

To tell or not to tell?

Posted by beamer - 22 Nov 2009 14:21

I am thinking of discussing these issue with my Rabbi. Hopefully, he won't pass out from the shock.

My question is?

Has anyone had good or bad experiences with this?

I don't need the riot act read to me because I read it to myself every day and I know it by heart. Can a Rabbi really be sympathetic and continue to maintain a relationship with you without you feeling like rubbish? In a way, you want him (or her, I guess) to know the 'real' you in the hope that they can help you but on the other hand...

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Re: To tell or not to tell?

Posted by the.guard - 17 Dec 2009 09:30

[BruceWayne wrote on 17 Dec 2009 06:20:](#)

[Rage ATM wrote on 03 Dec 2009 20:41:](#)

these stories have reinforced my belief that it is good to tell someone, not necessarily your rabbi...

But dearest Rage, whatever happened to the lofty, always-correct-for-every-situation, one size fits all idea of *Das Torah*?

You're not....some kind of *kofer* are you?

Addiction is a disease, and for diseases we go to the doctors who have the experience - not to the Rabbis...

In the old days, the doctors knew much less and the Rabbis were much greater people, often with divine inspiration. So we'd go to the "Rebbe" (or the Navi - in the REAL old days), and he'd tell us what to do. But today, the doctor's know a lot, and the Rabbi's don't have divine)...

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Re: To tell or not to tell?

Posted by BruceWayne - 18 Dec 2009 00:30

Right.

All I'm getting at is that people shouldn't ask the rabbis everything like they really are some kind of prophet. Maybe then it was appropriate, but nowadays if you really have a dilemma about what type of kitty litter to choose for Mr. Fluffy, ask the local crazy cat lady because she's the expert, NOT the rabbi.

I have an even bigger problem with rabbis who get all up on this power trip and don't have the humility (or the *cojones* to say *I don't know because I am not an expert in finance/business/your wife's favorite flowers/Mr Fluffy's favorite kitty litter. You should ask someone else.*

inspiration in most cases (at least as far as my own divine inspiration tells me

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Re: To tell or not to tell?

Posted by imtrying25 - 18 Dec 2009 00:35

[BruceWayne wrote on 18 Dec 2009 00:30:](#)

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YOU BADDDDDDDD MANNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNN!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

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Re: To tell or not to tell?

Posted by UTS - 20 Dec 2009 03:14

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Dear Guard,

Your point is well taken. So are the points made by others. However, a true rebbe should be able to handle these subjects. "Handling" these subjects can mean sending the individual to a specialist. The true rebbe - talmid relationship includes being able to at least tell the rebbe about these subjects. That is my opinion at least. This would be the ideal. I think that we all have to work on ourselves and on educating the rabbaim.

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Re: To tell or not to tell?
Posted by Holy Yid - 20 Dec 2009 05:19

[Chazak wrote on 20 Dec 2009 03:14:](#)

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My friend so you need to make a judgment if your Rabbi is a 'True Rebbe'.

Would you ask him to check your eye site? Do you take your child to him when they have an ear infection? Do you ask him for help in landscaping your yard?

Your Rabbi can be very chashuv and it is not at all a lack of respect or not following daas torah to talk to someone else about these (and many other) issues. Addiction is a disease. It is an illness. It is a medical thing. It needs treatment. It needs training to be understood and treated.

Please educate the Rabbinate but make sure you get the help you need right now.

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Re: To tell or not to tell?

Posted by silentbattle - 20 Dec 2009 06:33

I'm with Chazak - no, you wouldn't ask your rebbe about your eyesite - but if your eyes were hurting, and you mentioned it to your rebbe, he'd hopefully recommend that you go to an eye doctor. And if you explain the situation, and he works with you, and realizes that you need more help, he'd hopefully send you to an addiction specialist, or at least a therapist of some kind who could point you in the right direction.

