Internet Ban - Whats your opinion
Posted by stevec613 - 17 Jan 2010 15:39

I would venture a guess, that there is no group of people as aware of the dangers of the internet as those of us on this forum. We are probably more aware that our esteemed gedolim of what a tremendous negative impact that internet can have on ones life, relationship with Hashem, ability to learn and daven, etc. That being said we are also aware of the tremendous good that the internet has to offer. For many of us, GYE has been the tool that we used to not only conquer our internet addiction but to also grow in so many ways.

With that in mind I would like to see what my brothers (and sisters, if possible) in the forum think about the movement afoot to ban the internet from all Jewish homes.

My feelings on the issue are as follows:

My pornography addiction began long before the internet was in our homes. While Pornography was not as accessible as it is today there was no shortage of stimulating material to feed my addiction even as a pre-teen in the 70's. If it was not glossy magazines that my friends seemed to have no problem purchasing as 13 and 14 year old, it was the pictures in the "over the counter" magazines and newspaper advertisements. These were all capable of causing repeated falls. My point is that while the internet has certainly made these images available in private and on demand, the yetzer horah was as powerful, and had his methods even in the 70s and 80s.

Additionally, since finding GYE this past august (150 days clean and counting) the internet has been the tool most responsible for my growth. This site has been the launch pad to so much success in fighting the yetzer horah. Additionally I have used the internet to increase my avodas hashem. My "spare" time is now spent looking through the forums, looking for divrei torah on the parsha, looking for on line shiurim on halacha, tefillah, and hashkafa. None of this would be possible without the internet. I am learning more, davening with more kavanah, and working on my middos more now and with more success that at any time in my life (including my yeshiva and kollel days). There was a website I found several months ago that had literally thousands of shiurim available for download. It seems that this website was taken down due to call by our gedolim to ban the internet from Jewish homes. There are so many shurim that I had planned to take advantage of, that are now less accessible.

I respectfully disagree with the internet ban.

I am looking forward to the attitudes and opinions of this group.

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Re: Internet Ban - Whats your opinion
Posted by BruceWayne - 17 Jan 2010 15:44

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1. It's unrealistic.

2. As with anything that is very powerful, the power can go both ways. You can use the internet for learning and good things, or unrestrained "indulgence" in porn (thereby ruining your life). It's an issue of self control and responsibility.

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Re: Internet Ban - Whats your opinion
Posted by Kedusha - 17 Jan 2010 15:46

Even if a ban were effective, it would not be a long term solution for Klal Yisrael. If this generation can manage without the Internet (which is a very big if), the next generation will not be able to.

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Re: Internet Ban - Whats your opinion
Posted by Ineedhelp!! - 17 Jan 2010 15:50

Well said Stevec613,

And even to add to that, Many people's parnassah are based on the internet so what do tey do now?

I also agree that it would be an impossible task. Every home has internet. A more likely solution would be to filter all internet but I think even that is an unliklihood.

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Re: Internet Ban - Whats your opinion
Posted by cleareyes613@gmail.com - 17 Jan 2010 16:33

I like Kedusha's point about the next generation.

The Rabbi's of course have a point, but like everyone seems to be saying can cause issues.

- porn or provocative material will always be readily available.

- some ppl really need the internet

- a lot of good can be found online

I don't feel they should use the term banning. The rabbis should speak strongly against the internet, and push towards keeping it out of homes. Those that need it, should be filtered. And torah webistes that do exist, should not be taken down. There will always be jews online who need such places.

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Re: Internet Ban - Whats your opinion
Posted by lamed vavnik - 17 Jan 2010 17:25

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tough call. tough call . ??? ??? ???

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Re: Internet Ban - Whats your opinion
Posted by Kollel Guy - 17 Jan 2010 17:28

Everyone here has made very valid points. It is clearly impractical to keep up this ban for anyone who is already accustomed to the benefits of the internet, and material will always be available alternatively anyhow.

I would like to correct an apparent mistaken view about the Rabbis of our generation. Which is that they sit naively by their seforim all day, and occasionally look up to answer a question like "The internet is bad. Can you assur it?" To which they answer "Yes" and that's the whole story of both the inner and outer workings of the ban.

The following is not a stab or knock at anybody in particular. It is my astonishment at the 'ruach' I'm seeing on this thread.

The Rabbonim (contrary to apparent popular belief) are very smart people, and know good and well what can and cannot be done, and how effective it will be, and how practical it will be for the masses to uphold.

It is actually very surprising to me, that some of the people here who have previously displayed such deep intelligence, can look at a few words that the Rabbonim said, and conclude that they understand exactly what they were thinking, and all their reasons for what they did.

Who knows why they did it! Can you really consider that they - after dealing with klal yisroel for so many years - haven't yet figured out that the internet is necessary for some people financially?

It hasn't yet dawned on them that the next generation will be facing a world practically run by the internet?

They don't realize all the good which is available and often only available via the internet?

