

Letter Being Sent to Four Rabbanim in my Community

Posted by Kedusha - 21 Aug 2009 21:13

Hello,

I have written another anonymous letter, this time to four Rabbanim in my community, one of whom is President of the Vaad HaRabbonim. It is, b'li neder, going out in today's mail. Below is the letter, slightly edited:

[Note: I am substituting two other letters, which I believe make the point better. The second of these letters was sent by the the Vaad HaRabbonim to every Rav in my community].

Dear Rav *****, Shlita,

A wonderful friend of mine has dedicated his life to helping Acheinu B'nei Yisrael who have fallen prey to the Nisyonos of the Internet. His "Guard Your Eyes" program, www.guardyoureyes.org, has helped countless people in this sensitive area.

Rav Yosef Veiner of Monsey has made a remarkable statement: that the Nisyonos of the Internet are, without exception, the most serious issue facing Klal Yisrael. The Shiur can be heard at this link (this topic is addressed from about 21:00-47:00).

www.torahanytime.com/scripts/media.php?file=media/Rabbi/Yossi_Viener/2009-07-30/Tisha_BAv_Our_Responsibility_Toward_Others/Rabbi_Yosef_Veiner_Tisha_BAv_Our_Responsibility_Toward_Others_2009-07-30.wmv

Yet, unfortunately, Klal Yisrael is, for the most part, in denial. For example, Family First Magazine, which is published by Mishpacha, is currently running a serial called "Shattered Glass," which deals with a Kollel Yungerman who suffers from Internet addiction. Mishpacha has received so many complaints that the author was forced to change the story line to something less threatening.

Just this week, Rav Aharon Feldman, Shlita, Rosh Yeshiva of Ner Yisroel in Baltimore, and member of the Moetzes Gedolei HaTorah of America, wrote a groundbreaking letter. The letter is groundbreaking, in that it is probably the first by someone of the Rosh Yeshiva's stature to fully acknowledge the extent of the problem, and to further acknowledge that we're dealing with an addiction/illness, not with people who are evil and simply need to exercise better self control. The Rosh Yeshiva gave a strong endorsement of the "Guard Your Eyes" program, including the website, as an effective way to help people escape from this painful addiction. The Rosh Yeshiva's letter can be found here. www.guardureyes.com/GUE/Misc/Rav-Aharon-Feldman--GYE-Letter.gif.

Furthermore, due to the vital importance of the cause, Rabbi Dr. Abraham Twerski recently wrote a letter in support of Guard Your Eyes, making a very rare exception to his policy of not giving endorsements. Rabbi Twerski's letter can be found here. www.guardureyes.com/GUE/Misc/Rabbi%20Twerski%27s%20Haskama%20med.jpg

I trust that you will find this information useful. Please share the Rosh Yeshiva's and Rabbi Twerski's letters with other Rabbanim, and please recommend the Guard Your Eyes program for anyone who needs it.

Sincerely,

Dear Rav *****, Shlita,

As you are certainly aware, addiction to Internet pornography is a very serious problem in the Orthodox world today. It affects all spectrums of Orthodoxy, from Modern Orthodox to Chassidish. It is unknown how many Orthodox Jews (men especially) feel that they are leading double lives, and are crying out for help, with nowhere to turn.

Imagine the pain of a father attending his child's Siddur party or Chumash Siyum. It should be a moment of great Nachas. Instead, the father is ridden with guilt because of where he was on the Internet the previous night. And the night before.

I was in this unfortunate position until recently. Then, two things happened that have changed my life immeasurably. First, Rav ***** urged all of his congregants at last year's Shabbos Shuva Drasha to install an Internet filter, and to entrust the password to someone else. He went a step further, providing every member with information on how to obtain a free Internet filter for home use ("K9" - see below), and how to set it up. I had reached the point where pornography had caused me untold pain and frustration, and I was more than ready to listen. I installed the filter, and had my wife choose the password (in case the password is lost, it will be sent to my wife's e-mail account, to which I have no access). While not a total solution, having an Internet filter has been extremely helpful.

