

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 commando612 - 09 Apr 2010 18:21

Dear Tried 123,

I hear the logic of your approach. There may be many paths leading up the mountain, I can only say what works for me. For me the gradual approach always flopped. Cold turkey worked much better but after a few "tours of duty" it was too stressful for me to continue. The strategy I use now is maybe a mix of the two. Here's the battle plan: Every day you keep the program without concentrating on the past or the future. The past may have guilt, the future may have stress, and both emotions are counterproductive to the battle. Some days are easy, some days are hell, you push yourself to your limit and then beyond your limit. If you fall, you get right back on your feet and continue the program. You never "schedule" in advance a fall unless you're about to fall right now, then you can "schedule" tomorrow for a fall because that may help for today. One today is worth a thousand tomorrows (even if that's not accurate, if you don't tell yourself that then you may not succeed for today). And make sure you never ever fall on Shabbos.

I don't know my future but from using this strategy over the last couple of years I've averaged falling only about one night a month. This is small potatoes compared to the long-term sober guys here, but compared to my past it's a big improvement. Also it's been about 6 weeks since my last fall, which I feel is due to all of you on GYE for helping me to be part of a group effort instead of just an individual. Thanks ! The only price I've paid is my newfound addiction to GYE.
;D

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 09 Apr 2010 18:38

I was taught by my rebbeim that a thousand "tomorrow"s can easily counter-balance one fall!

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by Chazak Amenu - 09 Apr 2010 18:55

Commando! you said it! ;D you pretty much summed up what I wanted to say! a few slight differences but still... it is never really good to plan a fall especially if you can postpone it or avoid it altogether! Have a great Shabbos everyone!

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by trying123 - 09 Apr 2010 20:33

No one ever said to plan a fall...

Gradual doesn't mean Mon. and Tue. yes, but Thu and Fri. no.

It means putting in effort to do your best... find new strategies... address the underlying things....
restrict yourself when the urge is not overwhelming.... etc. etc.

The point is that you shouldn't be fighting a battle that is above you...

Although I know that for some addicts small steps don't take hold, and they need cold turkey
(, but you'd need a ton of
support for this... SA groups and what not....

To each his own...

Peace and Love (Cold turkeys and Hot ones (like me), alike....)

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by baalteshuva - 10 Apr 2010 18:24

No one ever said to plan a fall...

Gradual doesn't mean Mon. and Tue. yes, but Thu and Fri. no.

Tried-123, I agree with everything you say except this, what's wrong with breaking it up into days of the week, on certain days you will give it your all, even if the urge is overwhelming, and on other days if you have a powerful urge let yourself do it? this is not planning a fall, I'm not saying "on Mon I plan to do it even if I don't particularly have an urge."

Eventually all days of the week will become "NO" days.

I used this method with kashrut and other things when I became frum, and now I am fully kosher.

Maybe everyone has to find what works for them the best.

would love to hear yours and everyone's opinion.

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by the.guard - 10 Apr 2010 22:34

[baalteshuva wrote on 10 Apr 2010 18:24:](#)

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baalteshuva, I agree with you here pretty much, as long as the goal is a progressive cut-down to zero. Again, please read tool #7 of the GYE handbook, which discusses exactly this idea.

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by southafricanJEW - 11 Apr 2010 00:46

Hi guard and everyone, I have been grappling with these specific issues for a long time. I am featured in the "tips from rabbi Twerski" section of guadryoureyes over here. <http://www.guardureyes.com/GUE/RTwerski/Can'tStop.asp>

When I wrote that, I kind of had the attitude that trying to stop the natural urge to masturbate was impossible and psychologically dangerous for me.

I now realize that I had the attitude because of the mistaken idea that "cold turkey" is the only way according to the Torah. I could not fight my self to death every night resisting the urge, It was driving me insane. I also one extremely bad porn addiction.

I would also take the Torah sources out of context, I woke up every morning feeling like I was a perverted murderer.

I needed to flee from this entire disabling burden of guilt.

After a lot of thinking and honesty I now realize that "cold turkey" is not the only way, and

Hashem does not expect that from me. I first worked on my porn addiction and my addictive masturbation. But most importantly I worked on my deep feelings, and emotions about this whole thing. I sometimes cry in bed and pour my heart out to Hashem.

To me “zeruh levataluh” is by far the biggest chock that Hashem gave us.

It makes absolutely no sense to me at all and it goes against every part of my logical and emotional being. But I know that Hashem loves me more than I love my self and it is not me against Hashem, it is me with Hashem. I love Hashem therefore even though it is painful for me to strive for something I think is crazy. I will strive to do it.

But the only way for me is to do it gradually, I have already slowly started working on stopping natural masturbation. Londonbocher’s question about feeling guilty for the days that aren’t “no masturbation days” also bothers me.

I think that this addiction is one that involves so many emotions, pain and other factors that everyone has to find what works for them.

The “cold turkey” approach and even the 12 steps (for reasons that are not relevant to this discussion) don’t work for me

P.S Guard, I love and respect you even though I disagree with you sometimes.

