

Chaim's Oigen

Posted by chaimoigen - 06 Jun 2024 03:17

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It's been over a year, and over 1000 posts since I have been blessed to join this circle of unique and growing friends.

It has been year of incredible growth, with the help of Hashem.

I have written a lot, and I feel that some of ideas in my posts could perhaps have greater value if they were written in such a way that each idea is consolidated, and would take the form of a self-contained, single article.

And, of course, articulating these ideas in a new way will hopefully help me internalize the lessons learned and contemplated, in a deeper way.

So, here goes, and I hope you like "**Chaim's Oigen**"

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Re: Chaim's Oigen

Posted by stopsurvivingstartliving - 15 Nov 2024 10:54

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R' Chaim your posts manage to hit the spot EVERY SINGLE TIME!

Keep them coming, their epically inspiring and well written.

Thank you for the time you take to write your posts.

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Re: Chaim's Oigen

Posted by iwantlife - 15 Nov 2024 14:00

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[chaimoigen wrote on 15 Nov 2024 04:15:](#)

I love both of these boys with a love that is more than love. Because they are my sons.

I love them equally, empathize with their struggles, revel in their accomplishments and am suffused with Nachas when I think about them, when I learn with them. I thank Hashem for them and I Daven for them every day. I think they are amazing. I Daven that Hashem save them from the Yetzer Hora. They are both better than me. But, contrary to what Chazal say, I am deeply, heartbreakingly, achingly jealous of my younger son. I wish I had stayed off the battlefield like him and I wish his older brother had done so, too.

Ahh R' Chaim! Thank you for sharing this, it's from before my time here and I doubt I would've seen it. Just wanted to tell you how lucky your sons are to have you as their father. Your deep understanding of this inyan is priceless. I still remember, as a young, scared, confused bochur, when my parents discovered my browser history that I'd forgotten to clear. My father gave me a serious shmooze about how I can only use the internet if my parents are able to trust me. As if! I still remember silently screaming "Trust? I don't trust myself!". He meant well, but he had mammish no clue. So if nothing else, your sons are zoiche to Chaim's Oigen, and boy are those some good eyes!

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Re: Chaim's Oigen  
Posted by BenHashemBH - 15 Nov 2024 17:35

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[chaimoigen wrote on 15 Nov 2024 04:15:](#)

## **Who Are The Heroes**

**By: Chaim Oigen**

Thank your Reb Chaim!

To add another resource, please see the Michtav M'Eliyahu on Repentance. He analyzes the Ba'al Teshuva and The Tzaddik.

**Warning: Spoiler!**

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Re: Chaim's Oigen

Posted by chosemyshem - 15 Nov 2024 18:10

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[chaimoigen wrote on 15 Nov 2024 05:19:](#)

**“Losing Out. Or Not?”**

**By: Chaim Oigen**

**This one was in my “Friday Night Blues” thread, in the BB Section. But it’s really a universal *Yesod*, not limited to how to feel about “missing out” when the wife isn’t up for intimacy.**

**How many times are we compelled by the feeling that “I don’t want to *lose this chance*”, when the opportunity presents itself? A glance.. a stare... or more.... But am I really losing something? Does “*Chapping Arein*” an experience mean that I “got” something? Or is that just illusion? Yes, pleasure is real, a feeling of pleasure. But when I *really* realize that I don’t have *less* when I passed up an experience, well - it changes the playing field and rules of the game.**

**At least it did for me.**

[chaimoigen wrote on 03 Apr 2024 17:44:](#)

While in the throes of sexual desire, there is sometimes a strong illusion that not to have fulfillment of this need, would be a **loss**. I feel that I would be losing out if I don’t have it.

This carries over with Shmiras Enayim too- If there’s something exiting to see and I won’t take advantage and miss it, there’s a feeling that I would be **losing out**. If my wife and I had planned to “go to sleep early” and then one of us got an important call and it got late and she was too tired - I realized that in the past I had felt like I **lost** an **irreplaceable** opportunity. And that feeling would sometimes cause me to get bent out of shape and put me in a bad mood. This is

actually the Yesod of the "Friday Night Blues".

But I'm starting to feel differently now. I love being intimate with my wife. But if it doesn't work out today, there's always next time. The point is this - If things between us are good overall (including the bedroom, which is important), then the **individual** times and experiences aren't nearly as important as they **feel like** at the time. In fact, each individual experience probably isn't so important at all, except for the fact that I **want** it, which in itself is not truly a matter of importance (except to the lower half of my body, who isn't a Man Di'amar of such great importance).

