

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 Ratzo 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 rashkebehag - 15 Jun 2009 16:25

someone asked how I was zoche to start such an exciting thread. I wish I had zechusim. Guard moved it over so i wish to reclaim it. Anyway, I believe Twersky has a book showing that the 12 steps are compatible with the Torah and i think he even finds sources in the Torah that fit with some of the 12 steps. Is anyone familiar with the book? I read it a long time ago and can't even remember the name. (maybe it's "Self-Improvement? I'm Jewish!")

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Re: Torah AND the 12-Steps

Posted by the.guard - 15 Jun 2009 18:45

That's the one. See [this page](#) where Rabbi Twerski himself answers one of our members about this.

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Re: Torah AND the 12-Steps

Posted by Pintele Yid - 15 Jun 2009 20:27

Dov and K'hala Kedisha,

Remember the difference between a boxer and a brawler. The boxer will do whatever he can not to get hit and the brawler will step in toe to toe and get whacked but thinks he can hit harder and knock his opponent out before he gets knocked out himself. When fighting the Y"H we need to be both.

In conjunction with many of the other strategies posted on this heiliger site, thinking about how we are bringing Moshiach by fighting against the Y"H will keep you strong so you don't get into a crisis situation. This is what the Gemorah in Baba Basra nun zayin amud bais means when it says Im darcha achreena rasha hu. We got to do whatever we can, to not get hit in the first place.

I totally agree with you that while you are in the throws of a crisis, thinking about how we are bringing Moshiach by fighting against the Y"H won't do the trick. It is great that you and others find strength in the 12 step program when you are in a crisis. I pray that all yidden find what works for them. But on the other hand it does say Im Pogaya Bminuval Zeh Moshchaihu Lbais Hamedrash. So what is the p'shat in this chazal? Is it only talking about those who haven't fallen into "stage 3"?

When you are in a crisis, that is when even the boxer has to morph into a brawler because you are in the corner against the ropes and you are being hammered. HAMMERED!

There are several chazals that relate to this situation and I think that this is the deeper meaning of Moshchaihu Lbais Hamedrash (since most of the time the Bais Medrash is closed or too far away to access when you are in the crisis):

1. Berochos heh amud aleph - "Laolam Yargiz adam Yetzer Tov al Yetzer Horah" This means that when you feel that you are about to hit crises mode **you start thundering at your Yetzer Horah - calling him every expletive you ever knew** and screaming at him of how he dares to take your holy neshama and to shove it into the dungheap . Think of all the tzaras he has caused you in the past and he wants to do it again. If you can, don't just think it but scream it on top of your lungs so you get boiling mad at him. Take all the pain and frustration that has accumulated over the years and throw it at him. (Paranthenetically, this is probably what your rebbi meant when he told you to learn Tanya. He just wasn't specific enough. Fortunately for
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During this time I sometimes imagine myself standing in the ring and beating the heck out of my opponent the "Y"H" and he is dripping in blood.

If that doesn't work we have another Gemorah in Shabbos Kuf Nun Bais Amud Aleph that says that "Isha chaimas mulai tzoiah upeyha mulai dam vehakl rutzin achareha". It is interesting that this Gemorah is not quoted very often - maybe because it is dangerous to go into such a meditation - but it works for me. I am not sure how explicit I should be on this public site about this so I will take it very surface but "tain lechochom Vyechacachim od".

I was walking home several weeks ago from a Shabbos simcha, when as a result of having to pick up my head to look at the color of the street light, I saw something that that I didn't want to

see and it threw me for a loop. I saw that I was losing the battle so **in my mind** I invited myself to follow the "frum" lady home. When she took off her high heels, as a result of those treifa heels, I saw the most ugly bruises on the heels of her feet and I imagined that her feet stunk worse then the dorm rooms in yeshiva. I also try to imagine her as she was a walking skeleton. I think this is the deeper meaning of that Gemorah where if you are at the mercy of something you saw, then take it in and modify it to where you are totally disgusted by it. The Gemorah uses more "base" turnoffs and you can imagine the levels that work for you.

