

Murder or pork?

Posted by londonbocher - 07 Apr 2010 21:06

There seems to be a lot of confusion over something that I think in my opinion is extremely important to clear up.

I am writing from the perspective of someone not yet in a committed relationship. My reasoning would not apply in the same way for someone in a relationship.

My question is that it seems that in the frum world the only acceptable approach to overcoming sexual addiction is to stop "cold turkey". In other words if some one is addicted to immorality with other people, and is addicted to porn, and masturbation he should at least attempt to stop everything, not only his addiction with other people, his porn and addictive masturbation, but even his natural desire to masturbate.

This approach seems to be based on the gemorah ""There is a small limb in a man... " as can be seen over here <http://rehab-my-site.com/guardureyes/forum/index.php?topic=915.0>

The other approach of giving oneself time to grow at one's individual pace is from my experience seen by the frum world as completely contrary to modern psychology and borderline apikorsus.

This approach takes into account human limitation and what one can realistically expect from oneself. In other words if some one is addicted to immorality with other people, and is addicted to porn, and masturbation instead of attempting to stop everything all at once one should take things in stages, fighting slowly but very steadily up and up.

Until one has built himself. Once this has occurred he will have the emotional and spiritual strength to rise above the natural sexual drive and strive to masturbate less and less and express his sexuality only with his wife with a purity and kedusha that would make hashem cry with joy.

This approach does not seem like an accepted approach in the Torah world and my question is why?

Reb Ya'ir Shochet seems to follow this "unorthodox" approach as can be seen in his book

"The First Day of the Rest of My Life" in day nine.

I have tried both paths, I tried the "cold turkey" way and reached the 90 day mark, a few times. But eventually down I would go. When I read "the first day of the rest of my life" and took slow

steady steps ONLY fighting and feeling guilty for my next point in the battle I finally began to rebuild my G-dly soul, and when I REALLY saw my self as Hashem's child I would slowly begin to rise.

Now I am ready to rise above my natural drive.

My question is not a Psychological one. Maybe for a lot of people the "cold turkey" approach works. But if someone knows that he needs time, is this going against Hashems will?

I think the issue may in essence be clarified with the following question; what is the real root of the avaira of spilling seed?

Is it an avera like shabbat, kashrut or shutnez? If this is the case then there is absolutely no reason why one can't take things slowly see the shuir that "happygrowth" posted <http://rehab-my-site.com/guardureyes/forum/index.php?topic=402.15> . where Rav Gotleib says that when some one who is striving to keep shaboss it is often the yetzer hara that tells him he MUST stop "cold turkey"

But if spilling seed is an avera that REALLY effects others terribly, in other words if it is LITERALLY like murder or child molestation, G-d forbid, then one would have a lot more to worry about than the individuals psychological and spiritual well being. Just like a child molester needs to be locked up even if this will destroy him because children's lives are at stake. (someone who REALLY thinks that masturbation is like killing children and can carry on normal daily live when he wakes up either is either insane or does not appreciate the infinite value of a child or any human for that matter.)

I would love to know what all you holy yiddin, especially what guardureyes thinks.

Must I feel isolated from the warm Torah world for my different approach?

I often feel guilty and alone for having an alternative path.

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by happygrowth - 08 Apr 2010 05:59

hi, there is no need to feel guilty for taking small steps, i am sure Hashem is proud of you for your honesty and realistic outlook.

you are are making a very important point, that our relationtiop with Hashem is never "all or nothing"

you are doing nothing wrong by striving for perfection in steps,

so don't feel guilt or alone for your growth in steps

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by trying123 - 08 Apr 2010 06:32

Wow...

In the book "with hearts full of faith" by R' Matisyahu Solomon... he says that while The Torah approach rejects compromise, **gradualism** is acceptable and unavoidable...

As far as whether it is like Child molesting... I never thought of that but it is a freaky question... I don't know the answer...

In other areas of Judaism, the cold turkey thing hasn't worked for me... Gradual small steps did...

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by Holy Yid - 08 Apr 2010 09:45

I think that if we need to we should wean ourselves however if we are hurting other we should go straight to the last tools in the handbooks.

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by the.guard - 08 Apr 2010 12:25

Good question. Please see tool #7 of the GYE handbook.

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by commando612 - 08 Apr 2010 16:24

Londonbochur, welcome to GYE ! And reaching 90 days is always a huge accomplishment which you should be proud of, no matter what happens afterwards. You explained your question well. Here are my thoughts.

