

Additional tools for recovery

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 07 Dec 2011 21:33

I attended an SA workshop with lots and lots of tools for recovery (about 100 or so). I hope, little by little, to share them here on this thread.

Some of them are very simple and might even seem silly (but may surprise you--and work if you try them), and some of them are very deep. Some of them you may have heard of before, and some of them not.

Take whatever you find helpful, and leave the rest--maybe someone else will find it helpful. I can't say that I have tested them all personally, either.

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I posted this on Jan 1, '12, but thought it would be appropriate to add it here at the beginning of this thread, too:

I could have easily cut and paste the whole list of recovery tools into a post all at once and left it at that. However, I thought that by posting only one each day, it would give people a better chance to digest them and implement them (and remember them) to some extent in their lives. Also, in posting one at a time, I see it is giving me a chance to reflect on each of these tools and appreciate them much more.

So, if you are joining this thread now that so many of these tools have already been posted (and more yet to come, BE"H), I suggest you will have the greatest benefit by reading this thread slowly, just one or two tools each day. There's no hurry.

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--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery

Posted by Blind Beggar - 18 Feb 2012 21:29

I have heard that story from Elyah twice, and it is much better heard than read. It is good that the friend was a goy and not a yeshiva bochur, it makes the story more powerful.

I would have spent 48 hours in that basement if someone would have brought me food. New guest house, countryside, you can keep them. I can *understand* the goy wanting to do other things, but I *relate* to Elyah all the way.

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Re: Additional tools for recovery

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 19 Feb 2012 13:23

90. Clean and Sober.

Clean means free of lust. Sober means technical sobriety which, according to SA, means no sex with self or with any partner other than one's spouse. And, this is a topic of much controversy, as the GYE definition also includes not looking at p*rnography. (Still, viewing p*rnography is definitely not encouraged by SA).

However, I have seen people in SA who have brought their bottom line up and include looking at pornography (or similar activities) as a fall. I have also seen people on GYE who were so steeped in all sorts of acting out that their bottom line was much lower and I don't think they would have improved at all otherwise. Consult with your sponsor (or with Guard); don't decide such matters on your own.

But, I think a person has to reach a clear decision about his bottom line, and stick to it whatever it may be. I have heard people rattle off a long list of sobriety dates, "Five years since prostitutes, two years since m*sturbation, nine months since chat-rooms, and six hours since p*rn." (I am eggagerating slightly). If I were not able to admit the falls I have had, as difficult as they were to admit, I would not have continued onward with a stronger sobriety. I would have just kept playing games, deceiving myself, thinking that if I keep on doing XY or Z, it REALLY is alright. It's not alright, it was a fall; I have to re-set my date and if I ever do it again I'm going to have to re-set my date again. I am forced to work all the harder at recovery (to rely ever more on my Higher power and on the fellowship of recovery).

And, even if one continues to fall, look at the progress--I managed to stay clean LONGER this time (because I was working on myself and my attitudes and because I was relating to my Higher Power and to other fellows in recovery). We may make mistakes, but just try not to make the same mistake twice. Figure out what went wrong--what was lacking in your recovery program, and try to add it to your life from now on.

--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 20 Feb 2012 14:49

91. Attitude of gratitude.

This can include such exercises as making gratitude lists, and reviewing them daily. Also, listen to yourself throughout the day; How often do you complain? How often do you express gratitude? Try to complain less, and express gratitude more. The way we talk will eventually change the way we think.

Being sad and depressed feeds our addiction; it gives us an excuse to escape reality. Also, we often blow things out of proportion. But, in truth, we often have quite a lot going for us; and a lot of opportunities in front of us if only we look for them. I think the biggest thing we have to be grateful for is our ability to make new life choices from now on, and our ability to choose the way we think--we can choose to think more positive about ourselves (and about other people) and about life. (Yes, of course, all this with G-d's help, and with the help of associating with the right people. We can't really do it on our own, but with help we can do it).

--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 20 Feb 2012 20:49

...I thought to add a few words to the above tool.

Actually, I hate when people tell me, "Just look at the bright side!" etc.

