

From tragedy to redemption

Posted by Hashivalisesonyishecho - 08 Jan 2015 10:00

I am a middle aged person, highly talented, but leider unaccomplished. I seem to have some strengths but not the strength and the resolve to do what it takes to use my talents to be what I can be. I have had lot's of tzaros in my life which have gotten the better of me and eventually removed me from my learning and my general Ruchnius success. I was not omed benisoyon. I am ashamed of myself. On the outside I still seem like a basically Choshever person but nobody knows what I really am. When I was a Bochur and a young yungerman, everybody was sure I would turn out to be one of the Gedolim. That hasn't happened(yet). I would never tell anyone of my worst failings, but this failing of me not succeeding to fulfill my potential is known. I guess people may have long ago forgotten what was supposed to become of me but looking at me now they see nothing but an empty wasted soul. I haven't forgotten the original plan and somewhere deep down I still hope Hashem will give me back my neshama. My Boosha is maybe a good thing in a way because it keeps things from getting more out of hand. But it makes it impossible for me to get the support and encouragement that might help me do what I should. Maybe I could get the support here. I am middle aged but my mind knows that it isn't too late. I need my heart to know it too.

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Re: A tragedy of the human condition

Posted by belmont4175 - 15 Jan 2015 01:53

Hashiva Li! please update us on your progress.

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Re: A tragedy of the human condition

Posted by Hashivalisesonyishecho - 15 Jan 2015 02:48

[belmont4175 wrote:](#)

In the course of recovery in whatever program you choose a main key is EMUNAH, I would advise you to read THE GARDEN OF EMUNAH by Rabbi Shalom Arush [translated by Rabbi Lazer Brody] to get to know the fundamentals of Emunah, thereafter you will come to

acknowledge HIM in your life at every step, (your Gaavah will drop, sorry).

Start learning it's never too late. Be'Hatzlacha

You chaverim are wonderful, but as you have come to see I am hypersensitive. (Nobody would guess this about me but here I am more open than with people who know me) This bit of constructive criticism did get me to begin researching where to get the book you recommend and I also got through reading a section of the white book. You are right that I am a Baal Gaavah but it is painful to hear how blatantly apparent it is. While it motivates me to do something about it, it's not easy to face. Also equally painful is that you chaverim who are tuned in to recognize and understand, have come to see that I although an orthodox Jew who has learned all kinds of sefarim have yet to start to learn about emuna. I think my posts get on peoples nerves and make them despise me. That's why I haven't posted the last few days. I thank you for inviting me to post again.

As I read the white book I see that there are many levels of sickness one can fall to if one is sick. I think that if a person manages to control it at an early enough level, it's possible that he would never fall to the lower levels and therefore never know that he needs to look for a cure. I think that this includes most normal people of the world. I get the feeling that this view isn't shared here by most of you. But it's this view that makes me feel like I belong here. I might be wrong and I might be worse in fact than I admit to myself.

I have been clean for the past while. Since I began posting and reading the other posts and materials available here I have been cleaner in general, meaning not looking around (as much) on the street, at the cleaning lady, in the mikva etc and also more wholesome in relations with my wife (and she is clearly enjoying it more)

I am right now in a problem situation. I seem to be addicted to the internet. But I don't go to hardly any websites. so I'm just sitting and checking my emails again and again. I think I'm really just addicted to doing nothing. I have so much on my list to learn. But I can't get to it. That's the reason that I began the thread by wanting a forum to deal with asseh tov. I think my looking at bad things came from this feeling of yiush to begin with. I wish I would have a way to get my act together. I am a talented man wasting away. I used to be a masmid and I had so many tzaros over the years and little by little I became less masmid (and I think also less medakdek bemitzvos) while trying to tread water in the face of my tzaros. Now although I'm left with some fallout from the years of gehenom and still have a lot to contend with and deal with I'm not all that busy and I really should be able to get back in to learning but I just can't. I'm afraid that as

much as I will do to stay clean if I don't get a life then....

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Re: A tragedy of the human condition
Posted by Watson - 15 Jan 2015 04:45

[Hashivalisesonyishecho wrote:](#)

I think my posts get on peoples nerves and make them despise me.

Not at all. We love to hear from you. Every post gives the rest of us chizzuk.

