus test would be, though. One acting out? A pattern? Arrest? Feeking cruddy?

My goal in life is to be a pure and total eved Hashem. I know this deep in my heart. Most of the 12 steps are truly Derech Eretz Kodmah LaTorah, like the 2000 years Tohu, as far as I am concerned. The 11th is about moving on from the steps and starting your life as a Yid (in my case), it seems, no? Is the 3rd step Shma? yes, in retrospect. I could not and would not have "gotten it" from that had you taught it to me that way. I had been saying sh'ma all those years in addiction and yet: He still wasn't truly **in charge** enough, wasn't **on my side** enough, and wasn't **able to help me** enough, as far as I was concerned, to really trust Him. It was all too complicated in my experience of Yiddishkeit. I had to hear and learn all that in a different way, get off the 18-wheeler (or airplane, helicopter, blender, whatever!) and get on a nice, quiet bicycle with training wheels. That's the 12 steps. Simple, focused, and real. Now, certainly

Torah is the ikkar and hopefully a frum recovering addict will be able to maintain enough sanity to make Torah the ikkar and grow in it. Nu, I have met some who can't yet. Let's daven for them to have what we have, too.

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Re: Torah AND the 12-Steps

Posted by the.guard - 12 Jun 2009 06:18

Dearest Dov, your posts are so beautiful that they bring tears to my eyes!

Rav Twersky seems to operate along those very lines, using the 12 steps for everyone. That does not make sense to me, but - who am I?

He doesn't really. Only in the case where it is clear the person has tried many things and continues to fail. Yakov mentioned above [this article](#) from the Modia by Rabbi Twerski to a struggler. He doesn't even mention the 12-Steps. But he does mention the CONCEPTS of the 12 Steps though, which is **learning how to live and think right!**

But Yakov is right. "Living and thinking right" is not the end goal. For a Goy it is. For a Jew, we can go much higher. But how can we start with XYZ before learning ABC? And once we know ABC, we take it WITH US into the XYZ as well. We need to take this honesty, humility, lack of self, and this close connection to Hashem that we learned in ABC - into our TORAH as well. And if we do this, then our Torah and Avodah become truly powerful. Much more than before. They become a **nuclear weapons** against the Yetzer Hara.

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Re: Torah AND the 12-Steps

Posted by Ykv_schwartz - 12 Jun 2009 08:26

[guardureyes wrote on 12 Jun 2009 06:18:](#)

But how can we start with XYZ before learning ABC? And once we know ABC, we take it WITH US into the XYZ as well. We need to take this honesty, humility, lack of self, and this close connection to Hashem that we learned in ABC - into our TORAH as well. And if we do this, then our Torah and Avodah become truly powerful. Much more than before. They become a **nuclear weapons** against the Yetzer Hara.

Beautiful! Well said! I think that sums it up. This is how I approached my recovery and especially 12 steps. For me when I started, I started real simple, focusing on basics only. I did not overwhelm myself with lots of ideas. I focused on a few basic elements that I felt were required for recovery. Anyone who wants can, read the **written** part of my recovery [here](#) and [here](#) and [here](#) and [here](#). And the truth is that even today (it is only 120+ days; big deal), I still remain very focused on small issues that can make a huge difference in my life.

After thinking through this sugya I have gained greater clarity regarding the issue at hand. I think we all agree that our goals are kedusha, yiras shamayim, torah etc. We all agree that unless we are really applying kedusha we are not really recovered, as R' Twerski stated. But we realize that the means to that goal can be anything that will enable that goal as long as it is halachically permissible. Being that 12 steps is permissible (psak from R' Twerski) and proven effective, we all agree that 12 steps is a prime choice for the means to the ends. Perhaps the above debate was not a debate as much as a confusion what everyone was saying. Bardichev viewed Dov's words as if he is describing the actual goal. So Bardichev spoke up that we cannot forget the Torah; that is our goal. And Dov was perhaps thinking that Bardichev was explaining the method, technique, and means to achieve that goal and so he felt to disagree based on personal experience explaining that Torah did not WORK for him as a MEANS to achieve his goals.

