

Personal recovery plan

Posted by obormottel - 12 Aug 2011 22:38

I was pressed for practical steps I'm taking on the path to recovery. So here goes:

By way of introduction:

I've been a compulsive masturbator since age 11 or 12. Started looking at internet porn when it became available in my house, after being married for a short time. Can't tell you when viewing this garbage became addictive, but it's been years since I realized I have a BIG problem. I would come to shul to mincha with fresh stains on my pants, and people would ask me to be shliach tzibbur! The depression and anxiety, and feelings of hypocrisy! I don't have to tell you... I couldn't stop no matter how much I agonized over this. I installed BSAFE filter, and set my own password (dumb!!!). I took on hachlotois. I gave tzdoko, and even created a knas for myself of \$180 for each occurrence (turns out it's a legit technique; I just did everything else wrong). All to no help. About a month ago I gave up on myself, and gave myself over to G-d's mercy. I wrote a tzetle to a Tzaddik and gave myself over to the Tzaddik. Within 1 week of the latter I saw a banner for this website on Arutz7. Ever since then:

1. I had my wife install K9 filter and hold the password. In addition, she restricted my internet access so that now when I finish work at 6pm, my internet shuts down, so I have no reason to aimlessly (or, rather, intentionally) browse the web after I am alone in the office. Even with filter, there is plenty room for mischief on the web for a sick mind, so I find this trick especially helpful.
2. I subscribed and now READ daily the Chizzuk emails (both lists)
3. I got myself on the 90 Day chart (day 9 as of today, YAY!)
4. I am half way through the Handbook and Attitude handbook. Found both of them extremely helpful and lucid.
5. I listened to Rav Reisman's shiur on Yirmiyohu. (Did it on 9 Av, thought it to be appropriate). BTW, R' Reisman is great; I've been listening to his MP3 shiurim for a long time now.
6. I am obsessing with this site now, reading what I can, taking part in the forum etc. I probably spend as much time doing this as I used to do the other stuff, which keeps me busy and I do it from home in the evenings, not from the privacy of my office, so it brings me back home...

On the spiritual side, I kept the fence I've already created for myself before: to go to the mikva after each occurrence, and in general to be particular ab. tvilas Ezra. I started learning a particular kuntreis on shmiras eynaim (and once I know you better, I'll tell you which one it is), and plan on doing more of such reading. I also decided to keep my mouth shut in shul, if an argument of any sort ensues (I am usually very vocal expressing my opinion), so that I learn to not have attention focused on me. Also, I promised (in that above-mentioned tzetle) to wear a hat every time I daven, bentch, say Birchas Hashachar, or Al Hamichyo. I think it should add to the additional yiras Shomaim I'm trying to instill on to myself.

What else? I apologized to my wife (for which I was ostracized by some on this forum); and I actively turn my head away if something comes into my line of sight that I know will bring me to hirhurim.

And finally, I am making this kabolo allehabo (Bli neder, it's not a vow just yet): before acting out the next time (should a time like this come, Hashem yishmerenu), I will put on my hat and jacket and say my kappitel tehilim. If I don't do it and act out, C"V, then I will pay 10 times the mikva fee the following morning (I've been pretty consistent with my mikva promise).

Your input is welcome. Please don't beat up on me too much, I'm still working out my sensitivity issues:)

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by Dov - 10 Oct 2011 16:45

[obormottel wrote on 10 Oct 2011 05:25:](#)

When I see a trigger and turn away, she still lingers in the back of my mind, so I say a quick prayer asking G-d to take my lust away, and bless her with her heart's desires. And it helps (sorta, till the next one).

The question is, if my davening at the time of a challenge is not surrender, then what is?

Two things:

The words, "*And it helps (sorta, till the next one)*," mean to me that when you discover that you are *still* sensitive to the presence of these objects/people and *still* allergic to lusting over them, that it means that something is very wrong. Perhaps even that "it is not 'working' yet". It sounds like accursed "madreiga thinking", chulilu, (bar minon).

OK, true, it means that you are not like you'd *wish* to be. We yidden do have good aspirations, b"H! But I say that if it helps you out in even just one situation, it is "a smashing success" (as R' Tzvi-Meyer would call it)! This is not *hischazkus* I am offering here, but simply stating a fact that the difference between me dropping my life down the toilet vs living another day or year or decade sober - is this one situation right now where I am tempted to look up a slippery news

story, or get a better look at the shmutzy woman across the street, or to touch myself in the bathroom for just a little pleasure or to check and make sure that 'I still work down there', you know...("hey, it's been years and years, what's the big deal?").

