

just realised i am an addict

Posted by andrewsh - 18 Feb 2010 17:39

wow, after all these years it has dawned on me that i am an addict!

I have tried to fight it so hard, and succeeded even for long periods at a time, but now i realise it will never just go away.

I am so scared to write anything...what happens if someone i know, somehow reads this and knows its me, particularly my wife

i am in a bad place, bh never gone as far as involving someone else, although dreamt about it enough, but its eating me up, both what i do now, and what i have done over the years.

help please, although my vagueness doesnt really help

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Re: just realised i am an addict

Posted by jewinpain - 19 Feb 2010 03:34

Silent, I'm not so sure I understand what u say, since we accept that we have an addiction we get a different approach to tackle this and not just be kicking the yitsar hora really strong is that what u say??? Now when was this secret released that people with a VERY strong yitsar hora are addicts, we have the torah for few thousands years, yet we have managed w/o that, so what happened now, and how is the world better and the problem less after this, just trying to understand where this comes from, I've asked my therapist few weeks ago to proof me why I was an addict but I got no real answer, to all of u who feel better having this term attached to u go right ahead and use it as a method to ease on u things gr8, but for the rest of us who don't wana live with that why r we labled that way!

Sorry for my long post I'm just bored here

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Re: just realised i am an addict
Posted by Kedusha - 19 Feb 2010 04:50

[jewinpain wrote on 19 Feb 2010 03:34:](#)

Silent, I'm not so sure I understand what u say, since we accept that we have an addiction we get a different approach to tackle this and not just be kicking the yitsar hora really strong is that what u say??? Now when was this secret released that people with a VERY strong yitsar hora are addicts, we have the torah for few thousands years, yet we have managed w/o that, so what happened now, and how is the world better and the problem less after this, just trying to understand where this comes from, I've asked my therapist few weeks ago to proof me why I was an addict but I got no real answer, to all of u who feel better having this term attached to u go right ahead and use it as a method to ease on u things gr8, but for the rest of us who don't wana live with that why r we labled that way!

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As Rabbi Twerski has said: "If you're not addicted, why not just stop?"

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Re: just realised i am an addict
Posted by trying123 - 19 Feb 2010 05:03

[jewinpain wrote on 19 Feb 2010 03:34:](#)

Silent, I'm not so sure I understand what u say, since we accept that we have an addiction we get a different approach to tackle this and not just be kicking the yitsar hora really strong is that what u say??? Now when was this secret released that people with a VERY strong yitsar hora are addicts, we have the torah for few thousands years, yet we have managed w/o that, so what happened now, and how is the world better and the problem less after this, just trying to understand where this comes from, I've asked my therapist few weeks ago to proof me why I

was an addict but I got no real answer, to all of u who feel better having this term attached to u go right ahead and use it as a method to ease on u things gr8, but for the rest of us who don't wana live with that why r we labled that way!

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I can give you many Marah Mekomos that fighting the Y"ח takes a lot more tact than simply "kicking the yitsar hura really strong"...

In fact have you ever seen a Mekor to the approach of just blindly kicking the Yetzer Harah (with out a strategy...), after years of doing just that, proved to be fruitless...?

All the seforim I learn, give Aitzas and strategies and ways to work around the Y"ח...

With the 12 steps we are in essence kicking the Yetzer Harah strong (only with the added benefit of doing something that is proven to work well for this Y"ח...)

describe a Y"ח that can not be beaten with human strength...) But they do

R Tzodok (in Tzidkas Hatzadik) talks about a Y"ח that is stronger than what any person can handle...

Rav Desler talks extensively about how we each have a cutoff point of Nisyones that are above us...

All the concepts we talk about here can be found in seforim if you know how to look.... The only thing that's new to the 12 steps is a specific structure of the concepts that we all agree on...

If it works why can't we borrow it?

R' Aharon Feldman, Shlita, Rosh Yeshiva of Ner Yisroel in Baltimore gave a haskama to this site....

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Re: just realised i am an addict
Posted by Kedusha - 19 Feb 2010 05:06

[trying123 wrote on 19 Feb 2010 05:03:](#)

Rav Aharon Feldman, Shlita, Rosh Yeshiva of Ner Yisroel in Baltimore gave a haskama to this site....

Right - and the Rosh Yeshiva used the word "addiction" (and its grammatical variations) five times, and the word "illness" once.

