

Rational Recovery (RR) and Torah

Posted by Tomim2B - 04 Jan 2010 23:50

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Re: Rational Recovery (RR) and Torah

Posted by me - 13 Jan 2010 21:29

Dear Guard:

I am sure we will soon hear the answer to your question, but this is something that I myself have been working in my t'fisot ha'olam.

There are people who are totally goal oriented. They can't see anything except that goal at the end of the road. Sometimes they become so pre-occupied with this goal, that they are never even in the now.....i.e. in the very process that it takes to get to that goal. These are goal oriented people, and these type of people NEED a goal or they will have no motivation to even begin the journey. They need to have this goal in front of their eyes constantly or else, they will give up.

But, there are other's Dov for instance who for his tikun he must be in the "process", and the process only. He can't think about this BIG heavy weight called the "goal" at the end of the road. He needs to take each day as it comes, one day at a time, and then another day....living only this day, and focusing ONLY on today, and NOT that all encompassing goal, which is you are either successful or not. You either obtained the goal black and white, and you are a winner, or you didn't, which means you are a loser.

It appears that the 12 steps is to "be in the process" without looking at "that" goal, (which is tshuva shleima black and white!!) This is how I understand it? Am i right?

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Re: Rational Recovery (RR) and Torah

Posted by Dov - 14 Jan 2010 00:12

Guard, I'll do the best I can, wordy as it will be, but please understand that I don't really have the luxury to get everything clear and consistent - as me3 posted, that is a luxury some cannot always afford. But maybe Hashem has given me *some* clarity about this, even though in my opinion the whole issue is "cheshboinos" and nothing to do with action:

[guardureyes wrote on 13 Jan 2010 18:58:](#)

The end result of freedom from lust is: successfully being a Torah Jew.

As I have posted many times before, I was absolutely shocked to discover that my real problem was *not* jewish/religious at all, but simply *human*. The main issue for me in those years of active addiction was always and *only*: "I am a poor oved Hashem". When my problem finally got bad enough that my life was burning down, I realized that I was losing my sanity, my realness with my wife and everybody else, and that I was a complete fake, even to the Creator. Which of

It wasn't "madreigos" that I was losing, it was the basis of my entire humanity. It just *looked* like my *yiddishkeit* to me, because the ba'alei mussar who i loved had taught me that every part of my existence was by definition yiddishkeit. They didn't tell me that I had to be a **human** first.

It seems to me that if I am compulsively calling 800/900 #s, looking at porn, masturbating, looking in windows, or fantsizing about women I see or know, I am not even *sane* yet. He's a shtick beheimo, and he knows it. And it's hell on earth. Yes, I have had many convincingly sane *moments* during those years, but the proof is in the pudding, and how I lived my life. It only got worse overall, never better. (B"H, now it *only* gets better overall!)

So, was my original goal in recovery "success in avodas Hashem"? No, no, no. If it *had* been, I know I'd still be out there, crying about it in sh'ma and feeling like if I cry so much, I *must* be a tzaddik of some weird kind! I like to say that I was such a tzaddik nistar in my addiction, that even *Hashem* didn't know that I was a tzaddik! Ha.

You focus on what can bring you there, while battleworn focuses on what?

I'm a little confused here.
those things are exclusively jewish? None. It was no longer "a *Hamodia* teshuva topic"

I am a Yid. Period. I have a yiddishe Neshoma, etc. Hashem *knows* what to pour through it to

my mind and body. I just need to **let Him**. If I am sick in the head and heart, ***I just won't succeed at letting Him.***

It seems to me that Battleworn sees the truth: that a Yid needs to be free to be a Yid - there ***is*** nothing else for a Yid. And therefore a Yid who is in fetters needs to ask Hashem to free him to be a yid, and He will! I did not have that experience, as my perspective of Hashem, myself, and my place was too messed up I guess. I have not *met* any guys in or out of SA who seem to me to have crossed the bridge into freedom from lust that way, so I see it the way that I have seen it work. That's all.

You see sobriety (and the addiction) as the tool for you to draw and remain close to Hashem and His people.
yes, in retrospect - and it retrospect *only*.

You focus on YOUR Tachlis as opposed to - ***Hashem's*** tachlis? Is that what you are saying, Dov?