A problem for going this route is that you shouldn't chas vesholom transfer this to your wife. So if you feel uncomfortable about this then don't go there!

This brings me to another Chazal that few get to attain but it is good to know where the knockout punch is. The Gemorah in Yuma Samech Tes Amud Bais talks about how Shimon Hatzadik wanted to kill the Y"H for Tavva and they tied him up but then couldn't find a 3 day old egg. (Because the roosters and chickens stopped mating). On one hand it can be said that it was a metaphor for the lack of interest of humans to be together but I think a deeper meaning is that it affected the people who were on the madraiga of Roosters and Chickens that go after their animal instinct. In the sefer gan hashalom from Rav Sholom Arush, he explains that a major problem arises when the wife feels that she is only a object of lust for her husband. Women crave closeness of "soul" while men crave closeness of body. He therefore discusses how the man must recreate himself into someone who wants to be with his wife only L'shaim shumayim. On this level, all of our problems are gone because you don't view women as an object for lust but a way to be mekayin the ratzon hashem and to bring shefa on the sfira of Malchus which is in our case only when we are with our wives.

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Re: Torah AND the 12-Steps

Posted by Pintele Yid - 15 Jun 2009 20:59

Sorry I hit "post" instead of "preview" . I want to add this:

Sorry for this long post but I think that saying that Torah can't help everyone and only the 12 step program works when you are in the pits is not true. Torah is can be the antidote for every level. The Gemorah doesn't make any distinction. The problem we have is that sometimes we don't always have the power, strength and knowledge to unlock the antidote for the Y"H.

Hope this helps - it helps me most of the time. But I might be on level 2 and therefore never experienced the admas kodesh that you are fighting on.

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Re: Torah AND the 12-Steps

Posted by the.guard - 15 Jun 2009 21:11

You hit the nail on the head.

we don't always have the power, strength and knowledge to unlock the antidote for the Y"H

An addict simply does not have the power, **ever**, when he is faced with lust. He is ill and needs a doctor. The 12-Steps are the derech erez kadma latorah. As Dov said recently, Hashem had to "heal" all the Yidden before he gave them the Torah. The Torah can't work if you're ill.

BTW. You don't have to add a new post, you can modify your previous post by pressing "modify".

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Re: Torah AND the 12-Steps

Posted by Ykv_schwartz - 15 Jun 2009 22:12

Guard, I do not understand you. You are right that an addict does not have the power when faced with lust. However, an addict has to learn to take control of his actions. That is part of recovery. Hashem gave us the power of ratzon and to make decisions. We need to make decisions and difficult decisions. We need to decide NOW what we really want out of life. And we need to decide when faced with lust what to do. If not, then even 12 steps do not help. Just look at all the people that did fall even with 12 steps; members of our very own site. It takes POWER to call a sponsor the same way it is to do any other technique to distract himself (be it learn Torah or play guitar). There is no magic. I agree that perhaps calling a sponsor can

easier. but I do not know, never tried it. B"H, I have been freed from all temptations for 130 days, which is a total nes.

The main technique that 12 steps in regards to nisayon (obviously they have lots of yesodos), from what I understood from Boruch, our 12 steps expert, is the power of distraction. We must fight the yetzer hara from the side; overtime the temptations will die down. And in fact Boruch explained to us that this is exactly what Chazal meant. There is NO contradiction. The 12 steps are not details; they are klalim, principles. If it makes some people feel better, think of some of the idea of learning torah in nisayon as a detail to this principle of 12 steps. The chachma of 12 steps is not that they are mechadesh new ideas but organized them nicely and created a concise list of imp't yesodos for recovery.

I will quote the words of Boruch:

"Then I joined the 12 steps group and as I described here, through working the steps on my nisyonos, I came to realize that the urge to fight and confront the addiction with an all out emotional battle of wills is as damaging as the urge to succumb to the addiction. That is when I understood that the best way to fight the y"h was to be mevatel my rotzon to fight the yetzer hora directly. I realized that I needed to surrender my rotzon to Hashem's rotzon.

