

Before V After (part 3)

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**Before**

**Lust = pornography**

Before recovery I thought my only form of 'acting' out was pornography and masturbation.

**After**

Lust = craving anything I don't have

I now realise that any form of 'lusting' i.e. an all consuming desire for something that I don't currently have is a form of 'acting' out. Whether lusting after a different job, wife, car, house etc - they are all forms of acting out for me. In fact, in many ways my 'lusting' after financial security and success has turned out to be for me a much more insidious and harder form of lust for me to surrender than lusting after women.

Part of the miracle of the 12 steps has been for me that before recovery I could never go more than a few weeks without masturbation. I am now clean for 3.5 years - a miracle!! But - and this is a big BUT I still cannot go more than a few days without lusting after financial independence and success. I must work daily to surrender and pray to live life on life's terms and accept my current financial situation is exactly as Hashem wants it to be - today.

The degree of my serenity is inversely related to the level of my expectations

As they say in the program: "An expectation is a resentment waiting to happen". I am only ever as serene as the person/place/situation that I am most resentful to/frustrated about. When I am able to lower my expectations; focus on the things that are within my control to change and not the things I cannot change (aka the Serenity Prayer); focus on the abundance of blessings that Hashem constantly gives to me; and live life on God's terms, trying only to be useful to others as God would have me be, only then can I have some moments of calm and peace of mind.

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