Hertzuch-ein git, rebbe: Inasmuch that I came to recognize the truth about myself when I came to recovery: that I am a selfish, needy, manipulative, fearful, and lying man, I'd say yes to that. My tachlis was definitely to stop dying spiritually, mentally, and physically. That WAS my only tachlis then...it's kind of hard to pay attention to anything else at that point..."when you can't breath, nothing else matters", you know.

Hashem's tachlis? What do I know of His tachlis for me? To smear grease on the tzaddiks wagon axle or to save jewish lives, or to be mechadesh Torah b'rabim? It's not my business - it's His! I just want to stay alive. And so far, imperfectly, it's working out quite nicely.

Again, I'm a little confused here.

I'm also confused how such a goofball like me can do some good in this world. But the Eibishter laughs, they say.. ;D.

To you, the **process** is what counts.

Cuz that's my business - when I became a sexaholic I seem to have lost my license to look at

what's "before me and after me" (Gm' Chagigah).

But what's the point of a "process" without a purpose? Isn't the **purpose** "remaining close to Hashem and His people"?

Yes, that seems to be exactly what he had in mind for me...so? It just doesn't work at all for me or anyone I know to think about outcomes of any kind while recovering. It's just more controlling and less surrenderring, so it just makes us stay crazy. Then folks like me would probably just blame it all on SA, AA, our wives, or whatever.

Guard, I'd only write this megilla for you, you goofball.

Much love,

- Dov

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Re: Rational Recovery (RR) and Torah
Posted by the.guard - 14 Jan 2010 13:01

Guard, I'd only write this megilla for you, you goofball.

Much love,

- Dov

Thanks, Rebbe. I think I understand a bit better now.

It's amazing that as much as I am considered the expert in "Dovish" on this site, and as much as I have read, studied and "edited" hundreds of your posts (for the chizuk e-mails), I still never seem to see the same thing twice in what you write, and I never seem to stop learning new angles on how to view the addiction/life/recovery/avodas Hashem.

Either that means I am really really slow, or, it means that there's some genuine chachma going on here, and when it comes to "true" chachma, it seems to touch the Creator/Torah and take on some sort of "infinite" qualities...

Ok, maybe I'm getting carried away. I'll stop.

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Re: Rational Recovery (RR) and Torah
Posted by the.guard - 14 Jan 2010 13:08

Battleworn seems to claim he was a real addict once, yet today he writes:

Nothing that I see nowadays, can fire me up or take me out of control.

That almost seems impossible from a 12-Step perspective for a true addict.

I guess that's why Battleworn believes he is an "x-addict", while AA believes there's really no such thing.

Can it be true for some people?

I don't know.

Battleworn is sharing his experience, so I guess it may be true for some people.

And that's why it's great that he's sharing here.

After thinking about this, I remembered that the handbooks deal with many different levels of addiction. The first tool of the handbook is "Attitude", and it seems that perhaps for a "Level 1" addict, a serious change in Attitude (as Battleworn underwent through Tzidkas Hatzadik and Reb Tzvi Meyer - and many of the ideas in our "Attitude Handbook" we learned from Battelworn) was enough to break the addiction cycle.

There are 18 tools in the handbook though, and it seems that Dov was a Level 15 addict, who needed the 12-Step and live groups to undergo a transformation much more basic than "attitude", as he writes, simply to become "human" again... So it is possible that Dov and Battleworn will never be able to completely relate or understand each other, since their experience was very different. One guy has a flu and took aspirin, while another had cancer and took chemo. They obviously won't have much in common to discuss when telling people about

But many people may be like Battleworn. And that is why we made a "Battleworn's Corner"... Let all who think that attitude in Yiddishkeit is what they are missing come here and drink in the pure waters of Battleworn's Torah!!

Maybe we should make a Dov's Corner as well, for those who need more.

Bottom line is: We need both Dov and Battleworn on GYE.

GYE is like a doctor's clinic/hospital.

Some yidden have the flu, some have cancer, I" a

And we need to have the tools to offer everyone.

their illness and how they recovered

Thank you both of you Tzadikim, for joining us. At the end of the day, we hope that our lives will be for Kavod Shamayim.

