

Navigating the ocean of my life

Posted by amevakesh - 17 Apr 2024 10:21

For the past 267 days, there have been sunny skies, calm winds, the boat's been steady, with nary a thought to the pirates that lurk beyond the horizon.

However, clouds are gathering, waves are getting choppiier, and worst of all, a cry from the barrelman in the crow nest, "Pirates ahead"!!! I've been warned.

As they get closer, thoughts are swirling through my mind. I hear their evil whisperings in my head. "You thought you were off our radar, not so fast." Will they succeed in overtaking the ship I've put so much effort in constructing?

They're faster, sneakier, and more cunning then I, and I know that once they come too close, I'm doomed. But, I have an itch that needs to be scratched, a void that has to be filled, and I'm having a difficult time doing so.

But one thing I've learned here at GYE. There's safety in numbers. So I'm sending out a call to my fellow mates, can anyone help me out in how to overcome these Bein Hazmanim pirates?

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Re: Navigating the ocean of my life

Posted by chooseurname - 17 May 2024 16:25

Yes. Yes it does qualify as objectification to some extent. I think what HHM is pointing out is if you viewed her as just another person, not as a lust object you must struggle with, you would have an easier time with being able to move on instead of struggling with not looking.

Almost everyone has "regular tayvos". It's not a get out of jail free card though. This is one commonly suggested tool for getting to not struggling. (One I have not gotten the hang of).

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Re: Navigating the ocean of my life

Posted by amevakesh - 17 May 2024 16:33

To be clear. I wasn't thinking of any lurid details, didn't fantasize about her in a sexual way. She was just a pretty face that was stuck in my head for a few hours. You still think that's considered objectifying her? I didn't think so. I guess I have a lot of work to do.

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Re: Navigating the ocean of my life

Posted by guardyouriz - 17 May 2024 16:55

i dont think so, but what do i know

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Re: Navigating the ocean of my life

Posted by chooseurname - 17 May 2024 17:49

Don't get hung up on the technical details. But you just called her "just a pretty face." That's basically the definition of objectifying.

Getting a pretty face "stuck in your head for few hours" is some level of lusting after her.* And it's generally suggested around here that it's easier to lust after objects, not people. And that if you really saw her as just another person it'd be easier to walk on by.

HHM's sharp little line there is a poke to remind you to think through *her* feelings and reactions and recognize she's a real person who would really not appreciate you lusting over her grocery shopping. I never figured out how to do this (at least not yet) but it's supposed to be helpful. That's also why people suggest praying for her. It'll help you realize she's a real person, with her own life, thoughts, opinions (blech!), family etc. Not our mental sex puppet.

*I once heard Rav Aharon Feldman say that every time a man sees any women he rates her attractiveness in his head. That's "normal tayveh". Not really anything to do about that. But having her live in your head rent for for more than a second or two is some level of lust driving

the plane.

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Re: Navigating the ocean of my life

Posted by BennyH - 17 May 2024 18:03

To be honest, I was quite surprised to see HHM's question.

Nothing in that post suggested "objectifying".

And to the extent that men automatically rate women by their attractiveness, that's something we need to take up with Hashem for making us that way.

Not to a guy who's trying his darndest.

And all that "praying for her" "humanize her" stuff strikes me as bull****, sorry for my language.

Yes, beautiful women are beautiful. And they will remain that way, and we will continue to view them that way.

Try to look away, distract your thoughts, and move the hell on.

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Re: Navigating the ocean of my life

Posted by showell - 17 May 2024 19:03

[amevakesh wrote on 17 May 2024 16:19:](#)

I really don't understand. What in my post makes you think that I did? BH I am a healthy human male, that has regular Tayvos. Does the fact that I noticed a pretty woman, tried to control myself, not perfectly, but I really did try and I think for the most part was successful, then tried my best to be ??? from her, qualify as objectification?

HHM meant his comment as a way of dealing with such situations in the future.

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Re: Navigating the ocean of my life
Posted by eerie - 17 May 2024 19:12

[amevakesh wrote on 17 May 2024 16:19:](#)

I really don't understand. What in my post makes you think that I did? BH I am a healthy human male, that has regular Tayvos. Does the fact that I noticed a pretty woman, tried to control myself, not perfectly, but I really did try and I think for the most part was successful, then tried my best to be ??? from her, qualify as objectification?

My dear friend, you need a shout out for all the hard work, for the winning, for the being stronger than your YH for 95% of the time-that's a fantastic success rate! **YOU ARE A HERO!**

Gotta say I was very surprised at HHM's response

I would think that HHM meant to get you to strive higher, and he did that by making you think about the question, if I look at a woman **a second time** just to notice her beauty, isn't that belittling her? The fact that you realizes she's pretty, the first time you saw her, that's not objectification. That's healthy human male condition. But in the future, when the YH wants you to take a second look, HHM feels you're at the level of being able to help stop yourself by realizing that the second look is belittling her. I'm not holding there yet, but take it as a compliment that he feels you can reign in the YH by thinking this way

Keep on trucking!

You are an inspiration to me!

