

A Journey Without a Name

Posted by unanumun - 01 Apr 2014 07:34

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here goes. after spending all day on the site, i downloaded k9 filter for my laptop. (my office has a filter and my phone has the browser blocked and my wife has the code)

i now signed up for the 90 days. I hope it is not too soon, but I think i can do it. i think that all the support everyone gets and gives around here might be enough.

i have nothing to lose i guess (I really want this to work) and I am feeling very optimistic. and having all my new friends know what is going on with me will probably be great for me.

Does anybody think I am making a mistake and going too fast?

Can there be a downside?

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Re: first try

Posted by cordnoy - 26 May 2014 17:09

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Thank you for that thought.

Far be it for me to speculate on whether you are addicted or not....whatever it is, your road to recovery should be blessed with hatzlachah.

I will just write briefly my history.

I was steeped in shmutz for over 30 years.

I joined GYE and immediately (after 90 days) joined the wall of honor for 90 days.

I just as immediately fell like a lead balloon several times.

I then immediately jumped back on and went 115 days, and just as immediate, I fell and fell and fell again (havin' the time of my life doin' it).

I then realized that I was and am truly addicted.

I joined SA and read the book.

I am now clean for over 140 days and I know now more than ever that.....

Hi, My name is Avrohom.

I am addicted to and powerless over lust and anythin' sexual.

With the help of the group and my Higher Power, I am sober since January.

[I am not sayin' that this is the case by you at all...just sayin' my experience.]

b'hatzlachah

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Re: first try

Posted by unanumun - 26 May 2014 17:43

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[cordnoy wrote:](#)

I joined GYE and immediately (after 90 days) joined the wall of honor for 90 days.

I just as immediately fell like a lead balloon several times.

So then help me understand this. If you were addicted, how is it that you managed to pull through the ninety days without suffering the issues of withdrawal and stuff?

Do you feel like you were tricking yourself in those first 90 days? was it that the excitement of a new program just put the addiction on hold for 90 days?

It seems to me also that perhaps you were not addicted to acting out, just to lust.( if such a thing can be true) Perhaps that is a similar thing to what i am going through. ALthough I don't find myself lusting on a regular enough basis that I can consider it an addiction. Unless I am not

realizing something about the power of addictions and somehow in another 90+115+140, i will have to stand up and say:

Hi my name is ploni (or might have to actually use a real name)

I am addicted and powerless etc.....

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Re: first try

Posted by cordnoy - 26 May 2014 19:31

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it is true, although I cant explain it....I probably am addicted to lust and not to actin' out....probably is a difference.

I was not white-knucklin' most of the time

I did not have issues with my hand lower than waist

my main issue was with wife and intimacy (or lack thereof) and my Romanian woman friend. That was where my lust was directed.

Regarding withdrawal, I would have to say as follows....there are many here on this site or in general people who are addicted who have many other issues goin' on in their life....lustin' or actin' out was a de-stresser of sorts...if that is removed, withdrawal kicks in.....I, thank God, although my life is not easy, but it is not one where I am second guessin' myself or one where I'm worried about this person or that, or one where I am not comfortable with the way life is goin' for me, and again thank God for that....perhaps, therefore, the withdrawal did not kick in.

when I did fall those two times, I allowed the lust back in, and it was exhilaratin' but also unstoppable once I let her back. It wasn't an actin out addiction, for my falls lasted a week or two, and when I say that, I do not mean that I kept on fallin' in that time....t'was a build up and build up and build up...an ongoin' slow lustin' that just kept on gettin' more excitin' by the hour.

What else can I explain?

Like you know, I am completely open and honest with my feelin's and thoughts, so whatever you wanna know, I'm here.

b'hatzlachah

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Re: first try

Posted by unanumun - 26 May 2014 19:53

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As far as the idea of destressing, perhaps indeed in that area there has been a significant change. Reading about that point and then realizing how it claimed true in my life was an eye opener. I hadn't even noticed the pattern until I started hanging here. So indeed as a found myself slipping into the cycle I was aware of what I really needed and managed to get control of myself.

To be honest, the most serious causes for the need of destressing has not really been an issue since the first few days in the program so perhaps we will have to wait till those set of circumstances come up again for a fair prognosis, and yes they will definitely show up again.