Having a healthy and happy bedroom life is an important part of marriage. **Getting what I want at the time that I want it is not.** Waiting a couple of weeks, at this stage in my life, while being frustrating, won't inherently impact our relationship in any way. Unless I would make a big deal about it internally and externally, and send my wife on a guilt trip, and make my wants into a whole huge imperative.

Well, thankfully I choose not to do that today.

Thanks GYE.

I think I'm seeing pretty clearly today. Feels good. ??? ?!

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I recall this one from the FNB thread. And was actually just thinking about this when my filter went AWOL.

For years, unfiltered internet was an "opportunity" I had to grab. Maybe I could use some self-control and delay grabbing it, sometimes even until the point where the "opportunity" was "lost". But it was an opportunity.

You brought out how to deal with the "loss" in the context of intimacy. But (as your post makes clear) it's a foundational yesod that resonates throughout every angle of the struggle. It's not an opportunity.

The way I've been trying to think about it recently is something like this. If I truly want to act out I could do so, whenever, wherever, and however. Oh this particular attractive woman or unfiltered device or whatever may not ever come by again. But I don't act out because of particular objects of desire. I act out because of life.

So a particular situation isn't an opportunity or, indeed, a challenge.\* It's a flavor of life. And the goal is just to live a life that doesn't need to have acting out as a part of it.

So whether it's niddah issues, unfiltered internet, that girl walking by wearing just the right outfit, whatever. None of that is anything. The only significant factors in play are me and G-d. Everything else is just a distraction.

Not entirely sure I said this right, or even believe it, but I think you get the idea. There are no "opportunities" lost. There is only **you**.

\*Obviously some situations are challenges. A day to day unfiltered computer or random lady ain't exactly aishes potiphar. It's just a facet of life that needs to be dealt with. You can take this attitude or leave it. I know many choose to look at each urge as a nisayon they overcome, and if that works for them it's awesome. I'm working on being a little less dramatic about my penis, to put it bluntly.

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Re: Chaim's Oigen  
Posted by chaimoigen - 21 Nov 2024 01:21

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What Lasts About Us Here

By: Chaim Oigen

I've been here a while now, BH. There's an ebb and flow to the forums, to the relationships. To the online life and community. And I was thinking today about what's real and what's just an illusion. Asking myself to define what constitutes a genuine relationship, and what is not.

Once upon a time, there was much talk about how these forums are enabling secrecy, which is toxic. I've written about how I disagree. The secrecy enable a guy to take the first plunge. But today, so many guys are talking and meeting. And even if they are not, baring and sharing the secret part of your soul with a friend, even if you'll never know his real name, is a genuine connection that transcends many in-person meetings that take place wearing all the masks and layers we put on in public. Here's a post I wrote some time back...

No man is an island.

Each of us has an individual pathway to walk. (If you're really feeling morbid, Tom, I might say that each man owes a single death to pay at the end of his road).

Yet we touch and move each other's trajectories in a million, billion ways. Like ripples in a pond, the words we say and things we write; our every interaction with each other - radiates

outwards and changes the shape of all of our paths...

We are all different, forever, for having known each other.

I can't think of a better way to showcase this truth than what goes on in these forums. We don't know who each other are, most of us will never shake the other's hand or know his true name. Won't meet for a drink, (outside of Bardy's now-quiet pub).

Yet I know that notwithstanding that, I am forever changed by my deep connection with so many here.

You see: When a Neshoma touches another, the effect is NITZCHIYUS.

Grass may grow long and undisturbed over unused usernames and quiet threads. Guys have moved on for many reasons, many due to "graduating", as HHM said. Yet please remember that just as the posts, conversations, connections and human touches remain saved and accessible in the depths of these forums- so too is our striving, connection and steps towards growth, together, that which lasts forever.