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Re: just realised i am an addict
Posted by andrewsh - 19 Feb 2010 10:45

R' Aharon Feldman, Shlita, Rosh Yeshiva of Ner Yisroel in Baltimore gave a haskama to this site....

wow, i have so much gratitude to him, he really helped my marriage by giving us an hour of his time, was amazing

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Re: just realised i am an addict
Posted by silentbattle - 19 Feb 2010 15:48

Reb Jew in Pain - First of all, I completely understand where you're coming from. When I first started grappling with this issue, I was extremely against the idea of calling myself an addict. The fact is that the term "addiction" has all kinds of negative connotations, and anyway, none of us like to think of ourselves as being out of control.

What I came to terms with is this - am I an addict? Not sure. But regardless, I can use the same tools that addicts would use.

Yes, we've had the torah for thousands of years - but right now, here you are, and you're doing aveiros. The question is, what's the best way for you to stop? If you see these as aveiros, or if you treat it as an addiction? That's what it comes down to - what's the best way, the quickest way, the surest way, for you to stop doing aveiros.

Remember that your yetzer hora has no problem putting on a beard and peyos, and pretending like he's really frum, and saying, "everyone here is going against the mesorah we have, you should stay true to the torah and keep doing aveiros Because any other approach is kefira!"

Discussing a similar topic, my chavrusa recently mentioned to me the famous line of "miyad achi, miyad eisav" - to which I replied, the yetzer hora doesn't just pretend to be your friend - he pretends to be your *rebbe!* :D

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Re: just realised i am an addict

Posted by TahorVneeman - 19 Feb 2010 17:45

Andrew- I'm right there with you. New to this and trying to come to grips with the disease side of this whole mess. I have done lots of Mussar and been depressed when I haven't then translated it into real improvement. I fall the hardest when I get lazy about Shmirat Einayim and triggers and when I fail to realize just how crafty this beast is. It loves to just strike back the minute it senses that you are doing something to take it on. So I have learned patience, awareness, keep the beauty of Kedushah in my mind and bit by bit there are days that are magnificent and give a glimpse of what can be.

Did you or anyone here see Tiger Woods? B"H I have never done the affairs and things he has admitted to. But was I the only one who had tears of recognition in his eyes as he described the betrayal and loss of integrity his behavior has caused?

Time this week to build that internal Mishkan of Kedushah.....That's my plan and I hope yours...

TvN

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Re: just realised i am an addict
Posted by the.guard - 20 Feb 2010 19:46

[jewinpain wrote on 19 Feb 2010 03:34:](#)

Silent, I'm not so sure I understand what u say, since we accept that we have an addiction we get a different approach to tackle this and not just be kicking the yitsar hora really strong is that what u say??? Now when was this secret released that people with a VERY strong yitsar hora are addicts, we have the torah for few thousands years, yet we have managed w/o that, so what happened now, and how is the world better and the problem less after this, just trying to understand where this comes from, I've asked my therapist few weeks ago to proof me why I was an addict but I got no real answer, to all of u who feel better having this term attached to u go right ahead and use it as a method to ease on u things gr8, but for the rest of us who don't wana live with that why r we labled that way!

Sorry for my long post I'm just bored here

Dear JewInPain, I don't think I ever welcomed you.

I am the admin of this forum. Welcome to our community! As far as your question as to what constitutes an addiction, see [this article](#) where Rabbi Twerski explains how one can get addicted to this from a single use! Even if someone can go without it for a long time, he is still addicted if specific situations make him feel powerless to resist it even though it goes against his morals and inner desires. See also [this page](#).

Also, as Rabbi Twerski once asked someone who asked your question, *"if you're not an addict, why don't you just stop doing it?"*

Please read the below carefully and follow the instructions. The handbooks are especially important, if you want to learn more about the nature of the addiction.

Scientific studies have shown that it takes 90 days to change a neural thought pattern that was ingrained in the brain through addictive behaviors. Did you join the [90 day chart](#) on-line? Sign up [over here](#)...

Make sure to install a strong filter. It will be almost impossible to break free of this while having all the garbage within a mouse click away. See [this page](#) for one good filter option, along with instructions on how to install it best - and give away the password to our "filter Gabai"... See [this page](#) for another 20 (or so) filter ideas and information...