As far as your journey is concerned, just wondering if the issue was an occasional lust attack, now that you have gone through the recovery steps and sa groups, when you look back would there have been a simple way to just learn how to deal with the initial stages of the attacks and nip it in the bud without all the stuff about being powerless etc.?

I know this sounds like heresy here on the forums, (I am just trying to understand other people's experiences so I can learn from them) but it seems to me a bit strange that on a regular day to day basis you didn't have major issues with lust and then BANG you get into a situation that you are powerless and only a higher force can save you.

I mean what got you through the clean periods? wasn't there an aspect of self control that played in? or are you saying that only when certain circumstances came around, the need and desire became so great that you couldn't control yourself without the 12 steps.

I guess what I am trying to understand is this gray area of sometimes addicted and not the major addictions of guys that can't stay clean for a week without the 12 steps.

Although the truth is that somewhere at the beginning few weeks of my journey I had a realization that i needed to internalize the first step of the 12 and posted something about finally getting it. But since then I haven't really needed to move on to the next steps. So maybe I also am a gray guy and just need more time to realize it.

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Re: first try

Posted by cordnoy - 26 May 2014 21:35

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I am not a big thinker into this, but suffice it to say that for the last ten plus years, I was livin' from fix to fix. Perhaps not in the beginnin' of the thirty, but the last third to half, that was the way it was.

I see by my thought process now how nippin' in the bud is crucial.

I have tried many times in the past to fight it....unsuccessfully.

I cried many Yom Kippur's only to fall again.

Presently, I am not a complete 12-stepper. I have not really read past step 3. I have never written on paper a full-account of my past deeds, although I have said many here and to several therapists and people I know.

So, I will not throw the heresy word at you.

thanks

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Re: first try

Posted by Pidaini - 26 May 2014 22:00

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Interesting points.

When I first came to GYE I was clean for 152 days, quick fall, then 260 something days and then big fall which lasted two months in and out. Now holding three weeks.

That was coming from 10 years of lusting, 7 of which were fully acting out. I can't tell you how frequently because I never kept track.

One of the first things I learned here on GYE was that my problem was much broader than porn and masturbation. I was lusting much more than that. That slowly changed as I became more aware of it, but in the end the underlying problems came back and wanted their attention and I didn't have the tools to deal with it.

As I started looking into the 12 steps and getting more involved, life became much better in every aspect, and when I fell and left the work behind, I was down for a few days, good for two or three weeks, and then down for another few days.

Dr. Twerski says over and over that anyone that has character defects, basically anyone that is still breathing, can benefit from the 12 step program, and if I have any other reason to add to it, then I should surely be using them.

Time will tell will you are holding, just keep an eye out for it's signals.

KOMT brother!!! and KIT!!!

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Re: first try

Posted by Dr.Watson - 27 May 2014 00:34

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Charlie said in the Big Book study meeting that anyone who says that us addicts are weak willed are simply wrong, we are very strong willed. That's why we keep trying to control and enjoy the lust (drinking) time after time after time no matter what evidence we've accumulated that we can't use lust (alcohol) at all.

Willpower does work up to a point. People can go a long time on willpower, that doesn't mean they're not addicts. It's just that willpower alone will not beat the obsession of the mind at the end of the day.

Willpower is extremely strong. The obsession of the mind is stronger.

Add to that the likelihood that staying 'sober' on willpower means that one is fighting all the time, never really experiencing any let-up or peace from the obsession of the mind. It's exhausting. Trust me, I did it for 2 years. Eventually I joined SA because I was fed up of fighting all the time and never really winning.

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Re: first try

Posted by unanumun - 27 May 2014 15:58

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I am starting to get confused over everything here. I see that my understanding of addiction until now is not going to cut it anymore. I am realizing that some of the self described addicts here (at least two) had no problem at the beginning of their GYE journey and only afterwards things hit the fan and they realized their adiction.

Pidaeni, the realization that it is a lust problem was very helpful to me too. It was a real game changer and I see that there has been a real change in me both in terms of my desires to act out and my relationship with my wife.

Would you mind enlightening me though in what you meant by "underlying problems" that came back.

Dr. Watson, what you write rings true but I can't help but wonder how things are with "normal" people - those that don't act out and only have a healthy relationship with their wives lust free. (Although, I wouldn't be surprised if they don't exist) I have been thinking about this lately. I

mean, what happens with a "normal" guy when their wives are not in the mood or are assur for extended period? (Or even what goes on in the minds of divorced fellows)

DO they just carry on life as usual without a desire for sex? And if they have a desire for sex what do they do?