And the flipside of the same exact attitude is that I may start to chas veSholom look at these *little* situations as *big* issues, risks, or whatever. *I cannot afford to do **that**, either!* I need to be a fool for sobriety. To look at them as big deals for the gratitude afterward, but to see them as tiny little nothings in the moment. (Does that remind you of a gemorah about a 'thin string' and a 'huge mountain' somewhere, chabibi?) This takes an emunah peshutah that seems really stupid to the guys (not you) who are so busy trying to figure this all out so they can finally beat it. Gevalt. A melech zokein uksil needs some ??-??? ?????; ???-????, ?????.

I was a fool, an immature and stupid idiot for my sweet lust. It is about time that I am satisfied doing some things that seem altogether stupid - but work - for my sobriety! This is a very big yesod for me, personally. Not to be such a chochom. Hey, it was good enough for him:???????-?????, ????? ?????; ?????????, ????????? ?????????.

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Beautiful.

[/quote]Is my admission of truth about myself a sufficient first step? And how would you suggest I moved on to step two, which, according to your description of it, I have not yet attained?[/quote]

The way we traditionally work the first step in SA is to write our entire sexual acting out history on paper, then to admit it all to someone safe (most guys do this in their main meeting). There are p'ratim, and not everyone does it the same way. Th ikkar is that nothing be left out of the written version - though some leave out details to share with another person, at least they do write all the truth down, leaving out not a single detail of the truth. Vechosem yad kol odom bo - hey, it is the truth and there is no hiding from ourselves in reality. What to share with a group or with another person, that is a case-by-case decision.

This is only appropriate for addicts - people who have come to believe that they are abnormal.

You describe it quite well and refreshingly honestly. And with a good dose of real humor. That makes it even more beautiful, I think. Please never lose that.

So, when are you ready to move on to the second step? It's up to you, I'd say. If it does not work at all, though, then chances are you have not yet done the first well enough, yet. That is a klal from my sponsor's sponsor's sponsor...until way, way, wayyyy back in the AA mesorah-line, until the floor of some bar somewhere in Milwaukee.

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Re: Personal recovery plan
Posted by obormottel - 10 Oct 2011 20:17

[obormottel wrote on 10 Oct 2011 05:25:](#)

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You are right, I am danged if I do, and danged if I don't.

I just want to say for the record, that I didn't say "danged". I don't care if you're a moderator of the holiest site on the internet, it doesn't give you the license to butcher the English language. "D*mned if you do, and d*mned if you don't" is a figure of speech, which is a permanent word conjunction, and it has nothing to do with cursing, or inticing violence, or evoking H*LL on Earth. This self-righteous editing does nothing except make a perversion of a thought that some of us actually make an effort to formulate.

Dang it, it makes me so m*d. Yes, I said m*d. M*D, M4D, M^D!

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Re: Personal recovery plan
Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 10 Oct 2011 21:50

rumor has it that the administrator once had a bad run in with some beavers so he basically moderated them and their hobbies out of existence

easy does it Mottel, have a shot of mashkeh and sing hup kossack, that'll get the dings and the dangs out of your psyche

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by obormottel - 10 Oct 2011 22:31

[ZemirosShabbos wrote on 10 Oct 2011 21:50:](#)

easy does it Mottel, have a shot of mashkeh and sing hup kossack

how do you think I get out of bed every morning?

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by obormottel - 10 Oct 2011 22:50

On an (even more) serious note, back to my dose of Dove:

Your second point is excellent, and well taken, and has a practical suggestion.

Writing stuff down is the first step, then?

I am not sure about the first point you make, but I figure that just fencing with you is a waste of yours and mine time.

So just a clarification before we move on:

Are you saying that the very feeling of stress induced by reaction to triggers is contrary to what we are trying to do here? But I can't help it!...I see something that makes me wanna (how do you put it?) masturbate on the bathroom floor and I feel all bent out of shape. If I don't make a big deal out of it, I'll act out. If I do, I am stressed and need to vent on the forum. So the second option is better, but I think you're saying it's not the way to go because it's making a bigger deal of seeing something than what it really is?

So is my writing my sexual acting out history will help me not get worked up over legs in a park?

I'll take that with emuna pshuta, my chassidus is big on emuna pshuta. Just please confirm I got it right.

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by gibbor120 - 11 Oct 2011 14:50

OM, you bring tears to my eyes...

from laughing so hard at your posts. Don't worry chabibi, I'm laughing with you. :-*

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by obormottel - 11 Oct 2011 16:51

It's a good thing you're laughing WITH me, otherwise I would unleash my pen of fury, and hiding behind the anonymity of my username, hurl insults and insinuations in your general direction.

Well, the photographer girl is almost out of my mind now. We are busy building the sukka, I expanded this year and added a few hiddurim. I'm thinking to hang my snow-white undies in there as Noy Sukka. No keri stains for almost 70 days now.

Whaddaya think?

