

Bruce's Battle

Posted by BruceWayne - 17 Jun 2009 14:30

OK guys, it took me a little while but I'm finally up on this part of the forum. Most of you probably know who I am by now, so I won't repeat my story. You can find that and a bunch of other stuff at my original thread here: rehab-my-site.com/guardureyes/forum/index.php?topic=503.0

I will be posting my progress towards 90 clean days almost every day here. Updates will be right before I go to sleep, once the day's victory is secure, or the next morning.

This thread is really for myself. I don't care if no one reads it. It's here to keep me accountable and to help me get there.

So far I have been clean for 4 days. Today will hopefully be number 5.

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Re: Bruce's Battle

Posted by silentbattle - 17 Mar 2010 00:36

However you get there, I hope you find a way that makes you feel happy and satisfied with yourself and your life, in a real way.

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Re: Bruce's Battle

Posted by BruceWayne - 17 Mar 2010 18:38

Dov,

I guess everyone has their own definition of what a normal life is and hence what would be considered unrealistic expectations for that would vary from person to person.

Now to play devil's advocate. While it may be true that people's "own terms" may conflict with those of god/religion/whatever you want to call it, is that not in itself a source of frustration? That they want to do things one way but they are "supposed" to do it another way? Do you think they might be happier if they did things their way instead of the way they are "supposed to"?

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Re: Bruce's Battle

Posted by Dov - 17 Mar 2010 20:27

BW, I cannot answer you as a *GYE-er*, if you really want my own heart on this one, so any official GYE-nick, please close your ears and eyes before reading this...when you are done *not seeing* what I post below, you may then just go on to the *next* post, if there is one. Please don't fire me and don't tell on me to any really, really frum people....especially not to any mormons, pentecostals, or southern baptists. Oops! wrong religion...sorry, sorry. ;D

(close eyes here, please)

OK. I never said that what got me into trouble with lust was that I was violating the halocha. I posted about this point a long time ago to a guy named "chusid", or something (he was primarily interested in exactly what the *issur* of porn was) - it's also why I have the phrase: "I don't really care exactly which *lav* suicide is - there are other reasons why I'm not interested in it!". True, violating the halocha was horrifying and devastating to me. But that didn't stop me from getting worse. That's just a fact.

What eventually stopped me was that I saw **I was really going to lose the life I chose for myself**: a life that included having a conscience, integrity, some kind of 'good'-ness (Torah, etc.), and in which I'd be a **part of something** - like a marriage, community, and a family of my very own, for example. Those were not *religious* choices, per se. It was just me. The fact that any normal religion includes all these things in it's description of healthy living is just a side-issue for me. *I chose them for myself*. Perhaps yiddishkeit helped create those desires within me, perhaps other things did. I think it's irrelevant.

Now within me there was also a childish expectation that all people would adore and revere me and therefore do my will. For example, my wife would please me in every way whenever I

wanted, my kids would be cooperative, and any people I was beholden to in the working world would give me the respect (and the leeway when I deserved no respect) / felt I was entitled to. I also expected to become a gadol b'Torah - and recognized as such. Instead...well, it was beginning to become clear that I was just a regular guy among regular people. Unacceptable! If I wasn't going to be recognized as a gadol b'Torah and tzaddik, could I at least be recognized as a porn star? Sounds really crazy...*is* really crazy...but that's where I was in my desires, for a time. Life wasn't supposed to be like this.

When life was obviously not happening the way I expected it to - mainly cuz every *real* person actually has their **own** will - I needed some pretty powerful coping tools. The best and most reliable one I could find was associated with a part of my body that I could control using lust and gave me tremendous pleasure. To hell with everyone else - I **had it made** for those moments! Problem solved, sort of....

OK. So then Lust - my secret best friend and god - turned on me. And here is where I guess the *real* G-d finally begins to come in to the picture. See, I was accustomed to years of secret self-pleasuring and self-saving via manipulation of others. My wife *couldn't* find out about the things (I rationalized) my dissatisfaction with *her* was making me do. It'd ruin it all, cuz she wouldn't understand - though in my heart *I expected her to understand fully!* Of course she had *no chance* competing against the schmutz already in my head - *those* women appear to have no will of their own, no babies, no *aging*, nor any real life either, of course! They'd always be *mine!* Wow. Now **that** was a 'higher power' I could really hang onto!)