Maybe they are gearing the ban towards the percentage of jews who will listen, maybe they plan on loosening the ban with the passage of time (like they already did once) - since it is easier to tell people what to bring in then what to throw out....

Their reasons can be endless. If we judge their decisions we need to know their cheshbonos.

By the way, they **did** permit possession of the internet for financial use as well as for other important reasons (hence my own usage - even though I'm unclear on the stand of the American Rabbonim who might permit it altogether, besides someone who needs to work on his addiction is probably a different story), there are just stipulations necessary to keep to.

Again, I don't disagree with any of you. I'm just surprised that our Rabbis are being viewed as so ignorant of such obvious things.

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Re: Internet Ban - Whats your opinion
Posted by BruceWayne - 17 Jan 2010 17:58

Yiddle2 wrote on 17 Jan 2010 15:50**:**

Well said Stevec613,

And even to add to that, Many people's parnassah are based on the internet so what do tey do now?

I A more likely solution would be to filter all internet but I think even that is an unliklihood.

Except in China, Iran, Iraq, Russia, Cuba, and every other hellhole on earth.

I ain't gonna stop ya from moving there if you really want to....

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Re: Internet Ban - Whats your opinion
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 17 Jan 2010 18:04

Hey, weren't the gedolim banning COMPUTERS in the home until this internet ban came out?

Guess that didn't work, did it?

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Re: Internet Ban - Whats your opinion
Posted by Kedusha - 17 Jan 2010 18:07

Kollel Guy wrote on 17 Jan 2010 17:28**:**

The Rabbonim (contrary to apparent popular belief) are very smart people, and know good and well what can and cannot be done, and how effective it will be, and how practical it will be for the masses to uphold.

You're making it sound like all Rabbanim are in agreement on this issue. Not all Rabbanim agree to the notion of a ban - some feel that it's not practical and is not the solution.

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Re: Internet Ban - Whats your opinion
Posted by lamed vavnik - 17 Jan 2010 18:13

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i'm with kollel guy.

i also would like to add that although there may indeed be plenty of good on the internet , this may be a case where the danger of what we could lose outweighs the good we could gain. its not always true that b/c it has good or even essentials it must be allowed . what the world will or wont' become and how realistic it is or not to implement ,is not necessarily our problem .we have to know what we need to do to make sure we don't lose more good soldiers like ourselves to this poison . even if it means downloading our shiurim elsewhere .and yes ,even if it means closing down GYE itself (not that i'm suggesting it b/c there are plenty who would never listen to the ban anyway who would be saved . and as KG said it's probably mutar under necessity for life)

its entirely possible that the mere existence of frum sites on the net is drawing people who would never have touched it into a mealstrom of exposure they simply can't handle. and in some cases we just need to cut out the whole thing and let the good go with the bad . when you really need something there are ways to get it . for me as a lustaholic the whole concept of even just e-mail convenience was just just a (very shallow)facade to get my teeth sunk into the netty deep. i knew exactly what i could do there . there are so many like that ,who for them just toying with the net is a tease to potential worse things to come. let us understand the wide spectrum of people this ban reaches and who it will help the most . the people we think need it the least may be the ones who will benifit the most .

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Re: Internet Ban - Whats your opinion
Posted by lamed vavnik - 17 Jan 2010 18:15

Eye.nonymous wrote on 17 Jan 2010 18:04**:**

Hey, weren't the gedolim banning COMPUTERS in the home until this internet ban came out?

Guess that didn't work, did it?

what's that supposed to mean ? so if people don't listen to their rabbis it must mean the rabbis

were wrong . i like that logic. does it work for G-d too ? i could put GYE out of business.

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Re: Internet Ban - Whats your opinion
Posted by stevec613 - 17 Jan 2010 18:21

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in posing the question I has no intention of question the pesak of our rabanim or gedolim.

My goal was to see what the experts on this forum thought. Did they think that a ban on the web would have kept them free from this test in their lives.

I hope (kollel guys comment aside) that everyone put their two cents in. I am more than happy to be disagreed with.

For the record there are many rabbonim and mechanchim who are against internet bans.

The science as they say is far from conclusive one way or another.

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Re: Internet Ban - Whats your opinion
Posted by Kedusha - 17 Jan 2010 18:30

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stevec613 wrote on 17 Jan 2010 18:21**:**

For the record there are many rabbonim and mechanchim who are against internet bans.

My point precisely.

Those in favor of a ban cannot think it's a permanent, long-term solution for Klal Yisrael, but seem to be making an effort to buy time while some real solutions are worked out.

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Re: Internet Ban - Whats your opinion
Posted by Kollel Guy - 17 Jan 2010 18:36

Kedusha wrote on 17 Jan 2010 18:30**:**

stevec613 wrote on 17 Jan 2010 18:21**:**

For the record there are many rabbonim and mechanchim who are against internet bans.

My point precisely.

Those in favor of a ban cannot think it's a permanent, long-term solution for Klal Yisrael, but seem to be making an effort to buy time while some real solutions are worked out.

This is my personal theory. I believe this is what they were thinking. But I very well could be totally wrong.

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