

Britt's Beyond

Posted by briut - 02 Feb 2010 18:00

Dear Friends: Sorry I've been off in my own mind these last couple of days and not posting.

I've had a very very emotionally busy couple of days as I approach the end of a 20-day kaballa to be clean. Here's an update, and I'm hoping for your insights/comments.

That kaballa ends this evening. I've learned a lot. I want to express my thanks to all of you for jumping in to post, even in the face of some pretty long rambling posts without clear message. It means a lot.

And to the author of many insightful PMs, your direct, almost brutal comments scared away a lot of delusional thinking and brought me a tremendous sense of clarity. Saying thank you doesn't even come close to my gratitude for your time. I'd love to hear from the decades of accumulated wisdom here on the forum.

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!

Posted by Steve - 16 Apr 2010 04:24

Have a great Shabbos.

Remember, you are BRIUT-iful!!

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!

Posted by briut - 16 Apr 2010 13:00

A huge (for me) revelation.

I've realized this work is intensely individual and personal for each guy here. Including me. When I jumped in, I figured it would be good to learn the others' stories or even find some other home-towners to be in touch with: some way to have a personal connection.

I don't feel that way right now. I think that even PMs with members of the Forum takes away some of the anonymity I might need to use this site properly. So I've stopped looking to "get to know" individuals here; now, I'm just wanting to be one quiet, anonymous voice here. 'Cause there's work to do. So forgive me if I don't post much on your personal thread, or answer your PM, or whatever.

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!
Posted by briut - 16 Apr 2010 13:02

You know, I've made one giant revelation that seems to have nothing to do with GYE work but actually has everything to do with it. Namely: why am I so upset with a lack of "reliability" in others?

You see, I've always had this intense need for having "reliability" in my "deals" with other people. If you say you'll cook dinner tonight, then do it. If you say you'll be gone and I should cook, then I'll do it and you shouldn't. I get so disappointed and upset and everything else if I come home and there's no dinner ready on "your" night. But somehow, I'm JUST as upset when I come home to cook (leaving a crisis at the office, braving the supermarket at rush hour, etc) only to find that YOU decided to "surprise me" by making dinner. I "need" that feeling that "yes means yes, no means no."

I've always had this strong need to "count on" people to do what they promise (or avoid what they promise not to do).

So what's this revelation? I've realized that the only way for me to work on this middah is to see how and why I want to have "somewhere" I can count on things. And I'm afraid this "somewhere" is not really my wife, my parents A'H, or my friends, or whatever. The one I want to rely upon is Him.

To rely on Him, like when I call on Him to reconcile the mitzvos he sends me with the mind & body He's given me... when I sorta find the gap between His ideal and my "real" to be a little bit "unreliable" of a deal. Bottom line, I've realized to my horror that there's STILL, after all these years, a corner of my mind that is (forgive me) mad at Him for not doing for me what he promises in His Taryag. Ouch.

So I blame my wife for not making dinner if she promised, or even for making it when I promised, when in fact I'm still (forgive me) upset at a different "unreliable" One in my life. Boy is this thought... awful.

This is hard to explain, but somehow I think it's a big yesod for me to work on. Time to think some more.

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!
Posted by Dov - 16 Apr 2010 15:16

Maybe it's time to try to *do* something for Him w/o thought of payment or reward, *then* think a bit? Sometimes, experience is a much better teacher than the brain.

Just being annoying (and loving it!),

Maxwell Notso Shmarrt

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!
Posted by trying123 - 16 Apr 2010 15:30

Very Interesting thought...

We all have an inner tendency to scapegoat (Let out our frustrations on easier targets)....

When your Boss is miserably unfair with you, you can't put him in his place bec. you'll lose your job, but when you get home and your kids are being difficult....

Boy will they be put in their place. (After all they need to know that there is authority....)

We can sometimes be most cruel to the ones we love most... sometimes to ourselves... If we are aware of this we can strive to be better people...

When Chazal spoke of Sinas Chinom they did not mean hatred for no good reason because no one is actually that absurd....

They meant Hatred that is unjustified based on the actions of the individual....

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!
Posted by briut - 21 Apr 2010 16:15

Well, I think it's time for a

100 DAY CELEBRATION !

I'm not exactly sure how to 'count' my days here. It's my 31st nonstop day; before that, a 68 day streak. One fallen day inbetween. So I'm on 99 cumulative days out of 100, or 31 nonstop days, or whatever count might be appropriate. In any case, I'm now 100 days into this journey. And now, I'm now seeing that THIS IS NOT BEYOND ME. Cleaning up my act is within my field of vision. Hashem hears my prayers and is saying 'yes.' Tattie, a dahnk!

