

Hello folks

Posted by oisvorf - 18 Apr 2010 22:10

Well, here goes, yet another new member in this august society of those who are attempting to bring some kedusha back into their lives.

I hate to say it, but I too am a Rabbi, perhaps not so well-known but with my share of talmidim over the years, who has been struggling in this area for a long time.

I am not quite sure what to say in my initial post. On the one hand, it seems like others have gone through much more pain and anguish than me, and perhaps are dealing with a more difficult Yetzer Hara than I do. So perhaps I should just be quiet and thank my lucky stars, and gain some chizuk from seeing what some of the heroes here have done. ???

On the other hand, the issues that I seem to have little or no control over have been dogging me for many years. Baruch Hashem although I had fallen deeply into the chat room trap years ago, I have been able to completely stay away from that for a long time now.

And for the most part, I am able to stay away from hard core porn sites, except on rare occasions.

But certain types of soft core porn, I seem to not be able to break away from checking out, time after time after time - anytime I am slightly bored or need a break, or even if I am busy...I just cannot seem to break away from the urge to check out

I know that the answer that I should just be stronger has not worked. I have said several times in my Rosh Hashana sermons that the biggest emotion that I have often is embarrassment - the same stuff I was klopping al cheit for last year is still here, and I have not even changed a bit despite whatever other things I have done in other areas of my life and growth...it is so embarrassing and frustrating that I cannot pull myself away and waste so much time, kocho, and feelings on it - especially if truth be told, I enjoy it when I look, and feel only partially guilty about it.

I am not sure what the tachlis of posting this is, but that's about it for now.

Kol Tuv,

Your newest colleague

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Re: Hello folks

Posted by 1daat - 09 Jul 2010 05:30

Jooboy , thank you for your bracha. Ohmein!

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Re: Hello folks

Posted by briut - 11 Jul 2010 03:33

[shmendrick wrote on 08 Jul 2010 14:28:](#)

I see a world in which I cannot imagine any of these kids being able to turn away and focus on even a minimal level needed to succeed in any kind of yeshiva that I know about. Their thoughts are focused 24/7, except for when they are sleeping (perhaps), on girls, porn, parties, being cool, talking trash, bemoaning th jerks that their parents are for the few restrictions that they do have. [...] What does bother me is

(a) I find myself incapable of giving unconditional love. I cannot stand what he is doing. I cannot stand the insubordination. I cannot stand how he uses the rachmonus of his mother to allow him all sorts of things that I think are bad for him. I can't tolerate the way this is adding so much tension and difficulty in our family dynamic and when he just blows us off, and knows that he will get away with almost anything he wants, and will be "unconditionally loved", it drives me nuts, and I lose it sometimes.

(b) I am not sure that even if I was able to give it, that unconditional love is the answer. Why should he be loved despite what he is doing, which I hate? Why should he be allowed to make us so miserable? I know, I know, that sometimes this will lead him back in the long run (maybe) and that otherwise we will just drive him away.

Oy. Such a painful situation. Truly. To the extent any of us can feel your pain (pain shared=halved), you've got my ear.

There was one piece, though, where I might have been misunderstood. I never envisioned a situation where loving a kid unconditionally meant loving and accepting all the shtuss they do. Your son would definitely lose all respect for you if he thought you respected what he was doing. He KNOWS better. I'm sorry if I sounded as if giving him a ride to the liquor store would be a good idea.

No, I'm just talking about giving unconditional love to HIM (not his actions). I know that's a hugely difficult distinction to make. I don't know how to define it. But I don't think parents have to approve, for example, of being mechallel Shabbos in order to feel AND EXPRESS love in their hearts for who the child IS.

I won't be so chuzpatadik to imply that I've got a suggestion on HOW, but I do know how important it can be when a parent can convey the love for the child even when things look bad.

Sorry to have come on so strong before -- especially if it sounded like I was suggesting loving the sin and not just the sinner. Thanks.

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Re: Hello folks

Posted by jewinpain - 11 Jul 2010 08:12

Good week rabbi shmendrick! Don't beat urself up or underestimate what u do for ur son, u do what u need and can, and just deal with him, as if he were a "fremder" this will make it easier to love him, despite all the bad things he does or all the hate he shows to u, he is a "Jew in Pain" and he needs to be seen by the closest of his family as a pain case, there is almost zero to do to have him stop being a girl hunter, he is a teen ager and its normal for him, look at the other side of the coin, how would u feel if u find out he's gay,? Boy and girl attraction are normal! # 1 u

