

How to get married if i can not have a girlfriend?

Posted by Dmaot - 23 Oct 2013 00:24

Seriously... I'm being honest here, guys... i'm afraid to let someone close to me, lest i should start having these lustful feelings we all know so well. But on the other hand, how can i get to know someone better if i don't make any steps in that direction. For example, i met a girl who is very nice and always smiles and we seem to have a lot in common, but how do i know if i should "make a move". I am really confused... If i can't have a girlfriend how could i get married? Shouldn't we have at least been together a few months, years? Please help a bochur in distress. Thank you family! Blessings.

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Re: How to get married if i can not have a girlfriend?

Posted by Tosfos - 23 Oct 2013 00:47

This is a good question - thank you for being honest and posting it.

I can only speak from my own experience... and, although I have been married for 10 years, b"H, I would not claim to be an expert by any means... but it took me a while (as a single) to get past thinking that a woman with "pretty face" meant, by itself, that she would be a good match for me (as silly as that might sound).

And, at the risk of prognosticating, I'm fairly certain that once you, iy"H, get married and you and your wife are sharing your lives with each other, that your wife will not always be smiling... you'll see her in her ups and downs, and she will *need* you to love and support her even (especially) when she's down.

All this being said - when I was dating my wife, one thing that really made me feel like she was the right one (in addition to me being attracted by her appearance and her personality in general) was that we were able to talk about *serious* things fairly easily, even though we hadn't known each other for so long... b"H, that impression has really turned out / stayed true for us throughout our marriage.

So, cutting the chase, when dating... after you've established a bit of a comfort level with the woman, try to talk turkey with her... bring up your vision for being married, raising children,

learning, etc., and ask her feelings on those things... and at some point, she might say something that you don't like the sound of... don't let it drop with that... ask her to clarify (e.g. "It sounds to me like you meant XXX. Did I get that right?"). Sometimes that clarification can yield pleasant surprises.

Ok - I'll be quiet now... I hope this is helpful... Hashem should help you quickly find your way shidduch-wise, and in all of your endeavors.

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Re: How to get married if i can not have a girlfriend?
Posted by Dov - 23 Oct 2013 03:26

Hi Dmaot!

A few thoughts, be"H.

Funny, you wrote the magic and poignant words: "If I can't have a girlfriend, how am I supposed to ever get married?"

Now, you know that plenty will simply point out that marriage is clearly not primarily for our personal social or sexual entertainment. And "having a girlfriend" really sounds like: a friend who is a girl. Friends are, by definition, not primarily taken for 'projects you need to work on' together, but for social entertainment.

I am here to point out an aspect of ironic truth in what you say.

Here we are in a yeshivish culture where girls are clearly portrayed as The Enemy. We are warned in many ways against looking at them, certainly against ever touching them, and find

out that *thinking* about them is also a terrible sin. Their femininity is hidden - covered up...as though that will not add to their desirability! Ha. Of course, it does.

And then, very strangely, around the age of 20, we are told by our culture *to actually start **meeting privately** with and **talking** to one of them...of course while even **looking** at her.* And when we come home from the dates we are asked, "Well, did you have a nice time with Shprintza?"

Us:Excuse me?

Did I hear you right, there?

You want me to 'have a *nice time with this [b]chatichas issur!?*[/b]

She is kind of pretty - that triggers me and I think about her...can't go there...

Her voice is so feminine - that's bad too...can't go there, either...

OK, well, I guess I can get over that, if I really *have* to get to know if I could be married to her for the rest of my life, etc. Man, this is serious...OK, instead of just staring at each other (which is clearly assur) I'll ask her lots of questions and think about issues instead of just being a self-obsessed and sex-obsessed bochur, so I can safely get this dating job done. Nu.

But then they drop something even weirder on us:

You are supposed to eventually get *married* to the problematic and tempting member of the 'Enemy' - and then get naked with her.

Us:Um, Excuse me?

With The Enemy?! Are you **sure** you've got this right, folks? All this time you have told me that such things are cardinal sin - the worst of the worst.

Oh, well, yeah, but in this one case it is OK....um, it's actually a mitzvah.

Us:A mitzvah?! Hmm. Kind of tough to wrap my head around that one...OK, whatever you say

And here we are on a Jewish website with gobs of married guys having sex with themselves and using porn, with no clue as to why they keep running desperately after porn, girls, and masturbation - even though it runs counter to all their morals! Very confusing.

Kind of funny, I think. What do we expect? There is gonna be a lot of confusion deep inside bochurim. Here they are, discovering that sex with themselves feels very nice, yet they are told it's not allowed. Why does G-d not want them to enjoy it? Doesn't He like us?

Dad loves Mom and *they* look at each other, and even have sex apparently, so exactly why is sex itself a bad thing? And regarding the shmutz: how can it *really* be evil incarnate if my parents and rebbis are obviously sexual with their wives and say that it is good to enjoy it?

