How do I know if I'm really an addict?
Posted by withgdshelp - 07 Nov 2009 19:44

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Hi everyone.

This group has been a great help to me. I found it within hours after my last "fall", and decided that I needed to do something about it this time.

I just updated the chart - 11 days now.

I'm not sure if I'm really an *addict* or not. In the past, I have routinely gone weeks or even months without "falling". I know it's a sin - although I have heard many orthodox rabbis tell me that "it's not so bad". (They don't believe in the kabbala).

Anyway, how would I know if i'm an addict? I've been using the computer in a room alone as often as I did before I signed up here - with no "falls".

Maybe it doesn't matter if I was really addicted or not - I was never addicted to pork and I stopped that too! ;D

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Re: How do I know if I'm really an addict?
Posted by the.guard - 07 Nov 2009 20:10

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Dear withgdshelp,

I am the admin of this forum. Welcome to our community! Once you've arrived, there's no turning back. Everyone here will just grab a hold of you and pull you up, up, up!

11 days is a great start. Keep up the good work! As far as your question as to what constitutes an addiction, see **this article** where Rabbi Twerski explains how one can get addicted to this from a single use! Even if someone can go without it for a long time, he is still addicted if specific situations make him feel powerless to resist it even though it goes against his morals and inner desires. See also **this page**.

Also, as Rabbi Twerski once asked someone who asked your question, *"if you're not an addict, why don't you just stop doing it?"*

Scientific studies have shown that it takes 90 days to change a neural thought pattern that was ingrained in the brain through addictive behaviors. Did you join the **90 day chart** on-line? Sign up **over here**...

Make sure to install a strong filter. it will be almost impossible to break free of this while having all the garbage within a mouse click away. See **this page** for one good filter option, along with instructions on how to install it best - and give away the password to our "filter Gabai"... See **this page** for another 20 (or so) filter ideas and information...

We get cries for help every day, by e-mail and on the forum. *Tzuras Rabim Chatzi Nechama*
And that is why we created the GYE handbooks (links below). If you read them well, from beginning to end, slowly, and try to implement what you read, you will find the answers within them to enable you to completely turn your life around. **You're worth it.**

Also, join the **daily Chizuk e-mail lists** to get fresh chizuk every day, and post away on this forum. You will get tons of daily Chizuk and support. This disease can't be beat alone. It works best when you get out of isolation!

GuardYourEyes also offers various free anonymous phone conferences, where you can join a group of other frum Yidden, along with an experienced sponsor. See **this page** for four different options. Our conferences are taking place daily, throughout the week... This would be a tremendous step in the right direction for you and help you learn freedom from this addiction. Not only will you learn the secret of the 12-Steps - which is known to be the world's most powerful program for beating addiction having helped millions world wide, but joining the group will be another way of GETTING OUT OF ISOLATION and connecting with others who are going through what you are.

Let me tell you a little about the two GuardYourEyes handbooks. They lay down the cornerstone and foundation of our work, and they make our network much more effective and helpful for people.

You see, until now, people would often get "lost" when coming to our website, not knowing what tips and techniques to try. For example, a beginner wouldn't jump straight into therapy or 12-Step groups, while on the other hand, someone whose addiction was more advanced wouldn't be helped by the standard tips of "making fences" putting in "filters" etc... So it was essential to develop a handbook which details all the techniques and tools to dealing with this addiction in progressive order. Now with these handbooks, anyone can read through and see what steps they've tried already, and if those steps haven't worked, they can continue on through the handbook where the steps become progressively more powerful and "addiction-oriented".

And the second handbook, called the "Attitude" handbook, can also help anyone, no matter what level of addiction they may have. Often people write in to us saying that had they only known the proper outlook & attitude that we try and share on the GuardYourEyes network when they were younger, they would have never fallen into an addiction in the first place! So we hope that through this handbook, many addictions will be prevented.

The handbooks are PDF files, set up as eBooks, and they have bookmarks and hyper-links in the Index, to make them easy to navigate.

Note: You might want to print them out to read away from the computer. Keep in mind though, that if you do this, you won't be able to click on the many web links in the articles. But you can always come back to them later. The truth is, it's anyway good to go through the whole handbook once without clicking on links, just to get an overview of all the tools available. Once you did that, you can start again from tool #1 and read each tool through more carefully, click the links and study each technique and assess whether you have tried it fully yet or not...

