Dear R,R & R (Rabbi, Rav & Rebbe) Posted by cordnoy - 18 May 2014 21:25

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[I would like the Rabbinate to eventually read the followin' letter; however, I would like all on this site to chime in. What did I miss? What should be added? what should be subtracted? Have I missed the boat? How should this be sent out? Let me know please; thank you.]

Dear Rav, Rabbi, Rebbe (R,R & R.....all types....whether one is Modern Orhtodox, Reform, Chassidesh, Yeshivish, Right wing or Left),

I am a member of your Shul, Synagogue, Sanctuary (S,S & S). I could be the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, First Gabbai, Second Gabbai, Board Member, Ordinary Member or Guest. I am writing this to you, for I feel that the Rabbinate in general is not addressing the following issue in the proper manner. The issue I am referring to is people who have a lust or sexual addiction. For this letter, it is not important to define the word 'addiction.' I simply mean: people who have an extremely difficult time guarding their eyes. We cannot walk or drive down the street without our eyes wandering and noticing all that we shouldn't. Every woman, her dress, heels, posture and everything else are scrutinized. No billboard is overlooked. We look again, turn around and gawk if we can. These images remain with us throughout the day/night. They/We/I begin to act out. We masturbate without control. We cannot stop ourselves. We view pornography on the internet. These images and videos remain embedded in our heads. They become a part of us. They invade during tefillah, learning, work and play. We develop relationships with women on the internet. We frequent clubs where naked women dance before us. Some of us are into phone sex. Others are into prostitutes. We are addicted to all types of sex. Some of us fantasize about other men; many of us fantasize about women. There are no restrictions; no limitations. Anything you have ever heard of, we have done or thought about. I can go on and on about all our particular fetishes, but I think you get the message.

Now, as a member of the Rabbinate, I am sure you are well aware of some of this. The way you address this is probably one of the following: You dedicate one speech, sermon, drashah to this topic. You warn your congregants how vigilant they must be to guard their eyes and minds. You tell them that it is dangerous to their souls. Some might even state how the aveirah/sin of Hz"l is a ticket to Hell/Gehinnom. Perhaps Avraham Avinu/our forefather Abraham will stand by the entrance of the Gan Eden and kindly/sternly tell us that we do not belong here. Some of you might discuss the chillul Hashem/desecration of God's Name that is involved. Can you imagine getting caught? Picture the damage it will do to your community, your family, your job, etc. Some might mention that we can become physically sick. We can catch diseases by close contact with multiple partners. This might even be contagious, and we will pass it on further to our spouses or our children God forbid!

Many of you, however, will choose a different route, one that is considerably 'safer.' You will talk about computers, internet and the need for filters and monitors. You will hang posters all around the S,S & S, announcing and informing us of the possible filters, protections and monitors that exist for computers, phones, I-pods and nooks. There are phone numbers to call to assist you in the installation of K-9, Web-chaver, V'shinantem, Net-nanny, Open Dns and Covenant Eyes. You will tell us about the dangers for our families and our innocent children. Some of you may volunteer to be our partner. You will receive in an email all the websites that we visit. There will even be those who set up classes/shiurim to learn from a mussar sefer/book that deals with this important issue.

Some of you will choose to make this into your lifelong battle. You will bring this up every other Shabbos. You will announce special speakers and events that will deal with this. You will try to convince your peers to make a convention about the topic. Let us duplicate Citi Field in our community. Another Asifah; another gathering. Let us create a group of those who can tell others that our house is now protected.

Now, perhaps I missed a method or two, but the above would be the general outlines of what has been happening for the past ten or fifteen years. There probably has been many success stories. You saved many marriages and protected many children. People have come back and reported that they are now clean. I/We commend you for this and we wish you continued success.