And Reb Yid - No, I wouldn't ask my rebbe about how to landscape my yard, but I MIGHT ask him if he thinks that's something worth spending my money on (i.e., balance of ga'avah vs. my house looking presentable vs. what my wife wants vs. spending that money on a new suit for yom tov, etc) - it can be complex with many factors, and I might want an wise, objective check on my own decision.

As far as addiction being a disease, and a medical condition - I agree. However, it is a disease that is very closely connected to the yetzer hora, and with far more, and direct, spiritual connections. So, while it is true that it needs to be dealt with as a disease, I think that the way you deal with it should be going hand in hand with a rebbe's advice.

Reb Guard, as far as a rebbe having "divine inspiration?" Depends what you mean by that, but there is certainly the concept of having faith in a rebbe's judgement, even in areas not directly involving halacha, EVEN in areas where you think he's wrong! See Michtav M'Eliyahu, pg. 75, for a letter that he writes on this topic. Pretty powerful, all around.

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Re: To tell or not to tell?

Posted by the.guard - 20 Dec 2009 12:40

I agree, like you said, that a good Rebbe needs to know WHERE to send those who come to him for advice. If they come for advice in **this** area, he should know enough to tell them to and find a good addiction therapist... If he doesn't, and just says "try harder" and "learn more", the obviously he needs to be educated about this issue. He is not a bad person, he simply doesn't understand what our generation is up against - and about the nature of addiction.

And that's one of GYE's goals be"h, to **help educate** the Rabbanim, Rebbes, Mashgichim, Rosh yeshivos, etc... around the world in HOW to deal with this growing threat before it swallows our best and brightest.

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Re: To tell or not to tell?
Posted by UTS - 21 Dec 2009 00:37

[Holy Yid wrote on 20 Dec 2009 05:19:](#)

[Chazak wrote on 20 Dec 2009 03:14:](#)

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Please educate the Rabbinate but make sure you get the help you need right now.

[/quote]

Dear H.Y.

Wait a minute. I pretty much agree with you. However, what I said does not contradict you. If

you read what I wrote closely you will see that. I feel that if you cannot have that kind of relationship with your rebbe, it is not an ideal one. This is a definitely a ruchnios and shleimus issue, much more so than

"plumbing". BTW, bechol drochechoh da'ei'Hu, including plumbing.

Nevertheless, ideal or not, you have to get the help wherever it is. If it is here and only here, you have to get it wherever it is. Just keep in mind what I said for when appropriate. That's how I see it anyway.

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Re: To tell or not to tell?
Posted by silentbattle - 21 Dec 2009 01:14

I agree. We here all now how powerful this yetzer hora is, and it often needs to be fought with specialized tools.

However, I think that a person can try to start by working with his rebbe on a program (involving specific areas of mussar, more learning, being open with the rebbe or a chabura of guys interested in helping each other, trying out different ways of fighting this battle and seeing what happens. By staying in touch with his rebbe about this, he gains several benefits, among the fact that if he continues to have difficulty succeeding, there's obviously something wrong, and any competent rebbe will look for other options. Even without knowledge of addictions, if an issue like this stretches on and on with improvement despite great effort, there are pretty obviously other issues involved, and it's not simple - and in any complex battle, you need to rethink your battle plan and come up with new solutions.

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Re: To tell or not to tell?
Posted by UTS - 21 Dec 2009 07:06

[silentbattle wrote on 21 Dec 2009 01:14:](#)

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However, I think that a person can try to start by working with his rebbe on a program (involving specific areas of mussar, more learning, being open with the rebbe or a chabura of guys interested in helping each other, trying out different ways of fighting this battle and seeing what happens. By staying in touch with his rebbe about this, he gains several benefits, among the fact that if he continues to have difficulty succeeding, there's obviously something wrong, and any competent rebbe will look for other options. Even without knowledge of addictions, if an issue like this stretches on and on with improvement despite great effort, there are pretty obviously other issues involved, and it's not simple - and in any complex battle, you need to rethink your battle plan and come up with new solutions.

Thanks.

Complex issue. We are pioneers. All opinions are valid and welcome.

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