And that is why we created the GYE handbooks (links below). If you read them well, from beginning to end, slowly, and try to implement what you read, you will find the answers within them to enable you to completely turn your life around. **You're worth it.**

Also, join the [daily Chizuk e-mail lists](#) to get fresh chizuk every day, and post away on this forum. You will get tons of daily Chizuk and support. This disease can't be beat alone. It works best when you get out of isolation!

GuardYourEyes also offers various free anonymous phone conferences, where you can join a group of other from Yidden, along with an experienced sponsor. See [this page](#) for four different options. Our conferences are taking place daily, throughout the week... This would be a tremendous step in the right direction for you and help you learn freedom from this addiction. Not only will you learn the secret of the 12-Steps - which is known to be the world's most powerful program for beating addiction having helped millions world wide, but joining the group will be another way of GETTING OUT OF ISOLATION and connecting with others who are going through what you are.

Let me tell you a little about the two GuardYourEyes handbooks. They lay down the cornerstone and foundation of our work, and they make our network much more effective and helpful for people.

You see, until now, people would often get "lost" when coming to our website, not knowing what tips and techniques to try. For example, a beginner wouldn't jump straight into therapy or 12-Step groups, while on the other hand, someone whose addiction was more advanced wouldn't be helped by the standard tips of "making fences" putting in "filters" etc... So it was essential to develop a handbook which details all the techniques and tools to dealing with this addiction in progressive order. Now with these handbooks, anyone can read through and see what steps they've tried already, and if those steps haven't worked, they can continue on through the handbook where the steps become progressively more powerful and "addiction-oriented".

And the second handbook, called the "Attitude" handbook, can also help anyone, no matter what level of addiction they may have. Often people write in to us saying that had they only known the proper outlook & attitude that we try and share on the GuardYourEyes network when they were younger, they would have never fallen into an addiction in the first place! So we hope that through this handbook, many addictions will be prevented.

The handbooks are PDF files, set up as eBooks, and they have bookmarks and hyper-links in the Index, to make them easy to navigate.

Note: You might want to print them out to read away from the computer. Keep in mind though, that if you do this, you won't be able to click on the many web links in the articles. But you can always come back to them later. The truth is, it's anyway good to go through the whole handbook once without clicking on links, just to get an overview of all the tools available. Once you did that, you can start again from tool #1 and read each tool through more carefully, click the links and study each technique and assess whether you have tried it fully yet or not...

Right click on the links below and select "Save Link/Target As" to download the handbooks to your computer.

1) [The GuardYourEyes Handbook](#)

This Handbook details 18 suggested tools and techniques, in progressive order, beginning with the most basic and fundamental approaches to dealing with this addiction, and continuing down through increasingly earnest and powerful methods. For the first time, we can gauge our level of addiction and find the appropriate tools for our particular situation. And no matter what level our addiction may have advanced to, we will be able to find the right tools to break free in this handbook!

2) [The GuardYourEyes Attitude](#)

The Attitude Handbook details 30 basic principles to help us maintain the proper attitude and perspective on this struggle. Here are some examples: Understanding what we are up against, what it is that Hashem wants from us, how we can use this struggle for tremendous growth, how we can deal with bad thoughts, discovering how to redirect the power of our souls, understanding that every little bit counts, learning how to bounce back up after a fall, and so on and so forth...

May Hashem be with you!

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Re: just realised i am an addict
Posted by Dov - 22 Feb 2010 02:36

Dear andrewsh -

Thanks for opening up and sharing your new light. Do you see a bit more clearly? If yes, then I call it "light".

May Hashem help all of us do the work that needs to be done in order to **start** getting better and **stay** getting better for the rest of our lives. The path many of us were on was going in one direction: down.

As messed up as you see things to be till now, right now, you are perhaps one of the most fortunate people alive. That's poshut. May Hashem help us not to squander His gifts to us.

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Re: just realised i am an addict
Posted by Dov - 22 Feb 2010 03:49

[jewinpain wrote on 19 Feb 2010 02:10:](#)

i just wonder, who told u this secret that u r an addict, how about u just lust & for that u need to learn a bit musar isnt that what ??? ????? ????? ?????? ?????? ??????? stands for???

Dear jewinpain,

I'm kinda bored, too.

), that probably
nobody can tell anyone else that they are an addict. For two reasons:

1- It probably will not be accepted to the depth that it needs to be to make any difference at all for the addict. This has been my own experience and what I have seen meeting many people in and out of recovery.