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Re: Chaim's Oigen

Posted by chaimoigen - 21 Nov 2024 01:26

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## **What Lasts About Us Here**

**By: Chaim Oigen**

**I've been here a while now, BH. There's an ebb and flow to the forums, to the relationships. To the online life and community. And I was thinking today about what's real and what's just an illusion. Asking myself to define what constitutes a genuine relationship, and what is not.**

**Once upon a time, there was much talk about how these forums are enabling *secrecy*, which is toxic. I've written about how I disagree. The element of *secrecy* enables a guy to take the first plunge. Sure, there a lot of ways to misuse this space, like everything in life. But today, so many guys are using the forums as a first step that leads to further connection. Emails, talking on the phone, and eventually meeting. And even if they are not, baring and sharing the secret part of your soul with a friend, even if you'll never know his real name, is a genuine connection that transcends many in-person meetings that take place wearing all the masks and layers we put on in public.**

**Here's a post I wrote some time back...**

[chaimoigen wrote on 29 Nov 2023 00:31:](#)

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Yet we touch and move each other's trajectories in a million, billion ways. Like ripples in a pond, the words we say and things we write; our every interaction with each other - radiates outwards and changes the shape of **all** of our paths...

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Re: Chaim's Oigen  
Posted by simchastorah - 21 Nov 2024 11:35

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**And even if they are not, baring and sharing the secret part of your soul with a friend, even if you'll never know his real name, is a genuine connection that transcends many in-person meetings that take place wearing all the masks and layers we put on in public.**

SO TRUE

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Re: Chaim's Oigen

Posted by chaimoigen - 13 Jan 2025 14:19

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Here's another, in similar vein as the previous, that made it to the GYE weekly email. With some small additions:

## **Why the GYE Forum Could Be Your Key to Lasting Change**

**By: Chaim Oigen**

**With a spirit of humility, care, and respect I would like to share some thoughts on lasting and internal change.**

**There's been discussion on the GYE forum about folks who feel euphoric about finally breaking free, only to face the reality that the internal problem is still there. Some say "hugs," charts, and accountability are just distractions from the real work of internal change.**

**Here are my thoughts: Yes, change must be internalized to last. An addiction can't be cured with optimistic positivity alone. But the value of these forums in creating lasting change is profound and undeniable.**

**Here's why: You can only take step two after step one. It's terrifying to communicate with others, even behind anonymity. The forums provide a critical first step, and a warm welcome encourages people to stick around, make connections, and learn about ways to grow.**

**The reality is that most of us have tried to fix this problem alone and failed. That means "just stopping" isn't really an option for almost anyone who finds themselves on GYE. If someone has been using P&M to fill a deep aching need for years, against better judgment, merely talking about wanting to stop won't create real changes.**

**But here's the thing - a human is a marvelously complex piece of work, fueled by a cosmic Neshoma, weighed down by childhood upbringing, his Yetzerim and personality, and the burdens of unrequited hopes and dreams. Complex situations and relationships. Sheifos, goals, setbacks. And life. People! It ain't easy to fix em up.**

**We are all muddling through, best as we can. And it takes trial and error, working from the outside to the inside. We have to try. Genuinely. Start with what we can wrap our heads around. Make mistakes. Ask questions. Keep trying. Learn new things. Sometimes it penetrates, sometimes it doesn't. You need mentors and friends, methods and self-realization. And with Siyata Dishmaya, things will be different - if you keep trying.**

**These forums are sacred and special because they provide tools for genuine change and**

**growth in a way that I haven't seen before. They are:**

- **A safe place to recognize that your life has become unmanageable**
- **A place to make friends by sharing and caring**
- **A place to connect with a fellowship of people who actually understand**
- **A place to discover and learn from people who have shared their personal life experiences, experience that no one really shares elsewhere. There's no substitute, when it comes to learning, for LIFE EXPERIENCE**
- **A place to face up to your own mistakes and learn how to make amends**
- **A place to learn profound truths about yourself, Yiddishkeit, marriage, and relationships**
- **A place to discover what works for you**

**And maybe most importantly - the forums are where people receive the gift of opportunity to actually meet with real people, when they get to that stage, which leads to indescribable potential for healing.**

**A lot of the real healing with mentors here takes place offline, without a clear record in the forums (so if you haven't yet, talk to someone).**

**May Hashem bless GYE. I have a paper with all the names of the guys I've met and spoken with, and I daven for you regularly. Because I love you and hope that we'll all keep growing together, each in his own way, with Hashem's help.**

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Re: Chaim's Oigen  
Posted by chaimoigen - 13 Jan 2025 17:07

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**Why The Good Sex In Good (Frum) Marriages Can Only Be Experienced From Within**

**By: Chaim Oigen**

**A while back, there was a guy on the forums who shared about difficult conversations he was having with his father, who isn't religious. His father was casting doubt about the premise of Frum marriages being successful. Among other objections, he was claiming that Frum dating and marriage is misogynistic and doesn't work, and suggesting that it is necessary for a couple to "try out" the bedroom in advance to see if they are sexually compatible.**