But, as Jews, we learn there is a right time and a right place for everything. And a wrong time and a wrong place, too.

But that's not a very convenient truth for a bochur who is not gonna get sex for another five to ten years, is it? And they are confused on top of that, too, as explained above.

Saying, "But it is *assur* to use porn and sex with yourself!" is true, but no nechomah at all for them.

Guys need a real nechomah - one that really works.

Please don't get me wrong - I **love** Hashem, His Torah, our Jewish culture and the 'velt'. I am just observing and trying to open up discussion about what Dmaot started so well by pouring out his heart here.

He is right, it is not poshut.

More discussion about ideas for him later. I am sure there will be a lot of great feedback for you Dmaot! You came to the right place, chaver.

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Re: How to get married if i can not have a girlfriend?

Posted by SIB101854 - 23 Oct 2013 05:16

I may be dating myself but I recall a bumper sticker that said words to the effect that "it is a mitzvah on Shabbos!" or words to that effect. Physical attraction is important between potential spouses, but being emotionally compatible and on the same wavelength leads to a far deeper relationship which physical intimacy is an important part , but only one aspect of having a Bayis Neeman BYisrael. In contrast, the hook up culture treats men and women as merely disposable parts that have no emotional attachment at all, and merely exist to satisfy each other's immature need for instantaneous gratification.

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Re: How to get married if i can not have a girlfriend?

Posted by Dmaot - 23 Oct 2013 12:56

I hear you guys, Dov you really described all the thoughts rushing through my mind. Thank you chevra for this place of refuge. I actually was on the opposite side which Dov described as "a yeshivish culture where girls are clearly portrayed as The Enemy". But not until recently did i became aware of the fact that... it's a mitzvah to get married. So if i am to get married i should start doing something in that direction... With my eyes, with my mind, and still keep shmirat einayim, clean thoughts. That's what i fear. A fear of failure.

I'm 23 now and have had a few girlfriends before i became observant and one when i tried to be observant and have a girlfriend, which backfired, not terribly B"H, i got out before it got worse, but she was not for me anyway!

My dad who is not religious (or spiritual) told me yesterday "why don't you get a girlfriend? It's obligatory for you to have a partner, you know". At Chanukkah i remember a very old gentleman saying to me "you're crazy for not having a girlfriend, how do u even live like that? You're meshuga". This didn't mean anything to me... I just wanted to be close to Hashem. To be pure. I still do. It's my first priority.

I'm searching for a way to draw a girl to that inner circle where Hashem is. "Elokai, here is that girl i wanna be with. Can you please bless our relationship." But here is the problem. Having a girlfriend is assur and i can't understand how to keep the mitzvot and yet have a girlfriend without sinning. And how do i know if she's the right one to marry if i have never had any close (not physical) contact. Tosfos gave a good explanation on that but it's still a risk. I dont know, maybe there'll always be a risk.

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Re: How to get married if i can not have a girlfriend?
Posted by Dov - 23 Oct 2013 17:28

Wow, Dmaot, u said a lot there.

Yeah, the old guys with the "What? No girlfriend yet to make you happy with life??" - thing is funny, but true. I kind of wish I'd have been there to look them in the eye and just say something like, "Well, I am gay."

OK, now for the serious, boring part...

Anyhow, your dedication to going about things the right way is inspirational. You are a true Jew,

sir. But now, what to do? I guess it's about kosher networking with Rabbis and well-adjusted Jews you come in contact with here and there. Making friends in the religious community, however small it may be where u live, will probably pay off *big time* toward finding someone.

In most frum communities there is a **lot** of informal shidduch-making. My wife and I were introduced by mutual friends, her sisters found their husbands through informal family connections, and some of our peers just met at family functions like sheva-brachos, Jewish classes, etc. The rest was history. We Jews look out for each other and suggest appropriate matches when we can. It's one of the ways all good people love each other! I see someone who may be 'good' for a person I know who is dating, and float the idea to them...they take it from there.

And a great side-effect of your idea of the 'purity' you are so devoted to, is a thing that is very rare and valuable: fidelity in marriage. That's precious even out of a religious context. Surely that is G-d's Will, too.

But one point I want to make based on reading between the lines of your posts:

Aching for a wife is not such a good way to approach it. It feels too hungry and needy. No criticism here, just a suggestion:

A good woman is actually more attracted to a man who is at least somewhat secure *without her*. I mean that socially as well as sexually. Sending the message that "I am only half a man without a woman - I hope you can make me whole?", may be endearing...but is *not* a great way to begin

And look how many of us suffer in marriage from being too sexually needy. While at first it is very exciting being sexually desired...over time it always - always - becomes annoying. It is actually a major turn-off for a woman to live with a sexually needy man, on many levels.

So I think it may be worth your while to spend a few months (if you are not already, that is) gaining more security in yourself, in your level of Jewish observance, in your relationship with

G-d, and your participation in community...stuff like that. Focusing on contributing and being a *part [b]of [b]*is often the best way to end up getting what you need.

