

A Torah source for addictions

Posted by ovadia - 20 Dec 2009 12:47

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In response to today's chizuk email #660, I would like to present what I think is a Torah source for addictions, and where it is clear that even people on the highest Madreiga can always fall , once having been exposed to a particular Y"H.

Everyone is familiar with the statement of Rav Huna "Kivan Deovar VeShono Ba, Naasis Lo KeHeter". The popular understanding of this is that if one transgresses an Aveira a number of times, then one becomes desensitized to that Aveira. According to this explanation then by being Mischazak (Mussar etc) one should be able to regain his sensitivity and revert back to his original level.

However Rav Dessler ZTL says that this is not the meaning. He says that once one has been exposed to a Nisayon and "overcome" his conscience and decided to sin, even if he subsequently eradicates the Y"H and does perfect Teshuva he has lost his immunity FOREVER and will always be prone to sin by habit (addiction).

As proof to this he quotes an explicit Gemoro in Succa, where the Gemoro discusses the Simchas Beis HaShoavo in the Beis HaMikdash.

The Gemoro says that originally during the Simchas Beis HaShoavo the women would sit outside and the men inside. However this lead to Kalos Rosh. **(In the Beis HaMikdash!! During the Simchas Beis HaShoavo !!! where they were able to reach the level of Ruach HaKodesh !!!R.D)** As a result they built a temporary gallery for the women.

The Gemoro asks that since it is not allowed to erect anything in the Beis HaMikdash, how did Chazal permit it in this case?

The Gemoro answers that Chazal found a source for this in Nach.

The Novi Zecharia prophesized that LeOsid Lavo there will be a great Hespel (according to some this will be for the death of Mashiach Ben Yosef, while others say that this will be for the decease of the Satan/Yetzer Hora who will be killed by HaShem). The Posuk tells us that at this Hespel the men and women will be seated separately with a seperation. **Rashi stresses that this is in the atmosphere of a Hespel where one is certainly not lightheaded and at a time when the Y"H will have been eradicated, yet it will still be necessary for a separation between men and women, for fear that people will "fall"**

Rav Dessler ZTL says that from here we see that once a person has been exposed to a particular Y"H he is forever more prone to be triggered by that Y"H even if he has worked on himself and done complete Teshuva, and the ONLY thing that can help is a Mechitza (or a filter)

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Re: A Torah source for addictions  
Posted by Kolliel Guy - 22 Dec 2009 21:33

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That is very scary. I like to think that one day I'll be able to sit alone in front of an unfiltered computer without even feeling an urge. Oh well.

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Re: A Torah source for addictions  
Posted by UTS - 23 Dec 2009 20:32

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[Kolliel Guy wrote on 22 Dec 2009 21:33:](#)

That is very scary. I like to think that one day I'll be able to sit alone in front of an unfiltered computer without even feeling an urge. Oh well.

Don't feel *too* bad. People who never did it (rabbonim) tell me that they would have the urge even though they never had a computer.

Also, maybe there is *some* urge, but it can be diminished from what it was before tshuvoh.

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Re: A Torah source for addictions  
Posted by UTS - 23 Dec 2009 20:41

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[ovadia wrote on 20 Dec 2009 12:47:](#)

In response to today's chizuk email #660, I would like to present what I think is a Torah source for addictions, and where it is clear that even people on the highest Madreiga can always fall , once having been exposed to a particular Y"H.

I also am quite sure that I saw something that would (somewhat?) reinforce your point;

Chazal say that if a bochur goes beyond a certain age without getting married, "kol yomov behirhur". That is usually taken to mean - until he gets married. However, I saw that this means "kol yomov behirhur" --- regardless! I think that I saw this in the sefer Shulchon Hoezer in the back somewhere, however I have not been able to find it now. Maybe it was another sefer.

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RE:the torah source for addictions  
Posted by loi-misyaeish - 23 Dec 2009 20:52

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Oh c'mon chazak, i thought about that plenty b/4 i turned twenty. An addict like me, wouldn't have made a difference, nineteen twenty or twenty one, and even eighteen, either way i would have wrecked my life. But hashem saw how much i was suffering and sent gye.(although my mother totally disagrees, she's not an addict and doesn't know what it feels like! She want's me to trash the internet!)

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Re: A Torah source for addictions  
Posted by ovadia - 24 Dec 2009 12:26

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[Kollel Guy wrote on 22 Dec 2009 21:33:](#)

That is very scary. I like to think that one day I'll be able to sit alone in front of an unfiltered computer without even feeling an urge. Oh well.

