

SSA issues

Posted by coby613 - 05 Nov 2009 22:06

As suggested by eye, I am starting a new thread based on what was started in the "ghosts from the past thread. Basically the question here is that this is for people who have same sex attraction issues and tips on how to deal with those and input from other people. See above mentioned thread for more info.

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Re: SSA issues

Posted by yedidya aleph - 24 Jun 2010 01:32

[Briut wrote on 17 Jun 2010 02:34:](#)

who simply get physically nauseated at the thought (and certainly the image) of two men acting se*

I'm talking about "I've got to puke" kind of physical reaction.

I've seen it. Trust me. What I don't know is whether addicts can have that feeling, too. The guys here say no, that it's merely that gay stuff is "not their turn-on," but I sorta wonder.

i was told by a professional that there a various group of men who have a range of reactions to the ssa subject.

It would be interesting to hear if most guys do not have that "I've got to puke" kind of physical reaction" or if they are more neutral towards the subject.

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Re: SSA issues

Posted by Imaishie - 21 Jul 2010 19:24

Hi

I am Imaishie. i've been a lurker on the site for almost a year and go to meetings live. but at meetings so often my problem that is bothering me can't be understood by even the jews in the room at the meeting let alone the goyim.. being frum is all through your life and even if acting out is only sometimes those sometimes involve hiding your yalmulk or tzitzits or not being able to go to an event or a meal because of shabbos or kosher.

i am not ready to post in public yet because no one can understand why i do ss things.

I am a married man for 40 years and have grandchildren but i thought i was just a sickie for the first thirty. now i realize i act out to get into an alternate reality when i can't handle my own. for some reason i am afraid to commit adultery with a woman but I loose my self in the excitement and danger and craziness of ssa. perhaps because its easier with men. much more available and anonymous is always available.

my identity is false. my name is false. and my email is false because i don't want to risk my identity.

but i am suffering in not being able to have a friend to talk to. one time i got a name for alya to talk to but the guy really wanted to find someone to act out with and i don't need that. anyway it wouldn't be possible because i live in a part of the country where few if any of the guys on this forum live.

so if anyone wants a friend who wants to talk about recovery and history and problems to be solved and just a good friend who shares problems with him please email me.

i am so lonely to be able to share with a guy like me who is frum.

david

hofdav@yahoo.com

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Re: SSA issues

Posted by yedidya aleph - 21 Jul 2010 22:03

Welcome. Thanks for reviving this thread. You are quite perceptive to realize that some people are involved attempts to recover with unholy motivations. we all need to break free from the

lonliness.

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Re: SSA issues

Posted by briut - 23 Jul 2010 15:48

[Imaishie wrote on 21 Jul 2010 19:24:](#)

i act out to get into an alternate reality when i can't handle my own. for some reason i am afraid to commit adultery with a woman but I loose my self in the excitement and danger and craziness of ssa. perhaps because its easier with men. much more available and anonymous is always available.

Dear 'David:' I sent you a PM with some add'l details. Feel free to PM back.

I know it's tough to speak about the 'love that dare not speak its name,' even anonymously. (Maybe it's just lust and not love, but that's another story.) But don't let that stop you.

At first, I thought my own work here (read the beginning of my thread) was very different than that of the guys struggling with a taiva for women in various ways. As I get more into the work, I see how many similarities there are. The anonymous thrill. The objectification of pleasure. The retreat into a world of comfort and even ecstasy, at least for ten seconds.

Anyhow, I don't think you have to limit your conversations to folks here who've been there or even done that. By the time somebody buys the t-shirt, it hardly matters where they've been or what they've done.

Keep posting. And welcome aboard from the open seas of lurking.

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Re: SSA issues

Posted by Imaishie - 01 Aug 2010 11:26

yeah. i don't believe i could or would want to ever have a relationship with a man. the ssa is like you say. its about pleasure, danger, anonymity. i think after many decades of struggling with this problem the addiction has morphed into being mostly about the search. its about proving that I'm desirable sometimes. like piling up some sick kind of credit or victories. just like some people find their sex addiction morphs into a porn only thing. its no longer about a relationship. its about getting the drugs (endorphins?) zooming through your body and you learn to do it in a lot of different ways over the years. there is a lot of excitement because it is forbidden and it has nothing to do with the pleasure one gets from a spouse which is both physical and spiritual. the pleasure from a spouse for me is better. but when i get sad i withdraw and cant get my needs met.

i guess some of the reason it is better with my wife is because we learned to know each other physically. but the ssa is pure escape from the problems of life especially when i am having problems with my wife or other parts of my life.

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Re: SSA issues

Posted by briut - 03 Aug 2010 22:38

Yep, the anonymity is exciting. The ability to share lust with someone who wants to do the same and wants nothing more. There are lots of reasons that some (some of us, maybe 1 in 10, who knows) might find it appealing.

