

Should I put a filter on my personal devices?

Posted by BenTorah.BaalHabayis - 17 Jan 2016 06:02

B"H I'm already half way to the 90 day goal. (Yes, I know it doesn't end there, it only really begins...) I still haven't installed a filter on my computer. I think everyone is in agreement that a filter is only a fence to help a person not to fall and is not actually a solution. So far, since joining GYE and really working on myself I haven't really felt a very strong urge to look at porn which is why I haven't felt an urgency to install a filter. Now, I understand that at any time I may be confronted with a sudden strong temptation, and it's at that point where I filter can make a difference. However, I have this feeling that by installing a filter that will somehow create a psychological pull to davka want to look at porn. Putting up a fence officially makes it "forbidden fruit" and that makes it harder to resist. I feel like right now my not looking at porn is coming from me, since I don't want to do it and I'm content with that. Perhaps the "Pas b'salo" metaphor would be appropriate here.

Is this a ridiculous rationalization or do others feel this way too? I'd love to hear your thoughts.

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Re: To filter or not to filter - that is the question

Posted by yiraishamaim - 17 Jan 2016 06:28

I can tell you from my experiences that when I make a true resolution not to engage in the "stuff", for a good while I do not need a filter. However as you indeed stated yourself, a quick strong temptation just may arise. The extra protection of a filter just may be enough to stall you and allow you to regain your composure and take the necessary step(s) - you have in place, for such situations, to assure your continued sobriety.

Now, when you really don't need it - put on that filter.

I don't believe that the filter itself will cause temptation. *Aderaba* it is another way you are displaying to yourself - and Hashem -that you are making an important hishtadlus to distance yourself from the shmutz.

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Re: To filter or not to filter - that is the question

Posted by Workingguy - 17 Jan 2016 13:09

[BenTorah.BaalHabayis wrote:](#)

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Hi Ben,

It's funny when I read your posts how similar some of the things you express and the way you express them are similar to my own experiences, either presently or in the past.

What you write about the filter is not ridiculous at all; it's the way that you feel and only you know your own triggers and challenges. I can personally relate bc, while I've always had monitoring (just curious- do you have that?) on all my devices, I only have a filter on my phone but not on my computer. I've had many experiences where the more I locked things up, the more I tried to find ways around it and ended up acting out. That had been part of my struggle for ages.

But ill echo what yirai said, and add something. You're doing really well now, but things can go up and down which is normal. The present you can't imagine needing a filter but there might be a point where you're interested in not acting out but struggling with a small urge and the easy access just makes it happen too quickly. (Everyone knows how it can all go so fast "Wait, did I just act out? That happened so fast I couldn't think; can I get a do-over?!")

But if it's going to shoot you in the foot now by getting one then maybe don't and just have it in mind.

But here's what I'll add. I've had great stretches of clean and brought my challenges down to

much lower, basically no porn for the past five years and huge stretches of no masturbation, but still up and down in that area, as well as struggles with softer stuff, movie clips, and all the standard non x rated stuff. Not so long ago I had a fall bc I was doing the 90 count and I saw something moderately stimulating on purpose and was going to have to reset anyway, and so the voice in my ear said "Well, you're losing your count so just masturbate anyway". And I did. And that's when I realized that I was placing my responsibility for my sobriety on my filter and on charts, but that ultimately it is my responsibility and I can't let myself give in to these mental obsessions bc it means I still haven't accepted that it's my problem.

So in your case what I'm suggesting just from my own experiences is that you might want to look at if you're leaving your sobriety too much up to external circumstances. If I have a filter, I'll fall, if not I'll fall, but I've found a nice middle. Maybe see if you can just decide that a filter makes sense but that you're not going to let it be an issue bc YOU want to be sober and you're doing it not bc of a filter but bc you're at the point that you're ready to give this up. That's how I've been looking at it lately.

Of course, this is my perspective and the bottom line is ?? ???? ?? ???? , so you have to see what works for you. Bc no one else can tell you what is right or wrong for your journey and how it will affect you; I'm just sharing my perspective from my experiences.

Regardless, lots of hatzlacha and you really sound like you're doing great and are taking a really healthy approach to the whole process!

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Re: To filter or not to filter - that is the question

Posted by unanumun - 17 Jan 2016 18:10

I am not necesarily recommneding the following idea, but just sharing a way that helps for me and maybe can be helpful with your dilemma.