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by southafricanJEW - 11 Apr 2010 03:01

By the way I thought I should inform everyone that I am actually londonbocher, the original poster of this thread. But I’m really southafricanJEW, I was just scared to post again under southafricanJEW because my first post was controversial over here <http://rehab-my-site.com/guardureyes/forum/index.php?topic=128.0>

(the controversial parts were edited out)

I'm revealing this because I am feeling a bit alone and i thought I should get this off my chest :'(

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by trying123 - 11 Apr 2010 04:59

[guardureyes wrote on 10 Apr 2010 22:34:](#)

[baalteshuva wrote on 10 Apr 2010 18:24:](#)

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Tried-123, I agree with everything you say except this, what's wrong with breaking it up into days of the week, on certain days you will give it your all, even if the urge is overwhelming, and on other days if you have a powerful urge let yourself do it? this is not planning a fall, I'm not saying "on Mon I plan to do it even if I don't particularly have an urge."

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Maybe everyone has to find what works for them the best.

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baalteshuva, I agree with you here pretty much, as long as the goal is a progressive cut-down to zero. Again, please read tool #7 of the GYE handbook, which discusses exactly this idea.

If dividing into days makes it easy.... Sounds OK to me... if it worked for you than by all means continue...

I have tremendous capabilities... but in my present situation I may not be able to reach zero... So my goal is simply to try my best....

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by baalteshuva - 11 Apr 2010 08:51

This has turned out to be one intense thread.

Firstly and most importantly I think everyone has to let go of this whole apikoris business, how on earth can we grow if every time we do some honest thinking we start freaking out about be a heretic?

NO one on this forum is a heretic, even if someone's thinking is very controversial and wrong, they are simply mistaken or misguided, they are not intentionally trying to rebel against Hashem, they are doing the exact opposite! I don't know where this comes from.

Secondly why is it so important for one tell himself that some time in the future he must reach zero, in otherworlds NEVER masturbate again, surely as tried-123 says one must just try his best?

Is there not a Mishna that says "it is not up to us to complete the work, but we are not free from trying our best"?

Guardyoureyes I think these are fundamental issues that many people are too scared to talk about. Maybe you should get someone like Rav Tweski or another expert to look at this discussion and clear up all the confusion once and for all.

southafricanJEW welcome back, you have no need to feel alone and what you said about trying

even though your mind tells you that it's crazy is really inspiring!

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by southafricanJEW - 11 Apr 2010 09:34

southafricanJEW welcome back, you have no need to feel alone and what you said about trying even though your mind tells you that it's crazy is really inspiring!

Thanks for the encouragement, it means a lot to me.

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by briut - 11 Apr 2010 13:56

[baalteshuva wrote on 11 Apr 2010 08:51:](#)

This has turned out to be one intense thread.

Firstly and most importantly I think everyone has to let go of this whole apikoris business....

Well, thank G-d I wasn't even seeing any apikorsus business here! Maybe I'm just too accustomed to 'blunt' as a way to communicate. What I was HOPING was happening was some direct commenting, following by direct responses.

And as I agree with you, BT, that's one of the best things about the site.

So, to our longitudinally-impaired (London? S.Afr?) original poster here, keep going and remain, as Tried123 said in this thread, "just one little guy trying to understand and do my best." Put on your fireproof suit and keep on posting.

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by trying123 - 11 Apr 2010 19:24

[baalteshuva wrote on 11 Apr 2010 08:51:](#)

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ABSOLUTELY!!!!!!

My goal is simply to **TRY** and do the best that **I** can...

.... Is that how Bard says it?

Peace and Love Holly Brothers

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Re: Murder or pork?

Posted by commando612 - 12 Apr 2010 02:55

Yes, all you guys are really making this into a memorable thread !

And Tried, I really liked your words "putting in effort to do your best... find new strategies... address the underlying things....". I feel sometimes I'm not addressing the underlying things.

Here's some more food for thought. Let's say someone decides to go cold turkey and signs up for the 90 day charts. Day 1 of 90 is usually tough. Also Day 2 of 90. And Day 3 of 90. In my experience, each of those days are much tougher than if I just committed to one day at a time - let's call that "day 1 of 1". But each day is the same exact amount of time, so why is "day 1 of 90" harder than "day 1 of 1" ? And I think the obvious answer is, because of the extra burden of knowing that you're aiming for those additional 89 days. So it's a vicious circle; thinking of the goal for the future causes the extra stress today which in turn causes us to feel we need to pace ourselves because it's a long-term marathon. So actually if someone really wants to reach 90 days, the easiest way to succeed is NOT to aim for 90 days, but to aim for just 1 day, and then repeat 90 times.

I'm thinking maybe this is one reason why Hashem asked us to say Shma twice a day, morning and night. We're accepting the "Ol malchut shamayim", the "yoke" of heaven and mitzvos, for specifically today or tonight. We don't say Shma once a year for the whole year. One day at a time, and one night at a time. Does that make any sense ?

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