What I am here to tell you is that be'mechilas kevod torasam/I apologize to you great scholar there is a vital point that you are missing, and it is one that is crucial for us addicts. We are in hiding. This has become a stigma like no other before it. If we would walk to the bimah in the center of the S,S & S and announce that we are steeped into porn, we would be immediately banned and ostracized from the community. We are alone in the closet. Some of us feel that we are the only person in the world with this problem. We do not dare to tell our spouse, parent, Mashgiach or mentor. We hide our guilt and our filth. The danger of getting caught just adds to the thrill of the chase. We listen intently when you are hollering from the pulpit. We try not to squirm in our seats. We wonder if there's anyone else in this room that you are talking to. But ultimately, it doesn't help; we are not affected by your words. If we could, we would masturbate right there, right then; perhaps under our tallis or even with our tefillin on. We know and we heard many times that God has rejected us. We have been banned from His Presence a long time ago. We might feel a tinge of guilt; perhaps a lot of it, but it just leads to a vicious cycle. Within minutes, hours or days, we are back kneeling on the bathroom floor.

So, what you ask, are you missing? What more can you do? You have told us all how harmful

and detrimental this is to us, our lives, our families, our community and our souls. The answer, the solution, at least partly, or as a positive step forward, would be for a bit of empathy, some compassion, some concern, and most of all, some knowledge. Spend some time on the Guard your Eyes website. Learn about all the hundreds and thousands of frum/orthodox/modern orthodox, chassidesh, yeshivesh, bochurim, teenagers, students, yungerleit, Roshei Kollel, doctors, lawyers and professionals that are experiencing this problem. Learn what makes them tick. Study the causes. Speak to the therapists. Find out why this is becoming more widespread than ever before. Determine if filters or monitors would help these people. Let these people open up to you and listen to their concerns, worries, troubles, guilt, shame and anxiety. Investigate who are the therapists that are available for the different type of addictions. Do you even know what an SA group is? Do you know if they are accessible to your community members? Become experts in the field. Perhaps not all of you have the time and the wherewithal to obtain the status and the level of expertise as Rabbi Dr. Twerski and Duvid Chaim and Dov; but some of you can. Perhaps appoint one of your colleagues to become that expert. Learn about us. And most of all, speak to your congregants; not as a group, but in a private setting. Ask them about life (might be a good idea in general). And then tell them that you would like to ask some personal questions, and that you are asking everyone in the S,S & S the same questions; for this way, they will not be worried that they are under suspicion. Ask them if they have issues with guarding their eyes. They will answer: Who doesn't? Ask further. Tell them that there is help out there. In each S,S & S, there is probably 5 or 10 % of the members that suffer some type of sexual addiction. If my numbers are too high, then put it at 3 %, but you can help. One who suffers alone will suffer forever. That is what all the books and all the studies and all the experts have determined. Ask further. Be a bit of a nudge. Explain that although this particular person sitting before you might not appreciate this line of questioning, but it is worth it to you (and it should be worth it for him), to save or to assist one fellow in this community. R,R & R, I am afraid that you will be surprised, or perhaps even shocked about the amount of people that will "come out of the closet." And maybe, you say, I am saying that, for I would like to be part of a larger group....that might be true, but that is what many people are saying. And again, even if it isn't, can you imagine the relief of that one guilt-ridden, full of shame person will have when he finally is able to reveal his suffering and his grief that he has silently and shamefully endured all by himself for so many years.

R, R & R: either tell me why I am wrong, or please, I beg of you, take heed to some of what I wrote. You will be saving so many suffering souls.

Re: Dear R,R & R (Rabbi, Rav & Rebbe) Posted by Aryeh821 - 19 Jan 2016 04:05

Me personally? Ya for sure

And thanks for the welcome

He has and I did but I don't think he had any idea that this site even existed since he didn't refer me here

However I see your problem because my mashgiach at least in my opinion is a really one of a kind yid (maybe everybody feels that way about his mashgiach) and most people wouldn't say anything but even for those few wouldn't it be worth it?

Also I don't think most places talk about this kind of challenge besides in a really general way

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Re: Dear R,R & R (Rabbi, Rav & Rebbe) Posted by Shlomo24 - 19 Jan 2016 04:23

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Well I think that GYE is on it's way to make sure that people know about it.