But now that you've said that, you're also saying you want to give it up. Oy.

I'm thinking about the book excerpt on the front page of the site -- First Day of the rest of my Life?? Anyhow, the advice was to realize that we (all) tend to magnify the good memories and minimize the bad ones. The only way to avoid the disorder (addiction?) is to do the opposite -- stay focused on all the bad, stupid, painful, expensive things we've done in the way of this lust. Forget all the momentary rewards (victory, se*xual pleasure, etc). Get that cheshbon back to a normal score, and maybe there's a chance.

I wish I could say this to my own self several times a day. But I don't.

Keep posting. Keep posting. Keep posting. You think there's anything in your story that's gonna shock the guys here? I say, no.

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Re: SSA issues

Posted by briut - 04 Aug 2010 03:03

Oy! I should know better than to start up. But I think some folks on this site might be interested in the quote that someone sent me recently. Comments, anyone?

July 22, 2010

11 Menahem Av, 5770

For the last six months a number of Orthodox rabbis and educators have been preparing a statement of principles on the place of our brothers and sisters in our community who have a homosexual orientation.

The original draft was prepared by Rabbi Nathaniel Helfgot. It was then commented upon by and revised based on the input from dozens of talmidei chachamim, educators, communal rabbis, mental health professionals and a number of individuals in our community who are homosexual in orientation.

Significant revisions were made based upon the input of Rabbi Aryeh Klapper and Rabbi Yitzchak Blau who were intimately involved in the process of editing and improving the document during the last three months.

The statement below is a consensus document arrived at after hundreds of hours of discussion, debate and editing. At the bottom, is the initial cohort of signators.

If you are an Orthodox rabbi, educator, or mental health professional and would like to add your signature to the current list, please send a short e-mail to:

statementnya@hotmail.com *with your name, address, cell phone number, and professional affiliation.*

Statement of Principles on the Place of Jews with a Homosexual Orientation in Our Community

We, the undersigned Orthodox rabbis, *rashei yeshiva*, *ramim*, Jewish educators and communal leaders affirm the following principles with regard to the place of Jews with a homosexual orientation in our community:

1. All human beings are created in the image of God and deserve to be treated with dignity and respect (*kevod haberiyot*). Every Jew is obligated to fulfill the entire range of mitzvot between person and person in relation to persons who are homosexual or have feelings of same sex attraction. Embarrassing, harassing or demeaning someone with a homosexual orientation or same-sex attraction is a violation of Torah prohibitions that embody the deepest values of Judaism.
2. The question of whether sexual orientation is primarily genetic, or rather environmentally generated, is irrelevant to our obligation to treat human beings with same-sex attractions and orientations with dignity and respect.
3. Halakhah sees heterosexual marriage as the ideal model and sole legitimate outlet for human sexual expression. The sensitivity and understanding we properly express for human beings with other sexual orientations does not diminish our commitment to that principle.

4. Halakhic Judaism views all male and female same-sex sexual interactions as prohibited. The question of whether sexual orientation is primarily genetic, or rather environmentally generated, is irrelevant to this prohibition. While halakha categorizes various homosexual acts with different degrees of severity and opprobrium, including *toeivah*, this does not in any way imply that lesser acts are permitted. But it is critical to emphasize that halakha only prohibits homosexual acts; it does not prohibit orientation or feelings of same-sex attraction, and nothing in the Torah devalues the human beings who struggle with them. (We do not here address the issue of *hirhurei aveirah*, a halakhic category that goes beyond mere feelings and applies to all forms of sexuality and requires precise halakhic definition.)

5. Whatever the origin or cause of homosexual orientation, many individuals believe that for most people this orientation cannot be changed. Others believe that for most people it is a matter of free will. Similarly, while some mental health professionals and rabbis in the community strongly believe in the efficacy of “change therapies”, most of the mental health community, many rabbis, and most people with a homosexual orientation feel that some of these therapies are either ineffective or potentially damaging psychologically for many patients.

We affirm the religious right of those with a homosexual orientation to reject

therapeutic approaches they reasonably see as useless or dangerous.

6. Jews with a homosexual orientation who live in the Orthodox community confront serious emotional, communal and psychological challenges that cause them and their families great pain and suffering. For example, homosexual orientation may greatly increase the risk of suicide among teenagers in our community. Rabbis and communities need to be sensitive and empathetic to that reality. Rabbis and mental health professionals must provide responsible and ethical assistance to congregants and clients dealing with those human challenges.