**Here is my response (with some additions).**

**I think it addresses a lot more than the questions that were being asked there.**

*Most of your father's assumptions about frum marriage are pretty much completely wrong, and it's completely understandable that an outsider would make those assumptions, because of how we look to the outside world. It's smart of you to reach out to ask what really goes on.*

Today, frum dating (for the most part, certainly in the Litvish world), doesn't mean that you don't know the woman you're marrying well by the time that you walk down the aisle to the Chuppa. On the contrary, dating in a marriage-focused setting, (after intensive research ) enables a couple to get to know each other on a deeper level than they can if they would be hooking up after a couple of dates.

*Please look up and read a New York Times article about "The Thirty Six Questions to fall in Love" (There's a TED Talk on the topic too) about how lasting, deep, relationships are forged by sharing different layers by answering personal questions while making eye contact....*

*Lasting marriages happen through shared goals, emotional investment and mutual respect and work, attachment, and a healthy dose of Siyata dishmaya. We have a community that is very invested in belonging to a family unit, and that's a healthy thing. Staying together in a disastrous relationship because of the stigma of divorce isn't healthy, but is far less frequent, especially today. The idea that we have a lower divorce rate because women have less rights, for the most part simply is not true.*

*Sure, frum couples argue and even fight. And they also kiss and make up, too. Same as everyone else. I'm not sure why anyone would think otherwise.*

*Me and my wife have had plenty of disagreements, even some pretty serious ones over our decades of marriage. And we've had some pretty intense apologies, too. Both of us have each changed and grown in so many ways through those experiences. We're on pretty solid ground by now, we rely on each other always, and BH it's terrific. But marriage always needs work. **Like people.***

*Marriage is the best setting to become a mensch. And the best chance you have at it. And you can earn love, companionship, happiness, intimacy, and family along the way. If you look at it that way, as a growth opportunity, then I don't think there's any reason to think that failure is inevitable. That's only when you look at love as something that "happens" and unhappiness and something that results when it "stops happening".*

*The concept of trying out a few women to see what you like, and trying your potential wife out in advance to see if you are sexually compatible is unfortunately completely wrongheaded. Allow me to explain.*

*There are two kinds of sex. There is Taking/Excitement Sex in which a person is excited by the erotic and seeks the greatest orgasmic pleasure that he can get, which would be triggered by whatever he (or she) would find to provide the greatest source of sexual stimulation.*

*The problem is that the excitement doesn't last with a single partner, and trying new things runs out, and demeans the wife. It leads to emotionally sealed-off sex, and leaves a gnawing hunger for more. (Actually, the search for the ultimate sexual experience is one that demeans and objectifies women, far more than the "mysoginy" that's allegedly practiced in Frum marriages.)*

*Unfortunately, the quest that begins with trying out different women to see what sexuality satisfies you ends in frustration and unhappiness. Yeah, maybe that's why the system he's suggesting has an incredibly high divorce rate.*

*Sex as an expression of intimacy in a loving relationship is completely different*

*It's not sealed-off taking, it's connecting. It's expressing something that exists between you. **The whole day that you've shared is there when you climb into bed.***

*And you are enwrapped in the aura of years of hopes and dreams and hurts, the vulnerability and ache and all the joy of what's between you for years, **all this gets expressed in a private moment of intense personal nakedness and connection that satisfies in ways that Hollywood can never portray. It may not be as exciting but it's far more satisfying. And pleasurable in a way that has to be experienced.***

***Intimacy is much better after 20 years, and a lot of kids and tears and dreams. When you know what each other like, and like to give it because you love each other. Hope you get there, it's worth it.***

*Obviously some times are better than others, some have it better than others. If a couple has other issues in the relationship this won't necessarily solve them, and this may not work for them, either. I'm painting an idealized picture.*

*But the idea is that Intimacy Sex is a completely different idea and that the joy and satisfaction in the experience is one that's dependent on marriage, love commitment and relationship. As opposed to the other kind of sex, which is founded on "fun", being "hot", performance and excitement.*

*The idea is that are two experiences completely different things entirely.*

*Porn and Hollywood are selling a counterfeit imitation, or at least selling the sugar rush without the nutrients. The flash and sizzle without the substance. Or as HHM likes to say: "Intimacy is cake. Sex is icing. Cake without icing is pretty good. Icing without cake doesn't satisfy. Cake with icing is best". (That's why every good romance movie has a plot that involves the protagonists finding lasting love, not just lust, 'cause it's a necessary part of the satisfying fantasy).*