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Re: Dear R,R & R (Rabbi, Rav & Rebbe) Posted by cordnoy - 20 Dec 2022 15:54

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cordnoy wrote on 31 Jul 2014 17:22:

I think what he meant or might have meant was to demonstrate how far or extreme this addiction can go....not that isolated cases prove a frequency for that, but it is out there. Additionally, it can be used as a reference point to show the dangers of this addiction and what it can lead to.

Thinkin' about this a bit more (sorry for that), I think (sorry again) that when the Rabbis or some of them or the outside world hear about these molestation cases, they say to themselves or to their colleagues: My God! What sickos we have! when in the truth, most of us here, or many of us here, or some of us here know that our addiction - if left unchecked can lead to such things as well.

Perhaps I wrote that in the original letter or somethin' like that.

I am not sayin' that we/l/you are a future molester; I am sayin' that many molestors started off as bein' lust addicted.

In conclusion: if there is one idea that everyone associated with GYE can agree upon (and yes, i mean you as well), and if you would ask yourself, what would be the number one advice you can give someone, or what would be somethin' that can help another get out of this mess? I believe the answer would be to somehow get out of the isolation. Remove the blanket. GEt out of the closet! Somehow, get it into the open (and no; don't broadcast it on CNN), for a heavy load will be removed from your shoulders. Our leaders can help with that....somehow.

Thanks (and sorry for the ramble)

b'hatzlachah

Many don't know about the "recent posts" dropdown, but that is how, I, as a moderator (who reads every post) keeps current. I'm not 100% sure why I chose this thread to comment on, but it is good (and bad) to see that my mind, thoughts and writin' style are still of the same wavelength.

I will not debate philosophy, and at the same time, I believe that the #1 step for recovery for any person, no matter the situation, is to get his 'secret' out to another. That other should be someplace safe and cozy. GYE is NOT that place. There might be folks on GYE who could be that 'other,' but the forum is a public and anonymous place.

Please listen to the followin' distinction (and perhaps read it twice): When one goes to a therapist, Rabbi, mentor, guidance counselor, friend, etc. and discloses that he has molested two toddlers and one teenager in the past year, the 'other' should not respond with, "Know that you are a sicko, deranged, severely demented and need desperately to be locked up in a psyche hospital for three months." That is not appropriate and counter productive. Rather, the response should be, "I hear, I feel for you, that must be tough, that can be disturbing, how does that make you feel? Where would you like to go from here? Etc." However, when one is on a

public forum such as this and he says, "I have raped my wife, boyfriend and give my six year old daughter three baths a week, and I regularly enjoy being peed upon by a leather-clad transvestite," the response from the cheerleadin' squad should not be, "Bravo! Don't worry, you're normal, come join the party, let's explore the symptoms of this behavior, perhaps with the right EMDR professional, we can determine what brought this about, etc." There is this line in this public settin' that these actions (and sometimes even thoughts and desires) have crossed that this is not normal, this is not OK. Is it OK? yes, he/she can be helped, but that is not the purpose of the forum. It can be done through PM's, calls, emails, etc. And certainly not on day #1 and 2. [Even though I said to read it twice, that does not mean that I am right, just that this is my opinion (and I am not humble).]

Two more notes please: 1. This 'line' may not be clear to all, and perhaps not to me as well. Where does visitin' escorts and prostitutes fit in? Howbout multiple partners? What about sodomy with a 17 year old? Howbout bondage porn? I don't know, but I do know that there are some absolutes. 2. I don't like the cheerleadin' method; however, many do, and it has some value to it, perhaps lots of value, and those of you who engage in this type of chizuk, it is completely fine by me, as the motto goes, we should try whatever works; but that should not be confused with this discussion and my argument here when the line, imho ('h' for haughty), has been crossed for this public forum.

And one final note: I obviously have been around the block here for some time, maybe I helped people, maybe not, but on a one-to-one basis, I have spoken with many folks who have engaged in many of the above-mentioned behaviors (I can be included as well), and some of them will even say that I helped them in their recovery.

