

Appropriate Dress in Shul

Posted by getting.better.24.7.365 - 07 Oct 2015 03:41

Hi guys, I have no idea if this post is in the right place but I felt a strong need to talk about some things that have really bothered me this past Yom Tov. If it's out of place please forgive me.

I am struggling very much with this addiction. I have committed with new resolve to do better this year, to find some sanity. I go to shul and daven well but even in shul and afterwards I am confronted with views that are terrible triggers. I spent most of the past few days walking with my head down and at one point I even took my glasses off so that I could walk out of shul. Now I know I have a problem and it makes me very susceptible to wanting to look at things we shouldn't look at but the way women and girls are coming to shul makes it even harder for me and I strongly suspect that it can create problems for men who didn't have a problem to begin with. Honestly, the women I see in Shul are dressed more attractively than any non-Jewish women I encounter on a regular basis. Now I'm not saying that people should show up in garbage bags to shul but I think being dressed to the nines is a little over the top. Besides for being dressed to the nines, I believe that women and girls are really pushing the boundaries of Tznius if not out right crossing them. Every Yom Tov it seems the clothing is shorter, tighter, and more flashy. What is going on?! Are these women trying to incite an affair?! Do they want to be machshil the rabim?!

More importantly, is there anything that can be done about it? I have thought about approaching the Rav to voice my concerns. Couldn't one of the older ladies stand at the door and recognize when someone is not dress appropriately? It reminds me of a story with Rav Avigdor Miller zt'l. He was giving a shiur and an inappropriately dressed woman walked in wearing a low cut bright red dress. He stopped the shiur and asked if the Para Aduma could please leave. Extreme some might say, but is it really? I mean picture Arab women at a Mosque. Do you think that if one of them showed up dressed like one of these women in shul that they would be allowed in. Would it be so terrible to have someone monitor the standard of dress in shul? At least help us out in the place where we go to daven. Shouldn't shul be a safe place where we can go and not have to worry about running into triggers right when we walk in the door? Why do I have to take off my glasses to go into the hall to use the bathroom?

I would appreciate any help in dealing with this particular difficulty.

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Re: Appropriate Dress in Shul

Posted by markz - 07 Oct 2015 04:03

Hi GB

These are tough situations, where the shul wasn't designed with guys like us in mind.

How's the state of your mind / your thoughts regarding lust, when not confronted with this shul or similar situation?

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Re: Appropriate Dress in Shul
Posted by serenity - 07 Oct 2015 04:19

Focus on yourself and start implementing the tools here.

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Re: Appropriate Dress in Shul
Posted by serenity - 07 Oct 2015 04:31

Sorry is that came across as blunt, but it's what has worked for me and many others.

Hatzlacha!

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Re: Appropriate Dress in Shul
Posted by AlexEliezer - 07 Oct 2015 15:21

I relate very much to your concern.

Except I refuse to think about it.

Because thinking about it just gets me thinking about *them* and how enticing they look.

Then I just obsess about the whole thing.

Which leads me to obsess about what I love obsessing about.

Which leads me to fall.

There was a guy who used to post here who would say,

"she may be a problem, but she's not *my* problem.

Yasher koach for looking down and taking off your glasses.

We need to focus on our own issues.

We lust-obsessed men can help Klal Yisroel best by cleaning up our side of the street.

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Re: Appropriate Dress in Shul

Posted by eslaasos - 07 Oct 2015 17:06

Maybe it depends on the community and the shul?

I haven't yet seen a post from Serenity or AlexEliezer that I didn't agree with, and it makes a lot of sense that at the end of the day we are not responsible for other people's actions, we have to take care of whatever nisyonos are sent to us *by Hashem* (not these unfortunate women).

However, based on my experience, some shuls do require more zehirus than others, and like anything else I'll try to stay away from triggering situations.

So maybe these women need to update their wardrobe, and maybe the Rav has a responsibility to do *what he can* (probably not much, so maybe he's doing whatever he can already), but that's not something I'm in a position to resolve, so I just move on and away.