While I was busy keeping my **self** comfortable and managing everything around me to serve that holy end, I was unconsciously building myself up as the center of my universe...and things got screwier and screwier in my life! To be honest, I was shocked about this! After all, I was such a nice guy to everyone and did real great favors for some people, seemed quite selfless at times, learned quite a bit, and was very religious - but it (even Torah/serving Hashem) was still *all about the experience*. The feeling. The "d'veikus". I was at the center of it all! Not G-d, nor His Will. Sorry that I can't explain it any better.

Now, I could have gone on that way forever, I guess. Perhaps many do. Maybe it's really OK for them. It's not that was wrong, immoral, or whatever. But as it turned out, Self-Preservation, as *I saw it*, steamrolled all those nice considerations - *no mas!* Here's how:

I was turning to my drug in progressive ways, and lying like crazy to cover it up. I knew I was not the man my wife, children, co-workers or friends saw, at all. If you suggest that it was all just religious guilt, I say no way. The things I had to do were in no way compatible with a faithful lifestyle as a husband and father. I'd never do any of those things with the real people I knew watching. I discovered the hard way that porn, unbridled self-pleasuring with lust and animal-like

sexuality are simply not compatible with any kind of normal life at all.

Now if you propose that it's all society's fault, I say maybe you could go off to a place where they *live* that way and see how it goes. Really. The communes of the 60's tried it; many societies tried it. The biggest problem - and this is what "*ruined it all*" for me - is that it's all based on self-centeredness. Wills were eventually again at war...the "acceptance" and "free love" of others that they tried to use as a defence to the self-will problem eventually gave way. There is no escape from that fact that every real person has their *own*, differing will. Disunity breeds strife, and there is apparently no fascism for sex...I tried it. The petite dictatore himself! It turned out that you really do get more with honey than you do with vinegar, and no addict I know has real honey. Cash is a poor honey substitute, if you know what I mean. We all went through this failure process, in some small way. That's what brings many people to recovery. Looking for a life that works. And that is precisely why the focus on *G-d* and on *other* people than myself is **the** answer to me and so many other addicts of all kinds. It has much less to do with religion, and more to do with the abject failure of self-centeredness in making life work. Without working the steps in my real life, there is no ego defaltion for me, just more quiet desperation. I ain't goin back *there*, ever.

If you want your life to be yet another experiment in getting the self-centered approach to work, I say: go for it. But if it has been working pretty well till now, then why are you here? Why are you displeased? Were you really happy before, and came to Recovery just for more kicks? If your angst is really about "staying clean" for the sake of "staying clean", I have no answers for you. I tried that approach and got nowhere but deeper into hell.

(OK, the folks for whom sanity seems useless unless it's wearing a shreimel, may open their eyes, now!)

Have a nice day, BW!

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Re: Bruce's Battle

Posted by BruceWayne - 18 Mar 2010 03:01

How do you have the time to write so much?

And I'm not self-centered....of course, a self-centered person would say that too....

I want to be free of all that junk for the same reason you did--so I can have a normal life. All I said before was that people's definition of "normal" varies (although mine is pretty in line with yours).

I don't think that removing god from the equation makes a person self centered any more than an atheist or agnostic is necessarily self centered. They don't believe because they feel that there isn't enough compelling evidence. That doesn't mean they are self centered and choose to ignore god so they can do every sin in the book and then some (maybe that's so in some cases). But there are many atheists and agnostics who would be generally classified as "good people". One does not need to be religious or spiritual to be considered good (I'll just preempt your point about there is no good if it is not defined by some higher power...I disagree because pretty much anybody in the world will tell you that murder or theft are wrong, and these rules can be arrived at logically).

But I'm digressing. Back to the point. I don't need religion to guide me away from addiction. I can do it without religion/spirituality. Sounds like you did too, in a way.