Second, I discovered a remarkable website that has numerous resources to give Chizuk to those struggling in this area - www.guardyoureyes.org. This site is a life preserver for those who are drowning in a sea of Tumah (I know this from personal experience – it has kept me clean, and gives me the opportunity to both receive encouragement and to encourage others).

Please urge your members to protect, not only their children, but themselves, by installing K9 (www1.k9webprotection.com/) or another Internet filter, and by entrusting someone else to choose the password. Please also inform your members of the Guard Your Eyes website, and encourage them to make use of it.

The main concern, of course, is whether people will listen. "Kesheim Shemitzvah Lomar Davar Hanishma, Kach Mitzvah Shelo Lomar Davar She'eino Nishma." I believe, however, based on my personal experience, that there are at least two groups of people that will take your words seriously. First, those who have hit (or are rapidly approaching) "rock bottom," whose college grades, marriages, livelihoods and, indeed, entire lives are becoming unmanageable. Second, those who are doing better than the first group, but have the foresight to recognize that they are on a very slippery slope, which is likely to cause them a great deal of trouble in the foreseeable future. Such people may be inspired to take action, even though they have not yet hit "rock bottom." This is what the Guard Your Eyes website calls "hitting bottom while still on top."

Please consider sharing my message with your Kehilah. If you do so, who knows how

many people (and their families) will be helped in a major way?

Thank you very much. Kesiva v'Chasima Tova.

Sincerely,

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Re: Letter Being Sent to Four Rabbanim in my Community
Posted by EsaEinai - 28 Jan 2010 18:20

Someone should find a way to get this out to **all** Chabad Houses and emissaries, just think how many people they can reach.

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Re: Letter Being Sent to Four Rabbanim in my Community
Posted by briut - 31 Jan 2010 01:49

This is great. I know these letters are having an impact. (How would I have heard about the site if not for some marketing, anyhow?)

I also think it wouldn't be so bad if the rabbis in a town got such a letter with ONE LITTLE UPGRADE: a little post-it note on it. It would say:

"... AND I AM A MEMBER OF YOUR OWN KEHILLA. WE ARE EVERYWHERE!"

In my view, that's even more of a wake-up call.

I have had my own share of sexual challenges over the years (I'm still a newbie, so my story is out there for introducing myself to everyone - arrgh). In one case, trying to explain to the Rav that "we are everywhere" wasn't working until he found me by accident in some newsletter I didn't even know I was in. He was nice enough to ask if I wanted to talk about it. I did. It was gevaldig.

Having such chats with your rav is not everyone's cup of tea, I know, and having it hoist upon you involuntarily is even less appealing. Even so, getting such a letter with just the generic text might not be as powerful as a yellow sticky saying, "yoo hoo, I'm part of your minyan!"

Just a thought.

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Re: Letter Being Sent to Four Rabbanim in my Community
Posted by Tomim2B - 31 Jan 2010 01:59

And now for a dose of bitter reality: Chabad isn't public about these things and they wouldn't be at all supportive.

I know of a way to contact every Chabad house. It would be a waste of time and energy though.

2B

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Re: Letter Being Sent to Four Rabbanim in my Community
Posted by shemirateinayim - 31 Jan 2010 05:43

[EsaEinai wrote on 28 Jan 2010 18:20:](#)

Someone should find a way to get this out to all Chabad Houses and emissaries, just think how many people they can reach.

see my post on the breaking free

Tomim: I have the website link, but I have to copy/paste the info for every single chabbad house!! Do you have a shorter way. Even if they won't post it, they have reffered people to this site, see my post in 'breaking free'

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Re: Letter Being Sent to Four Rabbanim in my Community
Posted by the.guard - 31 Jan 2010 10:53

[Tomim2B wrote on 31 Jan 2010 01:59:](#)

And now for a dose of bitter reality: Chabad isn't public about these things and they wouldn't be at all supportive.

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Rav Bresinger of "Project Pride" is Chabad, and I am supposed to speak with him this week. He is a big supporter of our work. Maybe he can help...

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