

never thought i would get here

Posted by Humpty Dumpty - 17 Oct 2011 18:14

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**...and now I believe I will get much further! :D**

I am a yeshivish yungerman, and I started to get onto wrong websites when I was a bochur. I had the internet on my phone, and slowly but surely I started leading a secret life, that was tuning into a monster, despite me trying to deny it. Almost four years into my marriage, the monster of internet addiction was still going stronger than ever before, and I was starting to doubt ever getting out.

With Hashems help, I got onto GYE. With GYE's help and with my wife's support, I am amazed that I'm actually writing this story on the 42nd clean day. I once again believe in a life free of this addiction.

I think many details of my story would be very beneficial to other "strugglers", who can either learn from my mistakes or get inspired by the successes I am pleased to have had. I will bli neder post a more elaborate account of my experiences.

Meanwhile, believe that you can get out too! Follow the GYE handbook, and you're bound to succeed in some way!

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Re: never thought i would get here

Posted by Tzvi S. - 17 Oct 2011 18:37

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the time has come to show the world your power

KOT (keep on truckin)

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Re: never thought i would get here  
Posted by Dov - 17 Oct 2011 19:34

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Don't show the world any of your power, for you've got so little, really. Rather may it be time for Hashem to tear open the heavens and show the entire world that there is **nothing** but Hashem from top to bottom. WE are just His agents, period.

Azus dikedusha is best left to those more qualified to use it, I say.

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Re: never thought i would get here  
Posted by Tzvi S. - 17 Oct 2011 19:43

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it takes mesirus nefesh!

@dov,

How do you think that i'm talking of different power then of kdusha anyhow?..?

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Re: never thought i would get here  
Posted by Dov - 18 Oct 2011 20:51

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So when you wrote "time to show the world your power", all you means was "your power to allow Hashem in to take care of you", then.

OK, if so, we are speaking the same language, amigo. Please pardon my error.

But I guess you are full aware that the great majority of guys here are frum, and hence know all the party lines. Heck, we have used them all for years! "To really, really *depend* on Hashem," "Ein od milvado," and "*Hashem* ish milchama," are in all of our minds and mouths...and yet ten minutes later we have all been kneeling on the bathroom floor masturbating to the sweet perfect image of a shiksah.

If so, then who are we *really* depending on for our needs? If I really do feel ready and willing *limsor nafshi l'arba misos beis din al kedushas Sh'mo*, yet can still go to the porn again as though in chains for an hour, mouth watering, looking again for that perfect image....what does that say about me? *Not* as a **Jew**, mind you - but as a **human being**. Derech Eretz *Kodmah* laTorah. This is a huge point that most frum people I know completely ignore, while they persist with religiousizing their complete powerlessness and destruction. True, **not** every frum guy who looks at porn, masturbates, or even has sex with someone other than the wife, is an addict. Surely the overwhelming majority are not. There *is* still such a thing as a rosho, a ba'al tayvoh, etc., and Chaza"l were mostly surely referring to *non*-addicts b'divrei kodsham - ie., the average yideleh. But there comes a point when a person is doing it for years and getting worse...and sees that they cannot succeed at *stopping*. Yet so many are encouraged to hold onto the old mussar shmuessen meant for the surprised first-time-offenders! They are told that they must, in fact. I see it over and over. Gevalt. This is the reason I came to GYE in the first place.

Using the good-old "it's the YH" thing is just a pat answer. It means nothing about me and really blames 'someone' else! It's just *labeling*.

I am not criticizing *you* in any way, Technical Support! Just sharing a topic that is so very dear to my own heart after seeing up close so many marriages and families torn apart over this problem - and seeing so many up close that have been (and are being) saved. All and only because of someone **humbly** accepting the facts about themselves.

May Hashem continue to save me from my own egotism and self-lying.

Happy Succah-hopping!

