

The question to start dating?

Posted by steve894 - 06 Oct 2011 17:50

Hi to all. I am very new to this website and am so far very happy with it. This is my first post and I hope theyre will be many more to come. I am in the age of shidduchim and have been struggling with this problem for over 8 years. I am currently learning in yeshiva and attend a night college. I have been very interested in starting to date very soon. I wanted to know what people think about starting before this disease is at least some what under control. I would like to start within the next few months and hopefully I will stay clean until that time. But if I don't or even if I still am clean, should I wait longer before starting to date? I wish i could ask a Rebbi this but I am way too embarrassed about this whole topic. Thanks in advance for your replies and I look foward to seeing what you guys have to say.

steve894

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Re: The question to start dating?

Posted by alexeliezer - 06 Oct 2011 18:35

Steve,

Welcome! Hatzlacha in your learning and college studies.

Only you can decide when you're ready to start shidduchim. You are fortunate to have found GYE at this critical stage in your life. I dated and married in active addiction, so I shouldn't tell anyone to do otherwise, but I will. (At least I didn't have any idea that I had a problem back then.)

I can think of a few reasons to get sober before dating.

1. How can you possibly be objective if you objectify women as sex objects?
2. How can you wait patiently for the right girl if your sex drive says you need it soooooon!
3. Now that you are fully aware that you have an addiction, if you don't overcome it now, while you davka DON'T have pas b'salo, how will you know you're having appropriate relations with your wife, and not just using her as a crutch to feed your lust habit in a muttar way?

4. Do you really want to carry this with you under the chupah?

5. Quitting now will be a clear demonstration that you are clean, and is your last chance for the ultimate tshuva gemura (again, without pas b'salo).

Having said all that, let me ask you. Do you have an understanding of how to recover from this addiction? Read through the GYE handbook, and make a commitment to sobriety, to avoiding lust, avoiding all gazing, deflecting lustful thoughts and images. Turn the battle over to Hashem and turn over a new leaf.

You can do it! Now is the time!

Alex

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Re: The question to start dating?

Posted by gibbor120 - 06 Oct 2011 18:50

first of all, WELCOME! Thanks for sharing with us. I also got married without control over my addiction. As the many married folks here will testify, marriage will not solve your problems. (Rabbi Twerski advises against it, but I can't find the exact quote now.)

Coming here is a step, but only the first step. If you are not in control now, marriage will not help you. You may have a longer "clean" streak than when you were single, but you will not have changed. Please spare your future wife that agony and get help now. It's tough, but it's the only way. You'll be a much better husband for it!

Here's the official welcome. Read through it. We're here for you my friend!

Welcome to our community, you have finally come home!

GuardYourEyes (GYE) is a vibrant network and fellowship of Jews of all affiliations, struggling to purify themselves and break free of lust related behaviors. For the first time, there is somewhere to turn to for help in these areas. We're all in the same boat here. *Tzuras Rabim Chatzi*

. Once you've arrived, there's no turning back. Everyone here will just grab a hold of you and pull you up with them!

In the last couple of years, the GYE network has helped roughly 1,000 Jews get back on a path of sanity, self-control and healing and has touched the lives of thousands more. GYE has become known throughout the Jewish world as the number one address for dealing with these challenges which have reached epidemic proportions.

The tools of our recovery program were developed with guidance from the best experts in the field, such as Rabbi Dr. Avraham J. Twerski, and through the personal experience of hundreds of Jews who successfully broke free. We use a unique approach that recognizes that there are many different levels in these struggles.

Our network is comprised of a website, a pulsating forum, phone conferences, daily Chizuk e-mails, support hotlines, therapists, live 12-Step groups and a program of recovery for all levels of this struggle/addiction.

All our work is free of charge and we zealously protect the complete anonymity of all our members.

Here are some quick things you can do to help you jump straight into your journey:

1) See the "[GYE Program in a Nutshell](#)" (*Right Click the link and press "Save Link/Target As" to save the PDF file to your computer*) that can help you quickly identify at what level of the struggle you are at, and which tools and features would help you most at your particular level.