I know that this is the Beis HaMedrash but I hope a little Milsa DeBedeechusa is allowed, and I think that it brings out a point very strongly.

A eighteen year old Buchar from a very sheltered backround takes his first walk on the street. After a short while he sees a woman. He turns to his father and says in Yiddish "Taate, vus is doos ? (What is that ?)" to which his father replies "a kaatchke. (a duck)." The boy thinks for a minute and says "Taate koif mir tzvei. (buy me two.)"

I think that the point is clear. The urge is natural and nesecary. In a Shiur which a heard about Chanuka from Rabbi Tatz he quoted the well known Gemora which describes how Chazal tried to "sugically"remove the Y"H of Arayus, and they discovered that it was nesecary for reproduction. Rabbi Tatz explained in the Shiur how we need these urges for our personal growth. The challenge is to prevent ourselves from situations which bring out the urges and if we do get into a situation of Nisayon to overcome it.

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Re: A Torah source for addictions  
Posted by Kollel Guy - 24 Dec 2009 13:38

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OK That's something else. Of course it's necessary for our avodah that such an inclination exist. But I just want to know that there is a level REACHABLE on which I won't have to be concerned with this. It can even be when I'm 60! I just don't want this to be a fear forever!

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Re: RE:the torah source for addictions  
Posted by UTS - 24 Dec 2009 18:18

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[loi-misyaeish wrote on 23 Dec 2009 20:52:](#)

Oh c'mon chazak, i thought about that plenty b/4 i turned twenty. An addict like me, wouldn't have made a difference, nineteen twenty or twenty one, and even eighteen, either way i would have wrecked my life. But hashem saw how much i was suffering and sent gye.(although my mother totally disagrees, she's not an addict and doesn't know what it feels like! She want's me

to trash the internet!)

I hear. That is not the reason that I mentioned what I saw. The sefer was not talking about someone who is an addict. (Atu birshoiy askinon? It would seem that a sefer is usually talking about someone who is fulfilling mitzvos in a "normal" or usual, or proper fashion. ) I hope I understood what was bothering you. If not, please comment.

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Re: A Torah source for addictions  
Posted by UTS - 24 Dec 2009 18:24

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[Kollel Guy wrote on 24 Dec 2009 13:38:](#)

OK That's something else. Of course it's necessary for our avodah that such an inclination exist. But I just want to know that there is a level REACHABLE on which I won't have to be concerned with this. It can even be when I'm 60! I just don't want this to be a fear forever!

Again, based on things that I saw on this site and other places, you will probably have less of a y'h

eventually. However, **everyone has** a strong y'h for these things. Someone that acts on it increases that y'h. But after stopping for a year or whatever, it becomes less. And you are supposed to learn

how to deal with it so that you are not living in constant paranoid fear. I guess that's what the T.S. or similar things (yes, mussar, psychology lehavdil etc, etc.) can accomplish.

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Re: A Torah source for addictions  
Posted by UTS - 25 Dec 2009 15:59

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[Kollel Guy wrote on 24 Dec 2009 13:38:](#)

OK That's something else. Of course it's necessary for our avodah that such an inclination exist. But I just want to know that there is a level REACHABLE on which I won't have to be concerned with this. It can even be when I'm 60! I just don't want this to be a fear forever!

There is something else that I just remembered. If you feel that you are living in constant unproductive fear, you may be helped by medications. Particularly

antidepressants. This is a huge subject, but I know something about it from

experience. There is quite a bit about the subject of meds right on this site.

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Re: A Torah source for addictions

Posted by shemirateinayim - 28 Dec 2009 02:03

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kolelguy take it from a bachur. you will always have to deal with your tayvas nashim. because kol hagadol mechaveiro yitzro gadol heimenu. So your yetzer hara will 'knit pick' at the stupid things...like take my tayva to look. i have no tayvah to look at a real person in the face, I have a tayva in every ounce of peripheral vision. but i get no geshmak from seeing her face. The solution is to go lifnim mishuras hadin and not see her altogether. and if you work on that enough you'll be able to mentally disregard areas of your peripheral vision, by merely having the ratzon not to see it. the peleh is that I still have to work on choosing to do that , even when i have it so easy (it was HELL when i started, and that's coming from someone who is very careful not to use nivul peh).