It's not like Murder because Murder is Bein Adam L'chaveiro. And it's not like eating Pork because Kashrut is Bein Adam L'Makom. It's in a third category called Bein Adam L'atzmo. It's damaging ourselves. Like taking Heroin, or suicide. Dov explains this in some of his postings. The source for this idea is actually a Maharal, and there's an amazing Torah on this connected to Shavuos, I'll write something up and post it in the Beis Medrash section when I have more time.

About our natural desires, I agree that they're very natural. But a natural lifestyle would be NOT to be shomer bris at all. The whole concept of the bris is to go beyond natural and become part of the supernatural. The bris on the 8th day symbolizing the number 8 which is beyond nature, as another Maharal explains. So changing ourselves to keep the bris isn't going to work if we treat this the same as eating foods with less cholesterol. It will require supernatural effort which by definition will require the help of Hashem.

The problem with discussing cold turkey vs. gradual slowdown is that in both cases you're looking at the future instead of the present. And you can't predict your circumstances or feelings in the future. How do you know you can hold out another day/week/month/year ? Also if you look at the future that can stress you out because you see the tall mountain instead of the hair. Try the "one day at a time" approach, then the whole discussion becomes irrelevant. On any given day we're either capable of being shomer the bris or we're not. If we're capable that

means we have Hashem's help to succeed, and that help will probably come in the form of the ability to use the tools listed in the GYE manuals. If we're truly incapable and fall, hopefully we'll be considered an oneis like Reb Tzadok Hakohen says, see my posting at rehab-my-site.com/guardureyes/forum/index.php?topic=2006.msg58751#msg58751

One final thought. If you're talking about something which is Yai'hareig V'al Ya'avov (like sleeping with a Nidda) then a person has to be willing to drop dead of a nervous breakdown

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by londonbocher - 08 Apr 2010 18:33

Thanks for all the responses it is helping me gain a broader perspective.

It seems that my notion that taking gradual steps is completely against halacha is caused by my before doing that. But we have Bardy's Pub here to prevent going into that state of mind. Yetzer Hara. I will often take things out of context and out of proportion.

My thoughts will then flow like this: It is completely wrong to take small steps, but I seem to think its right, therefore I am a heretic who Hashem has no interest in.

My thought process might sound drastic, but I was kind of was enslaved to my mind.

My excessive guilt was the main reason how I landed up going down the terrible spiral of addiction.

Long ago I in a way, considered my self like an evil child killer because I masturbated.

My self esteem was obviously shattered.

Because of this I went to the opposite extreme for a few months.

My mistaken attitude was that I should only work on addictive masturbation and that I should completely forget about my natural masturbation i.e. the masturbation I did because of my natural urge not from guilt shame depression etc.

I now realize that I developed this attitude because I could not face the pain of the excessive negative guilt that my own mind caused.

This pesuch I focused on what I call "the yetziyat mizrayim from my mind"

I realize, like what is posted here, that we Jews must strive above and beyond the natural.

B'H I have started cutting down on even my natural masturbation.

I have a weekly cycle, on the days allocated as "no masturbation days" I will not let myself masturbate and fight really hard and give it my all.

On the other days if I feel a strong natural urge I will masturbate.

Please G-d, my "no masturbation days" will become more and more.

But one question that really bothers me is this:

On the "no masturbation days" if I slip I will feel positive guilt and regret and get up with u smile.

On other days if I masturbate I wont feel guilt or regret, because regret by definition means you wish you tried harder. But if I did try harder that would mean I was attempting "cold turkey" which in the long run wont work for me so how can I regret doing the best thing under the circumstances? I try feeling a deep longing for the day when I reach such kedusha that all days will be "no masturbation days" But this is not guilt.

I don't want to fall into the trap of feeling guilty for not feeling guilty and into the slavery of my mind. Anyone's input and opinions will be very much appreciated.

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Re: Murder or pork?
Posted by trying123 - 08 Apr 2010 22:53

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You did get me thinking, for a change...

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Re: Murder or pork?
Posted by baalteshuva - 08 Apr 2010 23:18

I have also been worried about this since i started becoming frum. I hope someone can clear

this up for us!

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Re: Murder or pork?
Posted by briut - 09 Apr 2010 02:58

This is an amazing thread. Wow. Touches many items I've been thinking about myself, especially the gradual-vs-cold.turkey approaches in Torah and in psychology.

I look forward to hearing add'l views. I might even have something to contribute, but I gotta sleep on it first. zzzzzzz....

Thanks OP and everyone for the intelligent discussion. Helps me out.

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Re: Murder or pork?
Posted by trying123 - 09 Apr 2010 07:12

[Briut wrote on 09 Apr 2010 02:58:](#)

Thanks OP and everyone for the intelligent discussion....