The conclusion that worked for me was the one I had to reach in my own heart. Many hundreds of silent nights with masturbation, screaming nights visiting schmutz sites and establishments, phone use for lust, and other disappointments washed over me. I even got caught and didn't stop. I was repeatedly shocked at my failure, after such sincere regret and teshuvah.

A great rov told me that the answer was more spirituality, though he had no clue that my very spirituality was twisted and only contributed to my very problem! See, my yiddishkeit had *developed* during the *very same* years that my habitual use of lust and schmutz developed into my preferred, safest, and only really **reliable** coping mechanism and nechoma to the pains and fears of normal life. It seemed to work for many years, though it sucked the reality out of me, slowly replacing true devotion to other people and Hashem with self-absorption. And the yeshiva experience itself - being so self-absorbed in ruchniyus self-development for our future lives...only land-locked me further. There came a time that there were no answers left.

Another rov told me I needed to explain to my wife that *she* wasn't enough fun for me. Let's not even get me started on that one, though I bought it hook-lin-and-sinker at the time....Nu, *osah r'tzon ba'aloh*, right?

Two shrinks told me that I needed to learn how to get more healthy pleasures out of life....more self-centeredness. Another told me it was no big deal....and he was frum. Yet another told me that 12 steps was silly, cuz "you want to get *better*, not learn how to *live* with this problem." He put me on meds and did therapy for 10 months while I got progressively worse, to his amazement. They all helped me and hurt me a bit, in different respects.

Rav Twerski told me (over the phone) in 1992-ish that I'd probably not get better unless I did intensive therapy, went to rehab, or joined a 12-step recovery fellowship. I told him "thanks", and knew that there was no way in gehinnom that I'd be able to hide *those* things from my wife, and I'd better really try harder! Eventually I couldn't even hide my addiction from my wife and even that didn't stop me (though it worked for a few months - If GYE would've been around). It took me five more years to finally rush myself into whatever help I needed, come what may. I saw that I couldn't stop.

And I came to SA and have been sober since, because Hashem obviously loves me and has the power to help me. But most importantly, **I let Him**. And I needed a lot of help to learn how to do that, and got it.

So, no. I don't believe anyone can determine for another that they are an addict. In my case the experts were right, but it did no good. As the gemara explains out of the posuk in mishlei, "taychas g'orah b'leiv *meivin* - meyhakos *k'sil* meyah". It's gotta come from in my heart if it'll do any good - a *k'sil* like me just won't really believe it, until I become a *meivin* in my own heart.

Besides all that, I find it hard to believe that most of us are smart enough to know if someone is an addict or not. Usually it's like Kedusha says it - it's trial and error. The only, really sad question we need to ask ourselves is how much evidence do we want? I personally know folks who have been arrested for (blatant) sexual misconduct and still came away from it basically blaming the *cops* for *entrapment*, rather than admitting that they have a serious problem.

Along the same vein, I know talmidei chachomim who have been oiver on gilui arayos, schmutz, masturbation, you name it, habitually many times and went for years hiding it (and some still then, I'd have made it onto the 90-day chart for sure! sorry...:D are). And they say they were **not** hiding it because they want to be able to keep doing it, but because they honestly believe that: "eventually I'll beat this, I know it! Hashem's just got to help me out here! So why rock the boat in the meantime and ruin a great marriage and screw up my children with divorce? I'm trying. I'll do *something* about it!".

Gevalt. A great marriage? Screw up the children? "I'll beat this"? Who suffers in the mean time while these and many other hundreds of yidden like them are "trying something"? I wonder who has the right to encourage them to stick with the old-fashioned way and learn mussar harder, while the family crashes and burns? What does it do to a 14y.o. yeshiva boy to see his father who taught him how to leig'n t'fillin last year, carted away by police for soliciting a minor for sex in a chatroom (like more than one father I know), or get divorced because of a destroyed marriage after years of secret porn (and what it leads to) driving the parents apart (like other fathers I know)? What wife deserves this?

OK my rant is over, and it's too long to read, anyhow. I love you (even if you fell asleep already!) and am just sharing one little guys experience and opinion. I have no monopoly on the truth, no more than you do, and respect your opinion. You may agree with some of, or everything that I said. Whatever. Just sharing. It's good for me, especially when I'm bored and haven't been on GYE for over a week!!

Tell me what you think, OK?