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Re: never thought i would get here  
Posted by Serene smile - 19 Oct 2011 07:59

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I could be misunderstanding the words, but I've seen this a lot.. Torah indeed, does describe the 'addict' clearly (and I've seen it brought in Tanya, ch 17): "hu b'reshus libo" (he is possessed/controlled by his heart). I.e, he CANNOT stop or control himself at all. (See Tanya ch17: again forgive me, there may be other sources, but I'm very simple and very busy).

In the judaism I've been shown, absolutely no experience AT ALL in life, falls out of the realm of Torah's (Hashem's) loving 'opinion'...

(How could it??? To say so, is, in my arrogant/humble opinion, a VERY weak/limited, small minded judaism)

Meetings too, are also part of 'refuas' described in many seforim/sipurim.. Yes, even w/goyim. The 12 steps as well.. Ask mechila, Make Hashem #1 for real, give up your deepest secrets, create a support group, pray... What's the question??!!?? If that ain't judaism, I ain't got no idea what is??!!

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Re: never thought i would get here  
Posted by tehillimzugger - 19 Oct 2011 16:30

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I agree 100% with SS

the first time i saw the 12 steps, i thought "this is chassidishe sforim"

i didn't get anything of what the "12 step bashers" ever said

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Re: never thought i would get here  
Posted by Dov - 24 Oct 2011 03:38

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Agree 100% with everything you wrote, Serene, and see no stirah with *anything* I wrote.

And here is a three-day long post, by far my longest, and quite preposterous. It was fun, so enjoy!

Al derech avodah, I might be able to explain where the fuzziness lies here. I know too many sweet and good chassidishe/yeshivishe and otherwise frum guys who are sex addicts. They are (as am I) completely unable to stop, and are very confused. The fact that what they are doing is assur makes no difference in their struggle - it could be assur, it could be mutar - either way they do not stop even though it is endangering or even destroying their family life, their integrity, their olam habo, their olam hazeh, their sanity, whatever...

The insistence that a Jew learn the derech to recover davka from Torah is a major block to many of these guys. Major. The reason I call it a block is not simply because it has not worked for them till now (which is also true). But rather, the reason I call on them to davka take a secular approach to recovery is this:

Most of us learned how to use porn, fantasy, and to masturbate ourselves WHILE we were defining our relationship with Hashem and WHILE we were defining what Torah *means* to us. This is why what they (we) have often felt so sure was destined to be our answer repeatedly failed as a working way out for us. Absolute devotion to Hashem and His Torah with hisbatlus gemurah simply did not work for many of us. For if it did, why are half of us even here at all? Hey, I am not a ba'al shittah on this and am not asking for anyone to agree with me on anything. I am simply reflecting the experience of many, and spelling out what many simply fear to face. If you see it in you, don't give up - seek for the truth about yourself, instead of more truth about Torah, Hashem, or other people. Self-honesty has been the missing ingredient for us all along. Of course, hiding from others and faking to get by has been poisoning us, too.

Yes, yes, yes, **of course** Torah is the answer. Because Torah (and Hashem's Will) *includes* derech Eretz. And Torah is His Tif'eres, the mitzvos are shaife' d'malkah - the Zohar haKadosh calls them kevayochol "limbs of Hashem's Malchus". So what of 'secular recovery work'?

The **approach** is key here, **not** the content. Sure the content can be found in Torah - but we don't find it! Only addicts do! This is why for many, the 12 steps work succeeds where the best shrinks and 'recovery programs' fail! The content that is actually needed, is just not the stuff that the 'oilem' typically focuses on in Yiddishkeit. Certainly not *normal* people in the oilem.

No matter what Rav Twerski writes, Torah authorities cannot speak undiluted program concepts from the pulpit. The Torah community must uphold a standard, and *should not* naturally cater to the truly spiritually sick people. A rov cannot speak of many of the things that I and others share about, even though it saved my marriage and my life - simply because they are not the typical Torah derech. They would irreversibly damage the normal people by sending them the wrong message.