There is no greater simcha than the simcha from clarity!

So, let us remember the holy words of our mentor R' Twerski:

"The **only** thing that can be effective against immoral temptations is **kedusha**; no if, ands, or buts. There is **NO** other way".

And let us all try to michazek ourselves in inyanei kedusha, by taking some small steps by ensuring we are at least abiding by halacha properly. As the Rambam's son writes a person cannot expect to have siyata d'shmaya in their temptations unless they are abiding by halacha. If one is B"H abiding by the halachos in inyanei kedusha already, perhaps there is some small chumrah one can take. On the day of Guard's baby boy's bris, as a *present* to guard I took upon myself one chumrah in inyanei kedusha. I referred to it in his thread back then. I have kept it up till today and B"H it has brought much hatzlacha to me.

[On my thread \(click here\)](#) one can read an interesting "*debate*" boruch and I had as to how to apply avodas hashem to this addiction. Boruch, our 12 steps expert, describes how the 12 steps encouraged him to **use** Torah properly for recovery. This has always been his major theme; that through the 12 steps he was once again able to SEE the torah that he always knew. Boruch was a BIG fan of actually running to the B"M in time of nisayon. I explained to him that I too have been successful in applying those words, but this is not so practical to most people, which I also quoted from the cheshobon hanefesh on. Either way, I think anyone who is looking how to apply avodas hashem to his recovery will find gems in that debate as each one of us brought out very fundamental points that I think should be relevant to many people here. Enjoy!

It may interest some of the readers to know that Boruch has developed an innovative approach to using the 12 steps effectively in a Jewish setting. He himself has begun working on this with people face to face. He built his own source material from the 12 steps. I urge anyone who is interested for serious recovery using 12 steps guided by a real talmid chacham to contact him at boruchshemo@gmail.com. You are not only helping yourselves but all of klal yisroel. When he sees people are interested, it will encourage him to refine his approach to such a degree that it will help ALL YIDDEN. From the day he arrived on the scene, he always dreamed of this. We should be mechazik him to actualize the dream that he has, because that dream was his message from Hashem.

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Re: Torah AND the 12-Steps
Posted by aaron4 - 12 Jun 2009 13:16

I'm in the U.S. eastern time zone and check the Forum throughout the day (posting occasionally), but unfortunately there's not all that much going on most of the time. It seems like most of you are in Israel and I look forward to reading what went on while I was sleeping. This morning I found **incredible treasures** on this thread once again (rashke, you have a real z'chus). As I read through it, I had my own thoughts and responses that I was going to post.

But then I read the next post and my point was already made, MUCH better than I would have said it. I don't feel deprived, I feel GREAT! It's very nice to see that the Gedolim on the Forum agree with you, I feel like I'm on the right track. Thank you!

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Re: Torah AND the 12-Steps

Posted by aaron4 - 12 Jun 2009 13:18

Correction, I thought I was on the victory thread but now noticed that this is a new one. Everything still stands, including the kudos to rashkebehag!

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Re: Torah AND the 12-Steps

Posted by bardichev - 12 Jun 2009 17:31

a chassidishe maase

I feel like we were sitting in a KRETCHMER (inn) drinking LCHAIM eating KICHEL and HERRING.

WE all got into a lively argument (FAMILY FIGHT)

the MOSHKE (inn keeper -our very own HEILIGE gaurd)

started screaming hey CHEVRA take your fight outside.

I don't want the PURITZ (the Y"H) coming and seeing us fighting

Dov (=BER) you know the HEILIGE BARDICHEVER WAS A TALMID OF THE REBBE REB BER!!!! wow!!!

a greese fin bardichev

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Re: Torah AND the 12-Steps
Posted by aaron4 - 12 Jun 2009 18:11

;D :D

bardichev you're funny! If we were all b'simcha like this all the time, the PURITZ would never even bother with our little inn.

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