

9 clean days!!! Not sure what to tell my son

Posted by Yitzhar - 21 Feb 2013 12:58

I'm VERY happy but not going to let it get to my head, because I don't want to become complacent and let my guard down. Yesterday was VERY hard for me because I was at a seminar all day with many very good looking individuals there. What do you all suggest doing when one is in a class, or anywhere else for a prolonged time and there is waaay too much eyecandy?

My other question is this. My 17 year old son, who's been in drug rehab for the past year (as Baruch Hashem, I've made it to 9 clean days! well as losing his mother during the year) and is doing AMAZINGLY well, not only emotionally but even spiritually. He's surrounded 24/7 by caring, wonderful people who are there to help him heal. And healing he is. They're going through the 12 steps (in a way). And even more amazingly (connected, I suppose, to the 12 steps) he came back to Yiddishkeit, B"H, he has lots of emuna, he davens, lays tefillin, keeps shabbos, wants to learn. A huge nes. THANK YOU, HASHEM! He told me (also a nes, that he opened up to me) that he met a girl on a bus a few weeks ago, and on Shabbos, went to meet her and told me he "made out" with her. Was he telling me because he wants me to help him stop? Wants me to be his father and talk to him? It's so hard for me to do that with him, because he's very argumentative and most of the time, I feel that (with him and my second son, but not my other 2 kids) whatever I do or say to them, it's the wrong thing, and I always get slapped upside the head in the end (figuratively speaking, that is) which is a whole other problem in and of itself, but I gave him one of Gila Manolson's books (he likes to read, and it's a quick, easy and enjoyable read) about intimacy. That's my way of "talking" to him. It's the easy way out (a cop out?) but she explains it much better than I ever could.

Today, he told me he wants to get a "smart" phone, as he's being let out 2 shabboes a week now, and he's coming to the end of his tipul and he's being acclimated to the "real world" more and more. He's said a few times over the past year that when he gets out, he wants to get a phone, but a kosher phone, because he sees how one can get addicted to an iPhone and being aware as he is to addictions, he wanted to be careful. Now, he's changing his story.

I'm not sure how to talk to him about this. He saw I was not happy about the idea, but we didn't have time to talk (good thing, because I wanted to ask you guys what you think. It's kind of hard, as you don't know him, but you might have some insight.)

I guess it will help alot if I go in there showing him that my phone is filtered and monitored, but I don't really want to tell him, because I don't want him to start thinking that I'm a sex addict or anything crazy like that, and as he's so smart and insightful, I'm sure he'll put 2 and 2 together. But the main problem is, I'm having a really hard time clicking on "filters" and actually going

through with what I need to do. What am I going to lose out on? How will I ever get over being totally frustrated not being able to do what I (think I) want to do??? It's so scary.

Any advice?

Thanks.

And have an meaningful and easy fast, and a freilichen purim.

Love,

Yitzhar.

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Re: 9 clean days!!! Not sure what to tell my son
Posted by alexeliezer - 22 Feb 2013 00:16

I can't read your son's mind to know why he told you about the girl.

In general, a parent should only enter a teenager's private life when invited. You can ask him if he's seen her again and gently pry, helping him determine how he feels about it. He'll let you in as far as he wants to and is comfortable with. He will detect if you are not comfortable talking about it. Your best bet is to be accepting and loving, because at the end of the day, you can't stop it.

Regarding the smart phone, obviously it would be best for him (and you) not to have one. But seeing them everywhere, they have become somewhat of a "need" especially among teens. You can remind him that the internet, and even texting, can become an addiction. Not even porn. The whole internet. Realize that if you set up a filter, you become the bad guy. "What's wrong with facebook?"

Filters and accountability software are required by the gedolei hador. So the fact that you are

following their advice with your smartphone doesn't necessarily mean that you're addicted. You're simply following *daas Torah*.

Keep davening!

Alex

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Re: 9 clean days!!! Not sure what to tell my son
Posted by Yitzhar - 22 Feb 2013 01:16

Thanks for your very spot-on reply.

I want to get a filter or whatever for my phone (and my computers) and I guess as "annoying" as Rimon is (for my computers, it probably doesn't do enough.

But I see there are so many options, a few different solutions that seem to do the same, or are they all the same with different names? Some block, some report, etc. Do I need them all? Money is VERY tight now, so I'd need one of the free or almost free solutions. Every time I go with the intention of doing something about my phone, I get overwhelmed and discouraged. I haven't seen or heard anything definitive, although I'm sure it's been discussed. Maybe you can point me in the direction of clarity?

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Re: 9 clean days!!! Not sure what to tell my son
Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 22 Feb 2013 01:25

Check out Venishmartem.com, GYE's filter site. You will find all sorts of options and help there.

Chazak!

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