As the Rambam says in Hilchos Issurei Biah (21:19) "yasiya libo midivrei havai vehashchoso veyifaneh ledivrei torah", move the mind from empty and destructive thoughts and channel it to words of Torah. Yasiya, yefaneh, that's a smooth process, no struggle at all. So if we do it our way, and it becomes personal and we try and beat the y"h on our own terms we are asking for real trouble.

Thanks to the 12 steps group I joined, I learned to do it Hashem's way, which is that when a nisoyon comes we resist the urge to struggle and we resist the urge to take on the yetzer hora and instead we just immediately, absolutely and effortlessly switch channels to Torah, whether it is the Torah suggested by the Rebbe R' Elimelech in his tzetel koton, the drosho of Chazal on Venishmartem mikol dovor ra, shelo yeharher odom bayom veyovo lidei tuma balaylo, whether it is another possuk or mammar Chazal, whether it is a Shiur on a cellphone, or a Rashbo or Ketzos we remember, we just do what Hashem tells us to do, we focus on His Heilge Torah for as long as it takes and He will do the rest."

In other post he writes:

"So addressing implementing the 1st through 3rd step in a moment of nisoyon, as I posted earlier, there is no submission to Hashem if you are not prepared to implement Hashem's prescription for a moment of nisoyon. And if you are honest you will look at the Rambam and see that it is very clear beyond any doubt that the Rambam is discussing what to actually do in a moment of nisoyon. The place for tefila is all in advance. L'olom yispallel odom shelo yechleh... However once we are in the actual situation of a nisoyon, tefila is the wrong approach. In this specific instance of nisoyon of hirhurei zenus the Rambam is very clear. And in fact in all nisyonos of yetzer hora chazal say moshcheihu lebeis hamedrash. And as you well know the mesilas yeshorim says that torah is the tavlin and no other approach will work."

The 12 steps give people sponsors which are VERY helpful. But again, a person still needs to address his most basic problem as an addict called lack of self control. Because if he lacks it, he can have all the sponsors in the world and read all the red, white and blue books, when faced with a nisayon, he will lack the will power to do what it takes to do to get himself out of the mess. The other thing that is REQUIRED of addicts is addressing his desires. He needs to learn to "let go" of his desires. Otherwise the temptations will eventually overpower him. This takes honesty with ones self as to how to address his most inner emotions and feelings. This is about self awareness. This is about uncovering his inner spirit. There is more that is required for recovery, but those two are the most basics, because they are the primary ingredients in p**n addiction. That is why we give ourselves a long time for recovery. This too, for some, can be easier in a group setting working the steps.

It is important for people to create goals outside of staying sober for an extended period of time. Otherwise they are not focused not "recovery".

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Re: Torah AND the 12-Steps

Posted by Dov - 15 Jun 2009 22:18

Dear Pinteleh Yid and friends - (Sorry about the long post)

Thanks for the beautiful feedback. When you write your rebbi was more specific can you please elaborate on what the specifications were that you found useful?

As a budding sexaholic, in 1979, I found the book, Yesod Yosef (not the sefer by same name that belz or bobov recently reprinted. That one is the talmid of the Kav hayashar and a great sefer, but it's about many assorted topics of mussar based on zohars, etc.). It is the sefer

alluded to by the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch in his little chapter on the aveira of sz"l.