*So this is why the idea of trying out sex with a few partners, and a potential spouse before committing isn't right. **Because it's impossible.** You can't "try it out" with someone you're not committed to - that's a contradiction in terms!! You can't try out the intimacy of commitment and shared life when you aren't committed and aren't sharing anything except a sweaty grunting in the night. Trying to preview **marriage** by trying **the other kind of sex** is sad and wrong. That's why the Torah encourages discovering intimacy only **IN MARRIAGE**. Because that's where you can experience the real deal.*

*That's all I can write now.*

*Here's a hand and a hug. Hang on! You'll find the truth in your heart of how you want to live. And Hashem will guide you, if you ask Him to.*

*Hold on to Him, tight.*

*Your friend,*

*Chaim*

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Re: Chaim's Oigen

Posted by Markz - 13 Jan 2025 21:33

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I love your explanations, however the question simply had no basis at all.

“he was claiming that Frum dating and marriage is misogynistic and doesn't work, and suggesting that it is necessary for a couple to “try out” the bedroom in advance to see if they are sexually compatible”

I heard this same thing from a non-Jewish female therapist who never married.

Please!! Look at their divorce rates to determine life expectancy of their failed ideologies in marriage.

Sorry I should've told you earlier and saved you a bunch of virtual ink

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Re: Chaim's Oigen

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Posted by BenHashemBH - 13 Jan 2025 21:45

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[Markz wrote on 13 Jan 2025 21:33:](#)

I love your explanations, however the question simply had no basis at all.

“he was claiming that Frum dating and marriage is misogynistic and doesn’t work, and suggesting that it is necessary for a couple to “try out” the bedroom in advance to see if they are sexually compatible”

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Please!! Look at their divorce rates to determine life expectancy of their failed ideologies in marriage.

Sorry I should’ve told you earlier and saved you a bunch of virtual ink

Shalom Brother Markz,

Why should a baseless question invalidate an insightful answer - especially when a lot of people aside from the questioner will read it?

\*\* If you're joking about the 'wasted' effort and it slipped past my head . . . sorry.

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Re: Chaim's Oigen  
Posted by chaimoigen - 14 Jan 2025 02:45

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[Markz wrote on 13 Jan 2025 21:33:](#)

I love your explanations, however the question simply had no basis at all.

“he was claiming that Frum dating and marriage is misogynistic and doesn’t work, and suggesting that it is necessary for a couple to “try out” the bedroom in advance to see if they are sexually compatible”

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Of course I agree with your point. But the questioner needed, I thought, these explanations at the time.

And I felt that the various points in the above post/article transcend the specific question and have value in and of themselves, (because a few guys told me that they got a lot out of that post)...

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Re: Chaim's Oigen  
Posted by chaimoigen - 19 May 2025 01:01

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## **The Churban We Created And The Shadows We Cast**

**By: Chaim Oigen**

**One year before Tisha B’Av, Choosemyshem started a provocative conversation about our own personal Churban. He called it “A Corrupt Conversation Between Body and Soul. Here’s an excerpt :**

[choosemyshem wrote on 08 Aug 2024 19:20:](#)

...I truly feel that the posuk of b'chol eis yiheyu Bigadecha Livanim is the scariest posuk in the Torah. And that feeling is maybe the paradigmatic example of the churban beis hamikdash.

Derecheha darchei noam. Chiko mamtakim v'kulo machmadim. Yashkeinu minishekas pihu ki tovim dodecha miyayin.

A life of non-stop avodas hashem should be a delight. Not a pressure, not a payment we begrudgingly shell out to G-d in exchange for another day of life. Not something right-but-painful that we force ourselves to do.

How many of us have tried to go to sleep but somehow stayed up till dawn clicking, clicking, clicking, impossibly drawn after something so fake, so meaningless, and so empty? How many of us have ever meant to go to sleep but somehow stayed up till dawn lost in a sugya??

Torah, mitzvos, our relationship with Hashem. These things of endless depth and beauty should be so much more attractive than the nothingness we fill our lives with.

But we don't feel that. We feel the opposite of how we should feel.

And all we can do about our backwards life is bend down and progress like slugs. [Which is what we are supposed to be doing in our current state and for 353 days of the year we should be delighted about.] But we could've been born with wings.