I would assume that their whole lives they have a desire and control it with will power, which would mean they are fighting their whole lives. So why does it work for them?

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Re: first try

Posted by unanumun - 27 May 2014 16:07

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Another question I have based on what cordnoy wrote about only implementing the first 3 of the 12 steps is that perhaps bnay torah that are working on their avodas hashem and their middos on a regular basis for years have more or less been working the 12 steps in their own way and since the later steps are more general steps, they are not so important in terms of sex addiction.

only the aspect of admitting a problem and powerlessness might be necessary. To which I then wonder that if someone has been working on bitachon and the realization that everything is run by Hashem (and internalizing that lesson) it might be that once he realizes that he has a problem with lust, all the other aspects of his avoda kick in automatically making the rest work out. This may be why I don't feel that I need the 12 steps. Perhaps I am working them without particularly realizing it. (I am not claiming to be a tzaddik it is just that I have had to work on real aspects of bitachon and its application to real life over the last few years in order to keep myself from needing to be admitted to a mental hospital- [I guess a little porn and smoking contributed their part as well])

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Re: first try

Posted by TalmidChaim - 27 May 2014 16:54

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Hey Unanumun,

That's a valid question, in my mind, and should be answered by someone with actual 12-step experience (not me). My follow-up question is: do you consider the working of steps itself redundant as a bnay Torah, but the group-support environment valuable, or both aspects partially unnecessary? In the former case, would you be able to join a support group (whose



benefits are myriad and obvious) and work just the steps you feel you need, or would you have to, almost as a matter of protocol, go through *all* the steps? That's a serious question I have.

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Re: first try

Posted by unanumun - 27 May 2014 17:34

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i wasn't saying that it is redundant to work the steps (chas veshalom anybody should catch me saying such a thing around here)

I was wondering out loud. My situation seemed to have been strange to me before the other comments. but then i got to wondering maybe that i need the 12 steps but am working on them.

the group environment has been a help but perahps just as it would be a hekp to get together to be mechazek in davening or shmiras halashon, but not necesarily because of addiction,

any 12 steps questions i will also leave to the pros.

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Re: first try

Posted by Dr.Watson - 27 May 2014 23:18

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There is so much more to it I don't even know where to begin...

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Re: first try

Posted by gibbor120 - 27 May 2014 23:23

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There are some interesting points here. I struggled with the "am I an addict or not" debate in my head for a while. I did have clean spells for months sometimes. Other times, I couldn't make it even a week or a day.

If I was involved in learning or something positive, and I didn't have physical or emotional triggers, I could go for a time without acting out. BUT, I always fell again, which meant a cycle of

binging for a time. My binges got worse and worse over time, and I was willing to do riskier things (meaning risking getting caught both at home and work) because I needed a more and bigger fixes and was losing more and more control. That pattern leads me to believe I am an addict.

(in 12 step literature there is a famous story of an alcoholic that decided that alcohol was ruining his life. He stopped completely, until he retired and thought it could not harm him anymore. In short, he picked up just where he left off 25 years earlier with tragic results.)

I have learned that bitachon is a BIG part of the 12 steps. Accepting that everything comes from Hashem, that he loves me, and especially accepting myself as I am. Not trying to be someone I'm not in order to relieve feelings of guilt (AKA being a perfectionist). Becoming G-d centric instead of ego-centric.

I never actually joined an SA group. The closest I got was Dov's phone call. B"H, I'm almost 5 years sober.

Less thinking and more doing. Humbly serving.

I'm just spitting out some different ideas that have helped. I realize I'm not doing them justice.

I hope this helps.

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Re: first try

Posted by Pidaini - 27 May 2014 23:28

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Similar feelings here, Doc.

As it's been said numerous numerous times, knowledge isn't where it's at. Not only that, but

every person is different, and every person himself has different stages. There is plenty of material available on the 12 steps for free, The Big Book, white book, Joe and Charlie recordings are just a few examples. Why not look into them and see if they speak to you. If they do, then why not get involved? If they don't then leave it for now, if you are doing ok otherwise.

Whatever the case may be, KOMT!!!

oh, just to answer the direct questions, the underlying problems are any form of expectations being disappointed and not letting go of them, thereby causing resentments and fears which need to be pacified....(I wonder if that made any sense to anyone)

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