

Transform Tools of Sin into Tools of Good: Burn the Yetzer Hara

Posted by Mevakesh Hashem - 26 Aug 2008 19:56

There is a concept (brought in the Gemara Meseches Shabbos) of "Mapik Havla B'Havla" which basically means that the way to fight fire is with fire!

Let me try and explain where i am going with this.

All of us on some level have been "burned" by our Yetzer Hara. Some of us may have had first degree burns, while others third degree burns, but regardless, we are here because we are tired of being burned by that Menuval, the Yetzer Hara.

However, there is a long journey between being tired of him, and actually getting rid of him. We have all heard the famous adage, " The road to Gehinom is paved with good intentions". Though it is a step in the right direction to "want" to stop sinning, we must also do whatever is necessary to actually "stop" sinning.

Ok, so how do we do it?

Although there is no one proven method that works for everyone, I think the premise of what i am about to say can be applied in some way to every one of us who have used various tools at our disposal to sin (and who amongst us can say that we havent?!).

If there was a certain tool that we used, it means that we either enjoy that particular tool, or are good at it, or have easy access to it. Therefore, getting rid of that tool won't be an easy task. So, instead of getting rid of it, use that same tool for good! Use that same tool for a Mitzvah! Use that same tool to help others stop sinning! Here are some examples of what I mean:

Tool #1: Blogs etc.

Many of us have, or had in the past our own blogs or websites, where we connected with many likeminded people, and oftentimes ended up in sin. Obviously, if you still operate a blog that leads to sin, you won't have an easy time quitting illicit behaviors. The key here is to delete your "sinful" blog, and instead start a kosher website or blog, where instead of being involved with people to whom sin is the order of the day, you will now be associated with people who seek spiritual growth and mitzvos!

Tool #2: Facebook, MySpace etc.

Many of us have been , or still are, members of these terrible yet innocent looking social networks. These can only lead to one place: S I N. Get rid of your profiles on these sites. There is no acceptable reason for a frum person to be there, especially a frum person that is struggling with sexual sins. There are quite a few Kosher social networks (including this forum) that we can belong to, participate in, and get to know others in. Seek out the kosher ones if you must be part of a social network, but please do not allow the Yetzer Hara to convince you that you NEED to be on Facebook or a similar virtual house of sin.

Tool #3: Anonymous email addresses

Many of us had, or still have a few e-mail addresses that we used to correspond anonymously with others (usually others of the opposite gender). This veil of anonymity is one of the Yetzer Hara's greatest tools, as he makes us seem invisible! We are never invisible to Hashem! Dear friends, get rid of all the illicit email addresses, and only keep the ones that you need for friends or work, but are clearly identifiable as yours. If you must have the thrill of having "secret" email addresses, try and use them for good things only! Start a Tehillim list. Start a Torah list! Start a Chizzuk List! Be the anonymous "good doer", and not the anonymous "sinner"

Tool #4: Colognes/Perfumes

Many of us (but hopefully many of you reading this have NOT stooped that low ever) have sinned with the opposite gender, and had illicit sexual relationships R"L. In preparation for a sexual rendezvous with a member of the opposite sex, often perfumes/colognes were used to spruce up our appeal to the partner we were sinning with. There is a good reason that many

Poskim forbid the wearing of cologne for men, and even prohibit women from wearing too much perfume if it can be smelled by men they walk by. These fragrances are a tool of the Yetzer Hara (Ever notice how these products are advertised?). If you cannot get rid of these totally, try and use them ONLY for Mitzvah. When you are preparing for an acceptable sexual experience with your spouse, put in all the efforts that you used to put in in preparation for sinning! You will see just how good and fulfilling the time with your spouse can be; a lot better than with someone who means nothing to you other than 30 seconds of sinful, imagined pleasure. Also, try and use these fragrances to make yourself smell betetr for the honor of Shabbos and Yom Tov, and not for the fake honor of someone of the opposite gender, who is prohibited to you.

I can go on and on, but I think you get my point, and everyone can dream up their own examples of tools that they used in their carreer as sinners. Everyone had certain clothes they wore for sin. Certain methods they employed for sin. Certain places they touched for sin. Certain music they used for sin. Certain objects they used for sin etc. etc.

Figure out your personal list of tools (your fires of sin), and then flip them around and dream up a way to use the same tools for good(your fires of good)

Again, I apologize for rambling. I hope this will be useful to at least some of you in your battle against our #1 enemy, the Yetzer Hara!

Chazak V'Ematz!

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Re: Transform Tools of Sin into Tools of Good: Burn the Yetzer Hara
Posted by me - 27 Aug 2008 10:47

yes, this is in fact what Rebbe Nachman says: That when one sins, it is much better NOT to wait and come back in another gilgul to rectify the sin. NO. What we really need to do is to rectify the sin with the same body that did the aveira. So, if you did an aveira with a particular eiver, the tshuva should be with the same eiver that sinned. This is the true tshuvah. So, as you say, we must do tshuva with all of our keshronote and resources (talents) that we used to sin with.

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