For example, if your personal experience in the steps is one that you believe a goy could not *possibly* understand, then you and I have very different steps. Humanity and self-honesty is included in Torah values, I believe. And the steps are about self-honesty much more than anything else. And a goy can be as honest with himself as any Jew, if he needs to be. So, they can recover.

I have, b"H, very close relationships with so many frum Jews in recovery over the past ten+ years and it seems to me that, ironically, we frum yidden in recovery typically have a *much* harder time being honest with ourselves than the average goy does, in recovery. We often love cheshboning ourselves into a pretzel, driven to interpret Torah ideas to explain us and the entire recovery thing, and thus we complicate the simple. Elokim boro es ho'odom yoshor, v'heim bikshu cheshbonos rabim...

I read parts of Kuntress uma'ayon mibeis Hashem, by R' RaShaB, zt"l. Nu. Perhaps you have, too. Perhaps we could compare notes on that sefer, which touches on this issue a bit. But still, it would not change the facts of what I keep seeing guys experience. The ones who keep trying to do it *in a way that seems to them like the Torah they are familiar with*, get complicated to pieces, and fail. But the ones who accept simple principles in a secular (that means spiritual but not religiously dogmatic) context make it, over and over. And they stay frum and grow in all aspects of avodas Hashem. Not just from being clean - but from being honest with themselves, with others, and with their G-d.

And the goal of any frum yid's recovery is usually to live a real life of an ehrlicher Yid, and nothing else! But then why are we driven to lust and act out our lust? Why are we all here? The addiction confuses so many here *to see it differently than they view alcohol or drug addiction* simply because zera levatola *happens* to be **assur**! It turns out to be practically irrelevant, in the end. The real problem is that we are out of control and can't stop. That sickens and frightens us, makes us lie, and ruins our relationships with Hashem and with people, especially with the ones we are 'closest' to. It is the difference between the guys who are just ba'alei tayvoh and masturbate cuz it's fun, and those sad ones (like me) who do it habitually and compulsively, while it takes over little parts of their thinking and their lives. One is quite normal, while the other

is sick, sick, sick.

And the recovery that I am familiar with is based completely on the acceptance of the fact that *even if porn-viewing and compulsive sex (with myself or others) were **mutar***, I *still* have no other option but to stop...even though I can't seem to stop. And all the yiddishkeit I have is on a wishy-washy foundation. No Tatty wants that for His child.

As far as Torah describing the addict clearly in a few select places, that may be so - but that was not my point. Sure, aspects of the thinking and process of addiction and recovery are all over the place in Torah. So? Where is it all put together? And who uses it? I went to rabbonim and to shrinks - and none of them had any idea what my problem was! Cuz none of them were addicts - only one had the guts to tell me I was very messed up and need professional help of some kind. Nu. So two years later I got the help...

My point is that the word "teshuvah" applied to an addict is vastly confusing for a good yid who happens to be a sex or lust addict. **Azivas hacheit** simply does not **happen** for an addict - we become "periodics". The hachno'oh needed to really give it up completely just does not exist because there we have too much mental and emotional *pain* when trying to give up our sweet addiction! What, after all, can Torah promise us in return for such a sacrifice? To an addict, all

the platitudes of Olam haBoh, madreigos, and the glory of conquest l'Shem Shomayim, fall on deaf ears - or deaf hearts. We really believe there is no substitute for it. And we all know that *giving it up* is the only way, and **that** takes a gift from Hashem. The White book of SA puts it nicely: "When we prayed, it was always, "Take it away G-d, so that I do not have to give it up!"

And **Charotah** has no context, at all. What *charotah* do I really have if the truth is that I, poor guy, still want to use porn, fantasy, and masturbation again *more than anything else in the world*?! The addict knows that he will feel just as crazy for it again in a day, a week, a month, maybe a few months...off to the races again....how can he talk of 'charotah' or of 'kabolah al ha'haboh'?

