

IF the 12 steps have not worked for you... let's get together for mutual support

Posted by boruch - 20 Jan 2009 19:22

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Firstly, a word of introduction. Let us first all agree on what ought to be beyond reasonable discussion.

A) Rabbi Twersky is a zoche umezakkeh es horabbim, he has helped an overwhelming number of Frum Jews. We should all stand in awe of the number of frum Yidden that he has helped. He solidly and exclusively advocates the 12 steps.

The 12 steps is Worldwide the single most effective tool in countering alcoholism and many other addictions. Be very careful if you want to argue with success.

C) People usually do best with a system to change and the 12 steps is a highly developed system that has been practiced by millions over many decades with significant degrees of success.

D) We live in a World which minimizes the role of Hashem and the 12 steps follows the Rambam's prescription. The Rambam says that when you have a weakness in an area you do well to go to the other extreme. In a World full of kochi ve'otzem yodi --- the self-destructive illusion of being a "Master of One's own Destiny" the 12 steps are a vital and absolutely necessary counterbalance by going to the other extreme and focussing on man's powerlessness and G-d's all-powerfullness.

**Secondly, the purpose of this post is not to create controversy.**

**The purpose of this post is not to debate philosophy.**

**The purpose of this post is not to prove any point or win any argument.**

It should be reasonable to assume that anyone on these forums should have more important

things to worry about than any of the above.

This post is to help and support those who have significant difficulty with the 12 steps and have come to realize that the fault **does not ,as some would insinuate**, lie with either themselves or the way they have tried to implement the steps. This is the place for mutual support and the search for a better way.

Next a word of caution.

IF either the 12 steps are already working for you or if you have just started the 12 steps then this post is not for you for two reasons.

1) Providing excuses, chas vesholom, for anyone to stop doing what works for them to experiment with something else is not what this post is about. Chazal say "Ein sofek motzei midei vaday" --- an unproven approach is no substitute for an approach with a track record. Please do yourself a massive favor and go back to the 12 steps and ignore this thread.

2) If the 12 steps is working for you, then you should rightfully be a believer and as we say in Yiddish you will no doubt be "a geshvoirener chossid" -- or sworn afficionado. As such the chances are very strong that you will see any discussion of an alternative to the 12 steps as one of:

- a) Apikorsus -- Heresy
- b) Meabed atzom ledaas -- Willful self-destruction
- c) Daiyos Kozvos -- fundamentally misguided thinking
- d) Zich-op-narren -- self deception

If any of a) through d) approximate your attitude to discussion of a non-12 step approach then please do those of us who fundamentally disagree with you a big favor and ignore this thread.

You may sincerely believe that you are trying to be mekarev us but I warn you of the potential harm that you could bring on your cause of promoting the 12 steps. By refusing to accept the possibility of another approach you will almost inevitably come across as dogmatic, unthinking and yes, even brainwashed.

But even worse and far more serious by engaging us in debate you are taking a chance, however slight, that by engaging us in discussion you will chas vesholom find your own resolve weakened and none of us here on this forum can take any risk of that.

Chazal say, "Al taamin be'atzmecho", don't trust yourself. If you could trust yourself you would never have landed on this forum in the first place.

Please, Lema'an Hash-m -- for Hashem's sake, don't take any unnecessary risks whatsoever.

If we who believe that there is another way are really wrong let us learn from our own experience.

**IF YOU REALLY DO BELIEVE IN THE 12 STEPS, THEN DON'T PLAY G-D. CHAYECHO KODMIN, YOUR OWN SAFETY COMES BEFORE OURS. LET G-D SHOW US THE RIGHT WAY. FOR THE SAKE OF ALL OF US PLEASE PLAY IT SAFE AND LET HASHEM HELP US.**

However if you feel, as do many like-minded from Yidden struggling with addiction, that the 12 steps are not a good fit and/or that you have given them a good try and you have found that they do not work then you will gain strength from being able to freely share your reservations and discuss alternatives with those who will not tell you in stereotypical, patronizing, judgemental and cult-like fashion, "The 12 steps always work, it's just you, you didn't do it right".

You will gain strength from those who can show you that the finer nuances and subtleties of the claims of the proponents of the 12 steps are not as well thought out and immutable as their proponents would have you believe. You will gain strength from reading that beneath all the dogma there is a small amount of sloppy, complacent and unthinking conformism.

In the non-Jewish world there are many who doubt and criticize the 12 steps for all the wrong reasons. They feel uncomfortable and don't want to acknowledge the role of Hashem. This makes it difficult for a religious person to doubt the effectiveness of the steps. Don't they believe in Hashem?

Secondly the Frum Jewish World is very conformist (generally a very good thing) and since the most well-known and public face of addiction therapy is Doctor Twersky and he is totally devoted to the 12 steps it is very difficult from a Frum Jew to explore and advocate another approach.

And yet there is a silent and very significant group of Frum Yidden who for many reasons, most legitimate, are deeply skeptical of the steps and their place in Yiddishkeit.

This thread is your place.