We could've been born with Abaya and Rava being more fascinating than politics, sports, hock, lashon hara, or women (choose your preferred flavor of narishkeit). Instead of every day being a painful journey of one foot forward, two steps back, we could be purely motivated to become as close to Hashem as possible. Instead of pain we could have had delight.

Ignoring the pain this distance causes Hashem (the highest level of mourning), the physical tzoros that brings (the lowest level), and the lowly state klal yisroel as a whole has descended to. The churban of the individual is so complete and so pervasive that we don't even realize how destroyed we are.

Please do me a favor. Don't say Hashem wanted us down here in the mud. Because while that's true, how can we not cry while we choke on dirt?

**Powerful and thought-provoking. Here was my response:**

[chaimoigen wrote on 09 Aug 2024 00:03:](#)

Shem,

great, excruciating point.

I'll share my thoughts.

I don't know about others. But at the risk of sounding arrogant, I have actually had many times that I stayed up lost in the Sugya. Those were/are the best nights of my life.

Falling asleep in the embrace of Eiruvim or Nidda or Chezkas Habattim, with drool on my desk, these have been the sweetest nights of my existence.

I've had times where the words of Tehillim or Tefilla suddenly open, incandescent and alive. Times when Shabbos or Yom Tov are aglow with an otherworldly sense of Kedusha. Times on Yom Kippur night that were rapturous.

**I don't think the problem is with G-d's gift of life.**

**The problem is with us. We ruin ourselves.**

We get lost.

We waste the gift of life, by exchanging the currency of our interest, enthusiasm, pleasure and passions.

We develop the taste for: Sports, politics, video games, movies, endless scrolling, dumb news, empty literature, foolish and foul music, lusting over not-so-naked or naked curvy corpse-flesh.

The demon lurking in the shadows at the corner of the study laughs to see us burn the currency of our interest and delight for empty shards of broken pottery.

We **burn out and corrupt, we pollute** the **pleasure receptors** in our **living**, and then we want to know why our Yiddishkeit is a difficult drag.

It's much like how we can engage in behavior that eventually trains ourselves to ignore the warm, loving woman waiting in the bed upstairs while we betray her for the ghost of a two dimensional false fantasy image that gives us nothing but empty self loathing back. And then we wonder why our marriages aren't working, why she doesn't initiate, why it's not satisfying....

Laugh, Lilith- how much have you taken from us? What have we paid you? - for what?!?!

Yeah, I cry over the nauseating Churban.

I think it is we who have made it.

Yeah, living in a world of Churban sets the stage for all this.

We live in a world of Hollywood, Washington, the city street, and the damned phones and

tablets and computers and whatever. But the edge and joy of life has been ruined by the false version of life and living we have adopted.

See the Ramban on Vichai Bahem. ??? ????? ?????? ??? ?????????? ???.... ??? ???? ?????... ??? ??????

That's why I choose the Shem of Chaim Oigen.

Because i am learning to look for and see what life is really all about.

And it can be beautiful, if we don't cast shadows all over it.

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Re: Chaim's Oigen  
Posted by chaimoigen - 23 May 2025 03:24

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How My Father Talked To Me and How I Talk To My Kids

By: Chaim Oigen

There have been a number of discussions on the forums regarding how to speak to your children regarding reaching physical maturity, the "facts of life", Zera Livatala, etc. There was talk about if it's different for the Chassidishe community, lots of good conversation. I cannot overstate how important I feel it is for a father to be the one to speak openly to his son about these important topics, and to give over the right perspective before he gets the wrong perspective from somewhere else. That means having the conversation when he is young.

I learned this from my father, shlita. Here's my post on the topic:

[chaimoigen wrote on 14 Mar 2024 00:16:](#)

I can share my personal experience. First I can share the talk that my father had with me. And I

can share the experience of speaking with my sons. Sorry if it's long.

My father sat me down once while we learning Mishnayos. I was in 5th grade (about 10 I think) and a few kids in my class were talking... dirty jokes etc. I was disturbed and confused and had said something to my mother, and she must have told him. My father, who is a special Mechaneich, began by telling me that he feels that I'm mature enough to have a talk, one that some of my classmates may not be mature enough for, so we should keep this talk between ourselves. I felt around 9 feet tall when he said that.

