

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 alexeliezer - 01 Sep 2011 16:48

I don't feel like I'm being cheated out of any nisyonos by asking Hashem to take my lust. It's just my way of asking for help. It's also my way of letting go of this personality trait (lust) that's been a part of me for so long.

And He's really not taking it anyway -- if I were to be so foolish as to start gazing in the street or indulging in fantasy, I have no doubt that the lust would be right there where I left it.

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by obormottel - 02 Sep 2011 21:32

I almost caused an accident today, when I was looking away from a jogger and almost crashed into someone at an intersection. The guy was very angry, stopped his car, rolled down the window and was yelling obscenities at me while making hand gestures that suggested that what he was saying was in accord with how he really felt.

I should have appologized, but I was busy NOT thinking of bad things to yell back, so I just bit my lip and didn't say anything at all. Besides, he was right...

I came up with a tool to use when driving through "dangerous" parts of town. I keep my finger on the window washer button, and if there is nowhere to turn my gaze, I stare straight ahead and spray some soapy water on the windshiled. By the time the whipers do their job, I am usually

out of the danger zone. (Unless it's a stoplight, but then I can just close my eyes). Driving with closed eyes is a big no-no in my family, though.

Gut Shabbos!

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Re: Personal recovery plan
Posted by mechazek - 03 Sep 2011 18:38

What an idea I had such a geshmak in hearing that idea the same as if I was hearing a sevarah that explains the entire sugya. Thank you for that.

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Re: Personal recovery plan
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 04 Sep 2011 06:45

Just dropping in to say hello here.

Good luck Obermottel, looks like you're on the right track.

--Elyah

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Re: Personal recovery plan
Posted by obormottel - 04 Sep 2011 07:55

Thanks Elya!

Tomorrow my wife wants to have a BIG Talk. Any suggestions?

I'm sure it's gonna involve the latest revelations

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 04 Sep 2011 12:48

What does she know already? What have you already told her? What's her involvement been so far?

How is your relationship as it is, overall?

What changes have you made already since you have joined this forum?

The main idea, which is always the safest path to take, is to say something along these lines:

"I feel our relationship is not as good as it could be (or, used to be), and I regret that. I feel I have a lot to do with it; What could I do to make things better?"

Then, you have to be willing to LISTEN. You want to clean up your side of the street, and THAT'S ALL. Don't start placing blame, or looking at whatever your wife may have also done to contribute. AND, if she goes in that direction, CHANGE COURSE "I would like to focus now on what I can do to make things better."

Just look at your part in things--with grueling honesty. And, whatever your wife may say, no matter how critical and bitter, she is most probably right. We addicts have huge blind spots to our own defects; our wives don't.

If you don't think you can handle that, or if you think your sobriety at this point is too tentative, feel free to tell your wife something like this, "There's a lot going on with me, I'm working a lot on it now, but I'm not quite ready to discuss it with you now. I am looking forward to discussing it with you when the time is right, which I hope will be soon."

And, besides that, full-disclosure, especially all of a sudden, usually does more harm than good. I would strongly advise against it.

--Elyah

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by obormottel - 05 Sep 2011 00:18

I followed the suggestions of just listening and not assigning blame or whateva and it ended up being a pretty amicable disussion. it was also almost entirely focused on my lousy earnabilty, not s*xual things, so it was a little easier to contain myself, but the advice was golden, anyways.

As for the main problem that I have, the wife has real trouble admitting it's an addiction and calls it a "weakness" and similar things, which is a relief and a frustration at the same time.

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 05 Sep 2011 06:28

[obormottel wrote on 05 Sep 2011 00:18:](#)

As for the main problem that I have, the wife has real trouble admitting it's an addiction and calls it a "weakness" and similar things, which is a relief and a frustration at the same time.

Glad the suggestions were helpful.

As for acknowledging our problem as an "addiction," I have found something in the White Book that is very handy (if the topic ever comes up). It says something like this: We don't claim to be experts in addictions, and we don't claim to be using the term in it's exact sense, however, the program of recovery (and attitude) which has been helpful for other addictions has also been very helpful for treating us--and other methods have failed.

--Elyah

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by obormottel - 05 Sep 2011 17:45

I met a Jew over the weekend, who is not frum at all, and who (after jail etc) came to terms with the fact he is sex addict, and started recently attending meetings.

He's been clean for 7 days.

So I mentioned that I am around a month's time clean...the guy was beyond himself:

"A month? That is so great, it's unbelievable, I don't think I can do it" etc.

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So I guess all's relative....

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by obormottel - 07 Sep 2011 16:10

I've been having trouble....not with looking around on the street, but with feeling good about not looking, as well as with having the split-second images linger in my head. I dwell on them and get depressed about why couldn't I look, and why it's not going away, and how much I really wanna look. I have been using "alert, avert, and affirm" tool, but the affirmation is not helping, and I usually forget to compliment myself anyways. I've used image replacement technique, but it's not always practical. I've been imagining some disgusting words on the inner thighs of my

fanatasies, and that helped a bit. Then I started using another tool, of saying "Hashem, take my pain as a sacrifice", because I literally shudder and shake and feel nauseated when the urge to look is particularly strong. Shopping and driving are particularly difficult activities. I tell myself if I look I die.

All these tools are from GYE and they helped more or less. But the other day I started saying "G-d bless her" every time I see someone I want to do a once over. And the urge immediately goes away! That is amazing....I find myself at peace, I don't want to look again, and I am comfortable with not being able to look once I ask Hashem to bless this person as His child.

So I want to be a ~~misnaged~~ litvak for a second, and ask: are we allowed to ask Hashem to bless goyim? I don't think so....but it's been doing wonders for me in the last day or two.....

What to do, heilige forum?

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by gibbor120 - 07 Sep 2011 16:14

Your plan sound like something i think I have heard from Dov. Maybe he'll chime in. I don't think there is anything wrong with blessing goyim. Don't you say "good morning", or "have a nice day"?

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by JackAbbey - 07 Sep 2011 16:18

the chazal tells us, if you see a gorgeous lady (for instance if you come to a corner, & she comes facing you from the opposite corner) you should say "boruch shakocho loy beolomoy"

about feeling depressed, please explain what particular thought about avoiding shmutz, causes you a depressing feeling?

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Re: Personal recovery plan

Posted by obormottel - 07 Sep 2011 16:38

[gibbor120 wrote on 07 Sep 2011 16:14:](#)

Your plan sound like something i think I have heard from Dov. Maybe he'll chime in. I don't think there is anything wrong with blessing goyim. Don't you say "good morning", or "have a nice day"?

I did ~~hear~~ read someone say it in Dov's name, so if the "real slim shady" would stand up, I'd like to hear it from the source.

I also heard you shouldn't say "bless you" to a goy if he sneezes, so what does that say? BTW, I say gezondheid or Salud to my co-workers to stay polite, and I do say hello etc....so I don't know...

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Re: Personal recovery plan
Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 07 Sep 2011 16:45

Does the *mitzva* of *Lo sechaneim* - *Lo titein laheim chein* apply here?

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