

Advising TOF (Teens of the Forum)

Posted by briut - 13 Apr 2010 12:44

Rabosai,

I'm hoping for your input here. There's a question heavy on my mind right now.

[size=14pt] Q: What's the proper flavor of hadracha (guidance) to give a young person who's part of the Forum?[/size]

You see, I generally assume the members (AND the unregistered "lurkers") are all "of a certain age." You know: legal adults, past the initial rushes of puberty, self-aware of who they are and what they stand for, etc etc. Most of us are. And I post with that in mind.

Still, younger folks are part of the Forum, too. They may have a real "addiction" issue, or may just be red-blooded frum teens trying to reconcile G-d's dual gifts to them of His Torah and an adult body. They might be so young that it's inappropriate (or even illegal?) to chat with them in the way we'd chat with an older member.

So, my question in more detail becomes stuff like:

- 1) Should we assume that any teen who found GYE has a serious lust issue, or should we reassure them that some challenge is perfectly normal?
- 2) Are there limits in the postings etc we make to them (like suggesting that one mz'l brings gehinnom, or promoting SA)?
- 3) Should we censor our posts to other adults because teens could be listening?
- 4) What's the right age for us to stop worrying about their age?

Thanks.

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Re: Advising TOF (Teens of the Forum)
Posted by DovInIsrael - 13 Apr 2010 17:45

lol!

only a teen in spirit - because I have not Grown up yet,

but I am working on it thanks to GYE and Duvid Chaims 12-step program, and all of the incredible , outstanding, strong, forum members who give me strength

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Re: Advising TOF (Teens of the Forum)
Posted by Chazak Amenu - 13 Apr 2010 17:49

I am not quite sure how to answer Briut because there probably is no answer. But thanks to this website we all have the chance to climb out of rock bottom and lead a real normal life. and we probably are immature! If we weren't than the legal age would not be 18 it would be 14! and some could argue that 18 is still too young!

but i think regardless of everything GYE will help us more than anything else! i was never able to make it past 1 month with p**n and now i am over 1 month and a half! this is still a very necessary thread but it is also very relative to who the teen is. for me some the stuff is very difficult to hear but sometimes it is actually good to hear it because it keeps things real.

And lets face people are pretty clean on this website not only because there are teens but because they do not want to trigger anyone else but it benefits the teens. most of the time people are giving chizuk and advice. Just wanted to make that clear, this site is about a serious problem out there and this is one of the best ways to fix it.

Me as a teen really appreciates the chizuk and help!

I am sure this is a good thread to continue though, like i said it is really relative to the teen.

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Re: Advising TOF (Teens of the Forum)
Posted by trying123 - 13 Apr 2010 21:29

I grew up in an extremely sheltered environment and community...

I remember as a young teenager, there were boys who had no exposure to Movies, magazines, etc. These guys would leaf through seforim on Marriage, Relationships, Tznius, etc. for lustful purposes...

Such a boy whose father has filtered internet will have all real shmutz blocked out...

GYE will not be blocked...

He may stop by and be exposed to stuff he never even knew existed....

I know this is difficult for most of you guys to relate to... but I could have been one of those guys....

On the other hand Guard correctly points out that it is an extremely minute minority.....

Peace and Love to all...

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Re: Advising TOF (Teens of the Forum)

Posted by silentbattle - 13 Apr 2010 21:41

True, Trying123 - and honestly, I think a lot of people here have had that experience of looking into some English halacha sefer for some stimulating halacha...sigh. Not my proudest moment, but it's happened, and other people here have mentioned the same thing.

Yesharim darchei hashem...those that want to trip, will trip. We shouldn't go out of our way to make things triggering, but past a certain point, we're not supposed to pad the corners of the world for them, either.

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Re: Advising TOF (Teens of the Forum)
Posted by briut - 13 Apr 2010 23:11

Wow. When I was a kid, it was the underwear pages of the Sears catalog. (I still swear they had secret messages encrypted into the photos, making us buy lots of useless junk.)

So, now Tried is saying that GYE is actually the Sears catalog of the charedi world? Kewl! (Do we have Lay-A-Way plans, too?)

But, to get serious for just a second, imagine the shock when they grow up, leave kollel, find the 'net at their accounting firm, and burn into embers when they see the screen that for us used to be just a Sears catalog. Ouch.

(Maybe these kids need us even more than I thought! CA seemed to be saying that, too.)

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Re: Advising TOF (Teens of the Forum)
Posted by Chazak Amenu - 14 Apr 2010 00:04

[Briut wrote on 13 Apr 2010 23:11:](#)

(Maybe these kids need us even more than I thought! CA seemed to be saying that, too.)

CA is always right! yeah! (when i write these words i cant help from laughing out loud, LOL!)

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Re: Advising TOF (Teens of the Forum)
Posted by teenagehelp - 14 Apr 2010 00:17

as a teenager (i recently turned 18), i'd say thus far my time on GUE has been ideal. i havent come across anything that seemed overly shocking or that has triggered me. i'd just say that the best route when posting for a teenager is emphasis on putting in hard work to end this early so that it can be stopped before the problem develops and picks up steam. and btw Guard, i think focusing on teens just beginning exposure to this issue will be a great aspect of the prevention concept.

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Re: Advising TOF (Teens of the Forum)
Posted by trying123 - 14 Apr 2010 00:31

I just received a personal message from a very popular and distinguished member of our family/Forum....

(Whom I have come to respect immensely)...

He asked me to post his message for him, so here goes:

"Its not only that I "could have" used Seforim to stimulate myself...

