

I have questions

Posted by battleworn - 24 Nov 2008 13:48

There are some things I want to discuss, for my own benefit as well as other's.

My first question is about Rabbi Twersky's definition of addiction. If I remember correctly, he said that anyone who does something against their better judgement, is addicted. Even if it's not very often. But I believe he also said that anyone that's addicted should go to a SA group. I know he doesn't mean that a bachur that is nichshal once in a while, should go. So there must be two kinds/stages

of addiction. If that is so what constitutes the worse one.

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Re: I have questions

Posted by the.guard - 24 Nov 2008 15:13

Rabbi Twerski agrees that the groups are not for everyone. He suggests that someone struggling start first with the 12-Step phone group that Elya arranged, and the other tools on our website, and if that doesn't work and he is sincere and determined that he MUST break free, and he feels that it's a matter of life and death for him - then he is ready for the groups.

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Re: I have questions

Posted by battleworn - 30 Nov 2008 17:23

Thank you very much for your clear answer.

My next few questions, have to do with The article that made up chizuk email 249 and 251. I was recently looking through the old emails on the site, when I came across this article. I was quite impressed with his analogy to Lashon Harah but then I realized that I have some big questions. {I see that I don't have enough time now to write a question so it will have to wait}

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Re: I have questions

Posted by the.guard - 30 Nov 2008 17:38

That reminds me, I never finished that article. Maybe tomorrow I will send out "Part 3".

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Re: I have questions

Posted by battleworn - 16 Dec 2008 15:44

Now that you've finished the article, I want to ask my first question.

Is acting out sexually, addictive [in his opinion]?

I've read articles describing how the availability, anonymity and low cost of internet porn, gets tons of people addicted. I want to know if he disagrees.

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Re: I have questions

Posted by the.guard - 16 Dec 2008 16:15

I'm not sure I understand the question, but maybe [this page](#) can help...

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Re: I have questions

Posted by battleworn - 16 Dec 2008 16:27

It seems to me that the author of the article disagrees with what it says on that page, and my question is if I'm mistaken?

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Re: I have questions

Posted by battleworn - 16 Dec 2008 17:31

And by the way, thank you very much for the link. I was looking for that info.

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Re: I have questions

Posted by the.guard - 16 Dec 2008 19:50

it seems that "who disagrees with what"? Sorry, I'm not sure I understand your question...

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Re: I have questions

Posted by battleworn - 01 Feb 2009 16:21

(The above discussion has been continued privately.)

The following question is directed to all those who feel they know the 12 step system.

Boruch has stated a few times that the 12 steps are not meant to be just 12 points, but rather they are meant to be a very specific and structured system that consists specifically and necessarily of these specific 12 steps. [I know I'm being redundant, but I do not want to be misunderstood] This would imply -among many other things- that you can never skip a step.

It is very important to me to know if you guys agree with him, totally, partially or not at all. It will be a great chesed to me if you can give me clear answers to my question. Thank you very much!

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Re: I have questions

Posted by the.guard - 17 Feb 2009 14:05

It all depends, I guess, on how seriously you take the 12 steps. If you have come to a point where your life is unmanageable and have decided to work the 12 steps as a last resort, and you are ready to do whatever it takes, then you must follow the 12 steps, step by step, without deviating. And this is best done within a group framework. You need to work it into your life until it is like the air you breath. After all, you are ripping out a huge chunk of your subconscious and who you have become. You will need a new way of thinking entirely.

If, however, you are just looking for tips on how to break free, but you still believe you will manage using other techniques (a partner, this website, phone conferences, determination, therapy, shavuos, whatever...), then you can view the 12-Steps as tips to help you in your struggle, without having to "work the steps" as they say, or "live the steps". You can read them, learn about them, and try to take out the Yesodos from them, like Letting Go and Letting G-d, rigorous honesty with yourself and others about the addiction, living with serenity, getting rid of anger and anxiety in our lives, and other important tips and points - some of which you can find on [this page](#).

This is my personal opinion, I do not know if Elya, Boruch or Kookoo would agree with me. I myself am not an expert in the 12-Steps. I welcome anyone else's thoughts.

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Re: I have questions

Posted by battleworn - 17 Feb 2009 14:26

Thank you very much! Does anyone else have something to say?

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Re: I have questions

Posted by Elya K - 18 Feb 2009 02:51

I had a beautiful piece on this and my computer timed out and it was gone forever. I'll attempt to copy.

It's like why do we have Rosh Hashanah before Yom Kippur? Shouldn't we forgive our sins and then we will be clean to approach the KING? No, first we accept the King as our King, we are his servants, he controls what happens, we accept that, then we are ready to take certain steps to ask for forgiveness.