I had a har time with the hebrew but made it through and it was horrible for me, besides being useless. First off, the author lived in europe years ago and was not shayich to my psychosocial/philosophical world. Second, my madreiga had no available seats in his ball park (not even nosebleed section). Third, he was talking about an aveiraover which I believe I already had no control by that time. I was "screaming at it" even though I absolutely needed it in order to deal with living. Just more hypocritical tension within me, that was all I got. Needless to say, after coming home from two years free of this "YH" (I had a nice time in yeshiva) and being convinced by some of my rebbeim and seviva that I was on the road to another gilgul (at best) for having left the RSHB"Y derech and going after chayey sha'ah in america, I wasn't feeling that good. I felt isolated and lost, though I kept up with friends and learning. I knew all the mussar that I know now, probably and cried many times in davening, but i guess something basic was missing. For one thing, it was still all about me and my madreigas, my neshoma, and my olam habah, unfortunately. Anyway, of course, I turned to my only really reliable friend: Lust. Are you saying Hashem was there for me but I refused to see Him? I ask you what was I supposed to do? Lust clearly worked for me. it got my mind off the pain and others and focused me in on a vital, exciting, and *meaningful* experience - it felt good and was freeing. Those qualities were pretty *meaningful* to me at the time. Do you really think I could have gotten the same from Tanya then? Naturally, lust became my worship, and I **don't** mean that poetically. Anything one does "religiously" (look the word up in a dictionary, really) every day faithfully w/o fail, with trust, and very seriously. It gave me feelings tzadikim write about in seforim regarding *mitzvos*, particularly the chassidishe tzadikim. I knew it was wrong, technically and believed it was destroying me in some way, but I could not see it or feel it yet, so why would I stop, I ask you? Who would? It was only later, when it almost completely destroyed me as a human being, not only as a yid, that I saw it was either lust, or me. Till then I was sure we were strange bedfellows.

So, yes, it is a YH, and to call it that for a person who is still free makes absolute sense to me. Teach and persuade yidden not to be fooled by the YH. However, anybody who has looked paraoh in the face and can say "Yes, I understand what it feels like to have your heart hardened and what it is like to realize that your bechira simply doesn't reach here any more" is different.

I do not wish to be confrontational but want to be clear about this. Gemorahs, chizzuk, reasoning and Mussar are great for people who understand it's value. I felt like I appreciated it and memorized chunks of mesillas yeshorim and learned a lot of the chizzuk on these forums. Lots of eitzas. But to a sexaholic like me and others I know, it was just an internal finger shaking at me and saying "why don't you just come to your senses already!". Today, I may seem very similar to most yidden, lust not being an issue for me most of the time. But I keep my "beggars clothes" nearby in my closet and I still put them back on every time I go to a meeting and every time what you call the YH shows itself to me. The day I allow myself to get fooled that (now that I am *really* a good yid) I can always just use my newfound reasoning (ie. real connected and deep Torah wisdom) against lust is the day I believe I will get flushed down the toilet and revert back to my old life. I am not alone in this. Am I in the throes of a crisis? No. But I am as soon as I think I can beat it, and I really mean that. I am on reprieve, that's all. And nevertheless it has opened up a beautiful new world of Torah and avoda to me i never thought I'd ever have a shaychus to after having abused it so much.

Moshcheihu lebeis hamedrash? Yes, I believe this chazal speaks to all of us. The question is: who is the menuval? As I explained above, my **mind** told me that lust was the menuval, but **everything I did** showed clearly that my heart considered it my best friend and my higher power. It wasn't really a menuval to me, so why try to apply that chazal to it?

I almost never struggle with what you call the YH for lust. If I have to change into a "brawler" I think the game is already over, for me. The ga'avah and self-deception alone, of me saying "I'll try hard enough this time and finally beat it, Hashem, just watch!", was the **poison** that almost irreperably ruined my life and the lives of my wife and children. i know at least one older talmid chochom who is still too busy ruining his with it to give up and get help... please daven...

Now, you may say: do it be'ezras Hashem, that's all. (Like Shaul and David before he went to golias changed his nusach and added that Hashem would help him) Well, saying **I'll beat it "be'ezras Hashem" is too dangerous for me**, as I lived as a "warrior" for years and it was just an excuse to get sicker - I just had to beat it! That is based on my *experience*, not a poor self-image, nor on chazal, by the way. (Though **chazal do say** that Chizkiyahu needed to go to sleep whenbavel came because he was on a *lower* madreiga than Dovid Hamelech **who could go out to battle** and still give it to Hashem. I am obviously on a lower madreiga than anyone who is not a sexaholic, but hey, that's life.) BH Hashem is here for me, in me and around me to protect me and flatten the path in front of me smooth, every single day. Some yidden do it the other way, by fighting. I can't. My fight is different. It is a struggle to: let *Hashem* do it, **not me**. Either way, in the end I am sure the YH is still saying "UNCLE"!, no?