I feel as if I've crossed over some huge mental divide, to a place where I see a different way of going through my sex life, my love life, even my parenting life. I'm not there yet, but I now see the next round of work that'll make it happen:

1) shmiras eynayim: very tricky. Halacha says I shouldn't stare at women and my own desires tell me I shouldn't stare at men (read earlier posts...). I'm also seeing how much I've enjoyed the 'buzz' from someone good-looking, and even filing the image away for a more private moment. I've got to find a replacement buzz to succeed in this area.

2) more love, less lust: In the past, I've approached intimate relationships with some "mutual objectification by consent" (i.e., pure lust) rather than true love. If I can focus on increasing the amount of love I give others, perhaps I can reduce the amount of lust I use to keep myself going.

I saw a beautiful sunrise this morning and started humming an upbeat tune, "Little darling, it's been a long cold lonely winter; Little darling, it feels like years since it's been clear; Here comes the sun, here comes the sun; and I say it's all right."

Thanks to Guard for long hours of holy work and for taking a personal interest when I wasn't sure I was cut out to be here. Thanks to everyone who read through long rambling posts and took the trouble to respond. And to the RBS'O: I don't know why you let me feel so many years where Your laws seemed incompatible with my body, but I know it's only now that I can show such gratitude for Your bringing me right to Your door. Thanks.

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!
Posted by Dov - 21 Apr 2010 16:19

Wow. Profound and touching. Thanks for the share, briut. May you continue in the way you have begun, and always feel that you are just beginning, while you watch your life get better and better. Amen!

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!
Posted by briut - 21 Apr 2010 16:24

[dov wrote on 21 Apr 2010 16:19:](#)

Wow. Profound and touching. Thanks for the share, briut. May you continue in the way you have begun, and always feel that you are just beginning, while you watch your life get better and better. Amen!

Thanks, Reb Dov. Oh, and did I tell you that I'm also feeling scared to death and unequipped for the challenge? I know that's not as upbeat as my long post, and ultimately a piece of apikursus since there's no need to fear where H' brings us.

But even so, I didn't want to leave you with an impression that I'm viewing my "current reality" as a walk in the park.

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!

Posted by strugglingyid - 21 Apr 2010 17:53

Wow! Great to hear about your milestone. 100 clean days is awesome. I hope to be able to look back one day and see 100 days behind me.

Of course you do not have control. Isn't that great! Just put it in g-d's hands. No need to carry this weight.

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!

Posted by the.guard - 23 Apr 2010 09:38

400 posts = 100 clean days.

To get to 200 clean days, you'll need another 400 I guess ;D

Just kidding.

KUTGW!!

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!
Posted by briut - 23 Apr 2010 18:33

Okay, I've now had 100 days down this journey.

Part of Guard's congratulatory note to me was that he was printing my reflections in the daily chizuk email. I wasn't sure why – I didn't think my own reflections were unique or profound. When I saw the email, though, I noticed one edit that somehow hit a very raw nerve. Gone was reference to how shemiras einayim is trickier when the lustful attractions are to men.

I tried to imagine why it disappeared. My first instinct was that the 'yuk' factor many feel toward a same-sex attraction. To which I would say, that's precisely the point. The 'yuk' factor exists: there's often a voice saying, "that's disgusting, how could you DO that."

True, some folks could find it tricky to relate to gay attraction. But the more universal point is that we're all imperfect in some way. As the Firesign Theater used to say, "we're all bozos on this bus." Editing out someone's special challenges, his warts, his un-photoshopped gritty reality – well that's wrong.

I've seen a lot of 'reality' in these last few months here. Jews in Pain with wives selected for them at an early age and without their input. Jews Trying to overcome oversensitive behaviors

that might interfere with their social existence. Teens with Strength enough to jump in before their hormones have even settled down. Lusts strong enough to bankrupt the bank account. And, yes, Jews healthy enough to survive decades of comments that their desires are disgusting and even worthy of death. These warts are the very thing that makes the chevra's work so beautiful in my eyes.

It's not only unfair to the members when we're airbrushed into some kind of unflawed Yid with one wart to hide. It also hurts prospective members who might fear this work because of their own flaws. Sure, they might say, progress is available to that guy who seems so wart-free, but if they only knew how many warts I have....