(The three prong approach to Teshuva).

The twelve steps are in order for a purpose. Let me explain. You do the twelve steps once in detail so you at least know what they are. then you work them as they come along. Or each day, you can work all 12 steps in a few minutes, once you know how.

If you're on this site you've already done the 1st step. You're powerless over this addiction and your life is unmanageable. Then you realize that you cannot do this on your own and ask Hashem to help you. Once you show trust in Hashem that he controls the world, you can begin to do Teshuva. Get rid of your anger, resentments, fears and tell someone else about them so you get out the shame and guilt. Then keep asking G-d for help. Ask people you've hurt to forgive you you're sorry. Pray for G-d to improve your midos, and help others heal.

Now look at it the opposite way. Help others heal, improve your midos, ask people for forgiveness, etc.

You can't help others heal if you haven't done anything for yourself. You can't ask people's forgiveness if you don't realize that you have some part in the anger, resentment and fears you think are caused by others.

So the steps are in an order for a purpose. Here's the way to do them each day, quickly.

Before you go to bed at night, do a Cheshbon hanefesh, soul search to see if you were dishonest, hurt anyone, were angry, resentful or fearful. If you were, fix it. In the morning, when you get up, tell yourself just for today, I will not act out in my addiction. As you say the introductory Brochos, remind yourself that Hashem is in charge, he created you and he's gonna take you back from whence you came, whether you like it or not. (probably not). During the say review what you're doing and think about why you may be angry, resentful, scared or fearful. If you are , call someone and talk it out.

Ask Hashem to help you. Forgive people who may slight you during the day, go to Minchah and pray some more, this time thanking Hashem for giving you another day clean. Thank, don't only ask. Make phone calls and help others.

We addicts have to psychoanalyze everything and everybody. Is he right, or her? What are all the details of this so I can make sure it will work before I try it. JUST DO IT. Jump into the Yam Suf before you see dry land, instead of the other way around. Jump in, accept it and G-D will help you. Keep analyzing, questioning, formulating, structuring, and you'll never get started. Action is the only way past depression, procrastination (fear) and boredom.

L'Chayim.....

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Re: I have questions

Posted by battleworn - 18 Feb 2009 13:15

Thank you very much, Elya.

We addicts have to psychoanalyze everything and everybody. Is he right, or her? What are all the details of this so I can make sure it will work before I try it. JUST DO IT. Jump into the Yam Suf before you see dry land, instead of the other way around. Jump in, accept it and G-D will help you. Keep analyzing, questioning, formulating, structuring, and you'll never get started. Action is the only way past depression, procrastination (fear) and boredom.

That's a very very good point! But I'm coming from a different direction. I've already taken action and broken free. I've learned a lot from my years of battling the addiction, and I know that I can help people a lot. I'm even considering writing a book. That's why it's important to me to know if and what they have to add to what I already know.

As I've said once, I only saw the 12 steps after everything else, and it didn't seem to teach me anything new. I know that the groups have tremendous success, but I need to know what the secret to that success is.

Perhaps let me tell you what I understood until now, and you tell me how far off you think I am. I understood that the keys to their success are:

- 1) No nonsense: The only way you can break free is by forcibly breaking the cycle and that means taking action with no excuses.
- 2) Group support and accountability; the power of these things can't be overstated.
- 3) Bringing Hashem in to your life; that doesn't need any explanation!
- 4) Taking responsibility for your life in general. This does two things: First, it stops the tendency to want to "check-out of real life" and then, it transforms you in to a different -bigger and better- person, which is one of the yesodos of teshuva.

If you're on this site you've already done the 1st step. You're powerless over this addiction and your life is unmanageable.

I'm glad you brought that up. To me it seems very clear that the point of the first step is this. For most people, there's no way in the world that they will ever agree to such a drastic change in their life, and such demanding accountability, if they think they can manage without it. Especially if they're not very religious!

Now, if someone had a solid chinuch, his Emunah is strong and he knows right from wrong (and the severity of the sin), then there would be no point at all in the first step (in it's standard form).

Before I go and rewrite the first step, I'm asking you to please enlighten me if I missed something.

And once again, thank you very much for your help!

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Re: I have questions

Posted by battleworn - 19 Feb 2009 17:27

Last night, I was talking to a bochur that has tried the groups in the past. He said to me that the way he sees it, is that it's all about group support. Then he said, that of course the big thing of the 12 steps is bringing Hashem in to the picture and relying on Him, but all that was nothing new to him.

Maybe this is because he has always been learning sifrei chasidus; what do you think?

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