So we **are** on the same team! We are both ultimately fighting the YH. The way I see it, an addict like me needs to see lust as YH **mibachutz** and use tefillah and mesiras nefesh (giving myself in service to Hashem and others in every aspect of my life, which *is* the 3rd step) and totally depend on Hashem to turn it aside (fine, call it "beat it" if it makes you feel good!), others need to wage a feirce internal struggle. Why not say eilu va'eilu?

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Re: Torah AND the 12-Steps

Posted by the.guard - 15 Jun 2009 22:46

"The Torah is only acquired by he who dies over it". The deep secrets that Dov is sharing with us every day on this forum, I believe he was able to internalize them - not because he is very intelligent, and not because he spent 11 years learning them, but for one reason only: because he **died** over them. He had come to a point where it was either "learn" these Yesodos or die. When a person feels that way about Torah, then he will acquire it. And that is how Dov has internalized all this wisdom. It hurts me that very few people here are able to truly understand what Dov is saying. Even Boruch was far from this level of depth. After all, he only started out... and he wasn't at a point of "learn or die". Boruch even claimed that he had made such a strong decision to stop - that even **without** the 12-Steps he would never have gone back. He claimed the 12-Steps were only helping him to not have to "white-knuckle" it.... But what can we do? We haven't "died" yet over these truths like Dov has. But how fortunate we are to hear them from

him anyway... Maybe over time we'll start to truly understand and internalize some of these life-altering messages in a deep and permanent way.

Thank you Dov for being here.

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Re: Torah AND the 12-Steps

Posted by London - 15 Jun 2009 23:27

I have been away hiding the past few days. Unfortunately I slipped last week, and have been trying to get back to basics again. Also (BH) I have been really busy with work.

I think it is impossible to explain the 12 steps to someone who has not experienced the life saving transformation that they offer. I am told in the fellowships to stick with the winners, when I see people who have been to hell and back and managed to stay clean and sober, transform their lives, embrace Yiddishkeit and stay this way for many years, these are the people I want to stick with, I want to hear what they have to offer.

If there is someone on this forum whose addiction took them past internet and masturbating and managed to achieve a happy, content and purposeful life, at peace with Yiddishkeit without going through a 12 step fellowship, and have stayed this way for many years, please post on this thread.

When I was acting out I, as I am sure many on this forum have, I / we had no problem going to the goyim for my / our pleasures, but as soon as it comes to recovery we get all pious and start debating, I wonder how much denial is contained within these posts of people who have not experienced the 12 steps. The 12steps are not merely a method of getting sober or an SOS call when in danger, the 12 steps go right to the core of a person, teach us how to live life on life's terms without medicating ourselves get us connected with Hashem.

I have met many very "chosuve" people in recovery people who learn in kollel, Rabbonim & Magedai Shiurim etc who have crossed like me many many boundaries. I know many from people who like me have used the internet on Shabbos, I have met many people like me who have gone far worse than the internet (vehamayvin yovin), for me my recovery is a case of

Pikuach Nefesh. If there is a dedicated Jewish program that will get people who are in the deepest of deep addictions back on track and give a life as mentioned in the AA promises, and offer support 24 / 7 for as many years as needed then perhaps this discussion would not be necessary. But there is not, what there is fellowships based on AA that are proven to cure even the worst of addicts that offers lifelong freedom, that does not go against our Torah, our beliefs, there should be no need for a debate. If and when a person needs the steps he will know it in himself.

From the many people I have met in SA who are working the steps properly it's not a case of Torah v's the 12 Steps, for us without the 12 steps there will be no Torah, only pain misery and suffering that will end in either jail, institution or death. The 12 steps are my medication for life a clear and concise way to daily living that does not preach religion at all. So what if it was founded by goyim, chemotherapy was founded by goyim so a cancer patient (R'L) should not take this treatment. Addiction is a cancer of the Soul that untreated get progressively worse.

