

Using the Pesach Seder & the Arizal's 4-step program to break free

Posted by alexeliezer - 03 Apr 2011 15:28

Please see my other [post/thread](#) for my personal story and how this worked for me.

This is based on a shiur available for download here:

www.jewishpulseradio.com/2011/03/torah-this-week-higher-order-of-the-seder/

by Rabbi Yaakov Labinsky (of Aish) entitled "Higher order of the Seder." This is but a distillation and the reader is encouraged to listen to the original Shiur.

The avodah of the Pesach Seder is to go from avdus to cheirus. Avdus means a physical, body orientation to life. Cheirus means a spiritual orientation. (For us, our avdus is our addiction.) According to the Arizal, there is a special koach in the Pesach Seder (first night only) called "dilug." This means jumping over, or passing over levels. Normally, teshuva must be done in a stepwise fashion. If a person rises too far too fast there is increased danger of return to old habits. On Pesach night, these rules are suspended, and a person can pass over levels not possible the rest of the year. But you must be prepared.

During the weeks leading up to the Seder, clean out the chometz in your spiritual life as best you can. And physically clean those rooms where your aveiros are done (I suggest the computer room and bedroom). Don't look at women. [my addition: If you need to (and can keep it), take a vow that you won't do _____ from Rosh Chodesh Nisan until at least after Pesach. You can do it!]

Erev Pesach, when burning the chometz, visualize your yetzer for lust being burned.

This is your kavanah during the seder:

There are four l'shonos of geula, three of which represent release from degrees of enslavement. (In our case, enslavement to the yetzer hora for lust.) The first cup of wine goes with the first lashon, "v'hotzaysi." With the kiddush and drinking of the first cup, know that you are being taken out of the most severe level of enslavement. Next is the cup for "v'hitzalti." Saying the hagaddah and drinking this cup will free you from the next, somewhat lighter level of

enslavement. Eat the matza and be humbled. Eat the maror and think about how bitter it is to be enslaved to the yetzer hora for lust. [The seder is already supposed to be a personal re-enactment of the avdus and y'tzia. This is using that re-enactment with an additional layer, a particular yetzer hora.]

With the third cup, over bircas hamazon, all remaining vestiges of the enslavement will be removed from you. You are now free, but in great danger, because nature abhors a vacuum. So the fourth cup, representing "v'lakachti" is drunk soon after the third. The tfilos we say over the fourth cup have to do with the future. With v'lakachti, we ask Hashem to take us for his. We commit ourselves to be his slave, rather than the slave of what we were just released from. Drink to your new relationship with the Borai Olam!

I used this approach, together with the 12 steps, ~~two~~ three years ago, and have never relapsed. I continue to daven for sobriety and shmira in this area, and continue to work on this and other areas of yiras shomayim. More recently, I am working on those aspects of my personality that were most affected by my addiction, including working on being more of a giver. Addiction stunts our personal growth. In recovery we can resume growing.

Chag Kasher Vsamayach,

Alex

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Re: Using the Pesach Seder & the Arizal's 4-step program to break free
Posted by Me3 - 03 Apr 2011 16:07

I'm glad this worked for you, and clearly yetzias mitzrayim and going out from the bounds of ones taivos have a very strong connection (see Nesivas Shalom in about a dozen places), **but...**

I'm sure we will find people who were addicted to lust who went and davened by the kosel for 40 days straight and were helped.

Maybe some went to Lizhensk on the Rebbe Reb Meilich's yartzeit.

Some were toivel in the Arizal's mikva, and were cured.

And some got a red string from Kever Rochel and since putting it on have had only pure thoughts.

Yet we will also find many more who were not able to miraculously overcome their addictions overnight. We therefore encourage people to systematically adopt a program that will enable them to beat their addiction Al pi derech Hateva.

Also somewhere during all those kavanos by the seder try to have the kids in mind too, because the mitzva is vihigadita livincha.

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Re: Using the Pesach Seder & the Arizal's 4-step program to break free
Posted by alexeliezer - 03 Apr 2011 20:22

Thank you for your comments. Allow me to clarify.

I agree. The seder functions at many levels. It is for the adults and the children, and the needs of all must be addressed. But I'm not speaking while I'm drinking.

This is not a substitute for using a proven system to address addiction. I applied many of the basic principles of the 12 steps in my recovery program and still do. But the seder is an opportunity to jump ahead, an opportunity that should not be lost. You will not walk away from the seder cured. It will still be a mighty struggle, but you will be much further ahead.

Regarding your comment about derech hateva, this approach is harnessing the teva built into Pesach night. One need only tap into it. You're having the seder anyway (as opposed to the other supernatural methods you mentioned). Remember, there really is no teva (nature), just the Ribono Shel Olam. That's why we turn our lust over to Him -- hardly an act one would call natural.

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Re: Using the Pesach Seder & the Arizal's 4-step program to break free

Posted by Blind Beggar - 03 Apr 2011 20:59

You're right Me3, I went to Uman for Rosh Hashona and I am still addicted (but I did find GYE and SA).

I am going to continue my program but you can be sure I'll have the Arizal's 4-steps in mind during my seder. Everything helps.

Happy Pesach!

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Re: Using the Pesach Seder & the Arizal's 4-step program to break free

Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 05 Apr 2011 23:07

[Blind Beggar wrote on 03 Apr 2011 20:59:](#)

You're right Me3, I went to Uman for Rosh Hashona and I am still addicted (but I did find GYE and SA).

& who knows if YOU would have merited finding GYE without the zchus of going to Uman??

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Re: Using the Pesach Seder & the Arizal's 4-step program to break free

Posted by alexeliezer - 12 Mar 2012 18:48

B'chasdei Hashem I am celebrating 3 consecutive years of sobriety (after more than 30 years of active addiction). I have modified the original post slightly, and wanted to move this thread back to the top so anyone who hasn't seen the *vort* can start working it in time for the first seder.

Hatzlocha!

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Re: Using the Pesach Seder & the Arizal's 4-step program to break free
Posted by JackAbbey - 13 Mar 2012 00:15

alex your seder explanation made me cry

oh! how enslaved we were!

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Re: Using the Pesach Seder & the Arizal's 4-step program to break free
Posted by alexeliezer - 17 Mar 2013 20:12

B'chasdei Hashem I have been clean now for 4 years. I'm not able to edit the original post because it was originally posted on the old platform (which bugs me cuz there's a typo).

I am adding this post mostly to bump the vort back to the top so people can see it in time.

Chag Kasher V'samayach!

Alex

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Re: Using the Pesach Seder & the Arizal's 4-step program to break free
Posted by jewish jew - 17 Mar 2013 21:24

Thanks a lot Alex

I was just thinking to myself that there was a speech on the Seder that I saw in someones thread a while ago that I wanted to listen to, and here it is.

Yitzchok

I saw it when posting [here](#) and it is one post after yours where you mention this speech.

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