I currently have opendns installed on my network, but i have the password. i have youtube and most other media streaming sites blocked. Although i have the password and can open it if i need or want, there is about a ten minute delay before it actually becomes unblocked.

so for me many times i will click on a link that goes to a video (even kosher, so to speak) or a news website and even though i know i can open it up, once the initial click was done and the block page shows up, i have to decide whether i will go through the process of unblocking and waiting the ten minutes. unless i really need it I usually just close the page and get back to what

i was doing. so basically i have the freedom to open what i want but manage to avoid impulsivity.

that being said, this was not the reason why i set it up this way, there were other reasons why i still have the password.

secondly, the day i started my 90 day journey, i had installed a filter on my computer. I found that to be the emotional commitment that i needed to start the journey. I felt like I was locking myself out of the porn option and I was afraid to do that. Once I brought myself to lock out the option I was able to start the journey. (just my experience, I know that many people had different experiences than that.)

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Re: To filter or not to filter - that is the question
Posted by Shlomo24 - 17 Jan 2016 19:06

I have a filter on my computer. I have it because my sponsor told me to get one. My filter is not a solution in any means to stop me from watching porn and acting out. While in principle I don't believe in filters, I also believe in reality and filters help, even if it's not the ideal for me. One way it helps me is that it stops the searches that start innocent and turn downwards. There is no "turning downwards" really because there's a glass bottom on how raunchy searches can get. My sponsor doesn't have a filter on his smartphone, and if I still stay sober for a while longer I may also not get a filter on my devices. I feel that if I'm acting out at that point then I'm sure as hell nothing is going to stop me. Nothing stops me now from acting out. God performs miracles because without him there is no way in hell I would be sober.

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Re: To filter or not to filter - that is the question
Posted by stillgoing - 17 Jan 2016 22:24

[inastruggle wrote:](#)

#15

What do we need filters for anyway?

While a filter is obviously not foolproof, it is a wise idea even for techies who can get around it. It still makes it more difficult and puts at least a "heker" between us and porn.

I am considering removing the railing by my staircase. It should be my responsibility not to walk too close to the edge of the stairs, and I can always jump over the railing anyways if I really

my \$.02.

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Re: To filter or not to filter - that is the question
Posted by stillgoing - 17 Jan 2016 22:34

want to. Just sayin
[BenTorah.BaalHabayis wrote:](#)

....I have this feeling that by installing a filter that will somehow create a psychological pull to davka want to look at porn. Putting up a fence officially makes it "forbidden fruit" and that makes it harder to resist....

By me it's exactly the opposite. When I don't have a filter installed, my mind will start slowly broaching the idea to look just a little... a little more... and more... until !!!

But when I know that I have a filter installed, I won't even bother to try. Deep down I really don't want to keep on messing up, so when I know how inconvenient it will be to try to bypass the filter, and I may not even be able to do it in the amount of time that I have, I normally won't even bother to try.

another point, when we show Hashem that we are trying, even if it's just a symbolic effort, He steps in and helps. We can't do this on our own, We need Hashem to do it for us. If it may help, do it.

Warning: Spoiler!

Hatzlacha

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Re: To filter or not to filter - that is the question
Posted by Eyeglasses - 18 Jan 2016 16:37

I like much what 'stillgoing' writes.

Chazal say 'Asi Mishmeres L'mishmeres' so of course we have to do whatever we can to stay out of the garbage, we should stay so far away that we shouldn't even know we're missing out something, and then our life will become beautiful.

Hey, wasn't life easier when there was no youtube shmutube at all? so why do we need access to it? it's no question a terrible monster, no benefit to us at all.

I've very strict filter installed, I do need the internet for work, and I get my things done.

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Re: To filter or not to filter - that is the question
Posted by BenTorah.BaalHabayis - 19 Jan 2016 05:55

Hi Ben,

It's funny when I read your posts how similar some of the things you express and the way you express them are similar to my own experiences, either presently or in the past.

I'm glad. It's nice to feel someone else out there can identify not only with your struggles but with your way of thinking. I enjoy reading your posts as well. You're responses are very thought

out. Maybe we can get to know each-other better. Send me an email (in my signature) if you're interested.

I can personally relate bc, while I've always had monitoring (just curious- do you have that?)

Monitoring is even more of a mystery to me. Who exactly do you get to monitor your activity? If I had my wife monitor I would feel even more locked up since I would not be able to face her if I went to something inappropriate. And I don't have any "offline friends" who I'm open about my struggles with, so I don't think I'd feel comfortable to ask them to monitor. So who exactly should I be asking to monitor?

So in your case what I'm suggesting just from my own experiences is that you might want to look at if you're leaving your sobriety too much up to external circumstances. If I have a filter, I'll fall, if not I'll fall, but I've found a nice middle. Maybe see if you can just decide that a filter makes sense but that you're not going to let it be an issue bc YOU want to be sober and you're doing it not bc of a filter but bc you're at the point that you're ready to give this up. That's how I've been looking at it lately.

