

cave

Posted by strugglingandstrivngBT - 02 Apr 2010 15:13

So, like all, becoming BT has by no means been easy, and I'm by no means there. One of the hardest parts has been in the area of sex, specifically "self gratification". While intellectually I understand what is so bad about wasting seed, I sometime have trouble attaching my heart to the idea. I have trouble with nocturnal emissions, and then to make it worse I have these bouts where the yetzer hara is so bad I'm shaking. When it happens I try to remember that Hashem doesnt want me to do this, but cant stop desiring it to happen, not just of it happening but of relief from the desire. I (to own up to my sin)/my yetzer hara tries to trick myself into having it happen "against my will" but I always wind up being to blame. When the bouts happen I feel so dettached from Hashem that I doubt everything and cant seem to process why I'm not allowed to do this. To make it worse I am not in a frum environment most of the time, and put so much attention on not looking or thinking about immoral things that I objectify people even more, and still think about them! Today I had this "genius"(terrible) idea to look at pornography to strengthen myself, and while I was able to resist for a while (left me feeling like I had a thick layer between me and my neshama) I ended up caving later in the night. I felt horrible and found this site, read a post and once again, while it makes sense and I feel that it is the ideal way of thinking, I cant seem to make myself believe or feel the truth.

I know that every time I cave I feel so detached and hate it, and everytime I tell myself I wont do it again, but then I go and do. This combined with other struggles and I cant even feel remorse for it, as part of me doesnt feel I did anything wrong and part of me is caught up in the other struggle (kevana vs keva, that in fighting this so hard I'm not really doing any proactive good for the world or serving Hashem). I feel like a hypocrit; how can I know it's wrong but do it, how can I daven and keep the mitzvot and avoid all these other prohibitions but this one thing I cant stop? Then in not wanting to deal with the weight of my actions or fall to despair, I try to look it as lighter or ignore it and cant even make since teshuva for it.

I think my post has two points: one is I needed to vent, but more productively, does anyone have any advice on attaching ones heart to the belief that this is wrong? I find myself thinking, "if I could let go of one thing this would be it" and then I think well if I do that then I dont REALLY believe in it, and if I dont belive in THIS do I believe any, and then I think about what I feel the ideal is and where I am, trying not to jump into things to fast and then using slow and steady as an excuse and justification of aveiras, and I get so confused. anyone have any advice? thanks!

=====

====

Re: cave

Posted by briut - 02 Apr 2010 21:22

Hi, and welcome.

I'm sure that btw Shabbos and YomTov, there won't be much traffic on the site, so don't despair and send an update after Y'T to get the chizuk you want.

You'll also see that newbies gen'ly get an official welcome, so stay tuned for that, too.

I do want to say that I'm also BT (although surely a few years older into the game; I'm in my 50s now) and feeling conflicts between my current frum lifestyle and the environment of my youth (and my workplace, and my newspaper, and my etc etc). We can try to close the door to these other attitudes, but they'll typically respond to a closed door by seeping in the windows. So, all we have is Hashem and our mitzvos to keep us going, keep us close to the Source, keep us alive.

Coming to see any kind of lust disorder as a step AWAY from true satisfaction rather than the opposite... isn't immediate. I'm just starting down this journey and I'm seeing how multi-faceted the work is, at least for me. (Details on request.)

Feel free to check in with anything further you'd like to add. Public posts are both cathartic and a useful invitation to The Gang here. PM me if you like (and my story is under Briut on the Introduce Yourself forum a couple of months back-- hold onto your hat).

Have a great Shabbos, YomTov, recovery, and life.... - Briut

=====

Re: cave

Posted by the.guard - 03 Apr 2010 19:58

[strugglingandstrivngBT wrote on 02 Apr 2010 15:13:](#)

does anyone have any advice on attaching ones heart to the belief that this is wrong?