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Re: just realised i am an addict
Posted by andrewsh - 22 Feb 2010 09:23

Dov, wow strong stuff, I believe you are right, tell me something is it possible that I have had this issue my whole life yet not an addict, most of the time I don't act at all on it ever so often it's some porn and very rarely m, made contact with one or twowomen via facebook etc nothing worse, although I do realise how bad that is believe me. I do alwAys have thoughts about women and occasionally manage to control my shmiras einayim. Is it still possible that all I need is strength and mussar?

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Re: just realised i am an addict
Posted by jewinpain - 22 Feb 2010 12:36

Ok dov! I got to much to question and answer to be able to do so from my mobile, but I'll get to it l8r when I'll be at my desk, u r 1 big tsadik there, wherever u live, I just love the work u did, I'll beat u over I'm telling u

Ttyl

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Re: just realised i am an addict
Posted by the.guard - 22 Feb 2010 12:43

[dov wrote on 22 Feb 2010 03:49:](#)

I'm just sharing one little guy's experience and opinion.

Yay, the little guy is back!! We **LOVE** the *little* guys!

"Moshe Kibel Torah Misinai". Asks the Kedushas Levi, "He got it from sinai? He got it from Hashem!". Answers the heilger Bardichiver with another question, "if Moshe had tried so hard to get out of the shlichus of taking the Yidden out of Mitzrayim, why did he willingly give the Torah over to the yidden, which is even a **bigger** honor?" The answer is, that he saw that Hashem chose Sinai, the smallest mountain. That means Hashem loves the smallest. So Moshe said to himself, well, I **am** the smallest, so if Hashem loves the smallest, that's fine with me! ... So Moshe got the Torah "from Sinai", meaning that it was only because of Sinai that he agreed to receive the Torah! :D

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Re: just realised i am an addict
Posted by me - 22 Feb 2010 13:09

[andrewsh wrote on 22 Feb 2010 09:23:](#)

Dov, wow strong stuff, I believe you are right, tell me something is it possible that I have had this issue my whole life yet not an addict, most of the time I don't act at all on it ever so often it's some porn and very rarely m, made contact with one or twowomen via facebook etc nothing worse, although I do realise how bad that is believe me. I do alwAys have thoughts about

women and occasionally manage to control my shmiras einayim. Is it still possible that all I need is strength and mussar?

I am not hear to speak in place of Dov, but I can say for "me", that your "occasionally" managing to control your shmiras einayim, or going to facebook to look for women, or any other type of "occasional" compulsive behavior does point to addiction. Yes, and as we said before, this compulsivness can take a break, but the addiction is still there only to eventually, (and we never really know when), explode. It's like a volcano. There is some smoke coming out of the peak of the mountain, but....only smoke. Everything is under control...right? Then, ever so suddenly, a big fiery explosion literally blows off the peak of the mountain, and what happens? Thousands of people while sleeping in their homes where completely incinerated by the molten lava. And, does this mean that the mountain has finished with it's addiction? Just because it goes back to only smoking? No way. Eveyone knows that the nature of THIS mountain is unlike any other. They keep a watch on it, and they know that one day, we never no when, this smoking will once again turn into the most destructive surprise.

Is it still possible that all I need is strength and mussar?

I once had this thought as well. After one year of failures, I came to the conclusion that I must not have enough Yiras HaShamyim. I mean really, who with true Yirah would be doing things like this, Right? So, I began learning mesechos Gihennom. Then, after this didn't help, I decided the next Elul that I absolutely must go for "mesiros nefesh". You know what this is right. This means, that no matter what, I will not fall, I am willing to give me life for it. Even if I feel like I am going to die.....This too did not work.

You see, this musar approach must mean that if I am not successful the "musar way", than I am what they say in the seforim....a rashah gamur, a choteh, and a mache' es a rabim. And, my friend. We have learned over the years, all of us at this forum, that this heavy weight of "I am crud, I am scum, and I am a loser, an outcast of our Torah society etc etc," leads to more isolation, more hiding out with "my secret" which leads to the anxiety, depression, hopelessness, which leads to a greater need to feed this monstor. Feeding this monstor means, I walk up to the peak of this smoking volcano, and I pour some gasoline (neft) down deep, then let's see what happens.

You need not use the term "addict" as an adjective that describes a loser. You need it only to help you clarify, and classify your struggle in such a way that you find a "new" approach which can/will turn you into a winner.

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