And **vidui**? Puleeze. How weak is a vidui that a guy feels he is only willing to do if he can keep his head deep inside a paper bag? That's what "SpunkyTeshuvahbrovah" is: a paper bag over my head in a virtual setting. Ooh, so safe. So 'safe' from everyone but ourselves.

Here we are among others who know exactly what it means to see your tzitzis dragging on the floor while masturbating on the bathroom floor and fling them behind us so we don't see them in the act....who know just what it is like to sneak a peek at porn on the internet (during bein hazmanim only, of course). We are fellow frum yidden! And yet so many are of us are *still* hiding behind **usernames**! OK, some use them because it's the style on forums, I know. But I also know that most guys (not all) are *deathly* afraid - some viscerally unable - to actually admit their real names here. Heck, posting at all is such a hard thing for many to do. And of those few who can or do post with their real first names (see my Captain Kirk thingy if you still can't fall asleep yet), most of them would still not consider actually **meeting** another recovering yid in their community to talk of the truth about themselves with...that's why I say this vidui has 'short legs'.

Besides being a mitzvah, vidui is a powerful tool to help a person let go of his current sickness and get free of his past mistakes. The Tzetel Kotton speaks of it, and countless addicts the world over use it properly as one of many program tools. Yet some frum guys bring with them a RMB"M that says that speaking out my mistakes or my ills to another person is **assur** if they are only bein odom laMokom! It's a busha to the King to publicly admit my transgressing of His Will!

Ashrei sh'bo v'talmudo beyodo? They will come to Shomayim and say "I couldn't get free of my addiction to prostitutes, schmutz, or masturbation because *the tools were assur*! So here I come with my 15,000 sins - **and a RMB"M**! Then they'll tell him that the RMB"M was not talking about addicts!



Ashrei sh'bo vetalmu**do** beyodo, indeed.

My life was *drek* punctuated by 'religious victories', my wife and children were fooled, and I never realized that ***the RMB"M was not referring to addicts in the first place!*** He was not referring to a person who is sick in the head.

Ooh, but admitting we are idiots or nuts is just too insulting. "Hashem, what do You expect from me? To even let go of my *self-respect* for recovery?! Heck, it'd be chilul Hashem, for I am a ben Torah and known in the community! (And RBs"O, if You are not sure of this, please just see Ch 5 of Hilchos Deyos.)"

Ein milim.

Does any of this address the issue?

Finally, I will share two Torah thoughts about recovery and addiction, be"H. Some may not like them.

The Sfas Emes describes (via the Zohar that refers to No'ach as "Shabbos") that Noach was a tzaddik who needed syu'ah. He walked **with** Hashem, cuz he could not walk **before** Him. He needed direct Divine assistance to be a tzaddik, says the Sfas Emess.

) was different. He *could*

walk before Hashem, and did in his lifetime.

Now, I admit I cannot approach a real havonoh of Noach, and what he did with the drinking after the mabul and what tikkunim he was trying to achieve for the b'riyah after the eitz haDa'as, and it's nutty to say he was an addict of *any* kind! But...

Noach's *derech*, I see as a model for the recovering addict. Yes, I can be a tzaddik - but dependent on Hashem. Passive, like Shabbos. Relying on kedusha from above, like Shabbos. Nukvah, like Shabbos. Naturally 'Osah Retzon Ba'aloh'....like Shabbos - it's naturally 'kidshoh vekaymoh'. And when an addict relies on his *own* da'as, he soon ends up drunk and naked in a tent somewhere (if he is lucky).

This is upsetting to some, who say it's unfair. They are not willing to 'just' be a tzaddik like Avraham Avinu (even though the initials on his briefcase were AA). Noach. Nu, he was sort of like a goy, no? They feel it'd be an abrogation or failure of their very Jewishness. (Even though the Sfas Emess refers to contemporary tzaddikim in this bechinah, as well!) Well, to this I say that these people are not ready for recovery anyway. They put their '*madreigo*' first, and their *hachno'oh* second. That might be avodas *atzmi*, not avodas Hashem, anyway. Basics, basics.