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Re: Rational Recovery (RR) and Torah
Posted by battleworn - 14 Jan 2010 14:17

Reb Me, as I wrote above, one of the most important changes that I had to make in my attitude, was to teach myself to always think "What do I need to do right now?" and not get bogged down with assessing myself etc. Do you think that fits with what you're saying? [I'm not sure it doesn't, I'm only asking?]

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Re: Rational Recovery (RR) and Torah
Posted by Dov - 14 Jan 2010 17:48

Rage, NOW you've got me positively terrified!

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Re: Rational Recovery (RR) and Torah
Posted by Kollel Guy - 17 Jan 2010 08:46

As I have posted many times before, I was absolutely shocked to discover that my real problem was not jewish/religious at all, but simply human. The main issue for me in those years of active addiction was always and only: "I am a poor oved Hashem". When my problem finally got bad enough that my life was burning down, I realized that I was losing my sanity, my realness with my wife and everybody else, and that I was a complete fake, even to the Creator. Which of those things are exclusively jewish? None. It was no longer "a Hamodia teshuva topic" .

It wasn't "madreigos" that I was losing, it was the basis of my entire humanity. It just looked like my yiddishkeit to me, because the ba'alei mussar who i loved had taught me that every part of my existence was by definition yiddishkeit. They didn't tell me that I had to be a human first. Don't worry R' Dov, it spoke to me in a big way too. Actually, R Twerski has a whole book on just this concept.

But dehumanization is the common denominator of our world. It's happening all over and it's happening to everybody, and it's happening *fast*.

People are just less in touch with reality in a greater way and to a greater extent than ever before (maybe since the dor ha'mabul).

It seems to me, that if the aa program brings you to an awareness of truth to some extent, *everybody* should be doing the 12 steps, addict or not.

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Re: Rational Recovery (RR) and Torah

Posted by lamed vavnik - 18 Jan 2010 23:35

i think this is a very enlightening and important talk.

what i was understanding from Dov was not that he was disagreeing w/ the goal, purpose , truth ,etc. but that for him it had the wrong effect and would end up causing tension or depression .he for himself and maybe many addicts like him ,can't look at the big picture or the end of the tunnel etc. it will just hurt them . this is important to bring out and i'm very happy this discussion is going on . it's similar ,in a way, to the way some people feel about mussar . so many people feel that mussar is depressing and frustrating and brings them down . there are definitely some seforim i stay away from b/c i know i cn't handle the message like that . not that i believe it is any less true. just , i have to know what i need .

the statement that G-d wants you to be human first b/f he wants you to be a yid has truth but can be misleading . most mussar (if not all) is speaking on a level to begin from . e.g. mesilas yesharim isn't speaking to someone who has issues in emunah . he's talking to a regular G-d fearing jew and wants to bring him up a notch into serious avodas H' . but there are basic tennets of our core mitsvois which when looked at closely are telling us exactly what SA seems to be saying to them . how to be the kind of human being H' wants us to be. looking at some of the sharoshim of the chinuch shows what H" plan was with the mitsvois .the problem isn't with the torah but rather , posibly the way it is presented . we start from such a high rung on the avodah ladder in our society that we are forgetting the simple basics of H" torah's message in basic mitsvos. believe in me . think of me constantly . put me in every aspect of your life . in the biggest yeshivos in the world people are being reminded there is a reboinoi shel oilam .

and we have come to the point that we are so far we need the goyim(SA) to get us out of the trees and see the forest. i am happy for those who found it .but i think it is sad ,nonetheless that it had to com e to that ..

i don't blame anyone for leaving b/c of that .i don't blame any one for saying they couldn't see it in torah the way we give it over nowadays . but it's there .it's all there . and we need to see it there .as jews who know the truth we should never have a time when we say the torah isn't working for me. to say i'm not ready to work on gayvah , gehinnom .i hear . but torah is everything .its life . being sane ,real , in touch with your self ,etc. is all torah . my mashgiach used to say b/f you learn mussar you need to first be a mentch . but he never said b/f you are a yid you need to be a mentch . the torah is telling us how to be the human being H' wants us to be . if we feel the torah isn't speaking to us on the most basic of levels ,there is a fundamantal flaw in the way we are approaching (or being taught)the torah. and we need to re-taech

ourselves the alef bais of what H' wants from us.

