

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 dms1234 - 11 Nov 2014 01:32

I hear what you mean. I get the: "I want to lust but i know its not going to help me so ahhhhhhhhhhh" feeling sometimes

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Re: The Ramblings of a Recovering Lunatic (General)
Posted by MendelZ - 27 Nov 2014 02:38

I just received some very sad news. I'm not going to go into it here, but its challenging and very painful for my family and I. What I'd like to share here is this:

I was saying Tehilim (for rachamim elyonim) when I got the news. After taking the call, I returned to my Tehilim this time davening for courage and strength to deal with the upcoming days with emunah and grace. The next pasuk that I read was: "Kol archos Hashem chesed v'emes" and I'm thinking: "Wow! What an appropriate pasuk! All of Hashem's ways are kind and true!" But then I realized that the pasuk finishes "for those who are notzer briso v'eidosav - those who guard his covenant" and I thought "Oh! I guess this isn't necessarily chesed."

Then it hit me. Of course Hashem always does chesed with us. The pasuk is saying that ALL of Hashem's ways are chesed and emmes and that those who are notzer briso understand that. Now, I'm not saying this is the pshat in pasuk, but it jumped out at me that I can say I am "notzer briso". And the reason that I am able to do that is because I was forced to live life one day at a time on Hashem's terms. What keeps me sober and not lusting is the very fundamental emunah that the circumstances of my life every single moment are orchestrated by a loving G-d who knows exactly what I need and what is good for me. That faith allows us not to get caught up in the worry, stress, loneliness, guilt, anger etc etc that fuel our lusting and dependency on our drug of choice. I had to come to recognize that when I see a pretty woman and looking at her and fantasizing about her seems to be the best thing in the world, I have to stop and say to myself, "No. Hashem knows what's best. Give that pleasure up." And I had to do that hundreds of times.

So, having to come to terms with and implement that truth on a moment by moment basis makes us the kind of person who is able to be notzer briso. And that is the kind of person who is able to see that ALL of Hashem's ways are kind and true. To the extent that one lives in that faith can he thereby be able to "be notzer briso." Its not that Hashem only does kindness to the notzer bris. And its not some kind of segula. Its the etzem idea and living that is required to successfully stay away from lusting which offers us the clarity and ability to faithfully accept Hashem's will for us, no matter what it might look like.

May Hashem save us from nisyonos and give us the strength to handle the ones that He knows we need.

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Re: The Ramblings of a Recovering Lunatic (General)
Posted by Machshovo Tova - 27 Nov 2014 03:54

Bsuros tovos & Hatzlacha rabbah

MT

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Re: The Ramblings of a Recovering Lunatic (General)

Posted by belmont4175 - 27 Nov 2014 20:40

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Re: The Ramblings of a Recovering Lunatic (General)

Posted by belmont4175 - 27 Nov 2014 20:40

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Re: The Ramblings of a Recovering Lunatic (General)

Posted by MendelZ - 27 Nov 2014 23:36

Amein! and thank you, MT.

And shkoaych, Belmont.

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Re: The Ramblings of a Recovering Lunatic (General)

Posted by cordnoy - 01 Jul 2015 17:13

Mendel'z a general; Moish is a Private.

I gotta lose about 25 pounds before I cen even think of joinin'.

MZ; how's life when there's no football?

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Re: The Ramblings of a Recovering Lunatic (General)

Posted by MendelZ - 10 Jul 2015 12:07

Football never goes away. It sits there quietly in the background, waiting to rear its ugly head and mess me up. As soon as I think that its gone for good, there it is again. I have to accept that I can never follow football like a gentleman. There's no two ways about it. Wait, what was the

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Re: The Ramblings of a Recovering Lunatic (General)

Posted by cordnoy - 10 Jul 2015 15:19

[MendelZ wrote:](#)

Football never goes away. It sits there quietly in the background, waiting to rear its ugly head and mess me up. As soon as I think that its gone for good, there it is again. I have to accept that I can never follow football like a gentleman. There's no two ways about it. Wait, what was the

question about?

I'm stumped

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