Right click on the links below and select "Save Link/Target As" to download the handbooks to your computer.

1) The GuardYourEyes Handbook

This Handbook details 18 suggested tools and techniques, in progressive order, beginning with the most basic and fundamental approaches to dealing with this addiction, and continuing down through increasingly earnest and powerful methods. For the first time, we can gauge our level of addiction and find the appropriate tools for our particular situation. And no matter what level our addiction may have advanced to, we will be able to find the right tools to break free in this handbook!

2) The GuardYourEyes Attitude

The Attitude Handbook details 30 basic principles to help us maintain the proper attitude and perspective on this struggle. Here are some examples: Understanding what we are up against, what it is that Hashem wants from us, how we can use this struggle for tremendous growth, how we can deal with bad thoughts, discovering how to redirect the power of our souls, understanding that every little bit counts, learning how to bounce back up after a fall, and so on and so forth...

May Hashem be with you!

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Re: How do I know if I'm really an addict?
Posted by kanesher - 07 Nov 2009 20:12

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withgdshelp wrote on 07 Nov 2009 19:44**:**

Hi everyone.

This group has been a great help to me. I found it within hours after my last "fall", and decided that I needed to do something about it this time.

I just updated the chart - 11 days now.

I'm not sure if I'm really an *addict* or not. In the past, I have routinely gone weeks or even months without "falling". I know it's a sin - although I have heard many orthodox rabbis tell me that "it's not so bad". (They don't believe in the kabbala).

Achi, congrats on getting clean. But I've got to take issues - orthodox rabbis, whom acknowledge that authority of the Shulchan Aruch? We're talking Shulchan Aruch here - now, I don't mean fire and brimestone here, we're all addicts and all fighting - but the basic point that as far yiddishkiet goes this is a problem -

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I'm struggling as well - but this Halacha has it's sources not in Kabbalah, but in the Gemara in Niddah-

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Perhaps they spoke within the context of marriage - which is equally assur, but the Ramah later on in Siman 25 permits ???? ??? ????? occasionally- which there is a machlokes if that's consider ????? as halachically it is considered ????? - some extend it to any context of marriage - with which both opionions the poskim disagree with dramatically, many based on the Zohar (The Pischey Teshuva and friends) but as far the final Halacha R' Moshe forbids it in the sharpest terms, save for a couple whom have a serious medical danger in pregnancy (???? ????) or when there is absolutely no way the marriage can continue without it. R' Shlomo Zalman disagreed sharply with R' Moshe, and I know of couple whom he instructed to separate for six months and not be ???? ????.

Regardless, not in the context of marriage there is absolutely no Halachic disagreement as far as the intention the above quoted Shulchan Aruch, which is not based on the Zohar.

Again, I'm struggling too. Just want to clarify what we're up against.

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Re: How do I know if I'm really an addict?
Posted by withgdshelp - 07 Nov 2009 21:04

I'm no Torah scholar - but I thought the only Torah violation was "pulling out" when with your wife?

Anyway, it doesn't matter to me if it is a d'rabbanan. I wouldn't give in to a craving for a chicken and cheese sandwich because it's "only" d'rabbanan.

A sin is a sin and I'm done sinning.

Still in all - I probably would not have been as motivated to change had I not seen what the zohar and the chassidic writings have to say about this sin.

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Re: How do I know if I'm really an addict?
Posted by the.guard - 07 Nov 2009 22:12

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Dear withgdshelp,

Please read through the following page, top to bottom:

What Torah commandments are involved in gazing at photos of undressed unmarried gentile women?

And this page may also be of interest:

Why do Chazal use such harsh terms in regards to these areas?

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Re: How do I know if I'm really an addict?
Posted by bochur28 - 08 Nov 2009 01:53

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those rabbis are obviously not orthodox! maybe they look orthodox - conservative 'rabbis' also wear yarmulkhas(as do the lady 'rabbis') - the gemora says beferush that it's a chiyuv misa to be motzi zera levatalah!!!

Or maybe they misunderstood you.