Then he proceeded to explain that Yiddishkeit is different from other religions, lihavdil. They have priests who don't get married, who live in a monastery, who separate from all physical living. But we Yiddin believe everything is from Hashem. We eat special food on shabbos. Because Gashmius is Heilig too, when used the right way, with a Bracha, Lisheim Shamayim. So too, we **make a Bracha** after using the bathroom. We don't make jokes about how dirty the bathroom is, it's something Hashem put in the world. There's nothing dirty about it at all - we thank Hashem for the NES of being able to use the bathroom. But **we still close the door** because there's a concept of Tzniyus.

Then he began to explain about the facts of life. Without too much detail, but enough to cover the subject. More of the same kind of context. He explained that Hashem has created us with a drive that it's natural for a person as he grows up to be attracted to women, because it's necessary for the world, and Hashem created the world that way, just like He created hunger so we will eat. He explained the basic facts. And he explained that Hashem created desire to be used with love in a marriage, and therein it is private and special and part of the Mitzva of marriage. We don't talk about it, not because it's wrong, and not because dirty, because it is not at all dirty- but rather because it's **private**. But, he explained - If touching, or desire is used not in the right context, then it would be wrong, etc. And we have to be careful not to look at what's not Tzniyus etc. We have to use it the way Hashem wants us to, keeping within boundaries of Kedusha, and not misuse it the way the Goyim do, etc etc.

He then assured me that I could **always** ask **any** questions that I may have. He spoke in general terms, and didn't use explicit detail about body parts or specific details what happens. it was enough but not too much (I was sheltered), and even so, I was a little grossed out anyways (remember - 5th grade!). But I felt trusted and cared for and empowered. And relieved because now I understood how the dots connected. **And most importantly - because of this conversation I was able to have follow up conversations a few times over the years.** I think 7th grade about shazal. Before I went to a dorm he talked to me about inappropriate touching and to avoid any relationship that makes me feel uncomfortable.

It is these conversations that made me be able to open up to a Rebbe for help in 11th grade,

after having been inadvertently exposed to porn in camp....

Although I have had my struggles, I believe it is this talk that helped me have generally the right understanding and attitude about intimacy leading up to and in my marriage.

And to this day, I always feel good knowing that I can talk to my Tatty about anything, and he trusts me. More than 35 years later, thinking about that talk and what it did for me and my relationship with my father shlita, it still makes me feel safe, cared for, and having an inner sense of confidence. It is one of the most cherished experiences I have from my childhood.

I gave the same speech to my sons, in 5th grade. The first talk isn't so detailed, but it sets **the tone**. And it opened the door for further conversations, each according to their different natures. But yes, each of them came back. Because they knew they were safe and trusted and there would be no shame, and that they would receive clear answers, support and guidance and acceptance.

More than once I was asked something that they didn't need to know the answer to. And I had earned the trust to be able to say "You know I always answer all of your questions. This specific thing you are asking is about something not-nice that you really would be better off not knowing. If there's a reason why you need to know it, tell me, and I will explain..."

Yes, one of my children came to me to discuss a loophole in the filter in the family computer. He wanted help and knew he could talk to me. BH My sons are clean (as far as I can tell, and I'm perceptive). They are open and have asked for help when they need it. Some have more challenges than the others but all are doing well. One of them is a Shtikle a Kadosh, bH. And I think that the talk and relationship I have had with them is a big part of it, with Siyata Dishmaya (and maybe also the many years of Tefilos that they should not suffer what I did).

One man's experience.

As I said, I can't speak from the perspective of the Chassidishe community. (The Litvish community wants their pure kids to be sheltered and Heilig too, by the way.)



But please consider this. Frankly, in today’s age, I don’t think that there is a single place in the world that is immune to exposure. Any child, Chassidish or not, in my opinion deserves to hear about these things, with love and sensitively, **from his Totty**. Not from somewhere or someone else, which is bound to happen at some point, sooner or later, if you don’t talk to him. I think that would be a shame.

P.S. I was a drop disappointed by the quick look I took at the “curriculum” that a Mechaneich recently has been advancing about how to speak to one's children. I felt that talking about how important it is to safeguard your eyes and avoid Shazal without giving any kind of background and explanation or perspective about relations between men and women in the context discussed above is an incomplete talk, and may inadvertently give the message that that part of the topic is taboo and too dirty to discuss. I think it should should be more comprehensive. But I haven’t really spent much time on these curriculums. Because I had a Mesora from my father shlita on how to give the talk...

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