You expect to retire in areas of avodas hashem? at what age. So when is there gonna be no tayvah for bitul torah, how about 'sleeping in', or ka'as??? "**Vyeshev yakkov**" *zugt the {medrash ?} melamed shebikesh ya'akov leishev beshalva, lefikach kaftzah alav rogzo shel yosef! life is about working hard, if you aint working you are gonna be falling and burning. there will never be a time in your life when you will say, 'OK that's enough zchuyos, i'm good enough, now for some FUN..'. What are you thinking? adam le'amal yulad. not to make his 401k and retire in florida. Shotim,Utipshim. Sit and learn. so your mind is going, do halacha and*

*mishnayos. medrash, nach. even keep saying ONE PASUK. the shulchan aruch harav (hilchos talmud torah) brings from the ramchal (not bishmo) that even if a person only said one pasuk 'va'achot lotan Timna' again and again, the effect of every time wil be different. since at all times the tzirufai sheimos, and midos that are sholeit at that time are different. jews don't go into retirement, we always grow. the idiots that feel that they worked their whole lives to retire....are idiots. they where created to work, and when they are rich enough to not need to, so go seek da'as torah about phasing out your work, and phasing into the beis medrash. And as far as the 'extra' money, it's not yours. it's only meant to last you and your dependents until the next fiscal year. Give the 'extra' to tzedakah, it was only LENT to you for that purpose.*

Sorry, i just got alittle fired-up and needed a "forum" to share this. Of only I was older, or looked it, I could do this in person. Well untill then let's keep learning and growing. And B"H when i have to give this over, I'll have some clearer points, and more mareh mekomos.

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Re: A Torah source for addictions  
Posted by Kollel Guy - 28 Dec 2009 12:04

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Reb yid, nobody would ever consider such a thing. But you would hope that when your at age 70, your dealing with a y"h that's a bit more sophistocated than the one which tells you to look at p\*\*n!!

Do you at your age - want to have the nisyonos that an 6 yr old kid has with shabbos, waiting for tses so he can listen to his new MBD cd, or do you think at your stage you should be able to handle shabbos, and be onto overcoming bigger and more advanced things, like the y"h for bitul torah, or kavanas ha'tefilah, or atzlus?

If you would see a 60 yr old eyeing a woman lustfully, even if you notice him ultimately pulling his eyes away, you would lose all your respect for him instantly.

There's such a concept of levels which your expected to be at.

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Re: A Torah source for addictions  
Posted by shemirateinayim - 28 Dec 2009 15:40

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i know, I've been there, when my y"h was to merely take notice of the girl's conversation. just to listen to her voice talking. Not to look, bet merely to know what color her clothing was. but the

same y"ch was always there just on tiny things, but will all the koach of our drive to watch p##\$.  
What I was trying to tell you, is that your desire be eventually stop fighting is WRONG. The fight will always be there, and just as strong (although i may be wrong about that), just in tiny things. So if at 70 you slip, it will be by looking up at the bus when you got on, since they all will/and already do have ads on them. And you're gonna call-up your accountability partner, and cry bitter tears over the fall. You may think I'm crazy. But baduk umenusah, the urge to not fantasize was replaced by what I said above, and just as hard. trust me, it was such a struggle to eat-out on shabbos, and not once look at the hostess/rebetzin, that I simply ate in yeshiva every week (as bad as it was). But eventually it downgraded to being slightly uncomfortable, when the urge to follow the daughter's conversation was through the roof. And you can't do anything physically to fight that..... it's all in the mind!!!

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Re: A Torah source for addictions  
Posted by YishuvDaas - 30 Dec 2009 04:03

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Here's a dvar Torah that I came across today that was meaningful to me and may put our own struggles into some context.

Dovid Hamelech said "G-d, you have refined us like the refining of silver" (Tehillim 66:10). In parashas Toldos, Simcha Bunim m'Peshischa explained that silver is purified by taking the impurities of silver and mixing them with the unrefined silver. I verified in an encyclopedia that this is indeed the case. It is these added impurities that act on the unrefined silver to remove the impurities. According to Simcha Bunim, this was the process that was occurring when Yaakov was together with Esav in Rivka's womb. The impure (Esav) was pulling out the impurities from Yaakov so that when Yaakov was born he had no remaining impurities (all of his sons were righteous).

It seems that so will it be during the time leading up to Mashiach, the interactions between the descendants of Esav and Yaakov will result in a purification of the descendants of Yaakov – which purification process could not otherwise occur.

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Re: A Torah source for addictions  
Posted by Kollel Guy - 30 Dec 2009 07:30

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Very interesting, Shkoyach!

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