

The Ramblings of a Recovering Lunatic (General)

Posted by MendelZ - 08 Aug 2013 23:22

FYI: There is another version of this post in the Balleh Battim forum that has more about how this all relates to intimacy with the wife.

First time poisting anything of a personal nature. Yes, I am interested in comments and questions. It will help me and others (I hope). Here it goes...

I never believed Chazal when they said starving it will satisfy it. It just didn't seem possible. How can you go without that feeling of release, of goodness? Not having it wasn't an option for me. No matter what I tried, I could never stay off of porn and masturbation for an extended period of time (expect a few times where I did a couple months without) because I just didn't believe I could live without it.

Over the past four months (approximately), I have noticed a big shift in my understanding of this whole business. **Yes, the longer one holds off from lustful thinking and acting out, the easier it gets. Big chiddush: Chazal were right.** But the concept was not real to me until I saw it in action in my own experience. (This is important: One need to see the truth for himself. We cannot force insight into another person.) By not focusing on me and by staying clean for a little while more than is comfortable, I see how real it is to "starve" in order to be "satisfied". We don't really need sex. (And B"H, my wife and I are currently in a month of self-imposed no sex and only once did I feel a little regretful. Not being chained to sex is such a freeing feeling, like taking off handcuffs.)

I still have plenty of work to do with my "addiction". But I want to point out that the main thing that helps me is seeing in real time that I DON'T NEED SEX. NOTHING WILL HAPPEN TO ME IF I DON'T GIVE IN.

It all started with filters and keeping busy and living in the moment and finding meaning in my life (still need to do all those things all the time)...but the realization that it is possible to say "no" and that every "no" is bringing me to less and less dependency was HUGE. Saying "no" to lustful thoughts and feelings is really saying "yes" to the Aibishter. Its saying, "Yes. Hashem, I do want You to be real in my life. I want to let You help me."

I heard from my Rebbe that the reason we have trouble giving up the things that we know are taking us away from Hashem is because we really don't believe that what He can offer us is more pleasurable. The ice cream looks and tastes really real and sweet right now on my tongue. I can rely on that ice cream. It never fails me when I need something fulfilling. Ever. Even though its only a few seconds worth, but it is real and trustworthy. I can take the sweetness and geshmak of porn and masturbation to the bank, any hour of the day, any day of the week. So we don't give what Hashem has to offer us a chance. Especially for those of us who got caught in this addiction at an early age before we could really stop from taking over our lives. It is hard to imagine that the goodness of Hashem can compete with porn and masturbating. Can real life really be better than that mind-blowing sensation of release?

Recently, I had a "nisayon". For me that means taking a shower while feeling depressed. Bad idea. Really bad idea. But I figured I would try it out and see if anything would be different. Stupid idea. Really, really, really stupid idea.

Baruch Hashem, I didn't fall. Some lustful thoughts surfaced but, thank G-d, the shower was uneventful. What helped me in the moment was the above ideas. The play-by-play went something like this:

First I thought, "If I say no to this, it will just get worse and harder to contend with. Give in now so that it won't be a constant struggle." So that was a tiny blip on the radar, a faint, muffled lie that could easily destroy me.

Then I thought, "Say no to acting out right now in this moment because each moment is a moment far zich. One moment at a time. If you want to act out later, that will be an eisek for then but the fact that it will get more difficult if you say "no" doesn't matter. So you will have to worry about it then."

Then the next thought(s) came along: "Hashem will take care of you if you say "no". Starve and be satisfied. He can give you what you need to be strong in a moment from now, just as He is giving you what you need to say "no" in this moment. Hashem CAN give you something better. Just trust Him."

That was it. Home free. The desire/need to masturbate dissipated (for those moments). And I realized that saying "no" (with the right attitude behind it) is saying "YES".

If I recognize Him as my strength, He will be with me. He is found where we let Him in. (Kotzk!
Kotzk! Yaaaaaaay, Kotzk!)

Please RBSHO, save me from complacency. Help me remember Who is the source of my
strength. Give me gratitude and humility, always.

These are the ramblings of a recovering lunatic. Please take them with a grain or two of salt.
And if any of the above was helpful or you relate to any of it, please let me know in the
comments. It will give me chizuk. Thanks.

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Re: The Ramblings of a Recovering Lunatic (General)
Posted by cordnoy - 08 Aug 2013 23:26

I liked the other one better

Great stuff

ditti

ditto

keep it up!

b'hatzlachah

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Re: The Ramblings of a Recovering Lunatic (General)

Posted by MendelZ - 08 Aug 2013 23:32

Me too. But I was advised it would be a shame to exclude people. I hope there is something useful in there for bachurim as well.

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Re: The Ramblings of a Recovering Lunatic (General)

Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 09 Aug 2013 00:10

bachurim are just future yingelait

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Re: The Ramblings of a Recovering Lunatic (General)

Posted by MendelZ - 09 Aug 2013 00:16

Mit dem bashefer's hilf.

If the mods, shlit"a, (ahem!) think I should just move the original over here, I have no problem doing so. Just trying to play it safe.