Just wondering who's "OP" is that a new GYE code name? or is this while you were dozing off? Or did I miss boat as usual? :D

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by the.guard - 09 Apr 2010 11:04

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Dear londonbochur, please re-read what Commando posted (WOW)

The problem with discussing cold turkey vs. gradual slowdown is that in both cases you're looking at the future instead of the present. And you can't predict your circumstances or feelings in the future. How do you know you can hold out another day/week/month/year ? Also if you look at the future that can stress you out because you see the tall mountain instead of the hair. Try the "one day at a time" approach, then the whole discussion becomes irrelevant. On any given day we're either capable of being shomer the bris or we're not. If we're capable that means we have Hashem's help to succeed, and that help will probably come in the form of the ability to use the tools listed in the GYE manuals. If we're truly incapable and fall, hopefully we'll be considered an oneis like Reb Tzadok Hakohen says, see my posting at rehab-my-site.com/guardureyes/forum/index.php?topic=2006.msg58751#msg58751

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by trying123 - 09 Apr 2010 13:25

[commando wrote on 08 Apr 2010 16:24:](#)

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Don't mean to be offensive or anything...

I just don't get it...

are you saying that even if you know by experience that the cold turkey approach busts... that you should use it anyway... because we only focus on today...

Seems a bit shortsighted...

Say, if I can just for today spend every second learning, going without food or water... and without looking out of my sefer for anything... But I know that this will kill the rest of my zman... and will make learning difficult for me in the long run... Should I go with it any way because I focus on just today....

Doesn't sound right to me...

I think we have to understand (at least if we know it from personal experience..) how today will effect my future ability... We are in the game for the rest of our lives... we can't sell ourselves out for a gain today at the expense of failure in the long run!!!!

Should an athlete kill himself on the first day of the season to the point where he loses his strength and thus fails the rest of the time...?

Correct me if I'm wrong... I'm just one little guy trying to understand and do my best...

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Re: Murder or pork?
Peace and Love to all (Turkeys and Graduals, alike...)
Posted by brut on 09 Apr 2010 13:30

[londonbocher wrote on 08 Apr 2010 18:33:](#)

I don't want to fall into the trap of feeling guilty for not feeling guilty and into the slavery of my mind. Anyone's input and opinions will be very much appreciated.

LB: your thoughts are beautiful. I'm surprised to hear Guard's view that Step 7 (gradual steps) can come BEFORE Step 8 ("90 day cold turkey, one day at a time") in the GYE handbooks. If so, I'd say your path isn't really so "alternative" as you put it.

It's hard for me to look UP at the rest of the mountain that needs climbing, and it's often hard to either appreciate where I stand in the moment or how far I've come. Especially when I'm not really sure where The Path is going to take me before I'm finished ("are we halfway there yet??"). Sounds like you're moving along. Great.

Let me also share a personal view that I expect others will quickly call apikorsus. Namely, WE DON'T KNOW WHICH AVEIROS ARE PORK AND WHICH ARE MURDER!! We might get to 120 and learn that life here was all about shatnez, or shmitta, or whatever. Even the ruach ha'k of the Rambam in naming "the big 3" might have been influenced by the physical world. Who knows.

Why do I say this? Because our job is just to do the best we can with what we've got. Not necessarily to do all 613 l'chumra, all the time. We don't even know what l'chumra would involve.

So, in my view (get your baseball helmet on for the attack), imagining the millions of lost souls from m'zl might be just like imagining millions of lost pigs from the baconburger.

If we can all just "grow in our Yiddishkeit every day" the Eibishter will love us as His own children which we are.

And Trying123, the term OP is supposed to mean "Original Poster," as in londonbocher in this case. Sorry.

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by trying123 - 09 Apr 2010 13:41

[Briut wrote on 09 Apr 2010 13:30:](#)

[londonbocher wrote on 08 Apr 2010 18:33:](#)

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And Trying123, the term OP is supposed to mean "Original Poster," as in londonbochur in this case. Sorry.

Hey.... wait a sec.

Briut, as a brother on this journey... I respect you...

But I think I'm one of those attacking guys you were expecting...

The Kedusha of the Rambam would've burnt me (or any of us) if we came in contact with him... These people were millions of light years holier than us... The Sefer Harambam was written)

Your assertion that we may find things much different than we thought is true...

But that the Rambam or others had it wrong... is wrong...

Sorry... although you knew I was out there... (hope your helmet helped... although I wasn't aiming at you... You are too valuable to GYE...)

Peace and Love dear Brothers...

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