

Alone at night

Posted by kavanah - 27 Nov 2013 11:35

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So the past 2 days were easier, but last night was a little rough. I was too tired to use my mind for anything, but not tired enough to really sleep. I tried some exercise till my arms hurt, and then I laid in bed trying to sleep.

As I'm sure all of us can relate, this is a real danger zone. I didn't act out, and I was pretty successful in controlling my mind, but not as well as I could/should have. I'm also worried that this will get worse as right now I'm only 2 days clean.

This nighttime frustration has also been a bad place in the past when my wife was available to me- I've often woken her up and explained that I need her. It's inevitably led to one or both of us being frustrated/upset.

Any advice for what to do in that situation?

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Re: Alone at night

Posted by kavanah - 27 Nov 2013 14:24

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Also, I see that my past behavior of waking my wife up is coming from the same distorted worldview as my other mistakes. Next time around, I include resorting to waking her up as something like a "fall"... maybe not so bad to restart the count, but still, it's not right and I see that.

My question here is about advice at night when there's nothing but you and your mind.

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Re: Alone at night

Posted by Dr.Watson - 27 Nov 2013 17:32

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What's wrong with there being nothing but you and your mind? It's very important to like yourself enough for you to be ok spending time with yourself.

Self-esteem aside, there's plenty you can do in that situation. Most obvious is learning. There's always a nice Jewish book around or even an online Shiur you can listen to.

[www.torahanytime.com/](http://www.torahanytime.com/)

Or you could read a novel or listen to the radio in bed till you're tired.

We're really lucky to have such patient wives. If me wife woke me up in the middle of the night for that, I would be so angry that neither of us would get to sleep for a long time. You should be really grateful.

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Re: Alone at night  
Posted by kavanah - 27 Nov 2013 17:44

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Thanks. Can't say I'd be angry if my wife ever did that... dunno, I think I'd be thrilled, but definitely, it has made her angry when I've done it in the past, and then that makes me angry, and we both end up laying awake and frustrated.

100%

I'd like to hear more what you think about being ok spending time with myself. When I have ideas, projects, learning, a book, something- it's fine. But when it's just me, well I get bored and the mind starts drifting to the most easily-accessible excitement... I've tried meditation too, and sometimes that helps, but not always.

Maybe relying on distractions is okay... but another part of that is I can't make noise or turn on the light less it wake my wife up. So then I'd need to go to the other room, and it ends up being a back and forth of thinking I'm tired enough to go to sleep, realizing I'm not and needing a distraction, and so on...

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Re: Alone at night  
Posted by Dr.Watson - 27 Nov 2013 17:54

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I'm not a therapist but I think being happy spending time with yourself, no distractions is important. It's a good indicator of self-esteem. How do you think your self-esteem is? Would you benefit from working on it?

You really don't see why being woken up in the middle of the night would make her angry?

I very often listen to the radio for a while before going to sleep. It won't disturb your wife. You don't need the light on and you can use earphones. So you lie back relaxing listening to the radio, (talk or classical music) not thinking about whether you'll sleep or not. If you become tired enough, then you turn off the radio and go to sleep.

There are also muscle-relaxation exercises you can try

And of course, daven to Hashem that you should have a good night's sleep.

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Re: Alone at night  
Posted by kavanah - 27 Nov 2013 18:01

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Thanks! I'll give headphones a shot.

[Dr. Watson wrote:](#)

You really don't see why being woken up in the middle of the night would make her angry?

Can't say I relate to it from my perspective, I'd say hallel if she'd wake me up for sex, but we are different people with different chemistry/desires and it makes total sense to be upset when one person forces their desires on another.

Like I said, I view that as part of what I need to work on, it's all in the same boat of letting the lust/selfishness takeover our consideration of others/Hashem/etc. She is totally correct to be upset about it.  
Of course I do

Headphones are a great idea

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Re: Alone at night

Posted by cordnoy - 27 Nov 2013 19:46

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I wouldn't advise spending time with yourself in your present matzav.

I know the feeling good and well of waking up wife.

it never ends up pretty.

should be avoided at all costs.

Like I am saying to myself, we need ultimately to learn that we can live without sex...not forever, just for this moment.

Try not getting into bed until you are tired enough to fall asleep.

With you all the way.

b'hatzlachah

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Re: Alone at night

Posted by Fortunate Man - 28 Nov 2013 07:44

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Certainly one needs to be respectful of one's wife's need for rest and comfort, and not be gozel sheina when she is sleeping.