7. Jews struggling to live their lives in accordance with halakhic values need and deserve our support. Accordingly, we believe that the decision as to whether to be open about one's sexual orientation should be left to such individuals, who should consider their own needs and those of the community. We are opposed on ethical and moral grounds to both the “outing” of individuals who want to remain private and to coercing those who desire to be open about their orientation to keep it hidden.

8. Accordingly, Jews with homosexual orientations or same sex-attractions should be welcomed as full members of the synagogue and school community. As appropriate with regard to gender and lineage, they should participate and count ritually, be eligible for ritual synagogue honors,

and generally be treated in the same fashion and under the same halakhic and hashkafic framework as any other member of the synagogue they join. Conversely, they must accept and fulfill all the responsibilities of such membership, including those generated by communal norms or broad Jewish principles that go beyond formal halakha.

We do not here address what synagogues should do about accepting members who are openly practicing homosexuals and/or living with a same-sex partner.

Each synagogue together with its rabbi must establish its own standard with regard to membership for open violators of halakha.

Those standards should be applied fairly and objectively.

9. Halakha articulates very exacting criteria and standards of eligibility for particular religious offices, such as officially appointed cantor during the year or baal tefillah on the High Holidays. Among the most important of those criteria is that the entire congregation must be fully comfortable with having that person serve as its representative. This legitimately prevents even the most admirable individuals, who are otherwise perfectly fit halakhically, from serving in those roles. It is the responsibility of the lay and rabbinic leadership in each individual community to determine eligibility for those offices in line with those principles, the importance of maintaining communal harmony, and the unique context of its community culture.

10. Jews with a homosexual orientation or same sex attraction, even if they engage in same sex interactions, should be encouraged to fulfill *mitzvot* to the best of their ability. All Jews are challenged to fulfill *mitzvot* to the best of their ability, and the attitude of “all or nothing” was not the traditional approach adopted by the majority of halakhic thinkers and *poskim* throughout the ages.

11. Halakhic Judaism cannot give its blessing and imprimatur to Jewish religious

same-sex commitment ceremonies and weddings, and halakhic values proscribe individuals and communities from encouraging practices that grant religious legitimacy to gay marriage and couplehood. But communities should display sensitivity, acceptance and full embrace of the adopted or biological children of homosexually active Jews in the synagogue and school setting, and we encourage parents and family of homosexually partnered Jews to make every effort to maintain harmonious family relations and connections.

12. Jews who have an exclusively homosexual orientation should, under most circumstances, not be encouraged to marry someone of the other gender, as

this can lead to great tragedy, unrequited love, shame, dishonesty and ruined

lives. They should be directed to contribute to Jewish and general society in

other meaningful ways. Any such person who is planning to marry someone of

the opposite gender is halakhically and ethically required to fully inform his or her potential spouse of their sexual orientation.

We hope and pray that by sharing these thoughts we will help the Orthodox

community to fully live out its commitment to the principles and values of

Torah and Halakha as practiced and cherished by the children of Abraham, who

our sages teach us are recognized by the qualities of being *rahamanim*

(merciful), *bayshanim* (modest), and *gomelei hasadim*

engaging in acts of loving-kindness).

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Re: SSA issues

Posted by briut - 08 Aug 2010 15:10

Dear Friends: I see there's no public post (yet) about the previous letter. I did get a couple of PMs, but there was one I wanted to share. I hope it might get someone to comment publicly.

Anyhow, the anonymous poster asked for the list of rabbis who had signed this letter. I sent it. As I thought. His reply included this:

"Not a single one of **my** Rabbis is in this list.... The article doesn't seem to be against Halacha or Hashkafa per se, but it is still not in the spirit of our style in dealing with contemporary issues in yiddishkeit....."

I don't know why this comment hit a very raw nerve, but it did. I heard it as saying that we love all our fellow Jews, but don't have to be inclusive or sweet or even understanding of some subset of them. You know, like "I love everyone in the whole world -- it's just certain PEOPLE I can't stand." That's "our" style.

I don't know who the "our" is in his comment of "our" style. But if I had come across that kind of belief and behavior while I was looking at frumkeit from the "outside," I know I wouldn't want "our" approach to become my approach. I'd be a Unitarian!

I'm sure there are lots of justifications. "They" might influence our children. "They" might molest (?) our children. "They" are looking for validation of "their" lifestyle that the Torah forbids. On and on. (I've certainly heard them all.) I just don't know how the Torah defines "our" approach as even PERMITTING an approach that keeps a Yid from being (treated as) part of the klal.

I guess I'm missing "something," but I don't know what "it" is. Can anyone clarify for me?
Thanks.

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Re: SSA issues

Posted by 1daat - 09 Aug 2010 06:22

Thank you very much for posting this. My daughter is bi-sexual, and I have sent this to her.

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Re: SSA issues

Posted by Sturggle - 09 Aug 2010 06:27

Shalom Briut, and to anyone else who is reading this.