It will pay off a lot, in the end. And who knows? Maybe your wife will be found in the course of

But do not worry about it so much, man. You are fine without a girlfriend and will get the right woman *if you really have something **to give***.

You are on the right track.

your efforts toward that very goal! Stranger things have happened.

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Re: How to get married if i can not have a girlfriend?

Posted by Dmaot - 23 Oct 2013 21:06

I salute you sir for what you not just said but for what you are. I understand now personally why there's a Daily Dose of Dov. Swallowed every single word. I should really adhere to your advices, they are literally lifesavers. It's true that a confident man who does not show his need for a woman is more desirable. So i'll just keep that weakness hidden until it dissipates B"H.

Reading your lines a verse came to my head, from Shir Hashirim:

I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the gazelles or by the hinds of the field, that you neither awaken nor arouse the love while it is desirable.

So maybe this means that love itself should rise between two people without any of them enforcing it, it would just happen by itself. And maybe then the role-playing starts with efforts to keep it alive and fresh.

It isn't easy for me to let it go and live on hopes that someday love would find me, but if that means "Let go and let G-d" then "Hineni, You know better."

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Re: How to get married if i can not have a girlfriend?

Posted by Dov - 23 Oct 2013 23:29

Well, thanks for the chizzuk, chaver.

So now are you saying that you *are* ready to focus a bit more on taking good care of yourself as a man, than on 'finding the right girl to complete you'?

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Re: How to get married if i can not have a girlfriend?

Posted by ploni.almoni@gmx.com - 24 Oct 2013 01:13

[Dmaot wrote:](#)

I'm searching for a way to draw a girl to that inner circle where Hashem is. "Elokai, here is that girl i wanna be with. Can you please bless our relationship." But here is the problem. Having a girlfriend is assur and i can't understand how to keep the mitzvot and yet have a girlfriend without sinning. And how do i know if she's the right one to marry if i have never had any close (not physical) contact. Tosfos gave a good explanation on that but it's still a risk. I dont know, maybe there'll always be a risk.

I think you may have a belief which is not quite right. You are saying that you are going to find the girl you think is right for you, and then you'll get Hashem to rubber-stamp the match. It will not happen that way, even if you think it does.

The way it will happen is that Hashem will look at where you are spiritually, which means He will take an inventory of what you *want*, which means He will look at what you truly believe in your heart is good for you. If you think porn is good for you, if you think wealth is good for you, if you think learning Torah is good for you. And based on those things, He will find you a wife that will

impose certain constraints you so that you get a chance to test the beliefs that need to change. That is why it's called ezer k'negdo. She helps you by putting up walls.

And that is why you don't need a girlfriend. You just need to daven to Hashem to find you the woman that you need for the greatest possible opportunity to improve in what you want by putting up resistance where you need it.

And it may take a long time for you to understand why the match is correct. The reason is because Hashem is not afraid to take that inventory of your beliefs and wants, whereas you may be, you may not be 100% honest with yourself, and you won't see it until after you have changed.

I read about this when I got married in Rabbi Miller's "Career of Happiness." He quotes the Chovos Halevovos and talks about getting "sandpapered" by your spouse. I did not like it one bit, and when I think about now I sort of get post-traumatic stress disorder. But I have to report that it is as he says in that book.

So if you want to make sure you get a better girl, work on yourself *before* marriage, in the areas where it hurts, so to speak. The result you want will follow.

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Re: How to get married if i can not have a girlfriend?
Posted by MBJ - 24 Oct 2013 11:14

ploni.almoni@gmx.com wrote:

The way it will happen is that Hashem will look at where you are spiritually, which means He will take an inventory of what you *want*, which means He will look at what you truly believe in your heart is good for you. If you think porn is good for you, if you think wealth is good for you, if you think learning Torah is good for you. And based on those things, He will find you a wife that will impose certain constraints you so that you get a chance to test the beliefs that need to change. That is why it's called ezer k'negdo. She helps you by putting up walls.

Thank you for that.

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Re: How to get married if i can not have a girlfriend?

Posted by Dmaot - 24 Oct 2013 14:16

I love this forum, i feel more secured and confident now. Thanks to you guys i can now be more focused on Hashem and me, then on me and a girl. Accepting G-d's good for me, and not my view of what's good for me.

Like Ploni Almoni said, now i work on myself and my relationship with G-d and all else will follow.

Dov, yes i am.

Free blessings for all!

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Re: How to get married if i can not have a girlfriend?

Posted by Dov - 25 Oct 2013 02:29

Sweet!

OK, now this will take lots and lots of actions, one day at a time, and lots of Hashem's sweet loving help. Each of those things are unavoidable...including his sweet, loving help.

Hashem cannot be bad to us, under any circumstances, ever. Not any more than He can get the flu and die or break a leg. He is Good. And He is yours.

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