At the same time, we know that Chazal employ the phrase "pas b'salo" in referring to the reciprocal conjugal relationship. Elsewhere does the pasuk say [Parshas Vayeishiv 39:6], regarding Yosef, Potifar, and Eishis Potifar: "V'lo ito m'uma ki im halechem asher hu ochel." Namely that Potifar gave Yosef free reign over his entire household, except for his (Potifar's) own bread, which he himself alone enjoyed. Rashi says "V'hee ishto, b'lashon nakiah" -- i.e. Potifar's wife. She was his, and his alone, to enjoy. That is Mr. and Mrs. Potifar, to the exclusion of anyone outside the marital bond. Not that she held by that restriction obviously, but that's beside the point.

Then, vayter in Chumash it says in Parshas Eikev (8:3): "Ki lo al halechem l'vado y'chiyeh ha'adam, ki al kol motza pi HaShem." Not by bread alone does man live but by that which emanates from the Mouth of HaShem.

So l'ma'aseh we see that there is both a symbiotic relationship between devar HaShem and pas b'salo. You are absolutely not wrong in desiring a conjugal union with your wife. Yaakov Avinu even tells his meshugineh shveir, Lavan harasha [Parshas Vayeitzei 29:21]: "Hava es ishti ... v'avo eileiha" -- "Give me my wife (your daughter) so I can have bi'ah with her." And lest we think that the Torah was being ambiguous on the subject, the pasuk tells us two verses later (29:23): "vayaveh otah eilav, vayavo eileiha."

The Torah does not use a mystical lashon of, say, "Give me my bershert so that I can achieve ruchniustic shleimus with her; so that I can become a neshama shleimah, instead of a palga neshama; so that I can achieve oneness; or become a true eved HaShem by being m'shamesh her.

The Torah tells us exactly what is going on here, albeit in relatively clean language. It is we, in our generation, who try to obfuscate the metzius of what is taking place. It is we who think there is something unseemly by what Yaakov is doing. But the Torah is conveying to us that there was nothing filthy, degrading or trashy about spousal intimacy.

Obviously our wives are not our fantasy objects. And like I counsel all my young men who come to me for marriage and relationship counseling, foreplay does not begin when you close the door. It begins the morning of, or the day before, when you plant the emotional seed, or spark the erotic flame. And the flirtation/seduction continues throughout the day with phone calls, text messaging, surprise notes or cards, flowers delivered, etc.

L'ma'aseh that dish is metzamek v'yafeh lo. You need to bake it slowly, adding just the right amount of seasoning, at just the right time, and let it simmer. You can heat up the flame from time to time with a phone call, or stopping by her place of work and taking her aside, and telling her something sweet, loving and intimate. You leave, and the heat dies down a bit. But it still simmers. Then you text her a few hours later something really loving and sweet.

I understand the frustration of having a wife who always seems to be tired, or just wants to be intimate on her schedule, like you're booking an appointment. It definitely aggravates shalom bayis, and then that maybe serves as an excuse for acting out inappropriately on a website. Sometimes shalom bayis necessitates her being available to her husband, even when she is doing it more as a chesed than as an act of passion. In those instances, though, that is her saving her husband from sin.

That might be a cheshbon that you need to negotiate between you and your Rav on one hand, with him guiding her on the importance of setting the table when you are hungry. She might not be eating, per se, because she is ravenous, but can sit with you and enjoy the meal out of love for you.

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Re: Alone at night

Posted by Pidaini - 28 Nov 2013 13:34

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Hey fortunate Man!!! Welcome Back!!!

Nice to see you!! How are things going?!

Kavanah, I jsut started reading this thread, I can totally relate to the being alone thing being extremely dificult. I personally have built a network of friends both in the country (EY) and all over the world through GYE chat system, and then carrying it over to gmail.

Another thing I found to not feel alone is my handy dandy [Talking to Hashem](#) thing. When I actualize Hashem, I don't feel alone anymore!!

The thing is to try and make sure to do something REAL, it's when we get stuck in our heads that the trouble brews.

As for the waking up wife subject, ....BB Forum!!!!!! so TZ don't look at the spoiler!!