Godspeed to all	
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Re: Dear R,R & R (Rabbi, Rav & Rebbe) Posted by sleepy - 20 Dec 2022 17:28	
markz wrote on 11 Jan 2016 18:19:	
markz wrote:	

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## markz wrote:

- 1- Watson's prior comment, which speaks to me too, that if 'confronted' (in a nice way) by the RRR, I wouldn't open up
- 2- Although people choose a synagogue based on location, and happens to be there's hopefully (not always) a warm personable rabbi officiating there

Yet, people choose their personal Rav based on many factors not necessarily dependent on location

I'm not making polls and have no stats, but in my humble assessment, a certain percent of the religious population don't have a family Rav at all, eg Chassidim of many groise Rebbes, is the heilige rebbe available for them day in day out like mine?

Then there's a certain percent like myself that have a Rav but he's not the Rav of my shul...

Then there's a small percent that the shul Rav is their family Rav, but he's not the warm personable type

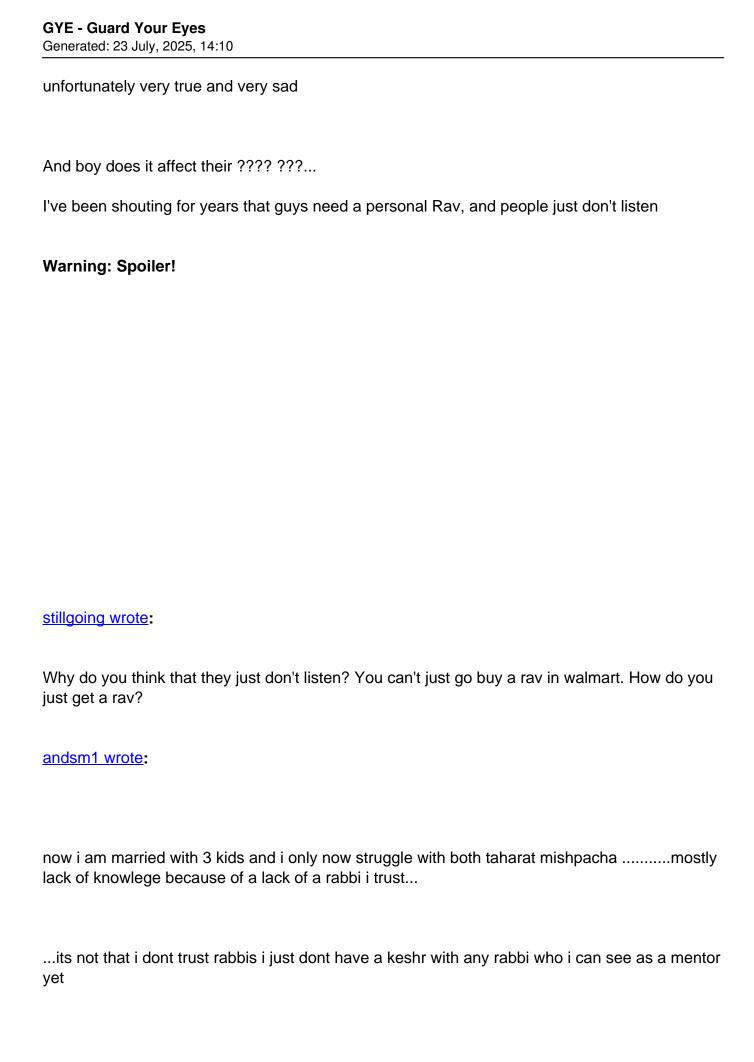
Are we close to 50%

I have no idea, and it's not the point.

And Watson's point also is not the point.

It is for the rabbis to try.

And the sad note that people don't have rabbonim that they feel close to (if that's accurate) is exactly that....sad.



If your life and your marriage depends on it you'd travel the entire country to find one

No rabbi is perfect, but if I think I'm more perfect than all rabbis...

Even a rabbi that has dealt with his lust issues may be of help (see oisvorfs thread I bumped last night)

Also many of us can do with a personal coach / counselor / therapist, and because it's pushed to the back burner we land up in very hot water

Each man to his own truck, but I don't have lifeguard training, only towing...