Why is Sexual purity so important in Judaism? Our sages called Shmiras Habris "Yesod", meaning "Foundation". The foundation of a building is "underground" and no one sees it, yet it holds up the entire building! Shmiras Habris is the hidden part of a Jew, it's the real you. If the foundation of a Jew is weak, his whole spiritual structure is fragile and in grave danger of collapse. At guardureyes.com we are finally joining together, for ourselves and for all future generations, to strengthen the foundations of our people!

=====

=====

Re: cave

Posted by dovekbashem - 04 Apr 2010 01:43

Guard,

Beautifully said. As I've said on this site before - ashreinu ma tov chelkeinu. This site makes me proud of yiddishkeit and of all the people here. Thank You!

=====

=====

Re: cave

Posted by strugglingandstrivngBT - 04 Apr 2010 02:04

shavua tov and thanks! It's very interesting that you say it's connected to yesod. I actually see this connection between my faith and breaking faith. Whenever I do something that is ussar I have less faith, and when I do mitzvot I have more faith. Lately I've been pogem habris more than ever since I made the decision to stop/commit to halacha, and it's showing. Not just in this aspect but in a lot. I also have trouble with derealization and disassociation, where I don't feel connected to myself or reality and my immediate surroundings. I suppose the tikkun would be to become more makhmere with being shomer and the connectedness will IYH follow.

=====

=====

Re: cave

Posted by the.guard - 06 Apr 2010 20:24

[strugglingandstrivngBT wrote on 04 Apr 2010 02:04:](#)

shavua tov and thanks! It's very interesting that you say it's connected to yesod. I actually see this connection between my faith and breaking faith. Whenever I do something that is ussar I have less faith, and when I do mitzvot I have more faith. Lately I've been pogem habris more than ever since I made the decision to stop/commit to halacha, and it's showing. Not just in this aspect but in a lot. I also have trouble with derealization and disassociation, where I don't feel connected to myself or reality and my immediate surroundings. I suppose the tikkun would be to become more makhmeh with being shomer and the connectedness will IYH follow.

Yes, Kabbalistically, one of the most damaging aspects of Pegam habris is that it makes us "desensitized" to Kedushah. That is why the Zohar says one can't do Teshuvah on this sin. Not because it is so bad (after all, Teshuvah helps for *anything*), but rather because the nature of the sin makes a person 'stop caring' about spiritual matters. Which is why it is so hard to do

But in our generation, Hashem understands how hard it is for us and gives us multiple chances to do Teshuvah by awakening us from above. Grab the chance now before it's too late!

=====

Re: cave

Posted by Dov - 09 Apr 2010 04:05

Has this sweet fellow gotten the GYE Welcome Package yet?

Hi BT, and thanks for speaking up and sharing yourself here with us. To do this alone is too great a burden, so I am really glad you have GYE. But it sounds to me that you need more immediate support. It also sounds from another one of your posts that you have some people around you who know about recovery and that you yourself have rubbed elbows with some form

of recovery work. I wish for you to *really* not be alone doing this and wish you hatzlocha here and with whatever tools you decide to use. Hashem will help you, though his timetable may not be what you expect is should.

On another topic, supposing you finally *got* the true idea of how horrible the aveiro of zera levatola is, clearly in your mind. And it also became so real to you, that you'd say it's now *in your heart*. It sounds like you are convinced it'd stop you. Or that at the least you are saying that it'd help you a great deal to stop, even if you'd still have some struggle. So far, am I on track?

You may be right. I don't have experience with success that way. I tried, and can point you in the same direction I took to get some of the tremendous guilt and disgust that I thought would
But I fully respect anyone who goes that way, *as long as they succeed.*

There may be another way completely for you to gain freedom. The 12 Steps do not look at the folly of sin at all (except in the very first step), and are an *entirely* different tack than what it seems to me that you are describing. The Steps don't sound very religious to many. And they essentially *are not* about religion. ***They are about our receptiveness to religion as a force of growth in our lives.***

They are about cultivating integrity, self-honesty, maturity, and G-d-centeredness. The people who live them, all seem to say they got some of these things from working them, along with the ability to ***remain*** sober one day at a time.