[Rage ATM wrote on 14 Jan 2010 15:30:](#)

[dov wrote on 14 Jan 2010 00:12:](#)

As I have posted many times before, I was absolutely shocked to discover that my real problem was *not* jewish/religious at all, but simply *human*. The main issue for me in those years of active addiction was always and *only*: "I am a poor oved Hashem". When my problem finally got bad enough that my life was burning down, I realized that I was losing my sanity, my realness with my wife and everybody else, and that I was a complete fake, even to the Creator. Which of

It wasn't "madreigos" that I was losing, it was the basis of my entire humanity. It just *looked* like my *yiddishkeit* to me, because the ba'alei mussar who i loved had taught me that every part of my existence was by definition yiddishkeit. They didn't tell me that I had to be a **human** first.

This spoke directly to me.

you see i think i finally understand what was bothering me with some posts and some fellas i met at SA who are frum but don't relate to their issues from a torah perspective. i went through this in my avoidah doubting if mussar related to me and i faught it . i realized where i was , and what i needed and refused to say that the torah wasn't able to relate to me so i found the simpler things in torah that did. i saw in the torah that he wants me to be human . i saw in the torah that judaism is the basis of my humanity and that judaism defines every aspect of my(and everyone elses including the goyims) existence.

those things are exclusively jewish? None . It was no longer "a *Hamodia* teshuva topic" I totally understand and respect the need of some to not focus on that way of seeing the torah if it may hurt or hinder them in some way . everything speaks to everyonedifferently. i don't think this is a matter of right or wrong ,or it is there or its not , or even if it is or isn't a jewish idea . but rather what i can handle for myself right now ,and what i need to do for myself where i am holding. if looking at your mission in a certain way is damaging to you , then it may be for

however long you need to ,you just can't look at it that way .you have to do what ever will get you closer to H' and his mitsvos.

but i think we should all for sure agree that b/f or after SA , it's really there .we just needed help to see it.

everything that SA asks us to strive for and achieve is what H' wants from us as his children and is there in the Torah ,why don't we say it like that .

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Re: Rational Recovery (RR) and Torah
Posted by the.guard - 19 Jan 2010 12:21

Lamed Vavnik, that was very nice, thanks.

Chazal obviously meant **something** when they said *derech erez kadma leTorah*. **Kadma** LeTorah seems to imply that - at least as far as **we** are concerned - it is BEFORE Torah. That is not to say that it isn't to be found **in** the Torah; after all, the Torah contains **everything**, but as far as **we** are concerned, it comes before Torah. As Dov always says, he had to face the truth about himself before he could **apply** the truth of the Torah to himself.

But you are right that the bottom line is that we need the derech erez so that we can go on to the Torah. The purpose of "becoming human" is ultimately to be better Jews and closer to Hashem and give him Nachas Ruach. But that is no different than eating, sleeping and breathing, all of which are **also** prerequisites to being able to serve Hashem. When we engage in mundane matters we should have in mind the "purpose" of the eating, sleeping and breathing as well. *Al kol neshimah u'neshimah tehalal kah* - every breath should be for the purpose of being **able** to serve Hashem. And so should the derech erez should be for the **purpose** of being **able** to serve Hashem. We can't serve him if we're a shtick be'heimah, can we? ;D So we have to get human again, and then we can apply the Torah's wisdom.

As Dov says, the Yidden had to be "healed" before Matan Torah...

Bottom line. We all agree that the purpose of recovery is to become better yidden and closer to

Hashem, but while Battleworn talks to "normal" yidden who can still afford to use the struggle as **part of the process** of getting close to Hashem, Dov talks to Yidden who are not normal and can't afford to use the struggle for anything besides to "stay alive". In retrospect, perhaps they can see how the healing brought them closer to Hashem and Torah. But that is the "result", and it belongs to Hashem and is really none of our business today.