Also, it's apikorsus(heresy) to not believe in Kaballah. Kaballah is a part of torah(the most inner, secret part, actually) If it was accepted by the Gra, every chassidic posek, the rema, shulchn

aruch, reb yonason eyebeshutz and rav yaakov emden(now if chassidim and misnagdim, Reb yonason and Rav yaakov agree on something, you know it's true) the chofetz chaim, brisker rov, chazon ish, chasam sofer, even the more modern rabbonim who were into secular studies like rabbi J.B. soloveitchik, etc.., then that's some chutzpah to not accept it! So if they dont accept kaballah, they're certainly not rabbis.

Maybe they're just am haratzim - be dan them lechaf zchus.

Also, the issue of hotza'as zera is mideoraysoh when one is not married - after one has been mekayam peru urvu, there's some shitos that hold it's medrabanan.

Haover al divrei chachamim chayav misa - doesn't change a thing.

Maysoh er ve'onan is more chamur, but so what? this is not some hoicher kabalistic minhag; it's pashut gemora and shulchan aruch!

As for those 'rabbis' - gemora says 'gadol hachtio yoser min hahorgo - one who makes others sin is worse than a murderer. If they dont know any better they should keep their mouths shut, seriously.

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Re: How do I know if I'm really an addict?
Posted by the.guard - 08 Nov 2009 12:13

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Dear Bochur28, this holy Jew recognizes the truth of what you are saying... He wrote:

Anyway, it doesn't matter to me if it is a d'rabbanan. I wouldn't give in to a craving for a chicken and cheese sandwich because it's "only" d'rabbanan.

A sin is a sin and I'm done sinning.

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Re: How do I know if I'm really an addict?
Posted by kanesher - 08 Nov 2009 13:08

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bochur28 wrote on 08 Nov 2009 01:53**:**

Also, the issue of hotza'as zera is mideoraysoh when one is not married - after one has been mekayam peru urvu, there's some shitos that hold it's medrabanan.

Youch! Don't jump down his throat! Let's clarify in an accepting, as Guard said.

But even that I am curious about - who holds it's a derabban after a peru v'revu? I know a bit about this, and perhaps a bit more, and have never seen such a shita considered anywhere in the poskim. I mean, it that were true, there would a lot more makom to be mekel with ???? ???? for a couple with children...and that's a chiluk I've never heard of. I'd very much like to know where I can find that.

Perhaps you mean the Tosfos Rid in Yevamos, but that is before and after marriage and merely shitas R' Meir, which of course we don't pasken like...

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Withgdshelp-

Absolutely, and Kol HaKavod. I'm pretty sure it's a Torah Commandment even then, but as you said - that academic. But I am an academic.
Welcome abroad!

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Re: How do I know if I'm really an addict?
Posted by levite - 08 Nov 2009 14:11

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great work kenesher a talmid chochem in our midst! im a chassid so to me pgam habris is prob the worst thing you can get to! The zohar even says there is no teshuva for it but even before zohar its obvious from chazal not only its bad its the worst i once heard someone asking if so why doea it not say in the torah and I will answer this with something i heard in the name of reb shimshon pinchus zl

Reb shimshon ask why is it that tefillah being one of the basic day to day needs of a torah jew why does the torah not speak about it specificly? he explains with a moshol, when a person gets married he writes a kesubah he takes on himself to finace his wife to cloth her etc nowhere in the kesibah does he promise to speak to her?! why because its obvious its the start of everything, everyone understands that if they are getting married they will talk and it does not have to be written. so tefillah is the same its the base without talking nothing starts its so obvious it does not have to be written

The same goes to p'gam habris its yesod the foundation the torah does not state the obvious as bilam said "their gd hates promiscuity" the foundation of a jew is kedusha so let us face the common enemy knowing the enemy for what it is!

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Re: How do I know if I'm really an addict?
Posted by the.guard - 08 Nov 2009 14:46

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as bilam said "their gd hates promiscuity"

Very true, but also note that Bilam said:

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See Rashi there :-)

Ah, it's good to be a Jew!

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Re: How do I know if I'm really an addict?
Posted by the.guard - 08 Nov 2009 19:51

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Hi GuardUrEyes,

It's like any other lo taaseh. Sometimes I have a craving for treif food, or a craving to break shabbat. Thank G-d, I haven't done either of those things in many years.

Sometimes I also have a craving to waste seed. I did that a few times recently. I decided to stop, so I stopped.