2) Install a strong filter (see [this page](#) for more info). It is hard to break free of this while having all the garbage within a mouse click away. The filter gabai at filter.gye@gmail.com will hold the passwords for you. We also highly advise installing "Reporting Software" such as webchaver.org to give you some accountability.

3) Join the daily [Chizuk e-mail lists](#) to get fresh chizuk every day.

4) Join the [90 Day Challenge](#). Scientific studies have shown that it takes 90 days to change the neuron pathways created by addictive behaviors in the brain.

5) Post away on this forum, where hundreds of yidden like you exchange chizuk and post logs of their journey to recovery. You will internalize that you are not alone, and you will learn the techniques and attitude that work for so many others.

6) Join our free anonymous [phone conferences](#), led by an experienced sponsor.

7) If you need more general guidance, write to GYE's helpline at gye.help@gmail.com or call the hotline at 646-600-8100.

8.) Download and read the "[Guard Your Eyes Handbook](#)" (a hard copy can be purchased for cost price [over here](#)). This handbook outlines the GYE approach in detail, and makes our network much more effective and helpful for people. **The handbook has two parts:**

A) The first part, "The 20 Tools", detail suggested tools and techniques, in progressive order, beginning with the most basic and fundamental approaches to dealing with this addiction, and continuing down through increasingly earnest and powerful methods. No matter what level our addiction may have advanced to, we will be able to find the right tools to break free in this handbook!

The second part, "Attitude & Perspective", detail 30 basic principles to help us maintain the proper attitude and perspective on this struggle. Here are some examples: Understanding what we are up against, what it is that Hashem wants from us, how we can use this struggle for tremendous growth, how we can deal with bad thoughts, discovering how to redirect the power of our souls, understanding that every little bit counts, learning how to bounce back up after a fall, and so on and so forth...

Our souls cry inside of us, but we have accustomed ourselves to block out that cry. Today we can begin to be who we really want to be.

We are here for you.

www.GuardYourEyes.org

GYE E-Mail Helpline: gye.help@gmail.com

GYE Phone Hotline: 646-600-8100

Help us help others: [Donate Here](#)

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Re: The question to start dating?

Posted by 1daat - 07 Oct 2011 00:52

Alex, beautiful post.

Hi Steve894 and Welcome.

There's a saying in recovery, "You're only as clean as your secrets". Modified, "You can only be as intimate with another as your secrets".

If you're still active, ch'vshalom, and hiding that from her, really you are tricking her, making her think you're something you're not. Not much of a way to start a life together with someone.

Posting on GYE is a major step. You are coming out of hiding. It's easy to imagine that soon you will be able to talk with real people, by phone, in person, maybe even your rav. You won't be so ashamed. You'll be living in the solution, hard at work. Picking yourself up, giving and getting chizuk. Watching your eyes and all the things Alex posted about.

What do you think about maybe giving yourself a few months clean. Your whole mind will be different at that point.

Hatzlocho.

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Re: The question to start dating?

Posted by steve894 - 07 Oct 2011 02:20

[alexeliezer wrote on 06 Oct 2011 18:35:](#)

1. How can you possibly be objective if you objectify women as sex objects?
2. How can you wait patiently for the right girl if your sex drive says you need it soooooon!
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Alex

Thank you for your responses. I really do not see what you are saying here. Baruch Hashem I am not at that point where I view every women as a "sex object". I don't see the parallel between a really bad addiction to porn and acting out to the sex drive towards women and their looks. Please explain more. I really was asking if a) it will be harder to stop while dating because I will be around girls and thinking about them more. and b) im"y when I am married what will the nisayon be like then? I do agree with what 1daat said and I would like to hear that clip from R twerski if you have it.

Thanks

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Re: The question to start dating?

Posted by alexeliezer - 07 Oct 2011 15:19

I agree that it's possible to be reasonably objective even while in active addiction. It is possible to choose a good wife. I did, B"H. You assert that you can compartmentalize -- see some women as sex objects, and others as kadosh, worthy of being your zivug. I suppose it's not impossible. Not going to argue.

