

what about u

Posted by mr.clean - 19 Apr 2014 01:55

ok so i am clean for 41 days as of now thank god and it took hell and high water to get to where i am, i had to really hit rock bottom. but im here and what im afraid of is that for the past few months i just dont seem to be myself. im usually loud talkative... an "extrovert", and now for a while now i feel melancholy, quiet, not interested in talking at all just wanting to be alone like i just have no interest in putting the effort into saying that extra funny thing or making conversation. im wondering and afraid that this could be because of all the disappointments i had on myself for keeping on falling i kept setting myself up expecting that this will be it ill beat this thing now finally but really i was just setting ,myself up for failure and there is just so many times someone can disappoint themselves before it starts to take a toll. or maybe it was the rock bottom, or maybe its still withdrawal?? has anyone else experienced this ? its terrifying, like ill never be myself again.

thx

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Re: what about u

Posted by Dov - 20 Apr 2014 08:14

Dear chaver whatever your real name is (forgot, so sorry!),

It could be many things, most of which are good. Or it could be a problem (less likely, I'd wager) that are going on.

First, there was a guy on GYE who used to say "Yes, sure I know what a leiv nishbar is. It's when I cry my eyes out over my sins and the matzav of others and I hurt horribly inside feeling real pain for them."

And he was talking about an entirely foreign thing to the 'leiv nishbar' we refer to in recovery.

Early, true recovery (which you are in, right?) is often experienced as a clarity in the fact that it was not my penis that was the problem, nor was it the girls at the office, school, the porn on the internet, etc...rather, *it was the way I have been*. It was me. So in recovery, many people

change a lot.

And it is scary.

If you talk with a sincere alcoholic in early recovery, say in his first six months or year sober, you will often hear him describe how he feels lonely not hanging around with the friends he used to have.

And you and I in early recovery **will** feel lonely not hanging around with the naked (pictures) of very the pretty women that have been (or perhaps are still) very precious to us. The porn was our friend, the 'freedom' of being able to find and use/enjoy the porn has been our friend, the pretty women we have been 'struggling against' on the street have been our friends, and in many cases, our wives being played the fools and sexually available for whatever adventures we wanted to use them for whenever we demanded sex, were our friends...and they may all be gone now.

That can hurt and usually makes us feel sad, whether we like to admit it or not. Having real withdrawal feelings is not an evil thing, you know. Even if we are frum, good people (which we are). it's just a fact of life.

On top of all that, in early recovery many people (myself included) felt a change in them of becoming quieter people.

I think that is humility shocking its way into us. It's OK. Trying desperately to fix that and become the same guy as I always was, is a terrible mistake. G-d runs these things, not us. We do not change ourselves, G-d does. Koheles tells us true happiness in life is "matas Elokim" - a gift from G-d, period. So I suggest we relax.

One more aspect to this from my experience at least, too:

Sex-neediness is slavery, whether it is sex with myself, with my wife, or the draw after sweet scenes available in the neighborhood/supermarket/job/whatever, or using porn on the internet.

It's all slavery and the behaviors of chasing these things are all responses to poverty within us.

Right? You feel it? The need, "the only way I can be free of it is to finally give in and just get it over with"? I have been there thousands of times...

OK. So that neediness is poverty inside, a need for something. In me, it is approval and love.

But in recovery I discovered (somewhere in my first year or two sober) that nobody - even my wife, even with sex or whatever, can satisfy that need of love and approval. Only G-d can. Finding that is not a thing i can learn from a sefer. The faith I need for that, is a thing I can only learn from other real people who actually have it. And in the end, it is a gift from G-d Himself.

You wrote you are less "loud and talkative", now, not putting that "same effort into saying the extra funny thing". Change always hurts, sure.

It's not evil. It's quite normal for many people to be talkative, a kidder, etc. But being the guy who feels naturally driven to tell the jokes and be noticed...is not *a/ways* a great thing for us all the time. Remember Koheles: There is a good time for everything. It is OK. The drive to say the quip or open up conversation, is often a sign that I am (quite within the realm of normal) hungry for attention and approval of people.

Starting off with sexual abstinence (as you **are**) usually goes along with a newfound freedom from social neediness, too. They are connected. And progress in real recovery will come with learning how to be socially involved with others - and yet not feed the old neediness for attention and approval. It will take time, patience, and a lot of not-looking-over-our-shoulder-to-
(...remember the story of the Chofetz Chayim answering the guy who told him that he is running from kavod and asked the tzaddik, "why kavod isn't running after
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You are probably fine.

Better than fine, actually.

But progress is not in more chastity - it is on growing up more.

BTW, if you can, check the first maimar of the **Maor v'Shomesh** on B'midbar. He describes this process in general terms for the young/middle-aged oved Hashem who finally breaks - and how it is just part of growing up and learning how to work a much more quiet (and more real) avoda. Enjoy. It's a beautiful piece.

Love,

Dov

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Re: what about u
Posted by Ezra - 27 Apr 2014 06:23

I think that as we get healthier, moods are bound to change and some of the fake facade that is no longer needed or wanted disappears.

It is possible that you also feel more vulnerable without being able to bury your head in garbage.

If you have a trusted advisor therapist it is worth talking over. Keep on trucking.

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