Whoever doesn't have a close Rav - go get one!

Whoever has - Hatzlacha!

wow, im very impressed .how true that one should get a rabbi to consult on such an important area, and not just the phone number to the bais horaah. please dont take this personal markz, i see that you reset your streak pretty recently.(i wish i could say that i have 37 days clean:sniff:) do you mind sharing the words of wisdom and chizuk that youre rabbi told you when you confided in him that you had to reset? i think it would be a big toeles for all of us rabbiless rabble. (unless its too private to share).thank you

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Re: Dear R,R & R (Rabbi, Rav & Rebbe)
Posted by Human being - 20 Dec 2022 21:17

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cordnoy wrote on 20 Dec 2022 15:54:

## cordnoy wrote on 31 Jul 2014 17:22:

In conclusion: if there is one idea that everyone associated with GYE can agree upon (and yes, i mean you as well), and if you would ask yourself, what would be the number one advice you can give someone, or what would be somethin' that can help another get out of this mess? I believe the answer would be to somehow get out of the isolation. Remove the blanket. GEt out of the closet! Somehow, get it into the open (and no; don't broadcast it on CNN), for a heavy load will be removed from your shoulders. Our leaders can help with that....somehow.

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I'm relieved to see were you stand. This has cleared up a lot of confusion for me. I always viewed GYE as *the* place that should be 100% safe and cozy for anyone to reveal **any** feeling or desire they have and be welcomed with open, caring, safe and cozy arms. I see we disagree slightly. You believe that

"There is this line in this public settin' that these actions (and sometimes even thoughts and desires) have crossed that this is not normal, this is not OK"

And i believe that "There is this line in this public settin' that these actions (and sometimes even thoughts and desires) have crossed that this is not normal, this is not OK"

So thank you for clearing it up. Can i ask you though? Isn't GYE the best place ever for those finally having the courage to "come out of the closet" to be welcomed with open arms, so long as they are just expressing their desires/feelings? Its anonymous, its a group setting, we are all brothers here and truly care about each other here. Isn't this the perfect place to allow people to begin their journey to getting support and assistance with whatever desire they would like to get assistance with? Yes, if someone says they "don't care about the desires they have", or says "i

want to act on a desire i have" which makes them potentially dangerous, then of course "GYE is NOT that place.?" We aren't therapists and we shouldn't be trying to play a role that is inappropriate for a public forum where right and wrong needs to be clear and blunt.

?But for feelings and desires that someone doesn't want to act on,

why cant we make Gye that beautiful accepting safe and cozy place? Is there any downside?

Wouldn't that be the best thing we can do as people who love each other and want the best for each other?

Why cant GYE be that place?

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Re: Dear R,R & R (Rabbi, Rav & Rebbe) Posted by Sapy - 21 Dec 2022 00:07

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Human being wrote on 20 Dec 2022 21:17:

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HB, let me respond in short, with a few points.

First, GYE has always been overall a very supportive space, with not much judgement, it is a place where people can state their desires and be accepted.

But, GYE has always had a frame of inappropriate non dangerous desires, that people can discuss, and feel free to state openly. Sorry but your bringing in desires that lots of people here feel are not in our scope to discuss. Pedophilia is dangerous and I know you agree with that, but

you wanna draw your line what's okay to feel, how much, how dangerous a person is, based on those feelings (obviously every molester starts with only feelings, and many of them want to stop and feel compelled), where as other feel, we are not here to discuss those stuff. It's a dangerous slippery slope.

Number two, GYE is based on a bunch people, everyone has their strengths. If you are the one who is very supportive, accepting, loving etc good for you, some are better in keeping people honest, or state it like it is. You want a safe space? You created such a thread, (I even used it to my great satisfaction) it's great, but why does GYE need to be one color, I would never be where I am without a kick in the ass, when I needed to face the music. You be the supportive one, make people comfortable, if people only want chairleading and love they have a thread to go to, and they have your email, and hashem will repay you for what you do. Preaching is usually not appreciated.