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I see the analogy of yetzias mitzrayim applying to Hashem taking us out of the house of slaves,

as most do. But with one difference that few choose to talk of:

I see the comparison of the addict (that means me) most closely to what Hashem did for **Par'oh**, rather than for the B'nei Yisra'el. Par'oh promises over and over again that he'll let go. But he holds on. He even swears that Hashem is 100% right, and that he is dead wrong, yet then hangs onto his beliefs that the Jews *can't* possibly be given up!

He makes a bankrupt fool of himself over and over again, with every makkoh....and still doesn't just let go! How much he suffered! How unmanageable his life and kingdom became! Yet he just could not accept it.... this is my story, and that of most addicts I know. We are exactly the same. "Es asher his'alalti bemitzrayim" - "how I played with/made fools of mitzrayim" We were deep into dotage. It is disgusting, really. How I am 100% devoted and running after seeing the right picture of a selfish and shameless prusteh shiksa and feeling myself to my orgasm - it all becomes so *precious* and *beautiful* to me, even with the lying and fakery it usually entails, not to mention my little mess on the floor... How debonair.

Then Par'oh seems to finally hit bottom. He suddenly realizes that **he cannot afford** to keep holding onto his precious Jews! He *runs* to recovery. "Go! Go! Get out of my hair now!"

This time he is really contrite. He takes action, puts on a filter, tells his wife all about it, starts going to meetings, a shrink, whatever.

But it does not last long. As soon as he sees the first glimmer of freedom, he interprets it in the funniest way:

"I am cured! Maybe I was a bit ill before, but now, finally, I see things rationally and I am in control!" We see that Par'oh felt cured of his Jew-fetish! So...how did he react? The RaMBa"n points out, "what kind of fruitcake lunatic (OK, so I paraphrase a bit) would surge forward *into a miraculously split sea* after his quarry? Did he actually think it was split for *him*, to catch them?!" What does this mean? It means he was reduced to an idiot and a fool. A Captain Ahab crazy with 'Jew-fever', he was.

How did *that* happen? Didn't he just 'let those people go'?

Simple. He decided that if he were no longer sick - if he was actually able to let go of his Jews, that proves that he is no longer powerless over his lust to keep Jews. He **has** truly learned his lesson. So now he can recapture them and not fall prey to insane suffering - if they cost him too much next time, he'll just let them go! Just like the smoker: He says to nagging relatives who say, "Harry, you're *addicted!*" that he "could **easily** give smoking up *at any time!* So shut up!" Hmm. Touchy, isn't he? Then he coughs his guts up one night too many and decides to test himself. And behold! He gives it up for *a whole week!* Will this guy quit? Maybe. But if he is truly an addict, he will most likely take a lesson from his success that he can now control and enjoy it like a gentleman, like everyone else. Just a single smoke after dinner, once in a while. Of course, soon he is back at the races chain smoking again, and his 'control' phase is a distant memory a raspy year or two later.

Par'oh ran after his Jews as soon as he saw he *could* let them go! "If I **can** let them go, then **why quit!**? Control and enjoy it!"

Get it?

This is my story, and I am not alone.

Par'oh ends up in Nineveh, helping the horses (and people!) do teshuvah of some kind - and (and lots of non-addicts, too) learn that it was never the last drink (schmutzfest) that got them in trouble, but it was always and only *the 1st one!* We - if we are indeed addicts - are powerless to control the *first* drink we take. That takes a lot of humility (or humiliation) to admit. Admitting we are actually powerless over the first drink is not normal. Normal people (even normal yidden!!) can take a drink of lust without ending up in the toilet bowl. Not me. That is the 1st step of a long, slow, and beautiful recovery.

Have a nice day!

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Re: never thought i would get here

Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 24 Oct 2011 15:00

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Dov, that was awesome. what an eye-opener. i thinks that this Pesach i will be getting more mileage out of Par'oh as well. never thought of it that way. wow. thank you so much for sharing all that.

