

The Rabbi Miller Thread

Posted by AvigdorBenYisroel - 03 Jan 2017 22:13

Topic: Middos

The very first statement in Even Sheleima (likutim from the Vilna Gaon) asserts, "The entire service of Hashem depends on improving the character traits".

We must take working on our middos very seriously. It's not enough to read through Mesillas Yeshorim! Someone once asked Rabbi Miller, "How many times a year should a serious yeshiva bachur finish Mesillas Yeshorim?" The rav answered, it doesn't matter how many times he goes through it, the main thing is that it should go through him!

Working on our Middos is not something we do by relaxing on the couch with a light "self-help" book. We must be ready to invest in it.

It is the most important business in our life!

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Re: The Rabbi Miller Thread

Posted by Markz - 30 Jul 2018 04:24

[Dov wrote on 15 Nov 2013 12:00:](#)

[Pure Daniel wrote:](#)

Just want to comment that in my case telling my wife is the LAST thing I would want to do. She doesn't deserve the heartache. I think in many cases the damage will outweigh the potential benefit.

The Gemarah says that a person should say "what a beautiful bride" at a chupah.

The Gemarah asks about a case where the bride is 'downright ugly' should you still say "what a beautiful bride"?

Beis Hillel says YES!

But it is a LIE??!!

Says the Gemarah "one is allowed to lie for the sake of Shalom Bayis"

This is talking about for the sake of SOMEONE ELSE'S shalom bayis.

ALL THE MORE SO WHEN IT IS YOUR OWN SHALOM BAYIS!!!

Stay Pure,

Daniel UK

Wow. **I'd like to respond to Pure Daniel's post with a thing I wrote and sent back to the rav Avigdor Miller society I get beautiful daily emails from.** This one, however, was a doozy, and my response speaks to the value of honesty in marriage.

I am not saying that you, him, or anyone should tell his wife he masturbates or looks at other naked women regularly. I agree that in many cases it would be a mistake.

But, be"H, here is some food for thought for whoever reads it:

A quote from Rav Avigdor Miller zt"l I recieved today:

How does a wife "Open her mouth with wisdom"?

June 3, 2013

25 Sivan 5773

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Always a man's inside should (strive to) be like his outside. (Brachos 28A)

But it is not recommended that his outside be like his inside. Even to each other the husband and wife should be perfect actors. Never should a wife (or bride) reveal anything derogatory or distasteful about herself, her past, or her family.

"She opens her mouth with wisdom," and the ideal of being "open-hearted" to a husband (or to a wife) is a serious fallacy. (Career of Happiness)

To whomever this is concerned:

I love The Rabbi zt"l and miss his evening lectures so much. But I must tell you that this vort of his is often terribly misunderstood and the way people often use the concept he refers to here, is often poisonous. I work with many good people with terrible problems. Many of them live in denial and have a terrible time getting honest - and so, they never get help. Their greatest skill of all is in their ability to cover up and fake many details of who they really are, even *especially* to the ones who love them and trust them the most! Besides ourselves, our spouses and children are the main victims of being lied to and fooled.

Once again, Rav Miller is teaching rare and precious wisdom, here - but it is only true and good when applied to truly normal people. He leaves no room for the abnormal, the ill, and the twisted who are among us. I believe that this was always part of his general derech: speaking to the *normal* crowd. In fact, the generation of Americans he grew up with were the very same way, minimizing and almost ignoring disabilities and the weak - always putting forth the strong and handsome as our representatives and models. Witness the 50's and the 'Leave it to Beaver' culture. They sincerely believed that by doing otherwise and showing the wheelchair-bound or abnormal among our ranks, they'd be encouraging weakness. So, like FDR's polio, they *had to* hide weakness.

But The Jewish People is different. 'Mi k'amcho Yisroel' does not mean we are perfect or ought to *seem* perfect; being a good Jewish spouse does not mean you or me are perfect persons; and some of us really *do* have serious, distasteful problems that need to be opened up about and are shameful. And sadly, *there are tens of thousands in this category* and it is so unfortunate that many choose the comfort of pretending all is ok as a good way to deal with that.

It is not.

If chronic porn use and masturbation is the scourge in our Torah community that many from experts say it is, then *the faking and lying in our community is a cancer that is rotting things from the inside out*. The yetzer hora and habitual use of the porn and sex workers may be symptoms of the problem - but the ability to accept living a fake life is its life's blood. Encouraging hiding, enables the game to survive and continue indefinitely. As long as our leaders project and encourage 'faking perfection' as a Jewish value, the masses will *not* get the help they need to squarely and bravely face their problems until their pain is too great. That's not fair. And our community has some dire, deep problems that nobody really seems to know how to handle! ...Maybe that is why so few suggest opening up about it?