There are additional points, if you wanna discuss anything further, email me, I'll be happy to talk to you in the phone.

All the best.
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Re: Dear R,R & R (Rabbi, Rav & Rebbe) Posted by i-man - 21 Dec 2022 00:50
I would add .if you don't have children yet , and or know people who have been abused when they were young , and seen the horrible affects and suffering it causes. Then perhaps you should not be going on about how all is good and there's nothing wrong with feelings etc. It's very serious business , and frankly our communities have learned this the hard way.
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Re: Dear R,R & R (Rabbi, Rav & Rebbe) Posted by Human being - 21 Dec 2022 03:16

i-man wrote on 21 Dec 2022 00:50:

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I'm not going to go into specifics, but between the ages of 11/12 (please don't ask me details-it will cause me intense shame and be triggering. I don't want to regret being so vulnerable.) I got all too familiar with molest. And that is why I am so passionate about the topic. Because my story could have been avoided if not for the fact that the molester would have reached out. He didn't reach out for the precise reason of shame and guilt for having desires that where "strange and crazy". That is why I am so passionate about it. I wish no-one in the world the fear, guilt, self hate and burning shame that molest causes.

And as I know from my own personal experience, helping people realize they aren't strange and are not "different then everyone" and have no reason to feel that others will judge them is the number 1 thing we can do to protect our children.

( I will not be starting off another conversation of "normalizing vs not normalizing. we had that convo already.)

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Re: Dear R,R & R (Rabbi, Rav & Rebbe) Posted by i-man - 21 Dec 2022 04:52

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And as I know from my own personal experience, helping people realize they *aren't strange* and are *not "different then everyone"* and have *no reason to feel that others will judge them* is the number 1 thing we can do to protect our children.

( I will not be starting off another conversation of "normalizing vs not normalizing. we had that convo already.)

I'm sorry that you had to deal with what you went through. I hear your opinion and to be honest it seems like a very complex, difficult question and I for one am certainly unqualified to opine.

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Re: Dear R,R & R (Rabbi, Rav & Rebbe)
Posted by Human being - 28 Dec 2022 06:15

Sapy wrote on 21 Dec 2022 00:07:

Human being wrote on 20 Dec 2022 21:17:

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Why cant GYE be that place?

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There are additional points, if you wanna discuss anything further, email me, I'll be happy to talk to you in the phone.

All the best.

As I emailed you, I disagree with point number one. The second point you make, i want to respond publicly. I think the exact reason you gave to support your perspective, in reality supports my perspective. Let me explain.

?Gye is meant for anyone and everyone that has challenges with porn/masturbation etc. Many many of us cant stop, due to overwhelming childhood experiences that overwhelms us with our challenges, in a way that doesn't allow us to just stop on our own cause we want to. Many of us need more. We need support, therapy, guidance etc etc etc.

Those same people -which i believe is a big percentage, have other adverse affects, stemming from the same childhood experiences. In other words, anyone with a history of trauma, neglect, abuse, bullying etc, will have other challenges, especially in the sexual realm because remember we are talking about guys here who have a problem that is of a sexual nature. That being said, I believe, in order to allow gye to be colorful as you said "but why does GYE need to be one color" we need to make sure that all people, with all different sexual challenges are accepted the same on gye. The only way for a platform to be colorful, is to let all the different colors feel safe, accepted and not judged. I think if the way some of us respond is with a kick in the pants, while that might help you, it will not help all the colors out there feel comfortable being open, vulnerable and courageous.

Thank you.

Because many of us that have a challenge in one sexual area (porn) also have another challenge in a different sexual area (sexual desires/orientation-) I think they are hugely intertwined because for many of us both challenges come from the same childhood/teenage/life experiences. And because they are so intertwined, anyone that has a different sexual desire then what some here find "acceptable", will be hindered from feeling they can open up about anything sexual in nature, out of fear, that if someone probes a little deeper, or if someone "chaps" they have other sexual orientations/desires, they will be judged, looked down upon and ultimately ashamed.

ultimately ashamed.