On the other hand, we do have the power to change our attitudes. I think that in order to acquire a new attitude, we need to acquire a new attitude that is plausible to us. We may have those moments of sudden inspiration, but they often fade just as quickly. Those gradual changes are what last. We might not be able to change dark to light overnight, but we can shift through lighter and lighter shades of grey. Progress. Eventually, we become able to see a bright side to everything. I'll admit that I'm still working on this myself.

--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 21 Feb 2012 12:51

92. Easy does it.

I think part of the addictive personality is that we obsess about almost everything we do. Where are we exerting ourselves--trying to force results. And, where are we over-doing things? (I want to recover, and I want to recover NOW!). A sober mindset, I think, is one of patience. Also, I think a sober mindset is to do whatever we can for today, and be able to leave the rest unfinished for tomorrow. Time takes time.

93. One day at a time.

This, in it's simplest sense, means "don't act out just for today." It's easier to think of not acting

out for one day rather than trying not to act out from now on for the rest of my life. At times, we need to think of even smaller increments--one hour at a time, one minute at a time, and sometimes even one second at a time.

In another sense, "one day at a time" means this: Remember, our acting out is really a SOLUTION, albeit a self-destructive one. We are trying to escape the pain of our restlessness, irritability, and discontent with life--in particular, our resentments and our fears. Resentments is when we are dwelling on the past--what people did or said to us, or what happened. Fears is living in the future--afraid what people will do to me or say to me, or afraid of what will happen to me tomorrow.

I heard a poem which I don't know if I am quoting correctly:

Yesterday is history

Tomorrow is a mystery

All we have is today--

That's why it's called "the present."

One day at a time means to live in the present; to deal with today and only today, because that is the only thing that is within our power. It means to let go of those resentments--what's done is done. And it means to let go of those fears--there is nothing we can do, today, about tomorrow.

I think I heard once (even if I didn't hear it, I think it makes sense): Hashem gives us the Divine Assistance to cope with whatever challenges He gives us, AND He doesn't give us any challenges that we can't overcome. When we dread tomorrow, when we are overwhelmed with fear of the future, it is because we are thinking about a test WHICH WE HAVE NOT RECEIVED YET, or we perhaps will never have to face--therefore, we have not yet been given the Divine Assistance to cope with it.

I may have said this before, and I might say it again (in case anyone is inclined to cross-reference me), but it's worth repeating:

FEAR=False Evidence Appears Real.

Regarding resentments: even if someone honestly did hurt us and we really did not play any part in it--the FIRST time it happened THEY hurt US. Every time we re-live the pain by re-playing the episode in our minds--WE are hurting OURSELVES. (We're letting these people to keep on living, rent-free, in our heads).

--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery
Posted by geshertzarmeod - 21 Feb 2012 12:55

[Eye.nonymous wrote on 21 Feb 2012 12:51:](#)

I think I heard once (even if I didn't hear it, I think it makes sense): Hashem gives us the Divine Assistance to cope with whatever challenges He gives us, AND He doesn't give us any challenges that we can't overcome. When we dread tomorrow, when we are overwhelmed with fear of the future, it is because we are thinking about a test WHICH WE HAVE NOT RECEIVED YET, or we perhaps will never have to face--therefore, we have not yet been given the Divine Assistance to cope with it.

--Elyah

I like that!

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Re: Additional tools for recovery
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 21 Feb 2012 13:01

In your zchus, Gesher, I thought of a similar idea which I think I read once in a Rabbi Pliskin book (if I'm not mistaken):

A lot of people have low self-confidence problems, and they seem to never be able to overcome them. The reason is because their self-image is based on lies: "I'll never be successful, I'm not good at anything, I'm worthless."

So, you can't ever find a solution to a problem which doesn't really exist!

I think there was more to it, but that's all I remember right now.

--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery
Posted by tehillimzuger - 21 Feb 2012 13:31

[Eye.nonymous wrote on 21 Feb 2012 12:51:](#)

Yesterday is history

Tomorrow is a mystery

All we have is today--

That's why it's called "the present."

What about Yossi Green's song:

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The mekor for this song is not clear see [here](#) and [here](#).