In any event, even in the most right wing shul where the women eschew makeup in favor of bulletproof stockings, we still have to control our eyes and thoughts.

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Re: Appropriate Dress in Shul
Posted by abd297 - 07 Oct 2015 20:29

Fully relate to the issues. It is pretty stunning to see some of the things nowadays. I'm in a small community that's mostly yeshivish so it's not a huge deal but guests and some more modern people are real issues. I guess just don't think about it and watch yourself as much as possible.

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Re: Appropriate Dress in Shul
Posted by getting.better.24.7.365 - 08 Oct 2015 00:32

"she may be a problem, but she's not *my* problem.

Thank you for that phrase. I will try to remember it. It is very true. My problem is that I wish that even just one place would be sacred so that although I fight at work and in the street at least I was hoping that when I got to shul I didn't have to start off behind! I walk in the door and before I say a single tefilah the fight is on again. Maybe I should come earlier!

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Re: Appropriate Dress in Shul
Posted by Hatzileini Na - 08 Oct 2015 01:03

Welcome aboard getting.better

I will admit I had to smile when I read your post. Not because I don't agree with you, as the way some people dress for Shul can make it tough on Shemiras Einayim, but because the I think we are holding the mirror the wrong way.

I believe that the reason so many woman are dressing this way is because of people like us, who have been obsessed with lust, have paid attention to women because of how they look, and have made that the focus of our attention for women. When a girl knows that this is the way to get a guy's attention, she will do so. When a girl feels like her self-worth is tied to her appearance, she is going to focus on that appearance.

Yes, I agree the way some of the women dress is inappropriate, and because I hate what it does to women, I hate the fact that I have likely played some role in it.

PS I recently read of a Shadchan who advocates cosmetic surgery for girls in Shidduchim to improve their chances. It may be extreme but it's a response to the realities of where so many of

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Re: Appropriate Dress in Shul
Posted by serenity - 08 Oct 2015 02:27

What about the SSA guy who maintains his sobriety. He's right there in shul with the guy he's attracted to, never mind in the gym etc. The point is that this problem emanates from our mind and our fantasy and the solution resides there as well.

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Re: Appropriate Dress in Shul
Posted by AlexEliezer - 08 Oct 2015 13:11

us are...

I was thinking about this topic (which I already said I shouldn't) and it occurred to me (along the lines of what Hatzileini Na wrote) that it has been discussed many times on this forum that many men here wish their wives would dress a little edgier, a little more enticing. As if that would make things easier for them. Now I don't mean to open up this topic again here, but thought it was worth mentioning.

So the very thing we want from our wives is the thing we're now complaining about (as a group).

Just saying...

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Re: Appropriate Dress in Shul
Posted by eslaasos - 08 Oct 2015 17:16

[AlexEliezer wrote:](#)

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Just saying...

I hope when guys verbalize wanting their wives to dress more enticing, they are referring only to the privacy of their home.

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Re: Appropriate Dress in Shul
Posted by AlexEliezer - 08 Oct 2015 18:47

They were referring to their everyday dress, not bedroom attire.

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Re: Appropriate Dress in Shul
Posted by gibbor120 - 08 Oct 2015 21:30

WELCOME! You raise a particular issue, but is that what really brought you to this site? Why not open up about yourself? We know what you are going through, because we are going through it too.

BTW, from what I understand, most women are not dressing up for men, they are dressing up to impress other women, as funny as that sounds.

You have a point about how they dress, but you will likely get much better results from working on yourself.

If you are really committed to changing your environment, why not change shuls? I think it is unlikely that you will get very far by talking to the Rav or any other idea to change your environment.

Is this your only nissayon? Please keep posting.

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Re: Appropriate Dress in Shul
Posted by cordnoy - 08 Oct 2015 21:31

[Hatzileini Na wrote:](#)

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us are...

I disagree.

I think they mainly dress that way for themselves, their women friends and their husbands.

I think we tend to give ourselves too much credit.

I have more to say on this as well, but I will clam up for now.

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