I'd like to write about a few other things but I'm far too tired to do that right now. I just needed you to know that I very much appreciate your posts.

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Re: A tragedy of the human condition
Posted by serenity - 15 Jan 2015 10:04

I think it is commendable that you read the White Book as suggested. That's a huge step. Although my knowledge is pretty limited, I think your understanding is half correct. Addicts in the early stages can stop it there, if they get recovery early. However they will always be at risk if they start again. But, people who are not addicts will not follow the progression to begin with.

I can relate this to you from personal experience. I'm cross addicted to lust, alcohol and gambling. I have many friends that love to go to the casino. They can go once or twice a year for 4 hours on a budget and be okay with that. If they were on the way to the casino and their wife called and said she needs help they can turn around. I cannot do any of that and I never could. If someone somehow convinced me that I was a potential compulsive gambler after my first trip to the casino at age 20 and I got into recovery, I could have avoided the progression that causes me untold pain and suffering. I doubt they could have convinced though. My wife for example went to a casino once and after that she could live with it or live without it. I didn't go

for 7 years at one point, and one day back had me spending 3 days a week there for months. Now I'm kind of hoping you're not a compulsive gambler, because if you're not you won't be able to relate to my gambling obsession. And thereby you can understand how you a normal person when it comes to gambling can take it or leave it. But me, a compulsive gambler, it will destroy me over and over. It seems you can sure relate to my lust addiction and the obsession I have with lust. Normal people cannot relate to it. They don't have the obsession, even after they try it, and therefore never have the progression.

You may be early stage, you may be a potential sexaholic, but even if that's the case, don't take comfort in that. In my early days of gambling I called the GA hotline. The guy told me I wasn't a compulsive gambler yet. That gave me permission to keep going, and keep going I did, to the point that I progressed into immoral, illegal and destructive behaviors.

Sorry for that long comment. I think the short of it is that, you are focusing on the ability to stop or control as being determinate. The real test I think is how far you end up going. That's a test that normal people just don't take. They have a really shallow bottom. Mine is deep and dark.

The Big Book of AA says don't drink a drop for a year and if you can do that without the program maybe your not alcoholic. So I would offer that challenge to anyone here. Without working the program of SA, do not take even one intentional lust hit for a year. I'll give everyone 10 to one . It won't even be a gamble . Normal people don't obsess over lust and would take that bet in a second.

When you lust you take a natural desire and utilize for an unnatural purpose.

Btw, it's obvious that many people here enjoy your presence and your comments immensely.

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Re: A tragedy of the human condition

Posted by belmont4175 - 15 Jan 2015 10:11

Hashivah! Don't get discouraged continue posting we were amazed by how things turned since

your original posts, however Yiush = Gavaah, for the man who can't be on the top gives up, perfectionism is Gods work not the humans, and that's why you also think we get nervous from your posts, come down, realize that the human is nothing he cannot achieve anything without Hashem, we are what we are, but we are not allowed to let ourselves go, we have to cling to Hashem and pray to him ask him for all our needs both material and spiritual, for strength and clarity and yes for Emunah and Bitachon.

We say everyday Vesein Sochor Tov Lechol Habotchim Beshimcha Bemesh, Vesim Chelkeinu Emohem, these last 3 words is a prayer that we also be from the Botchim, we have to surrender ALL to Hashem, the good and the bad, the Tzoros and the Nachas, the Nisyonos and Nefilos, and also the Torah and Tefilah that we do, let him take over, he runs the world from the start and is pretty experienced.

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Re: A tragedy of the human condition
Posted by newaction - 15 Jan 2015 10:28

Hashiva li you are now in the midst of a healing process ; it is a process and its going to take its time . I agree to the above posts of the chevra . It is nonsense to think that we dont like your posts , aderabah , in my opinion there is much more that you have not posted yet , for example your shalom bayis situation . We encourage you to say as much as you can FOR YOUR OWN SAKE . You will learn from the feedback and we will learn too. And pouring your heart out makes your burden lighter . Tell us how is the material that you are reading helping you , what is working better for you ; did you know that sholom bayis problems are very common among us addicts ? What type of Tzoros did you have , if it helps you feel free to share them with us . Please feel yourself at home here , we are more than family for you , we have no expectations besides trying to help.