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by alexeliezer - 11 Oct 2011 17:46

O'Mottel,

That is the funniest thing I've read in a very long time. Only on GYE! I need to come to your thread more often. Boy you are getting edgy with the humor! I can't stop laughing. Keep it coming!

Alex

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 11 Oct 2011 18:37

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by obormottel - 11 Oct 2011 19:42

You are all invited to a farbrengen in my sukka, my underwear display notwithstanding.

And if you were to come, here is a preview of what I would farbreng about:

[Gevura ShebYesod wrote on 11 Oct 2011 15:09:](#)

~~Mottel, you do that and we'll all come over for a farbrengen~~
...I could actually hear the IH whispering in my ear "you've done so much teshuva already, take it easy..."

But I know there is so much more to work on, the war is far from over. And there are other aspects of my life that are not so perfect either.....

We were debating last week the need for tshuvo for a recovering addict. Mine was the minority opinion, daas yochid, and I held that tshuvo for hz"l that was brought about by our addiction is superfluos because we were not baalei bechiro when we sinned.

So comes Yom Kippur, and of course I listen to divrei chaverai, so I start doing tshuvo and mentioning hz"l in viduy etc. And there is no emotion, zero...

Was it hayetzer telling me what Gevura suggested, or was I right and I was wasting precious Yom Kippur time by tshuvung for something I didn't have to?

Either way, we are past yomkippurdige tshuvo now. And, as rightly noted, there is so much more stuff to improve about me. But now the tshuvo needs to be accomplished through simcha, it's zman zimchoseinu, after all.

Sukka is G-d's hug (the three walls of the sukko are like a hand wrapped around a buddy's shoulder). He hugs us because we are precious to him, with our temporary dwelling, and perishable arba minim, because nothing is truly permanent in this world, except Him and His Love to us.

So no matter how imperfect my tshuvo was/is, my simcha can be true, because it's G-d's simcha, too.

L'Chaim!

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 11 Oct 2011 20:28

Mottel,

your attitude, striving and humor are all gevaldig

KUTGW

chazak ve'ematz

[obormottel wrote on 11 Oct 2011 19:42:](#)

Sukka is G-d's hug (the three walls of the sukko are like a hand wrapped around a buddy's shoulder). He hugs us because we are precious to him, with our temporary dwelling, and perishable arba minim, because nothing is truly permanent in this world, except Him and His Love to us.

So no matter how imperfect my tshuvo was/is, my simcha can be true, because it's G-d's simcha, too.

L'Chaim!

beautiful!

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Re: Personal recovery plan
Posted by Dov - 11 Oct 2011 21:22

Hey, Chaver, you mentioned the hug of the succah thing, and something that never occurred to me before happened.

We build the Succah now. In the Midbar - a bechinah of gan Eden - **He** built them Succos. What is *that* about?

In Gan Eden, everything is free, for it is 100% natural. There was no s'char there for odom - for he didn't do *anything* yet! He was just getting all kinds of goodies from malochim and everything else, because that is what is *natural* for yetzir kapov to be treated like. It is not Olam haBoh, just Gan Eden.

In the midbar, where the AC and food were all perfect - and free - it was a bechinah of Gan haEden again, as the sforim tell us. Hashem made them Succos - whichever tanna you hold of, it means that He was hugging them. He gave the hug *naturally*.

And now here we are, building a succah. **We** make His hug. That is, we have to build a Succah, as we do other mitzvos. The Sfas Emess writes about eating matzoh and the inyan of it - he uses the term "to be zocheh to really eat matzoh". He is not talking about chewing it. Living in the reality of the mitzvah is much different than just putting up a kosher succah, or eating a matzoh to the correct shiur. It is a gift - not something we need to merit by our gevurah. A free gift he gives when we get our will the heck out of His way and do His Will. We build it, and He fills it.

"Yoga'ato - umotzoso, ta'amin." Even *after* the yegiyah, it is a **metziyoh** that is 'found' as if by accident. A gift - *only* a gift, as sforim say.

And in the first geulah, He made these hugs for us in the midbar - even after we did the chato'im and *were condemned to death*. He still loved us so and made the hugs as a Father *naturally* hugs a child no matter what.

Today we need to build the hug - a nice kavonoh I will try to have while building my succah tonight iy"H. But kago'el rishon, kach go'el ha'acharon: ***we do not 'deserve' it by being 'perfect enough'***. We just need to depend on Him, do His Will - and build. We put His 'arms' around us, and He hugs. That is what He wants. Before the final ge'ulah it is not a bechinah of *deserving*, but a bechinah of being His natural child. B'nee bechori Yisrael.

Kach go'el acharon.

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Re: Personal recovery plan
Posted by obormottel - 11 Oct 2011 21:48

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Re: Personal recovery plan
Posted by obormottel - 12 Oct 2011 15:35

Gut yontiff, everyone!

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