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Re: The Ramblings of a Recovering Lunatic (General)

Posted by Machshovo Tova - 09 Aug 2013 01:07

Shkoyach for the beautiful insights. Helps me a great deal. And although I'm not a bochur, and no longer a yingerman, but an alte zeideh, I nevertheless keep away from the balebatim forum cuz it's too triggering for me (and even on this unmarried forum I encounter too many triggers). So I appreciate your watered-down version of great inspiration.

Hatzlacha

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Re: The Ramblings of a Recovering Lunatic (General)

Posted by Avrom - 09 Aug 2013 01:41

[MendelZ wrote:](#)

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Great Stuff!! (-thanks for thinking about us, burcherim)

And think this should be part of every GYE emergency kit!!!

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Re: The Ramblings of a Recovering Lunatic (General)
Posted by tehillimzugger - 28 Aug 2013 03:25

Bachurim are good people.

And hi Mendel, I never really read your stuff but "someone" is trying to convince me that you're a really great guy with really great insights and I have a lot to learn from you, so I'm here to be your talmid.

Tanchum Zeeshe.

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Re: The Ramblings of a Recovering Lunatic (General)
Posted by LEARNING - 28 Aug 2013 05:47

Very inspiring.

Especially the part about the shower. I have really tough times with the shower, and this helps me a lot.

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Re: The Ramblings of a Recovering Lunatic (General)

Posted by MendelZ - 28 Aug 2013 22:35

[tehillimzugger wrote:](#)

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Tanchum Zeeshe.

Hi, TZ!! Nice to "officially" meet you. Bachurim are wonderful people. I never insinuated otherwise.

Um...yeah. "Someone" has a very wild imagination. I ain't much different than everyone else here on GYE but I am happy to share my experience and would hope that others can benefit. I'll try to post more.

KOKO

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Re: The Ramblings of a Recovering Lunatic (General)

Posted by MendelZ - 28 Aug 2013 22:43

[LEARNING wrote:](#)

Very inspiring.

Especially the part about the shower. I have really tough times with the shower, and this helps me a lot.

Hey, LEARNING. Welcome. The shower was always the worst for me. When I was 17, my Rosh Yeshiva told me to be mekabel a specific amount of time that it would take to get clean, and I would allow myself to stay in the shower only that long. I think I was mekabel 5 minutes and it worked!

...for almost two weeks, if I recall correctly.

One thing that DID help a HUGE amount was being mekabel never to take a shower except in a mikveh when others are present. That made a big difference (when I stuck to that commitment). Didn't fix the lust addiction as a whole obviously, but it did minimize the shower issue.

KOKO BSD

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Re: The Ramblings of a Recovering Lunatic (General)
Posted by MendelZ - 25 Sep 2013 05:22

I came across the following in some gilyon and wanted to share it:

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Free translation: Once they came to Rebbe Shlomo of Karlin and told him about the spiritual decline that had begun in the generation, and regarding the power of the yetzer hara that had overtaken them. Rebbe Shlomo lifted his eyes heavenward and cried: "Save me now, Master of the Universe, from the evil inclination, for his strength is greater than my own. He is an angel, and I, a man of flesh. The evil inclination has no need to engage in his own personal needs (eating, drinking, etc.), nor must he busy himself providing for a wife and children as I do. He fulfills his mission when he incites others to sin and he himself has no evil inclination that

seduces him from fulfilling his mission. And I..."

Talk about powerless!

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Re: The Ramblings of a Recovering Lunatic (General)
Posted by tehillimzugger - 30 Sep 2013 00:14

www.inner.org/spiritual-masters/shlomo-of-karlin.php

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Re: The Ramblings of a Recovering Lunatic (General)
Posted by MendelZ - 11 Oct 2013 01:55

Nitz said a line on his thread that I thought was fabulous.

It sparked something for me and helped me redraft the way I think about lonely/empty/needy feelings (basically anything that triggers lust).

My spinoff of his statement is: How am I supposed to feel empty and needy enough to act out with G-d running the universe and loving me all the time?

When I start to feel empty and needy, that is a sure-fire indication that I have lost perspective. I can rely on that every single time. Normally I would be kind of frightened by low moods or feelings because I know that sooner or later it will bring me to fall...and...then...I'm...dead. (at least for a little while) That was because I didn't see any other way of feeling good again. Feel lonely/needy -> lust -> feel good again. Its a simple equation and there was no other option.

Thankfully, now I see other options. If I accept that Hashem is giving me everything that is good in His eyes to give me, AT EVERY SINGLE SECOND OF THE DAY, I wouldn't feel empty or

slighted or lonely or lustful.

If I see those feelings as a guide to my relationship with the aforementioned faith, then they are no longer frightening. In fact, they are very useful. They are there to alert me that if I don't go back to basics, I will fall.

How am I supposed to feel empty and needy enough to act out with G-d running the universe and loving me all the time? If I do, that means I don't see/accept that G-d is in fact running the universe and loving me all the time. Well, we know that's a fact. It can't be that for this moment He doesn't run the universe and love me. That leaves only one possibility: that my thinking is off mark. That's a whole lot less gripping than actually believing that I need to fill myself up with sex. No?

(Thanks Nitz!)

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Re: The Ramblings of a Recovering Lunatic (General)
Posted by tehillimzugger - 11 Oct 2013 04:08

can you imagine? chesed, gevura, tiferes!

Can you imagine? Alef, Beis, Gimmel!

Awww. Twiddlyloorahrum

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