gotta do, is to ask hashem for help with him, this can be help with giving u the right words what to say or what not to say, and when to say or not , or it can be asking hashem for sending u perfect mentor for him, there is a glove for every size hand, we just gotta fit it right! And only hashem can match this! 2 things that u should try to work on, # 1 find a way to make him fear/hate illegal activity, # 2 install in him a healthy drive for money (not quick bucks) just hard working stuff with good normal results, help him build some business or use some connections to find him a happy job! And last thing u wana do is stop that unconditional love for him, its like shooting in ur heart a bullet, u won't get him back C"V this way, period! I have family off the derech and I was a teen at risk, and I do deal with boys at risk from time to time, I've seen it too many times, he needs an open house and loving arms, aint ur business what he does on his own, u can demand he behaves in house with respect that's all, anything beyond that let loose! I'm not judging u , and I pray to hashem to never be put through such a nisoyan, just wanted to point out a few things u may have missed due to ur pain

I wish u hatzlucha raba with him, and I'll have him in my prayers iy"h

Good night/morning

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Re: Hello folks

Posted by oisvorf - 11 Jul 2010 19:13

Shavua Tov to you all...

You know, i just re-read this entire thread from the beginning, and come away amazed and astounded by the incredible love, sensitivity, warmth, generosity of spirit, humor, and intelligence of this group.

If I went to some convention of Orthodox Jews and asked what them "Tell me, what kid of people would you expect to find among a group of people that are admittedly out of control in their lusts, who all have spent hundreds if not thousands of hours watching pornography, masturbating, many of whom have had extra-marital affairs and lust for all sorts of unmentionable things -- would you want to associate with any of them?????

I am sure that I would not get a very positive response.

But I must tell you, in all my Rabbinic glory, that I am so very deeply proud, honored, grateful and speechlessly humbled to be in your presence. You are an amazing group of people who are so spiritually aware, deeply caring and loving -- I could not ask for better and more precious friends.

I look forward to some time when we can meet each other in person, and cry and laugh on each other's shoulders as we express our very heartfelt appreciation for each other.

Thank You so very much

Your friend,

Shmendrick

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Re: Hello folks

Posted by Jooboy - 11 Jul 2010 21:51

Next time your in NY give me a ring and we can meet at an SA meeting (don't worry you won't be the only Rabbi there!!)

This is pretty par for course in SA. Lots of very sick people with lots of love, support, acceptance and wisdom.

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Re: Hello folks

Posted by oisvorf - 12 Jul 2010 01:15

[Jooboy wrote on 11 Jul 2010 21:51:](#)

Next time your in NY give me a ring and we can meet at an SA meeting (don't worry you won't be the only Rabbi there!!)

I live in NY - so maybe sometime! send me a PM

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Re: Hello folks

Posted by oisvorf - 15 Jul 2010 16:51

Here is something I got in my email today that I thought I would share with y'all . . . very much in keeping with the types of thoughts that many have expressed. I got this from www.simpletruths.com/

Kol Tuv

Shmendrick

Brian Tracy said..."Eighty percent of life's satisfaction comes from meaningful relationships." Think about it...when you look back at the end of your life what will really matter? Five words...the quality of your relationships.

So here's the question: If your relationships are the most important part of your life, what are you doing to make them all they can be?

The 100/0 Principle may be the most important book you'll ever read. For me, it ranks in the top 3...ever! The message is truly life-changing. You've probably heard me say, it's not what you

say, but how you say it, that turns the switch from "off" to "on." In fact, our book, 212°...The Extra Degree, is a great example of that, but...The 100/0 Principle is even better. The examples, the stories, the quotes provoke many "a-ha" moments. Simply put, this is a book that can make your marriage better and greatly improve your relationships with family members, friends, co-workers and...even your boss.

Here's a brief excerpt from The 100/0 Principle. Enjoy!

Excerpt from The 100/0 Principle, by Al Ritter

What is the most effective way to create and sustain great relationships with others? It's The 100/0 Principle: You take full responsibility (the 100) for the relationship, expecting nothing (the 0) in return.

Implementing The 100/0 Principle is not natural for most of us. It takes real commitment to the relationship and a good dose of self-discipline to think, act and give 100 percent.

The 100/0 Principle applies to those people in your life where the relationships are too important to react automatically or judgmentally. Each of us must determine the relationships to which this principle should apply. For most of us, it applies to work associates, customers, suppliers, family and friends.

STEP 1 - Determine what you can do to make the relationship work...then do it. Demonstrate respect and kindness to the other person, whether he/she deserves it or not.

STEP 2 - Do not expect anything in return. Zero, zip, nada.

STEP 3 - Do not allow anything the other person says or does (no matter how annoying!) to affect you. In other words, don't take the bait.