I think where we differ is this: to you it's not about being "frummer", but to me it has absolutely nothing whatsoever to do with being "frum". It's just a matter of degree, I think. But I think the basic idea is the same.

Whatever. I'd rather not pontificate to no end about a point that doesn't really matter. What matters is the bottom line of getting to sobriety, not how you got there.

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Re: Bruce's Battle

Posted by silentbattle - 18 Mar 2010 16:02

[dov wrote on 17 Mar 2010 20:27:](#)

Now within me there was also a childish expectation that all people would adore and revere me and therefore do my will. For example, my wife would please me in every way whenever I wanted, my kids would be cooperative, and any people I was beholden to in the working world would give me the respect (and the leeway when I deserved no respect) / felt I was entitled to. I also expected to become a gadol b'Torah - and recognized as such. Instead...well, it was beginning to become clear that I was just a regular guy among regular people. Unacceptable! If I wasn't going to be recognized as a gadol b'Torah and tzaddik, could I at least be recognized as a porn star? Sounds really crazy...*is* really crazy...but that's where I was in my desires, for a time. Life wasn't supposed to be like this.

Can I take a stab at translating this into the version that we use in our own heads, that's really the same thing, but sounds so much more palatable (which is why we let ourselves get away with it)? Please tell me if I'm following you - we tell ourselves that we want to feel wanted, needed, *special*. It's a natural desire, everyone wants that, right? problem is, I'm not getting it in the rest of my life, so i need to find *some* area where I can feel that...

Am I following you, or just making stuff up? ;D

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Re: Bruce's Battle

Posted by Dov - 18 Mar 2010 23:57

[silentbattle wrote on 18 Mar 2010 16:02:](#)

[dov wrote on 17 Mar 2010 20:27:](#)

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Yes, there is tremendous warmth and acceptance that we (sickly) find in schmutz, no question about it, SB. And we tend to crave that so much. But our survival mechanism itself poisons us, in the end, and draws us deeper and deeper into stuff that *separates* us from everybody else! Lust separates us from others in so many ways, on the inside (in our own hearts) and on the outside (through our behavior).

Life *is* supposed to be grand and gorgeous - just not *on my terms*. I *do* need to be special and great - for each one of us *is*! But not necessarily in the things that we expect.

The glory of being a ben Torah, a husband, a tatty, an eved Hashem was definitely *not* the way I expected it to be, at all. And I tried to control it all and run the show to make it at that game - and when I failed I usually ran to my schmutz to make things feel right. I could be a King over *there*...a real stud, in my imagination.

Pathetic, really.

Nu. We can all laugh at ourselves sometimes...Hashem loves us anyway, and perhaps He chuckles the way we chuckle (inside) when *our* kiddies flop on their tooshies trying to walk - how clumsy they are and how persistent! Gevalt! Hashem - save us from **ourselves!**

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Re: Bruce's Battle
Posted by BruceWayne - 18 Apr 2010 19:16

Hey, why'd you guys let me slip all the way to Page 3?

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Re: Bruce's Battle
Posted by Dov - 18 Apr 2010 23:02

What!?!? I've been slaving away posting inane pseudopsychobabble for the past page or so and this is what you say?

well...it sure is shockingly nice to see you contributing to this otherwise forsaken thread. Hope to see more of you here!

PS. Howya doin?

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Re: Bruce's Battle
Posted by BruceWayne - 19 Apr 2010 02:12

next question?

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Re: Bruce's Battle
Posted by silentbattle - 19 Apr 2010 04:11

Ouch. Know what, though? It's great to have you back, no matter what.

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Re: Bruce's Battle
Posted by Dov - 19 Apr 2010 08:28

How about you ask some questions, for a change?

Pffffttt!

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Re: Bruce's Battle
Posted by BruceWayne - 27 May 2010 16:20

Bump.

My, how the forum has changed since I was last here.

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Re: Bruce's Battle

Posted by silentbattle - 27 May 2010 16:22

In what ways? You mean, the layout?

Welcoem back, bro! how are you?

Been jamming?

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Re: Bruce's Battle

Posted by cleareyes613@gmail.com - 27 May 2010 17:06

Hey its BruceWayne! Nice to hear from u.

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