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Re: never thought i would get here  
Posted by Dov - 24 Oct 2011 15:53

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I find it hard to believe that anyone would actually read all that. Sheesh, you are a *patient* fellow!!

Have a great day!

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Re: never thought i would get here  
Posted by tehillimzuger - 24 Oct 2011 16:09

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and i happen 2 b impatient (as evident by my kitzurim)

but its good so i read it

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Re: never thought i would get here  
Posted by DovInIsrael - 24 Oct 2011 16:11

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@Dov - I am sure that was great stuff. Too long for me... not too many brain cells left to process it.

At a quick glance, here is what I think you said:

QUESTION: Who was the first addict in the Chumash?

ANSWER: Pharoah. his actions caused a progressive degeneration in his ability to think...regardless of much he destroyed his family and country.

On a different note... did anyone hear about the iPhone application for Sukkot?

you download a picture of the 4 minim, and then while moving your iPhone, it shakes the luluv in the direction you move your phone.

nice, huh?

so instead of HO-shanahs.. we now have Hi-(tech)-shanahs!

we live in a world where we are connected to objects more than reality.

(ok - there really is no such phone app. I made it up to prove a point.. but there very well could be such an app)

B"H at least for Sukkot we had a chance to come out of ourself, and experience the REAL world.

anyone interested in keeping the momemtum going til next year?

dov.ii

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Re: never thought i would get here  
Posted by Dov - 24 Oct 2011 16:49

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Dear Dov (so fortunate to be) in Israel,

That's not what I said. There was a lot before the 'vorts' and anyway, the vort about *Noach* is far more important to me for it is how I actually try to live my real daily life.

The Par'oh thing was mainly to explain: "what in the world is Hashem is doing spending a *year* convincing a **goyishe** king that He (Hashem) is really, really in charge!?" (And you cannot say "it was really just for the yidden to see it!", because Hashem says befeirush each time that He is doing his these makkos "so that Par'oh will know that there is none like unto me in all the land," etc.) It was for Par'oh and mitzrayim, not mainly for us. Why bother? I see it as a perfect lesson in powerlessness and unmanageability. (See the Tanach Study Center and R' Menachem Leibtag, if you want more on this topic, vetimtze'u nachas.)

And I only used Par'ohs behavior as an **example** of your behavior and my behavior - *if* we are addicts. If we are addicts, then we are basically just crazy and also have an allergy to our drug of choice. This is simply why the 2nd step responds to the 1st step with, "...could restore us to **sanity**." *Insanity* is the basic problem, plain and simple. It's the 'disease'.

*Understanding* the 'roots' of our behavior is very nice and very comforting - but makes no difference at all when it comes to actually stopping and staying stopped. That is why understanding why we act out, drink, or whatever, is nowhere in the steps, at all. The 4th is only facing the truth and the triggers - not 'how we *became* addicts' nor 'what *drove* our acting out', at all. The 4th step is so absolutely indispensable because it is about facing what makes us uncomfortable with life **today** - and when an addict gets uncomfortable enough with himself, with his G-d, or with other people...he (or she) *will* eventually act out, no matter how well he (or she) understands what's wrong with them.

Disclaimer: This may not be the only understanding of the steps there is, but it is what I have and it works for me, so I share it. It's none of my business if anyone sees it all differently. And whoever uses a different understanding of the program - *if* it is actually working for him - has my greatest respect!

And a happy post **Hi**-shanah Rabbah to you and yours!

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Re: never thought i would get here  
Posted by gibbor120 - 24 Oct 2011 19:23

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[TehillimZugger wrote on 24 Oct 2011 16:09:](#)

and i happen 2 b impatient (as evident by my kitzurim)

but its good so i read it

I read the whole thing too. Do we get a free t-shirt or something that says "I survived Dov's  
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Re: never thought i would get here  
read it? >  
Posted by Dov - 24 Oct 2011 19:44

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Yes, you do. Speak to Guard.

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longest post"