But it seems that so far, your focus on the ***evil*** of looking (and I agree that it surely is evil!) has only brought you to attend even more to the the lust objects! So. We all know that wishing it away just makes us think about it even more, which is the Problem to begin with! No chidush there. What do you really have to lose?
finally speak to me... OK, I'll spare you.

I'm just plugging what works for me today. There are many who go very different ways and get better, so I suggest you search recovery in some way, then settle down (with help of friends in recovery) and ***do it***. Do it like we all did the addictive behavior: daily without fail, with "tzniyus" (we hid it or did whatever else we needed to do in order to preserve it!), honestly (we acted out very personally and earnestly), and sparing no expense or trouble.

You are already very lucky to be here! Hatzlocha!!

=====

Re: cave

Posted by the.guard - 10 Apr 2010 22:11

Dear SASBT,

Dov is right, I think we forgot to give you our "Welcoming Package". Probably because I am used to people introducing themselves for the first time on the "Introduce Yourself" Board...

Ok, so here's the deal... I am the admin of this forum. **Welcome to our community!**

Beating this addiction has little to do with religion. We have a few non-religious people on this forum too. An addiction is a disease, which manifests itself in many levels, physical, emotional and spiritual. People realize it is slowly destroying their lives, and they come here and start to recover... If we want to have a healthy and meaningful life, we can't be ruled by our basest instincts. This addiction will prevent of us from ever being a good husband and father, holding down a steady job or being a healthy and happy human being. And it is a progressive disease,

On GYE you will learn how to "hit bottom while still on top". Don't wait for the addiction to destroy your life. To explain better what I mean, see [this page](#).

Scientific studies have shown that it takes 90 days to change a neural thought pattern that was ingrained in the brain through addictive behaviors. Did you join the [90 day chart](#) on-line? Sign up [over here](#)...

Make sure to install a strong filter. It will be almost impossible to break free of this while having all the garbage within a mouse click away. See [this page](#) for one good filter option, along with instructions on how to install it best - and give away the password to our "filter Gabai"... See [this page](#) for another 20 (or so) filter ideas and information...

We get cries for help every day, by e-mail and on the forum. *Tzuras Rabim Chatzi Nechama*
And that is why we created the GYE handbooks (links below). If you read them well, from beginning to end, slowly, and try to implement what you read, you will find the answers within them to enable you to completely turn your life around. **You're worth it.**

Also, join the [daily Chizuk e-mail lists](#) to get fresh chizuk every day, and post away on this forum. You will get tons of daily Chizuk and support. This disease can't be beat alone. It works best when you get out of isolation!

GuardYourEyes also offers various free anonymous phone conferences, where you can join a group of other from Yidden, along with an experienced sponsor. See [this page](#) for four different options. Our conferences are taking place daily, throughout the week... This would be a tremendous step in the right direction for you and help you learn freedom from this addiction. Not only will you learn the secret of the 12-Steps - which is known to be the world's most powerful program for beating addiction having helped millions world wide, but joining the group will be another way of GETTING OUT OF ISOLATION and connecting with others who are going through what you are.

Let me tell you a little about the two GuardYourEyes handbooks. They lay down the cornerstone and foundation of our work, and they make our network much more effective and helpful for people.

You see, until now, people would often get "lost" when coming to our website, not knowing what tips and techniques to try. For example, a beginner wouldn't jump straight into therapy or 12-Step groups, while on the other hand, someone whose addiction was more advanced wouldn't be helped by the standard tips of "making fences" putting in "filters" etc... So it was essential to develop a handbook which details all the techniques and tools to dealing with this addiction in progressive order. Now with these handbooks, anyone can read through and see what steps they've tried already, and if those steps haven't worked, they can continue on through the handbook where the steps become progressively more powerful and "addiction-oriented".

And the second handbook, called the "Attitude" handbook, can also help anyone, no matter what level of addiction they may have. Often people write in to us saying that had they only known the proper outlook & attitude that we try and share on the GuardYourEyes network when they were younger, they would have never fallen into an addiction in the first place! So we hope

that through this handbook, many addictions will be prevented.