So while we need Battleworn on the forum for the "normal" yidden, we need Dov on the forum to

Just as an example of the different types of Yidden we get on GYE. I got an e-mail this morning:

Just a thought that's perhaps worth making somewhere on your site. For someone addicted to porn, the more ammunition to fight the yetzer hora the better. On the other hand, if someone is not addicted yet and has merely just begun to dabble in inappropriate sites, there might be a clean and simple solution. Pledge a \$100 to tzeddoka for each conscious, purposeful and clear infraction, that involves looking at an inappropriate image on the web or mobile youtube application (just to eliminate ambiguity) during this Jewish calendar year. If someone is a Yorei Shomayim and would know that he will have to, have to pay, that might literally do the job. I made that kabollah a while ago and so far it's working great. Haven't looked at an inappropriate website once. Again, this will only help if someone is not yet heavily addicted. Also, one should make sure to specify specifically a medium that he can handle. In other words, I limited my kabollah to the web, as opposed to looking at impropriety on the street. That would be a separate kabollah once the first kabollah has worked for a year or so. Plus, in a climate like we have here in Chicago, there is not much outright pritzus on the streets, certainly not during this season.

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Re: Rational Recovery (RR) and Torah
Posted by the.guard - 19 Jan 2010 12:33

Quote from Kollel Guy:

Don't worry R' Dov, it spoke to me in a big way too. Actually, R Twerski has a whole book on just this concept...

It seems to me, that if the aa program brings you to an awareness of truth to some extent, everybody should be doing the 12 steps, addict or not.

Rabbi Twerski seems to feel that too, but I think Dov takes issue with him on that point. Dov once wrote me an e-mail regarding Rabbi Twerski's applying the 12-Step approach to everything. He wrote as follows:

The following is just one addict's opinion:

Rabbi Twerski's application of the 12 steps is too liberal, in my opinion. His awesome books ("Self-improvement?..." and others that I read about 10-15 years ago) explain how the 12 steps are just plain jewish values. Of course, no argument there, and they helped me in some respect in recovery. But then he goes on to imply that the 12 steps can and should be applied by everyone in every problem situation, just as the addicts do. He suggests that as *everyone* has problems that they cannot overcome without assistance (be it from a therapist, a friend, or from G-d), they are technically "powerless" over that thing and can relate to the need for a Higher Power to restore them to "sanity" (steps 1&2).

But it seems to me that "sanity" was the word chosen for the steps because anything less precious - or costly to lose - is not likely to bring anyone to the desperation needed to actually *take* steps such as these.

I have heard Rabbi Twerski say that addicts have a distinct advantage over non-addicts, because, as he put it: "How many people out there do *you* know who have actually made a fearless and thorough moral inventory of themselves?!", (referring to the 4th step).

Now, I ask, why *is* such an inventory an extreme rarity even among frum yidden? Doesn't everyone have problems? Could it be that addicts in recovery are 'a cut above' everyone else with problems? I doubt that it's "goodness" that the overwhelming majority of folks are missing...

It seems simple to me that most people - normal people with normal problems - just haven't the necessary *motivation* to actually take these steps, and that's just why they don't.

We all have problems that we need help to overcome. But - "powerless"? Most people really believe in G-d, certainly among frum yidden. But, "Belief in G-d is good," Chuck C used to say, "but it is not enough for alcoholics - we have to *live* in G-d, lest we die". Who really has to take Hashem as seriously as the addict?

I have seen enough watered-down versions of the 12 steps, and of yiddishkeit l'havdil, to know that the dependence on G-d that an addict like me needs *has* to be more real than what I had while I was acting out - even though I thought I was frum then, too! Back then I was not OK with believing and saying stuff like "*Hashem, I love you and I need your help to be sober and useful today*", in english even with other people around. Belief in Hashem was largely ritual and philosophical. And almost useless to me.

It seems to me that as long as an addict takes their problem and their G-d any less seriously that they would take cancer or having a leg cut off, their emunah and bitochon may not really work for the addiction. So I'm not surprised that frum people can also be wacked-out addicts. Normal Torah living in this free and fun day and age just does not **demand** that we really take Hashem seriously. How can it? Should there be a "belief-ometer" at the doorway of every shul? What would that do.

Rachmomo leebe bo'i. He desires our attention. But you can't force that - maybe He can, though....