I ACTUALLY DID! Many times! (Sometimes with results.... Cry)

I am an example of those that WOULD go through Seforim with lustful intent...."

This is seemingly not as uncommon as people think...

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Re: Advising TOF (Teens of the Forum)
Posted by Chazak Amenu - 14 Apr 2010 01:07

I agree with Shlomo, and Happy Birthday by the way i did not realize you had turned 18! I don't know what to say to tried-123.

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Re: Advising TOF (Teens of the Forum)
Posted by trying123 - 14 Apr 2010 01:17

[Chazak Amenu wrote on 14 Apr 2010 01:07:](#)

I agree with Shlomo, and Happy Birthday by the way i did not realize you had turned 18! I don't know what to say to tried-123.

You can say that you see things differently.... Hey man... I am no better than you...

I am glad to have you around brother....

Peace and Love....

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Re: Advising TOF (Teens of the Forum)
Posted by Chazak Amenu - 14 Apr 2010 01:25

glad to have you too bro!

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Re: Advising TOF (Teens of the Forum)

Posted by briut - 18 Apr 2010 21:56

I could probably write a whole book, as most of us could, on the topic of what we SHOULD say to a teen on this forum. Or what we WISHED someone would have said to us as a teen. Or whatever.

Let me flip this around though: what should we NOT be saying to a teen.

There's probably a variety of fair views. Let me share a couple of my thoughts to get things started, but I'd really like to hear from the others.

Some stinky words I think I've seen here, that I wish I could obliterate:

1. You'll have this problem FOREVER (or, forever unless xyz...). I can't imagine telling anyone it's hopeless (or near-hopeless), and I can't imagine a typical teen feeling invulnerable believing it.
2. You're gonna "burn" (in the world to come) for every shmutzy act, word, or thought. (Teshuva is avail for much, or I'd say all, of what's being done.)
3. It's an addiction. Sorry, but in the world beyond this website, the word addiction has a certain fatalistic finality to it, probably unnecessary to get a younger person off their backside. Taking on a moniker of addict at a young age, though.... Maybe it's like the high school kid who kept stealing scotch from his parents' bottles -- does he need AA?
4. You'll always be powerless over this. Again, for a teen who's still finding their internal "power," I'm not sure this is accurate. Maybe the power is just under construction?

On top of all this, I wonder what we each would or wouldn't do on behalf of a teen. Would you invite him to an SA meeting? Would you pick him up and drive him there as you might an adult? Would you tell him his parents need to know, like we believe our wives need to know? In other words, I wonder what the differences are between teens and older posters here. I'm convinced there ARE some for all of us, but I'm curious about WHAT you think those differences might be

and how that translates into different actions on our part.

I'm guessing the teen members will have some opinions on the subject.

And remember, rabbosai, that for every member and poster here, there are lots and lots of lurkers who read our every word and want to learn from them.

Thanks to the entire holy brotherhood here.

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Re: Advising TOF (Teens of the Forum)

Posted by Chazak Amenu - 23 Nov 2011 00:56

I just wanted to add another few thoughts to this now that more than a year has elapsed. coming from a teen I feel that this website is a great tool for teens.

I do however feel that an emphasis should be put on making sure teens know that what they are going through is normal. Normal means that you will feel lust and attraction to girls and do NOT be too hard on yourself (I learned this the hard way) do NOT beat yourself up about it (it doesn't mean that you shouldn't do your best to focus on other things but...again its normal)! Being "normal" means you most probably not addicted to por* and masterbatio* so even though it might me very hard to stop it is possible and you can eventually have an easier time with it. Teens should be encouraged to talk with their parents.

Talking with my parents was extremely beneficial to me and I would not be 81 days clean without their help. Parents are not dumb they know what it feels like they WILL understand. Ask them to put a filter on and talk about any questions you have,they know you and can answer your questions better than anyone else!

Teens also should be encouraged to post almost exclusively on other teenager's threads or there own, this would make sure that the thoughts and tips people give are targeted toward a "normal", hormonal, healthy teenager (none of the addicted stuff or the "you'll burn". I hope this

is helpful to teens reading it and just as a general thought.

sincerely CA

PS

I am going to post this on my thread Chazak Amenu's climb
(www.guardyoureyes.org/forum/index.php?topic=1870.285) If your teen you might want to scan it a little. I either do not know or do not pay attention to the advice i give here and landed up in a REALLY BAD mindset but I am doing alot better now and would like to make sure others can benefit too. Thank you all.

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Re: Advising TOF (Teens of the Forum)
Posted by kidushashem - 23 Nov 2011 17:17

I have the perspective of someone who started out on GYE as a teen and am now an adult. My mental and emotional self are still improving and maturing but I've definitely reached the realm of adulthood.

There's no question that this struggle makes one grow up. I have grown immensely from all of the internal struggles. There is also no question that there is some very disconcerting stuff for a young adult to read about on GYE. I think there should be a balance and perhaps a "Teen Section" where all the intense stuff can be clarified (Geheinom etc.).

There's no question that the benefits of GYE for teens far outweigh the downsides... BTW, I have found some material on the forum to be way to explicit and triggering, so some of the guys here definitely had a good point there. I actually had a Yetzer to get triggered on here, but hey, there's nothing anyone can do about that. The fact is, GYE is so helpful to everyone, including teens. Nevertheless, maybe having a teen section and a teen hotline could be helpful, especially for teens like me who did not have the guts to speak to my parents so much about what I was doing...

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