

am i really an addict?

Posted by appreciate - 06 Dec 2013 10:08

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I have had a reoccurring masturbation problem for over ten years. Throughout the years I have had ups and downs, neither which were extreme. I have easily gone months without any problems. Today was my first day on this site and it seems that I am a level 3, which is defined as an addict. its hard to hear that, really hard. i thought i was just like every other guy.

An addict has a warped view on life, and can only focus on themselves, but I am a very kind and giving person.

If you are going thru this I would really like to hear how you "catch yourself" having thoughts or actions of an addict

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Re: am i really an addict?

Posted by tryingtoshteig - 06 Dec 2013 19:27

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Welcome!

I have also wondered whether or not I fall into the "addict" category. I have struggled for around 15 years, sometimes going for long stretches without falling, and sometimes going long stretches falling multiple times per day. But over the last several months, I have joined GYE, made some friends on the forum, made one real live friend who is also a GYE guy, and have found myself sober for the last 5 months or so. I have never been to a 12 step meeting of any sort. I did have a stretch of time when I was relatively new around here when I stopped posting and ended up throwing away a few weeks of my life to what seemed like at the time, uncontrollable lust.

So, does that make me an addict? A mild addict? A non-addict with a yeitzer hara? I am not quite sure, but what does it matter? Either way, I have a responsibility to stay sober TODAY, regardless of what happened yesterday or what will happen tomorrow. I have found that connecting with people who understand me will help, being part of the real world (not the fantasyland inside my brain) helps, being honest helps, reaching out to find Hashem's love helps.

So again, am I an addict? Am I a sick, diseased person? Am I just a normal, frum guy who has

made some bad choices before? I have found that pondering these questions is usually just a waste of time and energy. So now I am content with the answer

**Warning: Spoiler!**

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Re: am i really an addict?

Posted by appreciate - 06 Dec 2013 19:59

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bzh you will continue for the rest of your life! my question is specifically about your mindset, to you detect, even on the smallest level this warped selfish outlook?

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Re: am i really an addict?

Posted by tryingtoshteig - 06 Dec 2013 20:10

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When I ACT selfishly, I am selfish. When I ACT selflessly, I am selfless. I am not a big bad evil rasha, and I am not a big tzaddik gadol b'yisroel shlita. I am just a yid, and my job is to the right thing. I don't see a need to label myself as "sefish person" or "selfless person".

Does that answer your question?

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Re: am i really an addict?

Posted by gibbor120 - 07 Dec 2013 00:18

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WELCOME appreciate! It's nice to have you with us. I also debated for a while "am i an addict

or not"? I came to the same conclusion as TTS. It doesn't really matter. If I find tools that keep me out of trouble, keep using them. If there are tools that don't seem to help - drop them.

Any time we use self pleasure, we are by definition being selfish. We are human, and we are sometimes selfish. This seems to bother you.

We once asked one of our rabbeim something about if eating for pleasure (when you are full, don't need the nutrition etc) is indulging. He said it is, but so what. Sit and learn and don't worry about it too much. It will just be a distraction.

I have a feeling being overly concerned with the question of "am I an addict", "am I really selfish" is just a distraction.

I do not consider myself to be a selfish person, nor do I think others see me that way. I have come to recognize more selfishness in myself than I thought.... and that is ok.

Stick around. Use the tools that work - especially reaching out and sharing with others.

I hope this helps. There is a great chevra and a lot of chizzuk here. Stick around and keep sharing.

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Re: am i really an addict?  
Posted by skeptical - 08 Dec 2013 05:55

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Welcome to GYE!

**skeptical**

## **Am I An Addict?**

This is a question that many newcomers to this site find themselves grappling with.

First off, I'd like to point out that if the title, 'Addict' makes you uncomfortable, don't use it. If you are an addict, you will eventually figure that out. The bottom line is that you came here because you have an issue that is taking over your life, and you haven't been able to make progress on your own.

Now that that is out of the way, I would like to touch upon what addiction means to me, and how a basic function of human life can turn into such.

Take a piece of cake.

It's a tasty food, but not a very healthy choice for nutritional value.

Now, most people can have a slice or two on occasion, and it will be enough for them.

In the grand of scheme of things, though unhealthy, it won't be very harmful to these people because they are able to stop eating once they've had enough.

For overeaters, however, they have no off switch. They are obsessed with food and they can't get enough of it. Every minute, they are eagerly awaiting their next feast. Before they get to an event, their minds are preoccupied with what might be served.

It's that way for lust addicts as well. For most people, they may be able to have a bit of lust. We can argue about whether it can be healthy or not, but for those people, in the grand scheme of things, it's not a big deal.

For me, I know that once I allow myself to entertain one tiny thought of, "wow, cute looking girl," or whatever, my mind does not let go. There is no off switch. One thought leads to the next, which leads to the next. The next thing I know I'm on the computer saying, "5 more minutes." Three hours later, it's one or two in the morning, I know I have to be up at 6:30, and I'm still having a hard time pulling myself away to go to sleep. Then in addiction mode, I wake up at 5:30 to get on before I need to leave the house. I'm exhausted and not functioning properly, but who cares? I like it. So the whole day I'm looking forward to getting back to my garbage and I'm irritable if I'm unable to return it when I was anticipating it.

This is the picture of addiction, but keep in mind there are many people on GYE who are going through the same struggles. Being an addict doesn't mean that we are bad. It just means that over time we have taught ourselves to deal with life in an unhealthy way. It's a journey to get and keep ourselves healthy, but there are many many success stories.

Whatever you do, don't give up. Stay out of isolation and keep on moving forward!

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