Guard suggested that the same sex reference wasn't relevant because it's only another flavor of lust, just like a fetish for high heels or group parties. I say, fine: adding gratuitous, triggering details doesn't help the chizuk emails. Yet, perhaps the life facing a frum & gay Yid isn't just the thought of a sexual act. It's evidence of a long and winding road that affects a relationship with a wife, a Jewish community, and Hashem. It's comparable to the other warts we all carry, whether surviving child abuse, psychiatric crisis, death of a child, or anything that can throw someone into a crisis of faith and keep them there.

I'm proud to be a pickle, as one member says. True, a sober cucumber never turns back into a sober cucumber once steeped in the brine of addiction for too long. Still, this cucumber has been flavored in a way that helps define who I am, who I've been, and who I'll be able IYH to become. Editing us down to a bunch of cucumbers without brine... unacceptable.

Okay, I'll confess that I'm still sensitive from decades of living in the closet as a price to pay for living as a frum Jew. I'm sensitive to folks saying the most insensitive things possible and feeling unable to come out and defend myself. Or their justifying their opinions with a possuk. I'm sensitive to Hashem giving me a mind and body that's naturally inclined to things He tells us to avoid. I'm sensitive to many aspects of the warts I carry. But I see them, I love them, I love Hashem, and I wouldn't trade my peckele of miseries for anyone else's.

Part of me wants to stand on my high horse of egotism to say that my double dose is more than others here face. But it's not true. We all have a double dose – the one that makes us alike, and the one that makes us each unique. Airbrush away that other dose of challenge, and we're not being honest with ourselves or the folks we want to inspire. I want them to see that life can be gritty and real and doubly challenging – and still full of hope. The insights I've gained from the last few months here have surpassed my decades of therapy and prayers and shvuas and everything else I turned to in my pain and confusion. And I want to be part of telling others they

can do the same. Even with the additional private baggage I'm sure they carry.

Having written all this, I still can't put my finger on why the deletion hit me so strongly. I can't help but think, though, that I want the anonymity of this site to give me freedom to be who I am. If I can't show my warts in the safety of this chevra, perhaps I start to feel insecure that my warts aren't welcomed anywhere. If we dare not speak its name here, the wart might indeed keep me from the life I want with my wife, my community, our G-d. Please don't tell me that. Not again. Because as I think of my warts as unacceptable in the very privacy we create to support recovery, I begin to cry. And those tears probably show where my true feelings are coming from.

written Erev Shabbos Acharei Mos-Kedoshim (how appropriate - toevee hee !!)

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!

Posted by Chazak Amenu - 23 Apr 2010 18:54

wow, very beautiful! i have a wart (a real one) on my finger and i tried to get rid of it one with special band aids, it came back the second time i went to a dermatologist and he froze it off a procedure which was very painful but it came back! no matter how much someone wants to get rid of something and how much pain it causes to get rid of it will still be there and no one could do anything about it! so now i have accepted that it will remain and sometimes it will hurt but other wise it is not something i can get rid of! Beautiful thought Briut! have a great Shabbos!

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!

Posted by Dov - 23 Apr 2010 20:55

Thanks for being honestly yourself.

I loved the Firesign Theatre and will walk on my yellow rubber line this afternoon just for you.....
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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!

Posted by the.guard - 24 Apr 2010 18:11

I'm sensitive to Hashem giving me a mind and body that's naturally inclined to things He tells us to avoid.

Aren't we all? How many guys here have pedophilic fantasies r"I? And who among us doesn't desire other men's wives? That's called being "naturally inclined to things He tells us to avoid" too! But it really doesn't need to be said. Lust is lust, and your amazing progress was shared in the chizuk e-mail without specifying what exactly it is that you struggle with.

As I wrote you before, when I share the chizuk e-mails with 1350 members, I try to make it as generic as possible so that everyone reading your story will be nodding inside and saying, "yup, that's me. And if he can, so can I". If I would leave the exact desires/struggles/fetishes in the testimonials that I share, such as being attracted to men, high-heels, under-age or whatever the guys here might struggle with, then besides for it possibly being a trigger, **not everyone would relate**. They'd say, "ah, this guy's a real perv. What's does he see in *that*?" and then they wouldn't be able to digest your message, your struggle, and your success.

Does anyone disagree with me on this?

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