The handbooks are PDF files, set up as eBooks, and they have bookmarks and hyper-links in the Index, to make them easy to navigate.

Note: You might want to print them out to read away from the computer. Keep in mind though, that if you do this, you won't be able to click on the many web links in the articles. But you can always come back to them later. The truth is, it's anyway good to go through the whole handbook once without clicking on links, just to get an overview of all the tools available. Once you did that, you can start again from tool #1 and read each tool through more carefully, click the links and study each technique and assess whether you have tried it fully yet or not...

Right click on the links below and select "Save Link/Target As" to download the handbooks to your computer.

1) [The GuardYourEyes Handbook](#)

This Handbook details 18 suggested tools and techniques, in progressive order, beginning with the most basic and fundamental approaches to dealing with this addiction, and continuing down through increasingly earnest and powerful methods. For the first time, we can gauge our level of addiction and find the appropriate tools for our particular situation. And no matter what level our addiction may have advanced to, we will be able to find the right tools to break free in this handbook!

2) [The GuardYourEyes Attitude](#)

The Attitude Handbook details 30 basic principles to help us maintain the proper attitude and perspective on this struggle. Here are some examples: Understanding what we are up against, what it is that Hashem wants from us, how we can use this struggle for tremendous growth, how we can deal with bad thoughts, discovering how to redirect the power of our souls, understanding that every little bit counts, learning how to bounce back up after a fall, and so on and so forth...

May Hashem be with you!

=====

====

Re: cave

Posted by strugglingandstrivngBT - 11 Apr 2010 02:09

While I intend to read what you have suggested, my inquiries are more based on this notion that I have an addictive sort of problem, and certainly have an issue where I show addictive traits (ie trying to control things, escapism, selfishnish, etc) but I really cant pin it down to any particular addiction. I dont abuse substance, I dont have moments of uncontrollable sexual desire very often (in the past I did, but I have become stronger. I do suffer from compulsive sexual thoughts, I just dont act on them), I dont cave to the compulsion to abuse the internet often, but I am definitely losing it. I've been starting a new medication for disassociation and intend on changing it very soon (monday IYH), and it seems to be making things worse. Part of me almost thinks I have a reverse addiction and that refusal to take medication for a long time is my addiction, where when I am literally sober I am actually intoxicated and vice versa. All I really know is I'm losing my mind and need help. That is why I have been asking more do I belong here? thank you and I apologize for wasting any ones time if I dont in fact belong here.

All the best

Michael

=====

====

Re: cave

Posted by briut - 11 Apr 2010 03:41

SAS(BT): As soon as you mention disassociation, medication, compulsive thinking, etc, I start to daydream about something going on a little broader than 'just' the common ground most of the guys here share. Sexual issues are a yesod (foundation) for lots of life -- not just for sex and lust and relationships and families etc, but also a common avenue for other kinds of emotions to be expressed.

While you're still struggling with what kinds of medications could make the overall emotional situation better, it seems to me that you'll be struggling with the 'related' areas of sexual-thoughts-outside-of-Torah. That's to be expected. The question I start to ask myself in similar situations is, which area deserves working on FIRST and which area will FOLLOW?

I can't answer that for anyone else, and can't even answer it very often for myself. But I'm

guessing that for lots of folks, finding help with the generalized thinking patterns (Rx drugs, talk therapy, whatever) will make the specific sexual thinking patterns a little easier to see, examine, and improve. Just a guess, without knowing you, but figured it's worth sharing. Sooner or later, of course, you'll get to address the whole package no matter what order it's in.

As for the unspoken question of whether your issues even "belong" here, I'd guess that you've already answered this as 'yes' because you showed up here. I don't think anyone is gonna boot you out (just follow the guidelines/rules...). So, pull up a chair.

Welcome aboard. Post a little more and share a little more, if you're interested.