I can let reason number 2 go as well. That leaves 3,4 and 5 (I did the math for you!)

To answer your question (a), my personal opinion is that dating itself, being around and evaluating girls, will not make it harder for you to stop. As long as you have a good plan in place for how you're going to stop.

Question (b) is a huge topic. If you don't get clean before marriage, you are in danger of turning

your new wife into the focus of your lust. If you do this, she will thus be a constant source of the drug, perpetuating the addiction, and robbing both of you of true intimacy.

You may find discussions on the following pages helpful:

www.guardyoureyes.org/forum/index.php?topic=4454.15

www.guardyoureyes.org/forum/index.php?topic=4448.15

Keep asking questions and keep us posted with your progress. If my opinions don't work for you, hopefully others will offer ones more to your taste. Ultimately, you're the one who has to find your unique path to recovery.

Gmar Chasima Tova

Alex

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Re: The question to start dating?

Posted by kidushashem - 10 Oct 2011 22:55

Hi,

I'm in the same boat, thinking of starting to date soon...

For me, it's not even a question. I want to have many months of sobriety behind me when I start dating and definitely when I get married.

There's no way I'm willing to let myself spill seed or lust after I'm married. I want my relationship with my wife to be completely holy. I want to have relations only for the sake of heaven and to please her. I want my children to be born out of holiness. I don't want to think about any other woman besides my wife.

I don't want to hurt my wife in any way.

I have to have many months of sobriety behind me. I can't come to the Chuppa with 2 weeks and seriously expect myself to easily change and never "do it" again.

Also, I think that even though I didn't have to turn all women into lust objects when I wasn't clean, it would still be hard for me to not make some mistakes while dating...

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Re: The question to start dating?
Posted by gibbor120 - 11 Oct 2011 14:43

[kidushashem wrote on 10 Oct 2011 22:55:](#)

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I don't want to hurt my wife in any way.

Lofty goals, but don't get caught up in "completely holy" "relations for the sake of heaven" etc. That is a tall order for most ppl, certainly addicts. Appreciate your small steps, don't worry about "perfect" or "completely". Appreciate your *progress* in small steps, don't worry about *perfection*.

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Re: The question to start dating?
Posted by steve894 - 12 Oct 2011 21:12

does anyone know how to change my original username

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Re: The question to start dating?

Posted by Blind Beggar - 15 Oct 2011 21:17

To change your username look towards the top of the page and hover over Profile, then click on Account Settings which will then appear.

You and everyone else should be aware that usernames are allowed to contain capital letters and spaces, like Blind Beggar or Dov or Bardichev or Bochur Needs Help. It makes them easier to read and looks much nicer.

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Re: The question to start dating?

Posted by Rising Up - 16 Oct 2011 02:34

Welcome bochurneedhelp,

I am also a bochur like you that is in college at night and in position to start dating right now. However, I expressed the same concerns as you do here, to the appropriate Rabbanim, as well as to people that have been clean for a long period of time. Both have told me that under most circumstances they would advise me not to start yet (they expressed it like this since the for the most part they don't know me personally but rather only by name), but rather wait for a period of 4-8 months of clean time before dating.

There were 3 concerns that I laid out to them in my posing of this question. alexeliezer stated them partially, but I will nevertheless repeat them.

1: If I don't view a girl in the proper perspective than I will have no way of knowing if I truly like the way the girl looks and love who she is, or rather I love the way she looks and likes the way she is?

2: How will I know that I'm looking for in the proper girl and not skewing what I'm truly looking for, thereby risking the loss of the true goals that I have in finding the right girl for myself?

3: Am I really that stupid?

Rising Up

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Re: The question to start dating?

Posted by Holy Yid - 16 Oct 2011 07:33

Welcome my new holy friend. I wish you much hatzlacah here. It was a HUGE step to post your question in the open like that.

I too suggest getting involved in the program and being clean a while. The program is a great way to prepare for marriage besides for helping you stay clean.

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