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Re: Additional tools for recovery

Posted by geshertzarmeod - 21 Feb 2012 22:48

[Eye.nonymous wrote on 21 Feb 2012 13:01:](#)

In your zchus, Gesher, I thought of a similar idea which I think I read once in a Rabbi Pliskin book (if I'm not mistaken):

--Elyah

me???????

what did I do?

i just said "I like that!"

yeish gorsim

me??????

what did eye do?

eye just said "eye like that"

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Re: Additional tools for recovery

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 22 Feb 2012 13:58

I noticed, I originally thought this list was about 100 tools for recovery. Looks like we've got a lot more to go yet. (Just so there should be no misunderstandings).

I think this remark was supposed to go along with some of the tools already mentioned: Have you ever had a healthy relationship with a healthy person as a result of a lustful advance?

That being said, here's another tool:

94. Keep it simple.

This applies to our program of recovery. The 12 steps are "A simple program of recovery." Simple, but not easy. There's an AA slogan, "The 12 steps are a simple program of recovery for complicated people." (I think I risk being cross-referenced again).

It's not supposed to be COMPLICATED to recover.

However, it's hard to let go of our self-deceit. I think, a litmus test for us, if something has to be explained or justified, it is probably wrong.

We are equally as dishonest, in that same sophisticated and complex way, in placing blame on

others.

I had a maggid shiur once, and I noticed that whenever a talmud answered a question--the longer the talmud kept talking, the more the maggid shiur's face twisted and contorted. I was in that shiur for a couple of years. And the most important thing I learned is--if something is long-winded, it is probably wrong. If something is short and simple and straightforward, there's a chance it is correct.

"Keep it simple," is not only about recovery and a test for self-deceit. It should also be our approach to life. As addicts, we tend to over-complicate things. For example, we have intricate plans and dreams about how we are going to deal with life--what we need to improve our relationship with our wife and children, and especially how we are going to earn a living. The more complicated our ideas, most likely, the more out-of-touch with reality we are. We need to think "what is my next right step," rather than building up giant structures of fantasy and imagination.

When you're only thinking one step ahead, you can't be THAT far off!

I have spent about 15 years trying to be self-employed. I have changed from one profession to another (and back again), I have made all sorts of plots and schemes, both to improve my work and also to design winning advertising campaigns. Now, however, I am looking for a simple job in a simple office where I can just go to work in the morning, go home at night, and get paid at the end of the week (or whatever). Is that the ideal job? No. But it's the next right, and simple, step. After I actually have an income to speak of, I can work on improving things from there. I can take life one step at a time.

--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 23 Feb 2012 13:52

95. This too, shall pass.

When in distress, we want to act out because we feel there is no other way to relieve our pain. Or we feel this "urge" is never going to go away unless we act out. Often, after no more than a good night's sleep, we feel less in the grips of lust, or we feel somehow more hopeful about our circumstances. Sometimes it may take longer.

I read in a sefer by Rebbi Tzaddok (it was probably Tzidkas HaTzadik), that just as there is an appointed time for the ultimate redemption and, no matter what, when this time arrives the redemption will come, so too regarding our suffering and redemption on a personal level. Every thing we suffer from, no matter how small or how large, had a time set for the beginning of that suffering, and there is a time set for the suffering to end. No matter what. And, just as the Jewish people as a whole, if we are worthy, can bring about the ultimate redemption before this appointed time, so too, if an individual is worthy, he can bring about a personal redemption before its appointed time.

--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 24 Feb 2012 08:20

96. Three thinks is the limit.

Don't obsess. Instead, take some constructive action.

--Elyah

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Re: Additional tools for recovery
Posted by tehillimzugger - 24 Feb 2012 08:42

[Eye.nonymous wrote on 23 Feb 2012 13:52:](#)

I read in a sefer by Rebbi Tzaddok (it was probably Tzidkas HaTzadik), that just as there is an appointed time for the ultimate redemption and, no matter what, when this time arrives the redemption will come, so too regarding our suffering and redemption on a personal level. Every thing we suffer from, no matter how small or how large, had a time set for the beginning of that suffering, and there is a time set for the suffering to end. No matter what. And, just as the Jewish people as a whole, if we are worthy, can bring about the ultimate redemption before this appointed time, so too, if an individual is worthy, he can bring about a personal redemption before its appointed time.

--Elyah

amazing thought!!!!

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Re: Additional tools for recovery
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 26 Feb 2012 14:26

Tool 96 "Three thinks is the limit," was a general tool for our approach to life. (Disclaimer: it was

not a license to think about women, or other triggers, 3 times).

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