=====
=====

Re: cave

Posted by the.guard - 11 Apr 2010 13:38

[strugglingandstrivngBT wrote on 11 Apr 2010 02:09:](#)

While I intend to read what you have suggested, my inquiries are more based on this notion that I have an addictive sort of problem, and certainly have an issue where I show addictive traits (ie trying to control things, escapism, selfishnish, etc) but I really cant pin it down to any particular addiction. I dont abuse substance, I dont have moments of uncontrollable sexual desire very often (in the past I did, but I have become stronger. I do suffer from compulsiive sexual thoughts, I just dont act on them), I dont cave to the compulsion to abuse the internet often, but I am definitely losing it. I've been starting a new medication for disassociation and intend on changing it very soon (monday IYH), and it seems to be making things worse. Part of me almost thinks I have a reverse addiction and that reusal to take medication for a long time is my addiction, where when I am literally sober I am actually intoxicated and vice versa. All I really know is I'm losing my mind and need help. That is why I have been asking more do I belong here? thank you and I apologize for wasting any ones time if I dont in fact belong here.

All the best

Michael

As far as your question as to what constitutes an addiction, see [this article](#) where Rabbi Twerski (a world renowned expert on addictions) explains how one can get addicted to this stuff from a single use! And listen to [this 4 minute audio clip](#) from him too.

Even if someone can go without it for a long time, he is still addicted if specific situations make him feel powerless to resist it even though it goes against his morals and inner desires. See also [this page](#).

Also, as Rabbi Twerski once asked someone who asked your question, *"if you're not an addict, why don't you just stop doing it?"*

=====

=====

Re: cave

Posted by strugglingandstrivngBT - 11 Apr 2010 23:30

I have read some twerski and he is amazing! I really connect to what he has to say. I guess in that sense, I am an addict. I'm still confused though. I honestly feel that I need to get my mental stability under control first. The last few days have been really rough, with panic attacks coming back (after a long period without) depression and today this horrible crisis of faith. I'm stuck in this cycle of fear of Divine punishment for my actions and disbelief in such Divine presence. I had once attributed the depression to the yetzer hara but now I question whether or not it is, and that perhaps it really is a physical problem. Today, while I have spent the entire day struggling with depression and severe doubt, I haven't sinned. In the past I would have committed aveiras (likely of sexual nature) and not have gone through with my daily study and davening, but I did! I have wanted to, but I tell myself it will only make things worse, and when I get back to my self I will be glad I didn't. I dunno. I have a doctor appt tomorrow to try to straighten this out once and for all. Then perhaps I can accurately gauge what my next steps should be.

On a side note (though more related), has anyone else denied the existence of G-d because they were afraid of the consequences of their actions and the loss of control in means for them? I feel that's what I'm doing, but at the same time the very thought that I WANT to believe in G-d again makes me in control and hence denies the existence and I'm so confused and numb at this point. IYH things will get better soon.

=====

=====

Re: cave

Posted by briut - 11 Apr 2010 23:54

Could you consider the possibility that:

your Father loves you, misses you, regrets your empty seat at His table, and would gladly have you back in the Palace? Could you deny that He's there?

There's a song called "Little Neshamele" that talks about what our work is during this 120-year roundtrip from His palace back to His palace. PM me if you'd like help finding it -- this song could answer most of the emunah questions that frum (& searching to be frum) Jews might consider.

Or perhaps you have some other thoughts in mind? All ears.

=====

Re: cave

Posted by nederman - 12 Apr 2010 00:20

You sound very very normal to me.

Your brain is now wired to get its fix this way but you can fight it if you understand how it works. I know you are "addicted" because you are conflicted. You need that fix, and you know it's great (we all do,) but it goes against your identity - who you want to be. These are both solid sides of you now. Your rasha part as much as your tzadik part.

You can obliterate your rasha circuits if you understand that they are really there and that your tzadik part is not always in control. When you have been thinking about sex for a while you are no longer in control. Figure out the latest point when you are still in control and you still have the ability to make a choice. After that point you are the rasha. But if you deny the rasha the opportunity to practice for a long time without interruption, he is going to fade away.

=====

====

Re: cave

Posted by strugglingandstrivngBT - 12 Apr 2010 00:25

ps I would love to know where to find that mp3

=====

====