

Step 1- Recognition of Lack

“We admitted we were powerless over (alcohol) and that our lives has become unmanageable.” (Step 1, AA)

“Each person must say: the entire world was only created for me. If the world was created for me, I must see and contemplate at every moment the rectification of the world, to fill the lack (chisaron) of the world, to pray on its behalf...” (L”M 1:5,1)

Everything lacks. Everyone lacks. Not everyone recognizes, or senses their particular lack. The addict feels the lack. For innumerable reasons the addicted subject is forced to acknowledge the lack. For some it is the result of an event (i.e trauma); for some it is the language of the body (i.e genetics); some never had a chance (i.e abuse). For most it is the constitutive lack that makes us who we are. As creatures (creation/evolution) we are imperfect. We are formed in and through the particular lack that defines our particular mode of being.

“The Deaf Beggar blessed them: You should be like me; that is, you should live a good life, like mine. You think that I’m deaf, but actually, I’m not deaf at all. It is just that the entire world does not amount to anything to me, that I should listen to its deficiencies. All sounds come from deficiencies, since everyone cries out about what he is lacking. Even the world’s joys are due to deficiencies, since one only rejoices when his lack is filled . . .” (Rebbe Nachman’s Stories, The Seven Beggars, Day 2)

We fill the lack, hoping to quiet its murmuring. We eat, we drink, we buy, we consume. Often enough the sound of the lack is silenced, the void filled, enabling the subject a life of sufficiency and satisfaction.

For the addict, shattered by the crack at the base of being, the sound of the lack is deafening. Unable to hear the words of comfort and strength, the lack grows, insatiable, hungry, desiring, yearning (*bnei heichala di’ksifin*). The addict does not crave for the poison; the poison quiets the craving. Perpetually wanting, the lack yawns, spreads- demanding the magic elixir, the heroic substance (heroin from the latin *heros*) that promises to momentarily fill the void.

“It is known that all lack that comes upon the individual comes as a result of the shattering...” (L”M 1:90)

Recognizing the unfillable lack, the failed attempts at filling the void that cannot be filled, the addict is forced to admit, to confess: I am imperfect, I do not have power, I am lack.

Fulfillment must come from elsewhere, from beyond.

"It is known that whatever a person lacks, the lack is in the Divine presence...however, when a person becomes aware of this, that the lack is above and below, this will certainly cause pain and sadness, and it will prevent them from divine service with joy. Therefore one must answer/return to oneself, what am I? what is my life that the King Himself is telling me His lack, is there any greater honor? From this one may come to great joy, a renewal of spirit..."
(L" M 1:89)