So as a way to validate our beliefs and feelings let's begin with a possible framework within which to see the 12 steps from a "non-12 step" Torah perspective that simultaneously acknowledges the contribution of the 12 steps and yet sees the steps for what they really are, just one approach.

Just as many Roshei Yeshiva, Chassidische Rebbes and Gedolei Torah who were contemporaries of HoRav Shimshon Refoel Hirsch insisted that as important as Torah Im Derech Eretz was for the Jews of Germany it was not a mainstream approach and was only a "horo'as sho'oh", an important method for those times, so too, many feel that Rabbi Twersky's approach and the 12 steps are a "horo'as sho'oh", but should not be allowed to stifle more traditional approaches that are more mainstream (if this shocks you, you were warned, please refer back to the reasons above why you should not have been reading this post).

But most importantly, if you feel as I and many others do, that the 12 steps are unduly monopolizing the discussion, stifling discussion and shutting down dissent, and that the proponents of the 12 steps are fundamentally unable to acknowledge and accept your feelings then this place is for you.

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Re: IF the 12 steps have not worked for you... let's get together for mutual sup  
Posted by Ano Nymous - 28 Jan 2009 22:41

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Like guard already said, make sure you go with only ONE agenda: to rid yourself of your addiction (or habit if you like that word better). Even if you disagree with parts of their system, if you go in with an open mind you will come out with an open heart. Go in with a closed mind and you will end up with a broken heart.

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Re: IF the 12 steps have not worked for you... let's get together for mutual sup  
Posted by boruch - 29 Jan 2009 02:06

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[guardureyes wrote on 28 Jan 2009 21:31:](#)

That IS a bomb Shell. Good on you.

Well, if I was actually trying them out close up then it would certainly be a bombshell. As I explained on the other thread I am looking at it from a very utilitarian perspective. Just as some don't join in with whatever prayer some of these groups have, I don't have to identify or believe in everything they do to gain something.

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Re: IF the 12 steps have not worked for you... let's get together for mutual sup  
Posted by jerusalemsexaddict - 18 Oct 2009 07:07

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this is one of the best threads i've read on this site.

I just have to bump it up to the top

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Re: IF the 12 steps have not worked for you... let's get together for mutual sup  
Posted by the.guard - 18 Oct 2009 13:30

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You know that boruch, who originally started this thread **against** the 12-steps, is today the moderator of the [back to basics 12-Step phone conference](#) on GYE - twice a week, and one of the strongest advocates for the 12-Steps I have ever met! :D

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Re: IF the 12 steps have not worked for you... let's get together for mutual support  
Posted by cleareyes613@gmail.com - 18 Oct 2009 18:57

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Thank you Uri for bringing this thread on top. I read this read from begining to end. I never would seen it otherwise.

And the name Baruch was familiar. Thank you Reb Guard for putting 1 and 1 together. The power of the 12 steps, WoW.

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Re: IF the 12 steps have not worked for you... let's get together for mutual sup  
Posted by aaron - 09 Nov 2009 20:29

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Wanted to install k9, but too confused or embarrassed to ask for help?

Here is the answer to your prayers.....

I've discovered the greatest way to spread k9 web protection

**easily, without embarrassment and for FREE!!!!!!**

Using a special, easily installed, free program called crossloop, I (or anyone in the forum for that matter) can help install, make a password or alter k9 web protection.

I myself am more than willing to help anyone who wants this set up. I'm frequently online so I make a great partner to help others who need it to be bypassed. I check my mail frequently and am more than willing to help anyone who wants it set up.

Basically, all you do is download the program. E-mail me about what time you want it installed and we'll meet on the website together.

*Easy, no?*

The website is called [www.crossloop.com/ipage.htm?id=predownload](http://www.crossloop.com/ipage.htm?id=predownload)

My email is [extraemail564@gmail.com](mailto:extraemail564@gmail.com)

Feel free to visit my website [helpmestop.weebly.com](http://helpmestop.weebly.com) to other tips, advice and support.

I have much experience with k9, its settings and how people usually fall with it. I am happy to give recommendations in terms of settings to all who seek them.

I love GYE and couldn't thank them enough. That is why I feel such a strong need to give back and what better way than spreading k9?!!!!!!!!!!!!

Give it a try why wouldn't you? ??? ??? ???

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Re: IF the 12 steps have not worked for you... let's get together for mutual sup  
Posted by Markz - 16 May 2017 13:18

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[the.guard wrote on 18 Oct 2009 13:30:](#)

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Someone have a duster?

It's time to get the cobwebs off [this](#) thread

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Re: IF the 12 steps have not worked for you... let's get together for mutual sup  
Posted by GrowStrong - 16 May 2017 14:20

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[Markz wrote on 16 May 2017 13:18:](#)

[the.guard wrote on 18 Oct 2009 13:30:](#)

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That really was a great thread. The ultimate act of our free will is admitting that we are completely powerless over ourselves.

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Re: IF the 12 steps have not worked for you... let's get together for mutual sup  
Posted by cordnoy - 16 May 2017 14:30

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Tons of chochmah here on both sides of the aisle.

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