STEP 4 - Be persistent with your graciousness and kindness. Often we give up too soon, especially when others don't respond in kind. Remember to expect nothing in return.

At times (usually few), the relationship can remain challenging, even toxic, despite your 100 percent commitment and self-discipline. When this occurs, you need to avoid being the "Knower" and shift to being the "Learner." Avoid Knower statements/ thoughts like "that won't work," "I'm right, you are wrong," "I know it and you don't," "I'll teach you," "that's just the way it is," "I need to tell you what I know," etc.

Instead use Learner statements/thoughts like "Let me find out what is going on and try to understand the situation," "I could be wrong," "I wonder if there is anything of value here," "I wonder if..." etc. In other words, as a Learner, be curious!

Principle Paradox

This may strike you as strange, but here's the paradox: When you take authentic responsibility for a relationship, more often than not the other person quickly chooses to take responsibility as well. Consequently, the 100/0 relationship quickly transforms into something approaching 100/100. When that occurs, true breakthroughs happen for the individuals involved, their teams, their organizations and their families.

We introduced Al's new book, The 100/0 Principle a few months ago and the response has been amazing. So many people who have read it have returned to purchase copies for their friends, family, employees and customers.

Reading is believing! Just click [here](#) to see inside Al's life-changing book...The 100/0 Principle. It's one of my all-time favorites!

Today we're putting this best seller on sale for only \$10.00, and offering free UPS ground shipping for qualifying orders in the U.S.

NOTE: Offer expires 7/19/10 at 11:59PM CST.

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Re: Hello folks

Posted by ur-a-jew - 15 Jul 2010 19:13

[shmendrick wrote on 08 Jul 2010 14:28:](#)

Unconditional love. In abundant quantities. Don't worry that your son will see through you, or think you an idiot for ignoring his foibles, or feel unable to rise to the challenge. The love AND RESPECT of a father is important whether "deserved" (whatever the *&# that means) or simply a gift.

What does bother me is

(a) I find myself incapable of giving unconditional love. I cannot stand what he is doing. I cannot stand the insubordination. I cannot stand how he uses the rachmonus of his mother to allow him all sorts of things that I think are bad for him. I can't tolerate the way this is adding so much tension and difficulty in our family dynamic and when he just blows us off, and knows that he will get away with almost anything he wants, and will be "unconditionally loved", it drives me nuts, and I lose it sometimes.

(b) I am not sure that even if I was able to give it, that unconditional love is the answer. Why should he be loved despite what he is doing, which I hate? Why should he be allowed to make us so miserable? I know, I know, that sometimes this will lead him back in the long run (maybe) and that otherwise we will just drive him away.

But it is so darn difficult.

Shmendrick I nearly cried when I read this post. The pain and suffering that it brings to a parent when they see how their children are messing up their life is unbearable. My comments that follow are therefore not intended to minimize the pain and suffering you are going through, but I feel that it may give you some perspective and a way of viewing it. You mention two things that "bother" you and interfere with you're ability to give unconditional love.

Does our Aveinu Av Harachaman withhold His unconditional love from us during all the years that we've been committing insubordination of His will, when we just "blew off" our religion to go onto porn sites and do all the other things we've done. Where you given a wonderful family and loving wife "despite what [you] were doing." Unconditional love is what you're (and all of us) are getting from G-d and what G-d wants you us to give back to our children, all of our children. Do you fault your son for doing the things that he does. If the same stuff was put in front of us, would we really resist. The answer is no. Because when it or similar stuff was put in front of us we didn't resist. If we did we probably wouldn't be here. I don't know about you, but certainly when I was his age (and probably even now if I could) I would try "meet as many girls as possible, plan Friday night parties in a place they think is safe from adult snooping ... engage in one oneupmanship as to who was "badder" as far as getting to which base with girls," Sure its "the opposite of what Guard Your Eyes is all about" but this site is here because we're coming from there.

No it's not easy to give unconditional love. But our existence on this world is due to unconditional love. I don't envy the position you are in, and we are all davening for you and your son. But pushing away you're son will only c/v drive him further into the abyss. Let him at least know that come what may he always has a father and mother that are there for him who love him no matter how low he may sink even if they can't stand what he is doing.

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Re: Hello folks
Posted by oisvorf - 16 Jul 2010 17:23

Hello Everyone,

Thanks again for your writing and good wishes and support . . . it really means a lot to me.

Baruch Hashem, I have been feeling a bit better about things. There has not been much

positive change with my son, but I think we had a few good interactions (went out for Pizza, a good shmooze or two, he made me dinner one night) and I am feeling that this unconditional love thing may yet work.