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Re: A tragedy of the human condition
Posted by Hashivalisesonyishecho - 15 Jan 2015 11:51

Serenity, I thank you for drawing a clear line in a place where my line is fuzzy or nonexistent. I hear what you are saying but I wonder. May I present a point of view? This isn't philosophy for me, it's about my life and yours. What you call lust I call something else. The non addict also lusts but he is in control. The addict is out of control. In your case the control issue runs on several planes. It would be too much of a coincidence to say that you have 3 illnesses. It is 1 issue which is that you have an issue with control. But the lust for sex, you don't necessarily have more than someone who is in control. So the \$64K question - why is it that some people can control themselves and some people can't? There is something else which creates the

difference which has nothing to do with lust. I don't agree that this something is the 12 steps because those who aren't addicts don't need to have that level of emuna etc and still they control themselves. So what is it? May I make a hypothesis? There reason people abstain from acting on their lust is because it doesn't pay. They will lose more than it's worth. So far I speak for everyone addicts and non addicts alike. But what do they fear to lose? This is where the 2 groups part. The addict is motivated by consequences outside of their very being. They're concerned that it will ruin their lives. Even an addict might abstain if someone is clearly watching them. Or they hit rock bottom and realize that they just can't live this way because it's not an existence. So they motivate themselves to seek help. The non addict abstains because of consequences within their being. They have an ego(in the Freudian sense). They really enjoy. They really experience. They have something of value and they don't want to trade it for a momentary lust. This is felt deeply and really at all times so they can control themselves. So in a nutshell the addict control himself because of the negative motivation - the fear of the fallout of the fall and the non addict because of the positive motivation - the good life that he doesn't wish to trade. For people like that if they lose hope they could fall into an addict-like situation because they no longer experience life. For such people if they could rebuild their lives they would regain control. Now to make the line fuzzy again, I believe that the addict is also the same basically but he has so long ago(maybe in childhood) lost his joie de vivre that he doesn't know about it. (But maybe the knowledge that such a thing can exist could make him seek it and help him find it.) So since they know no reality of life, the only remedy is to find such a great reality of life that anyone can latch on to - emuna in hashem. But that is very high and invisible and a big job to stay in constant focus.

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Re: A tragedy of the human condition

Posted by Hashivalisesonyishecho - 15 Jan 2015 11:55

newaction, I wish I could share my pain, but it is too specific and if I would tell of my story I would easily be identified by those who know me. I feel that you are more than family and I wish I could find a way to share this without this fear.

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Re: A tragedy of the human condition

Posted by cordnoy - 15 Jan 2015 19:06

Hashiva,

firstly, keep postin'....they are read by all and everyone is involved.

secondly, we share your pain as well.

thirdly, regardin' openin' up; stick around and find someone you trust who is safe with your secrets. email, text, chat with him. you will see and feel a burden lifted off your shoulders.

finally, regardin' your post, it has been proven by many, and many here as well can testify to this - that us addicts, of which I am included, will do anythin' to get our fix....and nothin' will stop or prevent us. We will ruin and destroy everythin' that is sacred....family, money, marriage, God, honor, etc. just so we can have that fleetin' pleasure. You may reason with us: Hey, will it be so enjoyable? Is it worth it? Many of us (and I know I did) will answer that no, it is not, but we will do it anyway. That is addiction.

b'hatzlachah to you on all that you are goin' thru and may you find peace in your life...with God, family and mostly...yourself.

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Re: A tragedy of the human condition
Posted by serenity - 15 Jan 2015 20:04

Wow, thanks for really reading through my comment and thinking it through. The points you bring up can really help us here. I think there is a lot of truth to what you are saying and I am by no means anything close to an expert in this arena. Lets discuss the idea that my being cross addicted evidences that there is something more to my disease and that something is lack of control. And further that addicts also in the final analysis control themselves, because of the fear of negative consequences. Firstly, I would offer that many and probably most addicts are not cross addicted and definitely not to the extent that I am. I should also mention that I am compulsive over-eater. Also note that concerning my addictions the gambling and lust progressed and were much more invasive and devastating than the others. Allow me to jump thoughts for a second, because an important distinction of an addict is coming to mind. To an addict, as far as my understanding goes, the addiction is the solution and not the problem. That seems to be a very consistent feature of addiction. We need to think about that a lot. That implies something fundamentally awry with the mind of an addict. Back to me for a second, I most likely have a compulsivity disorder that contributes to my addictive pattern, so that may make me different in some ways than a many addicts, but I don't think that's the defining point of my addiction. In fact my compulsivity has beneficial aspects to it as well and can show a positive side of competitiveness, thoroughness, determination and endurance. Which brings me back to the issue of control, addicts have extreme amounts of will power and control; some more than