For me, these are the stages I need to go through for a working emunah:

1- a period of basic emunah in the ideals, *while* acting out and getting deeper in trouble;

2- coming to a program of some sort and learning the ideas or steps, maybe parroting the words of recovery. There's no shame in "fake it till you make it." Kind of sh'lo lishma, bah lishma, you know. But if it *remains* that way and I find I am still having trouble with lust and my life is a shambles, then:

3- I'd get the distinct feeling that I was duped - that "Hashem" *doesn't* really "work". That I really **am** hopeless. I may not have left *yiddishkeit* over it, but the day had come when I'd no longer take it seriously as a tool for living the good life - which is what all the schmoozes *told* us it is supposed to be....and doesn't that very issue bother so many of us in our addiction? (And perhaps some carry that disillusionment with them into recovery and deny the Torah-dikeh nature of the steps! Ouch.)

I have seen many folks get to this stage, including myself. Some give up on everything and disappear, expressing that they really feel sure **their** situation is different that that of all other addicts - that their situation is really **really** beyond help and the 12 steps does not address it. I felt sure of that many times in early recovery, but somehow came around, I guess because nothing else worked and I refused to drop dead.

The lucky ones stick with the program and begin giving themselves to a Purpose or Power higher than they are. Like Hashem, for example.

This was my journey. Most from SA guys that I know go through something like this. They get the crapola beat out of them (literally and figuratively) until finally, finally G-d becomes more *to them* than just a beautiful idea...

So, maybe I'm wrong about what R' Twerski believes. But that's my impression of the man's writings. So, if you are referring to a real addict (or even someone who may be an addict), I feel that the choice is usually between death or some kind of surrender and work, such as the 12 steps offer. But if you are referring to a *basically normal person* who's life is just more annoying because of anger- or time-management issues, I don't see what the 12 steps has to do with that. Give him cognitive therapy and a-bi-gezunt.

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Re: Rational Recovery (RR) and Torah
Posted by lamed vavnik - 20 Jan 2010 10:58

Hey big G. thanks for responding. i don't think we're connecting tho',

Chazal obviously meant something when they said derech erez kadma leTorah. Kadma LeTorah seems to imply that - at least as far as we are concerned - it is BEFORE Torah. That is not to say that it isn't to be found in the Torah; after all, the Torah contains everything, but as far as we are concerned, it comes before Torah. As Dov always says, he had to face the truth about himself before he could apply the truth of the Torah to himself.

that maymar chazal isn't relevant to here. derech erez is my behavior and interaction with others (midos ,business,politeness etc.)vs . my learning Torah and interaction with H' . what we are talking about here is kol mi sheh yirosch kodemes l'chochmosoh , chochmosoh mikayemes. and rayshis chochmoh yiras H' . that is plain and simple ,to get in touch with yourself. be honest with where you're holding . get the basics of belief(emunah) and recognition(yirah) of G-d in your life or you don't have anything . and if it isn't working it means you haven't even started. Living Torah in a real way **is** about facing yourself . hayn hayn gufay toirah.

what we should say is ,it wasn't **presented** to me that way or i couldn't find . i understand that people had to go to a different place where the focus is **only living** those points, and i'm now seriously reconsidering it myself , b/c i just need that constant mussar chaburah . And i understand that a person may need to isolate that from other aspects of torah b/c his exposure to mainstream style would end up short circuiting him. The whole Dor as a group may have to shift it's focus from striving for excellence in Torah to making sure our neshamos are healthy and plugged in to the Boiray Oylam.

i'm also not suggesting even one approach(BW over D) i agree we need many levels (not that you need my haskamah). :D . i am saying no matter what level you're on don't seperate it from the Torah . That is , i assume, what you mean by "as far as we're concerned".

"The purpose of "becoming human" is ultimately to be better Jews and closer to Hashem and give him Nachas Ruach. But that is no different than eating, sleeping and breathing, all of which are also prerequisites to being able to serve Hashem. When we engage in mundane matters we should have in mind the "purpose" of the eating, sleeping and breathing as well. Al kol neshimah u'neshimah tehalal kah - every breath should be for the purpose of being able to serve Hashem. And so should the derech erez should be for the purpose of being able to serve Hashem. We can't serve him if we're a shtick be'heimah, can we? So we have to get human again, and then we can apply the Torah's wisdom."