That's why I said I wasn't sure if I was addicted. I grew up secular, I had years of open access to pornography. Honestly, that stuff doesn't turn me on anymore - it never really did. We looked at it as teenagers constantly - because we were curious about the female body. Now, I feel horrible that one of Hashem's creations would use her body in such a disgusting manner. All the more so if any of them are Jews, G-d forbid.

There are other things online that would even be considered "kosher videos" by many people that can pose a problem for me. I'm not even sure that your filter would block them.

By admitting my sin here, and keeping track of it on the chart, I have very few cravings anymore. It has helped a ton.

I realize that wasting time can lead to wasting seed - but it's not the same thing. Maybe after I've gone 90 days without wasting seed, I can try to stop watching mindless (but kosher) stuff online, and learn Torah every waking second that I'm not working or spending with my family.

I just wanted to understand the goals here. I don't want to be credited (even anonymously) with "no bitul zman" when I am m'vatel lots of zman at this point in my life.

Honestly, that stuff doesn't turn me on anymore - it never really did.

Dear withgdshelp,

From what you write, it seems you are not an addict in the real sense of the word. Especially if you can compare this to breaking Shabbos or eating treif... You are fortunate indeed that this is no longer an "option" for you in your mind. You see, for most of us on this forum, it is very different than "eating treif". While we would never consider eating pork, somehow we fell into these powerful desires and can't seem to break free of them without **a lot of help**.

However, I beg you to be aware and honest with yourself. If you see that you cannot control yourself and end up falling again before 90 days, then you are probably an addict (in denial)... in which case, you will need the tools of **the GYE handbook** to find a way out of this mess...

May Hashem be with you!

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Re: How do I know if I'm really an addict?
Posted by withgdshelp - 09 Nov 2009 13:32

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guard-

I plan to be very very honest with myself as well as everyone else here. If I make it the rest of my 90 days (and beyond, iy"h) then everyone here will know about it, because my name will be on your Wall of Honor.

If the opposite, G-d forbid, you'll also know, because I will honestly update my progress no matter what happens (b'li neder).

Of course, as you say in the introduction - Wall of Honor only helps if you're very honest with yourself!

I still have a desire to look at certain videos - that many people would consider totally pareve - but that drive me to a mental state of near insanity, feeling an impossible urge to "you know what".

In the past, I have given into these ideas -

#1 "maybe I can just watch a little bit, and stop before I go overboard"

#2 "maybe I'll just watch right before I have a kosher outlet with my wife"

#3 "it's been a long time, maybe I can just take a quick peek - you know, just to check if I still have this very strange turn-on"

It is obvious to me now that these are all statements of the yetzer hara.

Just being able to put all of this in writing and share it with others has given me lots of chizuk! In the middle of a spiritual test, the things that the yetzer hara whispers in your ear sound credible.

As soon as I type them out for other holy Jews to read - it becomes so obvious how silly the argument sounds!

In fact, just a minute ago, I almost gave in to #3 - but as soon as I started to type it up here, I realized how idiotic that sounded! So - still clean!

SHOMER HA BRIS! I LOVE YOU TATTELE B'HIMMELLLL

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Re: How do I know if I'm really an addict?
Posted by the.guard - 09 Nov 2009 14:00

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I still have a desire to look at certain videos - that many people would consider totally pareve - but that drive me to a mental state of near insanity, feeling an impossible urge to "you know what".

This sentence of yours gives away the addiction... You see, most people can "drink like a gentleman" and lust a little and just "move on"... And addict can not. He has developed an "allergy" to alcohol or lust. He goes to pieces over the "first sip" and can't stop. That is why is it great that you recognize this and stay far away from that "first sip". **Kol Hakavod!**

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Re: How do I know if I'm really an addict?
Posted by Kedusha - 09 Nov 2009 14:16

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guardureyes wrote on 09 Nov 2009 14:00**:**

I still have a desire to look at certain videos - that many people would consider totally pareve - but that drive me to a mental state of near insanity, feeling an impossible urge to "you know what".

This sentence of yours gives away the addiction... You see, most people can "drink like a gentleman" and lust a little and just "move on"... And addict can not. He has developed an "allergy" to alcohol or lust. He goes to pieces over the "first sip" and can't stop. That is why is it

great that you recognize this and stay far away from that "first sip". **Kol Hakavod!**

In other words, just as an alcoholic needs to avoid that first sip, we need to avoid that first slip!

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