**Warning: Spoiler!**

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Re: Alone at night  
Posted by cordnoy - 28 Nov 2013 20:22

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And I think what Pidaini is sayin' is that Fortunate Man's advise is good for the ordinary person; that is a proper mehalech. For us addicts (or whatever you wanna call us), however, there is a good sevara to say (and many wiser than me have said this clearly as well) that the best way is not to focus on it at all. You are simply feeding your lust, and that is not a good thing.

b'hatzlachah

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Re: Alone at night  
Posted by Fortunate Man - 28 Nov 2013 21:30

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And chevrei, just so we're clear, the Moderators and I have communicated privately about this. Yes, my mehalech is for the "ordinary" person. Which is the derech that we are all striving to return to. When you have an achievable goal in mind, it's best to focus on that, and try to map out a plan to get there.

Kavanah, some of the chevrei and I have had exchanges regarding the degree to which our wives factor into our struggle. In my experience, they are either part of the problem, part of the solution, or both. The bechirah chofshis is ours, in hachi nami. But all of the da'as Torah whom I have consulted on the inyan (whether for my own struggles, or in assisting others with theirs), all of them have said that the wives have a stake in the situation. One's wife cannot be divorced from the situation, for if she is, a real divorce is an increasingly strong possibility.

Just so we're clear (because I'm sure that some guys are about to have a cow): this sexually-orientated struggle may be entirely inner-generated, from a past gilgul, a tikkun that we have to make, whatever. But the very first mitzvah in Torah is centered on the ha'arah: "Lo tov he'yot ha'adam l'vado -- it's not good for man to be alone, and that he needs an "ezer kenegdo," followed by "pru u'rvu." Part of achieving the madregah of Tov is by having an ezer kenegdo.



Our yetzer hara is with z'nus. Yenner's might be with gezel, nival peh, ka'as, or whatever. His ezer kenegdo is to help him with that. Ours are to help us with our yetzer hara for our particular inyan.

I absolutely hold that one can't do it alone. That's what my rabbaim have taught me. Perhaps other men here have rabbaim who told them that this is not so in their case. I don't know. But I'd be very surprised. One needs devar HaShem (Torah sources to absorb one's kocho), davening and siyatta d'shmaya, supportive Torah-based chaverim (like we all have here), and pas b'salo.

For unmarried bachurim, perhaps this struggle is part of one's tikkun. Chazal say that "Zivug rishon l'fi mazalo; zivug sheini l'fi ma'asav." One's primary soulmate is in accordance with one's mazal; and one's secondary soulmate corresponds to one's actions. Usually that is taken to mean that if you're a good boy, you get your heavenly bershert, but if you're a bad boy, you get a tsara for a wife. That's on a pashut pshat level.

Rav Ilya Lopian teaches that sometimes you don't get your zivug rishon first. Sometimes you get your zivug sheini first. I haven't told this to anyone, but I will divulge this here to you guys in this setting: my ex-wife, alieha haShalom, was a South American giyores, a model, a real sexy babe whom I met on kibbutz when I went to Israel 25 years ago at first to become a reform rabbi. So we did the spiritual zenus increasingly chozer bateshuva thing, eventually going to BT yeshivos and starting a kollel life together.

It was a fiasco in the end -- still hanging on to a lot of the shmutz (looking at stuff together, going to discos wearing ball caps and funky wigs when we were back in the States -- garbage like that). What I'm getting at is that those ma'asim ro'im, that hypocritical lifestyle contributed to the deterioration of that marriage. My ma'asim were detestable going into the marriage, and to some extent stayed reprehensible in the marriage. Not surprisingly, she was disgusted, and left with some of the kids, and left others with me. Her life ended tragically in a suicide.

Part of my personal growth process was a focussed teshuva, especially on histaklus asuros and hirhurim asurim. ANd five months to the day after my divorce from my zivug sheini, I was remarried to my zivug rishon. Our anniversary is the 5th night of Chanukah.

My current wife is a very prim and proper lass from a traditional family who never grew up with the pornographic lifestyle of America.

What I'm getting at, with respect to the bachurim, is that m'stama part of your challenge is to struggle against this nisayon and be zocheh to your zivug rishon. It could be that one's mazaldik zivug rishon is a lowly woman who has her own bitter inner wickedness, but that one's ma'asim-driven zivug sheini is the reward, so to speak, for overcoming this challenge.

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Re: Alone at night  
Posted by cordnoy - 28 Nov 2013 22:24

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Dov has said many times that we will never be ordinary.

Even if you disagree with that, and we will become ordinary, practicing that behavior now, which will be counterproductive, is not what we want to be doing.

We need to focus completely on the task before us, and that is ridding ourselves of our lust-addictive behavior and thoughts, or surrendering it. After that goal is reached (whenever that may be), or perhaps when we are close to achieving that goal, we can practice the other methods with our wives.

b'hatzlachah

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