Sorry . i can't agree with that either. eating and sleeping are very diifferent from what you are calling "being human". those are in the category of raising up the physical. those things are

essentially from our Behamah side that we are mekadesh. They are not mefuresheh mitsvos ,but yes, part of our general avodah. the lessons of Sa ,which are essentially living and breathing in Emunah and t'shuvah and cheshbon hanefesh are fundamentals of aviodas H' . they are mitsvos mefurashos taken in the realest way. it is part and parcel of what we're about on this world ,taken to the ultimate level for those who need it .but it is not something different or something "before". i'm not talking ,when i say avodah, about the rat race of collecting schar and making H' happy. leave that. But knowing our mission in life IS our identity as human beings . it's what gives us and our lives meaning. One of our biggest jobs on this earth is to NOT be an Animal. no, we can't serve him if we are a shtick behamah , and getting out of being a behamah IS exactly the service He wants! it isn't b/f or something else from Torah .

. "So while we need Battleworn on the forum for the "normal" yidden, we need Dov on the forum to share his experience with the "not-so-normal" ones "

not getting involved with that and don't disagree. it's only the point of saying

"As Dov says, the Yidden had to be "healed" before Matan Torah"

to relate to OTHER parts of the Torah ,yes. to apply ,as you said ,OTHER aspects of our avodah ,yes. but b/f Matan Torah ? b/f Aviodas H"? IT IS AVODAS H"! .

i know this may be an issue of semantics (and i pray it isn't more fundamental,)but the wording used has pushed me off more than once from SA and even getting closer to 12 steppers here on the forum , which i should be doing .

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Re: Rational Recovery (RR) and Torah
Posted by the.guard - 20 Jan 2010 14:56

LV, thanks. I'm pretty sure I agree with everything you wrote.

I think maybe we are getting confused over which of the steps we're talking about.

I was basically referring to step 1 (of the 12-Steps) where we face the truth about ourselves for the first time, and then again in Step 4 when we face it with much more clarity.

Those come before Torah and don't have much to do with Torah, I think.

The rest of the steps could indeed be classified as Avodas Hashem, I suppose.

Not having worked the Steps myself, I'm a bit out of my league here. I would have to ask Dov to comment on whether I am on-track or not, and to hear what he thinks of what you wrote, all of which sounds pretty good to me. :D

When I read Dov's words I sense truth - and **love it**.

And when I read your words, I sense truth **too**.

I am not really wise enough to know if there's anything you wrote that would perhaps not "work" for some people.

Dov might know.

Meanwhile, see Dov's latest great post on this very issue from yesterday [over here](#).

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Re: Rational Recovery (RR) and Torah
Posted by the.guard - 20 Jan 2010 17:05

Hey guys, check this out!

A frum therapist in Yerushalayim seems to have found a sort of Torah-Based approach to the

12-Steps...

www.nachatruach.com/12Steps.php?lan=eng

Some of the points he bring up on the page, are things that had bothered Battleworn in the past.... For example, her writes:

The Torah obviously doesn't deny one's "issues" but sees them as external to one's deepest inner self. Thus, a main goal of the NR treatment is to help the client know this intellectually and internalize this truth unconsciously, and from this place rebuild a healthy self esteem. For example, the Twelve-Step program correctly requires an addict to continue to say, "I am Joe Smith and I am an addict, clean for the past ten years." This is necessary so the addict won't "fall back" into denial, which is the first step to relapse. The Nachat Ruach approach clearly recognizes this requirement of the program. However, it encourages the recovering addict to say as well, "I am Moshe Cohen and I am an addict, clean for the past eight years. I am also a Jew created in the Divine image. When a Jewish addict says this, he is recognizing that he has intrinsic value, positive potentials and the possibility to grow.

Practically, the Nachat Ruach formulation means that while an addict should never forget that he has a "chronic disease", he doesn't have to and should not define himself only in terms of that disease, but he should also recognize and affirm that his unique Divine spark, which is his essential self, is always clean.