We went to speak to a few "experts" on yeshivos and "kids at risk", signed up for parent mentoring with Project Yes (Hat tip to Briut), and while I have no idea where he will be next year, there is a glimmer of hope.

Baruch Hashem for all of you and my wonderful wife, who puts up with way too much from me. I loved ur-a-jew's thoughts on how we need to mirror the Almighty's love in a ?? ??? ?? ??? kind of sense. Thank so much!

Wishing a great SHabbos to you all....even Shabbos Chazon! (I actually convinced the kiddush)

Shmendrick

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Re: Hello folks

Posted by jewinpain - 16 Jul 2010 21:38

Thanks for the update rabbi, I knew that u will see change, as soon as u change ur prospective about him, and to way u handle him, just keep it that way, 1 day at a time. And it will bring u lots of nachas l8r on,

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Re: Hello folks

Posted by Dov - 19 Jul 2010 03:44
club to take a week off

Just read through the last pages of this great thread, my first time back on the forum since having to take a break from the forum-part of GYE.

Loving and admiring you fellows very much,

Dov

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Re: Hello folks

Posted by 1daat - 19 Jul 2010 05:34

Shmen, Mazel tov! These are major events in the life of repair. B"H. May it continue to return to an entirely new configuration. With love as the access of symmetry. One note, I found myself "chasing after" the good feeling and trying too hard to make it happen again. My daughter withdrew. Our kids antennas have antennas. I remind myself over and over, "... this is not for you. this is not to get something." "100/01.

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Re: Hello folks

Posted by oisvorf - 23 Jul 2010 17:06

Hello folks, :D

Just a quick peek in to say hello. I have not really been on GYE much lately for several reasons

- Busy with Tisha B'Av, kids, etc
- I have not really felt the need to get help with my addiction
- Not that much of interest has happened with my son

Expanding on 2 & 3 ... It is interesting that, as I have mentioned before, I have felt much less of an urge to succumb to our common addiction lately. It is getting so that I wonder if it still an addiction, or whether it is just a garden variety Yetzer Hara that with a reasonable amount of will I can fairly easily control. I still have urges, of course, but they are more manageable. In fact, I am often satisfied to look at clothed pictures of women who have the body type that I lust after, without needing to see nudity. (Does that count as a slip or fall on the 90 day chart? Is that

still a problem with Shemiras Einayim? I know that it is, but is it an acceptable step towards a better future for now? Am I just fooling myself? Interesting questions) Anyway, this whole business with my son is probably a major contributing factor. . .I find that whether lishma or not, my aversion to his watching porn has a deterring effect on me.

As for what is happening with him - He is still chillin and blowing off davening and any kind of learning or frankly any mitzvos asei - he does put on tefillin for a minute or two each day - but I think it is beginning to get through to him that he has to get serious about where he is going to yeshiva next year, and that he has to begin giving it some thought.

Other than that, most of his time is sleeping till 1-2 PM, eating, going to movies (including Erev Tisha B'Av), and trying to figure out ways to get past k-9. I try to keep the confrontations down but I really have to work on my temper and penchant for sarcasm. Halevai the Ribono shel olam will give me some strength.

I also am trying to apply some of what we do hear to my more pressing addiction - overeating.

Wishing everyone a comforting Shabbos Nachamu, and again appreciating your thoughts and caring

Shmendrick

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Re: Hello folks

Posted by Jooboy - 23 Jul 2010 21:48

Shmen,

Nice to see you back.

I have your experience often and I'm certainly not going to tell you that you are or are not an addict.

In SA we call the experience of not feeling lust, depending on the situation:

- 1) Surrender on a full stomach (maybe our wives have been very available or we juts acted out). It seems there is no problem staying sober
- 2) God gives us respite to show us that, yes, we can live without lust. Then.....He turns the heat back on to get us on the growth track again.
- 3) Who knows? But, in the collective experience of my fellowship, it will come back one day, so we best be prepared. When the bullets start flying its a little late to head out for target practice.
- 4) Like you said maybe your not an addict.

Whatever the case enjoy the smooth ride and use it to grow.

a garden variety Yetzer Hara that with a reasonable amount of will I can fairly easily control

An addict certainly can not control his addiction. If he can then he is indeed not an addict. But from a Jewish perspective, Chazal were quite clear that we in fact absolutely do not have the power to control the yetzer harah. "Ilmolai Hkadosh boruch hu ozro, ayno yachol lo". If God would not help a person, he would be unable to overcome the yetzer.

It seems fairly black on white. Addict or not, we do not have the ability to overcome the yetzer without his help. Important for all of us regardless of our label.

Good Shabbos

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