

addiction and religion

Posted by lavi - 14 Jul 2014 20:17

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To my dear friends,

I'm writing this post, to express my view, about religion (jewish) and addiction. I know already that there are many esteemed "gyes" who differ. I know also that chochmah has been used to help out addiction and I can understand this and I even agree on this point. I actually had the zchus to speak about this personally with Harav Wolbe zatzal. Also I wish to acknowledge the usefulness of programs like the twelve steps and all the other tools that can be used to help and recover from addiction. What I specifically want to address is the following points, the goal of recovery, the advantage of recovery and the connection between religion and recovery.

I also want to acknowledge that I understand that for some people mixing in religion to recovery is too heavy. Ok. And for others they don't see the point. Ok. Others say we see the connection, but one thing at a time. Ok.

What I am writing concern people who are concerned about how their spiritual level is effected by addiction and are wondering how to focus on shteiging in the mist of addiction, in a healthy way. It also must be mentioned that the one day at a time approach seems to be quite popular here, so if someone feels that way, good for you, and even if you don't feel that way, it maybe worth trying.

But I suspect that there are others, myself included that want to and need to view ourselves via the future and this is a very big decider for us in the battle of now. We need to know where is recovery taking us, and the answer a nice normal life, without ups and downs isn't tempting enough. And also for the ultra normals , do you thing you can stay your whole life treading water?

A normal and balanced life has it's big advantages and it is good for the person and his family and the whole world at large. Especially people who have addictions- how very important it is to become "normal".

If I may however go a step further. After a certain period of being normal, I think that is the nature of most people to want more, more? What more?

It may be that deep inside we seek fulfillment something more than regular day to day life. there comes a time, for some more often than others, that you feel a need for something exciting. I'm not talking about outlets or distractions or something by the way, I'm talking about a deep seated need to feel accomplished in life. In my humble opinion, Hashem put in our religion various mitzvos to give us this. Therefore everyone should make it their business, to see how and what, when and where they can put serious effort in their spiritual endeavors, at least shl"o lishmah, or according to some this is a part of lishmah, to find our greatest enjoyment and fulfillment in the torah, it has potential to recharge our batteries and bring inner satisfactory and peace to ourselves. If fact this may even be our "normal" state in ideal settings.

And it isn't optional. If we don't find our high's in good things, we will slide into bad high's.  
may Hashem help us reach our proper potential.

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Re: addiction and religion  
Posted by shivisi - 24 Jul 2014 13:38

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[ineedchizuk wrote:](#)

Your tafkid in life:

To do what you WANT to do instead of what you FEEL like doing.

-R' Noach Weinberg zt"l

I guess the ultimate goal should be, to also FEEL like doing what you WANT to do.

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Re: addiction and religion  
Posted by lavi - 24 Jul 2014 20:27

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thanks shvisi

thinking out of the box, is not a talent a lot of people share

i mean there is a reason for the box to begin with!!

although sometimes it takes a good box to wake someone up.

and if you box is a screen, then one should definitely, think out of it, or alternately box the box.

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Re: addiction and religion

Posted by dms1234 - 24 Jul 2014 21:03

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**lavi**

and i have spent time in ohr samayach.  
COOL! Me too!!!! I love that place! Its like home to me!

**lavi**

my point is that i think that there are a lot of people who feel a void in their lives, as well as addiction problems- and they find it hard to work on addiction, when they don't see the purpose of life.

Absolutely!! And thats exactly how i feel! I am a Baal Tshuvah and Religion does give me purpose in life. How is that a Steera to what I am saying? In fact keeping clean is helping me find that purpose as when i was lusting i was escaping from my purpose in life (and of course life in general) And of course i am Frum and doing mitzvos but i think, at least for me, thats not enough to be clean. I need something else as well.

**lavi**

like i mentioned, i am not speaking about requirements. i am speaking about giving

ourselves the peace of mind, that religion offers  
...you feel frustrated about your current situation, you may be surprised how religion can help you as a tool for recovery. especially if someone has failed repeatedly in his efforts. I am confused?? How are you defining religion. I do have peace of mind, because I have realized Hashem runs the world! Not me! That is so relieving. I can relax and concentrate on only what I need to do and Everything will turn out just fine! That is so relaxing! In terms of principles of Hashkafah, it could give us peace of mind, yea, but it don't think that will completely help us get out. But then again, its not like we are completely separating religion from addiction. Because, a core component of addiction is emuna and bitachon which of course are core principles to Judaism. Also that there is God. Maybe i am just confused now. I don't know. Too much thinking for me!

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Re: addiction and religion  
Posted by lavi - 25 Jul 2014 00:48

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ok dms, thanks for response.

i don't wanna overload on anyone (even myself) so i will try to point out a few things that helped me, based on what i wrote above.

- 1) getting involved in a new/fresh limud has given me extra zest for life and has contributed in feeling less urges for evil.
- 2) coming to davening on time has also (this involved going to bed on time)
- 3) helping out spouse and kids a little bit more.

Notice these represent 3 amudim. torah avodah and gemilas chasadim. the aim is a filled neshama has less urge and time to act out.

BUT i also need to be on gye!! and also have healthy outlets. and i'm sure others need more than this. just pointing out the getting involved in good things has contributed to my recovery.

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