But people like Rabbi Mordechai Twerski, Rabbi Abraham J Twerski and others, are trying desperately to help our leadership get the tools to respond to these problems - but most Torah authorities have no clue what to do about things like violence in the home, about addiction to alcohol, sexual promiscuity, gambling, and drugs, and about many family and marriage problems, etc. We can jam all the anti-internet rallies full of 'normals' (really normal-*lookers*) - and it still will not convince anyone that we here in the rally do not have the problem ourselves or addressing our issues. And all the books on 'shalom bayis' and 'teens at risk' that are printed, will not prove to ourselves or others that we are addressing these issues, either.

We are not. We are mostly still running from.

So I hope that even if we as a society cannot Torah tolerate leaders who are imperfect, we may at least accept Torah leaders who will not encourage *us* to hide from *our* real problems and just fit into the mold.

I think that ideas such as this one from Rav Miller zt'l, encourage that denial, and should not be

taught at all in such a general, simplistic manner without clarification. I have met (and continue to meet) enough people who have suffered and are still suffering from the mach'loh of applying oversimplified 'Torah-advice', as I have.

I lived for 11 years of marriage leaning heavily on that one line, "Meshaneh mipnei hasholom". It was a fiasco.

Hide the fact that I missed the minyan, for why should she know...then hide the fact that I called the sex phone line because, "Oy, poor girl. That would really break her heart!"

C'mon. That's not *meshaneh mipnei hashalom bayis*, at all! *It's meshaneh mipnei **MY** shalom and comfort!* Furthermore, I probably rationalize that if I tell her, then she will not want to have sex with me, *and then I will sin even more!* So I'd better keep my masturbation a secret, to save my kedushas haBris...

Wow, that makes sense to this sick mind. It's uncanny how convenient these 'Chaza"lim' are, no?

And because we start meshaneh mipnei hashalom for this, we do it for that - just as Chaza"I say "The YH comes and says do this, then tomorrow do that...and finally when he says "Go do avodah zorah" and the yid says, "What?!" - the YH says, "And what you did yesterday *wasn't* practically A"Z already?!"

I love and be"H will continue to learn, use, and spread Rav Miller's Torah values and teachings. He was a rare man to have such beautiful clarity about so much of life as Hashem's Will expressed. Whether he had a blind spot in this p'rat is not for me to judge but I believe Hashem places personal responsibility on me to ignore teachings such as these - and to keep the rest.

As Chaza"I teach us, "bar min hateven".

No, chevra. It is far, far better to be meshaneh mipnei hashalom *for someone **else's** marriage*, than it will ever be to be mashaneh for *your **own** marriage*.

And when it comes to disclosure of our sexual betrayals to our wives, every case needs to be judged completely individually and patiently.

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Re: The Rabbi Miller Thread
Posted by AvigdorBenYisroel - 12 Aug 2018 20:48

I just returned after months of not being here and was very disappointed to see this last quote from our dear friend Rav Dov shlita. I do find some solace that it was written in 2013 and sincerely hope that Reb Dov may have changed his mind about what he wrote. I don't think that Rabbi Miller would hold that one should disclose to his wife and break her heart just because he's an addict. That's more selfish addict thinking...

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Re: The Rabbi Miller Thread
Posted by cordnoy - 12 Aug 2018 21:41

[AvigdorBenYisroel wrote on 12 Aug 2018 20:48:](#)

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No, he didn't.

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Re: The Rabbi Miller Thread
Posted by Markz - 12 Aug 2018 22:07

[AvigdorBenYisroel wrote on 12 Aug 2018 20:48:](#)

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Brother it's great to see you back!!

The words of Dov which I quoted are very deep and need to be delved into. I encourage all to read and re-read them.

If you think Dov changed from what he wrote 5 years ago, perhaps Rav Miller zl may have changed from what he said 25 years ago, no? I'm writing this with full ???? ??????. Dov fully follows Rav Millers words, but he was pointing out how amazing it is how people apply the words of Rabanim as it suits them, and Rav Millers words are no exception.

???? ?????? ??????. Words of chazal need to be taught hands on, and Dov to me is a good Rebbi on some topics. He's available and reachable :-)

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Re: The Rabbi Miller Thread

Posted by AvigdorBenYisroel - 22 Aug 2018 20:39

I've spoken to Dov more than once. And to cordnoy more than once. MarkZ and me have never
Here is where I will agree to disagree.

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Re: The Rabbi Miller Thread

Posted by ??? ??? - 23 Sep 2018 06:30

i know this post is very old. but just joined recently and being a big fan/talmid of Rabbi Miller ill try to weigh in to explain what he is saying. I don't think he is talking to a FFB who is smoking 20 cigs a shabbos who as you say there ae mant frum smokrs who don't .He's talkig about a not yet frum smoker who would love to keep shabbos yet is totally addicted anfd for him cold turkey(for shabos) isn't an option because he doesn't have the appreciation of shabbos that a FFB has , yet still giving up that one cig is a great accomplishment.

Looking at the smoker as a FFB would be as one of ur friends,chavrusa... etc try to figure out how we can be struggling with something which should be as clearly assur a s smoking on shabos...yet it seems like for 35,000 people it's not that simple

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