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Re: Navigating the ocean of my life

Posted by cande - 17 May 2024 22:16

[amevakesh wrote on 17 May 2024 16:33:](#)

To be clear. I wasn't thinking of any lurid details, didn't fantasize about her in a sexual way. She was just a pretty face that was stuck in my head for a few hours. You still think that's considered objectifying her? I didn't think so. I guess I have a lot of work to do.

your good bro, no worries,

unless people know something you dont.

stay safe.

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Re: Navigating the ocean of my life

Posted by Heeling - 19 May 2024 03:37

My friend,

You're doing a great job fighting this difficult battle. Don't let anything get in your way - even good-meaning comments from very good-meaning people - Nothing can drag you down. Nothing can stop you. YOU ARE A HERO!! No question about that.

And Mazel Tov on you almost hitting 300 clean days.

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Re: Navigating the ocean of my life

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 19 May 2024 04:31

Sorry for a late response to good chaver's pained question, but just got onto the site after Shabbos. My deepest apologies for writing such a short comment which looking back at it could be viewed as criticism. As was mentioned by others, my intention was just to give perspective for the future. Many guys have told me that when faced with this matzav, the reminder that she is someone's wife, daughter, sister, friend, mother - and that she is not "mine" at all, and therefore i have no right to to take that 2nd look, minimizes the nisayon greatly. Instead of it being a yetzer hara/ta'avah issue, it is dealt with as a bain adam l'chaveiro issue. If i knew i would have to ask permission to keep looking (and then "have her in my head for a part of the day"), or that i would have to apologize if i did it without asking, i probably would not do it. Again, my apologies for any hurt the previous post may have caused.

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Re: Navigating the ocean of my life
Posted by BennyH - 19 May 2024 22:15

I just ran into a breathtakingly beautiful sight. I haven't felt this kind of gut punch in a long time. I looked twice and then a third time. I was lost.

I don't see how apologizing, praying, etc, would help. Blocking it out and moving on, does wonders on the other hand...

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Re: Navigating the ocean of my life
Posted by amevakesh - 21 May 2024 03:10

Summer is around the corner. All of the Almighty's magnificent artwork in human form (please don't nit pick my choice of words - literary licence, I don't mean to objectify) are emerging from their cocoons. Bold, Brazen, and Beautiful. How can I ensure that this will be my first ever complete summer without a fall?

Just a thought that crossed my mind. One of the YH's greatest tactics is when he tells me, you're never gonna get another chance to see another one as beautiful as this woman, It's a once in a lifetime opportunity, Now or never, Don't miss it.

So, I was thinking about a story that I heard about Rav Shmuel Birnbaum Z"tzl (hope I'm not messing up the details, any Mirrors please correct). When the ship that he was on with the rest of Mirrer Yeshiva was traveling from Shanghai, as they approached the American shore, they passed under the Golden Gate bridge. Everyone ran on to the deck to see the sensory beauty and engineering wonder featuring color, sound and light. Young (R') Shmuel Birnbaum sat immersed in his Gemara. When his friends came to tell about the once in a lifetime opportunity to see the bridge, he responded, "Nu, so now I have a once in a lifetime opportunity to give that up for my learning". He didn't budge. I think I heard a similar story about Reb Aaron Leib when he was flying over the Rock of Gibraltar.

Maybe the next time the YH tries to persuade me with this line of reasoning, I can respond in kind. Don't know if it'll work or not, might be too lofty. Remains to be seen.

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Re: Navigating the ocean of my life
Posted by gye365s - 21 May 2024 15:16

Indeed. It's difficult to balance doing 'normal' outdoor things in this exposed world of ours.

Your post reminded me strongly of the story of the half-eaten cake - only 4 minutes, recording on Torah Anytime linked here:

torahanytime.com/lectures/239335

The more you want it, and even more so if you've already taken a "bite", the more precious it is to Hashem when you give that moment to Him.

Thank you for the chizuk!

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Re: Navigating the ocean of my life
Posted by Heeling - 21 May 2024 19:34

My friend,

The summers are definitely very hard. I live in not such a Jewish neighborhood and it's not fun. Some Jewish neighborhoods, can be tough too.

But we know that a lot of it is just a mask. If we would get to know them we would not want to look at them (Example: The woman from the house next door to me). I like the idea of applying Rav Birnbaum's approach but for us, it's a bit more than that, I think. Beauty is subjective. It takes a lot of work. A lot of sweat. With a decent amount of tears. But it's all nonsense, it might be shiny but it's most likely just a piece of plaster covering up some damage.

No, it doesn't mean that all beautiful-looking human beings are miserable people but it also doesn't mean that they are as beautiful on the inside as they appear on the outside.

A little deeper than that, I think that a big part of our 'looking' is due to us feeling that we are missing something. Even if we do not want to marry that person or even engage in a conversation, therefore we don't really care about their middos or personality - we simply want to look because it's attractive, it looks shiny, and fancy. Did you ever walk or drive on the street and notice people driving the same make & model car as you or do you only notice cars that you would like to drive? Speaking for myself I only notice cars that I would like to drive and it's those cars that make me want to look at them again. The same goes with women. Lots of us feel that we are missing something from in our marriage or that our wives don't fit some categories we would like for them to fit into. But if we would only appreciate what we have and work on loving and feeling attracted to what's really important in life, it would be a big help.

This is just some two cents I tell myself. Take it or leave it.

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