This is gold! What you're saying essentially is that just because I have a filter that doesn't have to become my reason for not watching porn. The main focus will remain on internal change, and the filter is just for good measure. I'm simply used to thinking of filters as these annoying things standing between me and my fantasies. The filter then becomes the nemesis to get around. (I don't know that I added anything in this last paragraph, but I sometimes like to rephrase things for myself in a way that speaks to me.)

Regardless, lots of hatzlacha and you really sound like you're doing great and are taking a really healthy approach to the whole process!

Thanks for the kind words. I appreciate your thought out response and the vote of confidence! Hatzlacha to you too!

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Re: To filter or not to filter - that is the question
Posted by BenTorah.BaalHabayis - 19 Jan 2016 05:57

[unanumun wrote:](#)

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I currently have opendns installed on my network, but i have the password. i have youtube and most other media streaming sites blocked. Although i have the password and can open it if i need or want, there is about a ten minute delay before it actually becomes unblocked.

so for me many times i will click on a link that goes to a video (even kosher, so to speak) or a news website and even though i know i can open it up, once the initial click was done and the block page shows up, i have to decide whether i will go through the process of unblocking and waiting the ten minutes. unless i really need it I usually just close the page and get back to what i was doing. so basically i have the freedom to open what i want but manage to avoid impulsivity.

I like this idea. I will look into this. This may be that "happy medium" where I have a filter for good measure but the main focus is still internal. Thanks for sharing!

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Re: To filter or not to filter - that is the question
Posted by BenTorah.BaalHabayis - 19 Jan 2016 06:11

[stillgoing wrote:](#)

[inastruggle wrote:](#)

#15

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my \$.02.

want to. Just sayin

I don't entirely agree with the mashal. For many of us here, when we go online there may be an automatic thought process about "Oooooooo, there's some porn I can look at right now, but I'm not going to because I know I shouldn't". If you're still thinking about porn as an option then it's a good tzu shtetl to the staircase with no railing. But I imagine that for "normal" people, they go online to do what they need to do and the thought to look at porn doesn't even occur to them. And while I'm not "normal", I generally am using the web for business and real necessities. When I use the web for these things I'm not thinking about porn at all because I'm focused on the task at hand. I proudly do not have a Facebook account, I do not watch You Tube Videos and I read news online sparingly, so on a daily basis I see no "cliff" by using the internet without a filter.

The main concern here would be if and when I get triggered and am craving porn and actually want it. Then a filter may be a good thing to avoid the impulsivity, but if I don't work on internal change then I'll go looking for it elsewhere. I sell electronics for a living and I have piles and piles of used iPhones sitting on the shelves in my office. There's no way to filter all of those...

I still do think it's a good idea just for good measure to have a filter on my primary work computer and personal phone.

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Re: To filter or not to filter - that is the question

Posted by cordnoy - 19 Jan 2016 06:55

[BenTorah.BaalHabayis wrote:](#)

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While you did conclude that it might be a good idea to have a filter, i would just like to point out that generalizin', and postin' stuff w/o perhaps bein' in real contact with real people can be problematic. We applaud you for not havin' facebook and such, but many of us here do go online to look at porn. When we are goin' about our work necessities, we are thinkin' about porn. So, while your conclusion might be the correct one for you, it might be worth it to spend some time with us addicts. My apologies for takin' offense, but I take recovery seriously, and at times, things bein' said strike a cord.

Keep on postin'

b'hatzlachah to all

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Re: To filter or not to filter - that is the question
Posted by markz - 19 Jan 2016 11:53

Cord????

Where's your generosity???

I'll have to do it for you

[Cordnoy should have wrote:](#)

And by the way I have plenty space in my garage for used iPhones - I collect those thin's. But don't send them all, I need to keep half free for other collectible items like my coins and ma's

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Re: To filter or not to filter - that is the question

Posted by BenTorah.BaalHabayis - 19 Jan 2016 14:45

[cordnoy wrote:](#)

[BenTorah.BaalHabayis wrote:](#)

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R' Cords, I apologize if my comments were offensive. This was by no means my intention. I used the words "I" and "I'm" many times, so I thought it was clear I was specifically reflecting on my own experience and circumstances and was not attempting to generalize.

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Re: To filter or not to filter - that is the question

Posted by cordnoy - 19 Jan 2016 15:06

[BenTorah.BaalHabayis wrote:](#)

[cordnoy wrote:](#)

[BenTorah.BaalHabayis wrote:](#)

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Accepted completely.

Thank you.

As you can see, I quoted from the post where the word "they" was bein' used.

Onward.

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