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Re: Dear R,R & R (Rabbi, Rav & Rebbe)
Posted by Sapy - 28 Dec 2022 16:26

Your are entitled to your opinion, I'll be blunt, I think you are blinded and very compassionate about your experiences, and you see judgement in many posts that don't judge at all.

I'm here on GYE for quiet some time, it is a very accepting community.

You want "your kind" of acceptance that's what I said you created a safe space, (no advice etc). Which i think is very valuable.

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Re: Dear R,R & R (Rabbi, Rav & Rebbe)
Posted by cordnoy - 28 Dec 2022 17:17

Over a decade of history on this website has shown that folks with all types of fetishes, desires, actions and more have been accepted and not judged. [Otherwise, how would I be here?] Even a "kick in the pants" is nonjudgmental. As said many times, there are lines, however.

Disagreement is not only allowed; it is encouraged.				
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Re: Dear R,R & R (Rabbi, Rav & Rebbe) Posted by Sapy - 28 Dec 2022 17:33				
HB, I dont see where you are disagreeing with what I wrote.				
We're all good here.				
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Re: Dear R,R & R (Rabbi, Rav & Rebbe) Posted by cordnoy - 28 Dec 2022 17:35				
I was lookin' for somethin' in the archives, but instead I found this beauty from over ten years ago:				
Well, I'm not quite ready to click my heels and return to Kansas with this new outlook. But I've realized that it's neither the lust nor the love that I'm mourning.				
This is very very serious and very very dark in my consciousness right now, but I'm going to spill it out even though the thought's not fully formed.				
You see, I'm not missing the lust as much as I'm				
MISSING THE VESSEL THAT I USED TO STORE THAT LUST.				
THE VESSEL WITH ELABORATE PASSAGES TO KEEP THE POISON AWAY FROM MY				

HEART, WHILE GIVING THE LUST A WARM FUZZY PLACE TO LIFE.

THE VESSEL THAT CRADLED MY HEART AND KEPT IT SAFE FROM ALL THE SHMUTZ AND DEPRESSION AND DEGRADATION AND EVERYTHING ELSE THAT MY LUST DEMANDED.

THE VESSEL THAT I HAD HAND-CRAFTED SO PAINSTAKINGLY OVER SO MANY YEARS, SO THAT (YOU MIGHT RECALL) THE BALANCE OF 98% AND 2% SHMUTZ WAS CAREFULLY MAINTAINED.

THE VESSEL THAT I MADE OUT OF BLOOD, SWEAT, TEARS AND AT GREAT COST TO OTHER PARTS OF MY LIFE. With a passageway for my spouse, another for the kids, a safe corner for my fantasies, a containment chamber for my outrageousness, and a nook and cranny carved perfectly for every need as it arose over many years.

THE VESSEL THAT DEFINED MY SELF-VIEW OF SEXUALITY, MASCULINITY, WORTH, AND MORE.

I've been having this dream that I was on a desert island for years. Rescuers came (maybe a tour of the two shuls??). I wanted to take home the beautiful bed I had carved out of stone and inlaid with jewels. It fit me perfectly, it took years of my life to finish, etc. But they couldn't bring it on the boat. I had to leave it behind to get home. I missed my bed, the work of my hands and my heart and everything.

So, I think I'm not really as addicted to the lusting itself as I am to the house of cards I constructed to live with my lust. If I don't lust, then I don't need a cloak anymore called gay, or special, or master juggler, or wow-what-u-do-4-Hashem, or well-hung, or good in bed, or anything like that. I don't need a cloak at all. I just need to show up as me.

Giving up that container that held the lust is work that I'm now contemplating on a level deep enough to scare the pants off me. (And I don't mean in preparation for acting out, you know.)

## **GYE - Guard Your Eyes**

Generated: 23 July, 2025, 14:10

Okay, is THAT dark enough for you? Because I think I have to stop typing a cry for a coupla minutes. Lemme know what you read in this that I might continue working on, once the tears dry. Thanks.

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