1) What are you looking for in response to the letter you recently posted?

[Briut wrote on 04 Aug 2010 03:03:](#)

Oy! I should know better than to start up. But I think some folks on this site might be interested in the quote that someone sent me recently. Comments, anyone?

Exactly. So, as some people might be interested, maybe we all know better than to start up and it's best not to ensue a discussion about this on the forum.

We are here to work on ourselves in the area of sexual addiction. I'm not sure how important this is for that goal.

Maybe we can all continue to focus on our growth without comments.

with love and respect,

Sturggle

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Re: SSA issues

Posted by briut - 09 Aug 2010 16:19

Sturgg: thanks for speaking up. My next comments might be a little unpolished, but I think that's the only way to really put them out in a way folks might hear.[sturggle wrote on 09 Aug 2010 06:27:](#)

What are you looking for in response to the letter you recently posted?

My hope was to get people's genuine, frank comments. Like yours! So, thanks.

[sturggle wrote on 09 Aug 2010 06:27:](#)

it's best not to ensue a discussion about this on the forum.

Sorry, buddy, but I would disagree. For folks facing these issues as part of their se*ual bag of miseries, these issues are pretty key. If your kehilla made it easy for you to "come out" with your own se*ual activities (and I mean ALL of them!), would you feel the same motivation to change; would you feel the same alienation from what you do and what you feel? It might not be relevant to everyone here -- nothing is -- but I'm hoping you're not saying it's irrelevant to the forum.

[sturggle wrote on 09 Aug 2010 06:27:](#)

We are here to work on ourselves in the area of sexual addiction. I'm not sure how important this is for that goal.

I'd be happy to tell you how important. I've seen lives lost, families ruining, careers in tatters, etc, all due to flavors of se*ual issues that mainstream frum society has trouble with -- trouble with the activity AND trouble with the people engaged in it. (two different things.) I'd even make the case that the nature/nurture debate might make it even tougher on the SSA issues, since I believe there's nature involved as well.

[sturggle wrote on 09 Aug 2010 06:27:](#)

Maybe we can all continue to focus on our growth without comments.

AWMAIN as to continuing our growth TOGETHER! But shame on us if we place undue limits of the ability to comment and comment back -- that's not growth, it's bigotry.

Again, sorry for the tachlis without sugar-coating. It comes from love for you and a yearning to feel understood by you and the chevra.

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Re: SSA issues

Posted by silentbattle - 10 Aug 2010 14:07

I think that Sturrgles point is that we can certainly allow people to open up about their issues, whether they be chocolate, vanilla, or strawberry. However, the issue that you're bringing up is a volatile one, and is not about you addressing your own issues - it's about finding out what other people's objective opinion is about this issue - and let's face it, you're not going to be happy with any opinion that differs from your own.

And let's also face it - even the most intolerant of us have been influenced by the society around us which tells us that anything is really ok, and that we must accept everything. Therefore, it becomes very difficult to know what's right, what's not, what's personal opinion, etc.

Your own opinion has no doubt been influenced by your own experiences and situation in life, as well. And that certainly makes you lean more towards one perspective - perhaps correctly.

The question is, what will discussion of the overall, objective (not related to your, or anyone's personal struggle) accomplish?

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Re: SSA issues

Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 10 Aug 2010 15:52

Rav YomTov Rakov Zatzal (of London) said:

Achdus = Unity; not Uniformity!

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Re: SSA issues

Posted by ss7107 - 04 Jan 2011 22:26

I know this issue has been rehashed many many many times but I want to jump in here from a personal perspective. I have been struggling with this issue since as far back as I can remember. I acted out for over 18 years with other men and this was the single biggest cause of pain and hurt in my life. How often I (still) struggle with the question of whether or not I am gay?

Of course none of this matters as much as the fact that I am a s*x addict. None of these feelings or urges are real when I am in my addicton. With the help of my Higher Power I joined SA recovery in early 2009 and started to gain real sobriety and 12 step recovery in May of last year. Today I celebrated 8 months of sobriety.

The most important thing I can tell ANYONE who struggles with this on a small or large scale, is to keep talking about it in a safe environment. There are so many people struggling with this and YOU ARE NOT ALONE! I still think I am alone sometimes and it hurts. So many people struggle the exact same way I do or similarly. I can truly trust God on a day like today and say that he made me exactly the way I needed to be.

The biggest key to my recovery was to understand that I don't need to understand. This is one of the things I truly don't understand. I accept, I am powerless and I believe that the bigger plan will show itself one day. I certainly don't have choices about my addiction or the way it drives me.

I am happily married to a wonderful woman and have a beautiful family. I will focus on gratitude instead of complaining. I invite you to do the same.

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