The choshuve people on this forum who do not accept the 12 step fellowships are either not addicts or are in denial, either way I hope and pray the ultimate Refuoh should come upon us speedily.

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Re: Torah AND the 12-Steps

Posted by Pintele Yid - 15 Jun 2009 23:37

Dov and London - your posts just blow me away as I only **begin with the slightest mashehu** to understand what you went through and how you have gotten to where you are today.

To answer Dov's question, his name is Rav Yosef Yitzchok Jacobson and you can google him. He gave shiurim on the Likutai Amorim in the Tanya. See store.chassidus.com/item_detail.php?item_id=24527

He talked in length about the what an Aveira is on a kabbalistic level and the way one can "thunder" against the Y"H when one feels that he is falling into the web of the Y"H by taking the pent up anger and frustration that a person has and channelling it in this constructive way.

This is based on one of the tenets of the Tanya that Moiach Shalit Al Halev. (The brain can ultimately rule over the heart) I think I remember him saying that you still have to have a bechina of a brain to be able to do this. If your brain is fried then one just has to hit rock bottom before they can get out of it.

He also taught us on a Kabbalistic level how it is possible for the Y"H to become your "best friend". He said that when you are doing your avairos, you are nourishing the Y"H so in turn, the Y"H will do what he can to become your best friend by feeding you as well.

I will somehow try B"N to alert him to this Website so he might be able to contribute. I am sure I am not giving true justice what he and the Tanya has to say about this subject.

I just have one question, when you were in the "fighting" stage, did you ever try to do the 2 things the Gemorah suggested? (Thundering against the Yetzer Horah or making the object of your nesayon despicable in your eyes)

Heligar Guard - One question for you - before Kabbolas Hatorah how did the Yiden become healed. Was it the 12 step program? I think that every yid did what worked for him/her and with the help of Hashem they succeeded.

I think the bottom line is what Dov said "Ailu V'ailu". We have to do what ever works for us and hopefully we can also learn on this forum other things from others so we can add them to our arsenal. I recently attended a conference where General Cartwright, the #2 in the Military said that the insurgents change there tactics every twelve days. We can say that the Y"H is at least as nimble as the insurgents. We therefore have to learn as many ways much as possible to keep on top.

What Dov is really saying is that the topic headline of Torah vs. the 12 step is really wrong. We have to incorporate both. What works for some might not work for others. We should be cognizant that the totality of what we learn here will I"Y"H help us is in our moment of need - of

Regarding what you wrote:

[guardureyes wrote on 15 Jun 2009 21:11:](#)

BTW. You don't have to add a new post, you can modify your previous post by pressing "modify".

The funny thing
is that it was there in front of my eyes and I never noticed it. A mussar haskil for us all.

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Re: Torah AND the 12-Steps
Posted by the.guard - 16 Jun 2009 14:55

London, so good to have you back. Your post is profound, as usual. So much to learn from. You have to stick with us and keep inspiring us.

About your fall, Nu, what can you expect from an addict? But can you identify what chain of events led to it? Can you make new fences in those areas, or try something you haven't yet, to

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Helivai we should be able to clean ourselves up by the click of a modify button

Re: Torah AND the 12-Steps
Posted by the.guard - 16 Jun 2009 15:07

Heligar Guard - One question for you - before Kabbolas Hatorah how did the Yiden become healed. Was it the 12 step program?

Dear Pintale, it was Hashem that healed them. But what do you think the 12-Steps are all

Dear Yaakov_Schwartz, Pintele and everyone else,

I think it's time to change the name of this thread to "Torah **AND** the 12-Steps' instead of "Torah about? Letting HASHEM heal us!!
vs. the 12-Steps". Torah and Avodas Hashem are our LIFE. They are EVERYTHING. But an addict needs the 12-Steps as *Shcar Pesiyos*... What are *Psiyos*? Steps! When we go learn Torah, we get *Shcar* for the steps too! It's all included in our learning Torah. An addict needs to learn the Steps so that he can bring Hashem into his life and become human again. It's the "*derech erez kadma letorah*" - **so that he can once again learn Torah and serve Hashem.** That turns the 12-Steps into HOLY AVODAH too!