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Re: Rational Recovery (RR) and Torah
Posted by Dov - 20 Jan 2010 19:06

May I keep sobriety my #1 priority and my doorway into avodas Hashem. And with that:

[lamed vavnik wrote on 20 Jan 2010 10:58:](#)

Hey big G. thanks for responding. i don't think we're connecting tho',

he had to face the truth about himself before he could apply the truth of the Torah to himself.

that maymar chazal (Derech Eretz kodmo laTorah) isn't relevant to here. derech eretz is my behavior and interaction with others (midos ,business,politeness etc.) vs. my learning Torah and interaction with H'

I'd ask you where "my behavior and interaction with others (midos ,business,politeness etc.)" come from? You *are* saying that they *are* my avodas Hashem, right? [quote]. what we are talking about here is kol mi sheh yirosch kodemes l'chochmosch , chochmosch mikayemes. and rayshis chochmoh yiras H' . that is plain and simple ,to get in touch with yourself. be honest with where you're holding . get the basics of belief(emunah) and recognition(yirah) of G-d in your life or you don't have anything. [/quote]I agree with you here, 36-er, and even speak about this fact bluntly and often in the shul I attend whenever I have the opportunity - but I am gitten by Hashem with the recognition that I am speaking to people who may or may not not be motivated as I was (and still am). Most are not likely suffering from a terminal illness, as I am. Yet I feel that they *are* good yidden, and for them, this stuff *is* icing on the cake - though for *me* it seems like life itself - "like you haven't even started" - as you put it. But...

Personally, I believe that Tzaddikim see it the same way as you and I do, though for another reason entirely: they are purely motivated to serve Hashem because they recognize that it is the only way to be. I was not that way, though I tried and fooled myself that I was for years as I got worse while I got "holier"....perhaps Hashem will help me get there and want it for His sake, not mine, one day, perhaps not. It's none of my business. Perhaps I could but it'd be a bad idea for me to ever become aware of it...maybe gayva would eventually creep in and become a tsunami after a short time and ruin it. Yup, keep it a secret from me for a siman b'racha!

and if it isn't working it means you haven't even started. Living Torah in a real way **is** about facing yourself . hayn hayn gufay toirah.....i am saying no matter what level you're on don't seperate it from the Torah....

Please, please, I am not seperating it from Torah at all and never did. I am looking at it in terms of avodah, process not theory, principle, nor goal. Practically speaking, I see basic, simple, emunah b'chush (and the way of thinking that comes as a result of it) as simple, open-eyed maturity. Being a mentch. The way I look at it, it is **sanity** - from Hashem's perspective. I believe this is how Reb Elchonon Wasserman Hy"d seems to view it (in kovetz ma'amarim), too.

It is **not** the property, per se', of b'nei Torah, nor even of Yidden! Even a *Rosho* can have it (chesed y'sovevenhu) and certainly an am ho'oretz can (though he *won't* get very far with it/become a chosid).

Eating and sleeping are very diifferent from what you are calling "being human'. those are in the category of raising up the physical. those things are essentially from our Behamah side that we are mekadash.....but b/f Avoidas H"? IT IS AVODAS H"!.

Perhaps you'd **like** them to be...but they are not necessarily, even for many good jews. The RMCH"L writes in the hakdoma to Pischei Chochmo v'Daas that if a yid eats and sleeps to be able to learn, daven, do chessed, etc., he is a great guy - but he has not elevated the act of

these "human/physical" things at all. He goes on to say that only with the study of kabala can one come to see the inherent meaning in these activities and thus elevate them. He is plugging for kabala there and that is not my point here, of course. But I see from that, that what you are talking about here is *not* that simple, even for b'nei Torah. There is *plenty* avodas Hashem in eating and sleeping even *without* elevating it...and many Jews are probably doing OK w/o these things - these things that you and I know we'd die without. Just my opinion. I don't *like* that it is so, and wish everyone would be given to Hashem, (and they'd be happier!) but I think it's the truth. Hashem will lead us all to grow *as He sees fit*. He kicked my behind pretty hard...

One more thing.

Please see the hakdomo to "Da Es Atzm'cho" by R' Itamar Schwartz (author of Bil'vavi Mishkan Evneh series - and also translated beautifully into English). He clearly separates process from goal, and accepts a separation similar to what I believe 12 step work relies upon as an absolute necessity to **do** avodas Hashem. His goal, of course, if you are familiar with his derech, is nothing less than total and constant intimacy with Hashem and the awareness that He is my/your Eternal and Absolute Best Friend.

i know this may be an issue of semantics (and i pray it isn't more fundamental,)but the wording used has pushed me off more than once from SA and even getting closer to 12 steppers here on the forum , which i should be doing .

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