others. I think I heard an explanation of that in the seminar tapes of Bill S; which you should definitely listen to. I can tell that I have the ability to maintain huge amounts of self control when I set my mind to something. I have won weight loss competitions, I'm an Ironman finisher, I have advanced degrees, I can do fasting regimens etc etc. Even in my addictions I employ a lot of self control. I plan, I have patience, I manipulate, I lie, cover up, hide and live a double life. I'm an expert at escape artistry and getting myself out of trouble. I think most addicts have way more control than many non-addicts. Bill S., I think says, that regular people think addicts lack control, and we can add as you say lack the same motives for control, but that's because they assume we want to stop. What they don't know is that, we DO want to do the additive behavior and we don't want to stop. To be frank we want to masturbate, fantasize and lust. The reason we want to masturbate is simple, it is the solution to our problems. And there in lies the insanity of the addict. Bill S. continues that, If people understood this and they knew the amount control and determination and the lengths we are willing to go to for our addiction, they would be in awe. The thought that we stop out of fear is missing something in the essential approach and point of view. And point of view is huge in addiction. We at a certain point are not willing to go to any further lengths or we don't have the stamina or endurance to continue. We basically at some point admit defeat and just can't do it anymore. We still want to do it though. There is no such thing as rock bottom. I go to hear many addicts tell there story. I go at least once a week to a speaker meeting of AA and also hear countless stories in meetings. The one thing that is clear, is there is no objective test of rock bottom. For many many addicts rock bottom is death. The only definition of rock bottom is subjective and it is when you are too tired to keep digging and admit defeat. Rock bottom is when I say I am powerless over lust and my life is unmanageable. That is hard thing for many addicts to admit, because they do a lot of control and will power and they think they can manage their addiction. They have to think they can manage it, because we can't imagine life without it.

I tried to stop my lust addiction for years. I considered myself an erlicher yeshiva bachur. I wanted to spend my life in service of klal yisroel. I could never stop lusting no matter how hard I tried. Not that I even close to a free walk and I'm sure I can fail at any moment, I have never gone this long (except Israel year) without acting out and I will say that I have a daily reprieve from this obsession. I'm new and it does crop up, but I have to say the obsession is gone. I do not have to exercise control over not masturbating on a daily basis. I don't test that out; I'm not a fool, but lust is no longer the solution that I choose engage in to fill the void within me. To be honest working this program and being of service to others is filling that void right now. And God has removed the obsession. It's amazing and I'm so glad you gave the impetus to think this through. I can say with conviction that I did not do anything or have to exercise any control to be free on a daily basis of the obsession to lust. Let me just clarify that a bit, for myself. I mean I didn't have to fight lust. What did do was admit i was powerless over lust and that lust could no longer be the solution to my inner turmoil. I accepted the 12 steps of AA/SA as the solution and I started working that in earnest.

I used to be willing to go to any lengths to pursue my previous solutions to my problem. Among those solutions was lust. I would lie to my wife, to my family, to my friends to Hashem and to myself. I would spend money I didn't have. I would devote time that should have been devoted

elsewhere; like to my wife, my kids, my community and my work. The list of the steps I would take to get what I wanted contained way more than 12 and they weren't simple.

Now I am willing to go to any lengths to pursue a solution that will make me happy, joyous and free. That solution only has 12 steps and they are simple.