For an addict, the Torah is on the other side of the mountain and there's a deep gorge between them... The 12-Steps are like a "*Gesher*" between him and Torah, so that he can GET to Torah... And when he walks across that *gesher* in 12 *psiyos* (without being "*mefached klal*") - then he will get Torah and Avodah in a whole new way. In a much more REAL way.

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Re: Torah AND the 12-Steps

Posted by Dov - 16 Jun 2009 17:27

Dear Pinteleh Yid:

He talked in length about the what an Aveira is on a kabbalistic level and the way one can "thunder" against the Y"H when one feels that he is falling into the web of the Y"H by taking the pent up anger and frustration that a person has and channelling it in this constructive way.

This is based on one of the tenets of the Tanya that Moiach Shalit Al Halev. (The brain can ultimately rule over the heart) I think I remember him saying that you still have to have a bechina of a brain to be able to do this. If your brain is fried then one just has to hit rock bottom before they can get out of it.

He also taught us on a Kabbalistic level how it is possible for the Y"H to become your "best friend". He said that when you are doing your avairos, you are nourishing the Y"H so in turn, the Y"H will do what he can to become your best friend by feeding you as well.

and

I just have one question, when you were in the "fighting" stage, did you ever try to do the 2 things the Gemorah suggested? (Thundering against the Yetzer Horah or making the object of your nesayon despicable in your eyes)

Well. Here I go again. May this be of use to *somebody*:

My sponsor is Roman Catholic, I have had sponsees who were Frum yidden, goyim, totally unaffiliated Jews (sadly, some married to shiksa's), and have very close program friends who are mormons, etc. I hope that doesn't render me posul le'eidus... B"H they can **all** get sober and stay that way even though they are missing a big chunk of reality (the Torah). Living sober is a gift Hashem gives to *everyone*, like He gives air and water - "hoy **kol** tsomei lechu lamoyim!". Really. I guess I owe water, air (and cucumber sandwiches) my very life. B"H, I do not make breathing and eating the whole point of my life - it's just survival, not a madreiga. Don't get me wrong - I take breathing **very, very** seriously - dead seriously. But (as long as I am not having breathing trouble, r"!!!!) it is certainly **not the purpose of life**. It shouldn't be. It, like sobriety, is perhaps the most essential heicha timza **to whatever life I choose**. Now, lets get into living! As a yid, "living right" is Torah, period. The Will of Hashem is expressed through it - what more could anyone want? Nevertheless, frum addicts ignore the Torah every time they act out, and can't stop. Then we get sober. As I am a yid who knows what the Torah is, in order for my relationship with Hashem to be honest I need to try and keep the Torah. If my relationships are

not **honest** I will not succeed at sobriety, at all. **No chatzitzas allowed** in this mikvah! And, if I am not sober, I'll die. Kofoh alai ha'har kegigis? AA calls it Enlightened Self-interest. As recovering addicted yidden, we choose to extend survival to keeping the Torah because it is **our** third step. I hope that is somewhat clear. But please don't pretend that the only sober yid is a frum yid. Helping others get and stay sober is not kiruv. It is more akin to giving blood. ("No drunk ever got sober as a result of *inspiration*" -Chuck C.)

PS. Ask any sponsor in Brooklyn and they will likely report: being frum is *not* an asset when it comes to getting sober. We often have it much **harder** than goyim because of various reasons.

PSS. I agree that in some long-term way, **all** yidden desperately need to accept Hashem's will through the Torah whether they realize it, or not (as do *all* bnei noach, really). I believe in the "rotzeh anee" of the RMB"M...Nevertheless, it doesn't seem to actually *work* that way, as I have "testified" above. Maybe the actual ratzon Hashem for us as individuals is not that simple...vehameivin yovin.

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Re: Torah AND the 12-Steps

Posted by Efshar Letaken - 16 Jun 2009 17:41

Thanks Reb Guard for changing the title to Torah & The 12 Steps.

Its way more accurate.

Efshar Letaken

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