I think it's important to add that part of the insanity and the progression is that, we lust because it is the solution to our problems. And we continue to lust as the solution to our problems, even though lust has become the source of our problems. We engage in the problem as the solution. -Again - we engage in the problem as the solution. Normal people don't do that. A normal person will say "you are crazy. How the heck can you do that again. Didn't you learn your listen

. I will say that nearly getting arrested twice and enduring extreme amounts of pain anguish and suffering to myself and to my family did not stop me from acting out for more than 2 weeks. 2 weeks max I was back at it. So there is no bottom for me. The bottom is jail or death. I know many people that lost their wives, family and jobs and are still unwilling to give themselves over to the simple program and SA and cannot stop. And that is despite a sincere desire and strong effort to stop including going to all kinds of therapists. I mean look, if your wife found out what you were doing, would it damage your marriage? If your kids found out, what would it do to them? If the answer is it would destroy them, then you are willing to go to any lengths to lust, even destroy your children and your marriage. Maybe that's not you, I don't know. I know that it's me.

Hatzlacha, and really than you from the bottom of my heart for this.

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Re: A tragedy of the human condition

Posted by belmont4175 - 15 Jan 2015 20:49

[serenity wrote:](#)

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It's amazing what you write, although I'm not in your position I feel the same way regarding the obsession, since I have taken this program serious. I quote you again: **I have never gone this long (except Israel year) without acting out and I will say that I have a daily reprieve from this obsession. I'm new and it does crop up, but I have to say the obsession is gone. I do not have to exercise control over not masturbating on a daily basis. I don't test that out; I'm not a fool, but lust is no longer the solution that I choose engage in to fill the void within me. To be honest working this program and being of service to others is filling that void right now. And God has removed the obsession.**

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Re: A tragedy of the human condition

Posted by newaction - 15 Jan 2015 22:57

Hasiva Li an addict can refrain himself from acting out if there is a tremendous good reason for it . But this is called "white-knuckling". Its like a huge body of water contained in a dam . The addict has not moved one inch forward and has not done any healing. The opportunity will surely come , the dam will crack , hell brakes loose on the water flooding all body and soul. There has to be a change in our minds , in our thought process , in our psyche. The 12 step program is an excellent way of life , for a non addict - a luxury ; for the a addict - a vital necessity . You have some goals at hand , first to remain clean from acting out . But that is not enough you want to change your whole philosophy in how to look and relate to life as it evolves. You will see that the whole world around you will slowly change from negativity to positivity . You will feel the peace and serenity and you will start enjoying life. But you have to get started .

Another thing if you open up chances are that you will say things that were very common to must of us , there wont be much of a difference and you will be able to keep your anonymity. Opening up is part of the Healing . By sharing you put your recovery in motion ; wishing you hatzlacha in your journey.

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Re: A tragedy of the human condition

Posted by Hashivalisesonyishecho - 15 Jan 2015 23:07

[serenity wrote:](#)

I think most addicts have way more control than many non-addicts. Bill S., I think says, that regular people think addicts lack control, and we can add as you say lack the same motives for control, but that's because they assume we want to stop. What they don't know is that, we DO want to do the additive behavior and we don't want to stop.

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I think it's important to add that part of the insanity and the progression is that, we lust because it is the solution to our problems.

The program is working great for you baruch hashem and you now have an 86 day streak which is amazing. Keep it up bezras hashem.

I am just wondering if there isn't something else to add to this. You first explained that it isn't a control issue but you want to do the addictive behavior. Then you said that you've tried for years to stop which indicates that really deep down and in your better judgement you don't want to do the addictive behavior. So then it is a control issue. In a nutshell I think you have to find your ambitions(besides in the area of dealing with the addiction etc) and feel that they are attainable. I think that although you earned degrees it didn't fulfill your ambitions as you probably don't know what your ambitions are. So you've gone through the motions of accomplishing some good things but they didn't really give you anything. When you will find yourself that will give you a lot. You will still have quite a job with the addictions because they became a regilus and a second nature so the program that you are doing now will be extremely beneficial always.

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Re: A tragedy of the human condition
Posted by Hashivalisesonyishecho - 15 Jan 2015 23:56

[newaction wrote:](#)

Hasiva Li an addict can refrain himself from acting out if there is a tremendous good reason for it . But this is called "white-knuckling".

I'm not talking about refraining. I'n talking about getting an inner purpose connected to an ambition(besides a purpose in the area of dealing with the addiction.)

As far as opening up, if I could somehow find a smaller group where I could somehow know that they aren't connected to my social circles, that would be amazing. How I wish I could do this. But I'm not willing to be known.

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