

SonicReducer's story so far

Posted by sonicReducer - 04 Jan 2010 17:16

Evening all (;

I only discovered GUE a few weeks ago, but it's been such a huge help to me. I thought I'd post my own story.

I'm a baal teshuva, and I've been shomrei mitzvot for about 5 years. Becoming frum has been both the most fulfilling and difficult journey I've ever undertaken (still on it!). Although it can be very hard day-to-day, and I've had more than a few moments where I wanted to throw off my yarmi, the Aibishter has helped me to keep going.

My family emigrated from Johannesburg, South Africa, to London when I was about 14. This move was very, very hard on me, especially socially. I left behind a lot of my friends I grew up with, and struggled to rebuild in the UK. For the past ten years (I'm 24 now), I've been quite lonely, and my self-esteem took a lot of big hits (although Baruch H-Shem therapy has helped a huge amount). I was unhappy with my situation, and unhappy with who I was. I think I used p**n and shfichas zera as a pick-me-up, and as an attempt at some kind of intimacy, besides the usual urges and curiosities of a young man.

This continued when I become frum, although frequency decreased (and guilt increased). University was a very difficult time, fashions left very little to the imagination, although I managed to avoid getting involved with all the shmutz that goes on.

I spent a year at a well-known baal teshuva yeshiva after uni. This was to be my greatest length of shmira - just over a year. I fell badly when I came home for pesach - after 9 months in Yerushalayim, the fashions and posters in the UK were just far too much to handle, along with my PC that I had left behind.

Since then, I've really fought (and fallen), and GUE has given me a lot of inspiration. I was quite happy to realise I had been mechavin to the Guard Your Eyes Handbook already about 3 years before I had read it! My browser opens onto the chizuk list, which is really handy.

London is a tough place for shmiras eynayim, and I really daven hard that H' should help me. Baruch H-Shem I'm usually ok but sometimes the y'h just gets too much. My recent best period is about 6 weeks. I found a good filter and I'm really considering accountability software, but I'll see how the next few months go.

A big challenge at the moment is shidduchim - I'd really like to get married (and feel emotionally I'm finally in a good place to deal with it properly). I don't fit in very here - I'm too 'modern' for a chareidi girl, but too chareidi for a modern girl, so it's been hard meeting girls that are shayich. That sneaky y'h gets me here a lot - telling me that it will be years before I find someone and in such a tough environment, who can blame me for giving in? Positive thinking and bitachon are really my biggest weapons here, but they don't come easily.

One thing that really surprised me reading others' stories is how widespread these struggles are, and how wide a cross-section of yidden it affects.

May the Ribono shel Olam give you all the beracha and hatzlacha you all deserve for your truly super human efforts!

sR

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far
Posted by silentbattle - 31 May 2010 01:31

Hi, just noticed that you're getting pretty close to 90 - KUTGW!!

How are things going?

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far

Posted by sonicReducer - 27 Aug 2010 16:00

Gosh, it's been a long time.

Just a quick update, really an excerpt from a recent PM:

I find my biggest struggle at the moment is being shomrei negia with my callah, and waiting until she's mutar. I'm not scared we'll do anything we shouldn't, but what's interesting is that I start looking around at other things a bit more. I look at women in the street a lot, and usually feel bad about it. I think in a way since my callah isn't 'giving' me what I want, I start to look for other outlets. Not good, very possibly something I need to discuss with a Rav.

I'm hoping the closeness of marriage will 'mitigate' this, at the moment she's just a friend that I've known for a few months that I've bought an expensive ring for, not yet the woman I've committed my life and my heart to. Something to keep an eye on.

Good Shabbos everyone, I'm going to a nice simcha tonight: sheva berachos for an older gentlemen who finally found his bashert!

kol tov,

sR

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far

Posted by briut - 29 Aug 2010 15:29

sR: So good to hear from you. For me, just one yachid taking a guess, something worth focusing on is... BUILDING A _MARRIAGE_. Not acquiring (?) a wife, or having a wedding, or

fixing your family origin. Not even how to keep yourself from feeling or looking at or whatever.

The question is, will this [thought, word, action] be GOOD for the marriage or BAD for the marriage. Because you want, and deserve, to have the very best possible marriage from the beginning.

Because you deserve it. Because your work here has been so honest and deep and inspiring. Because Hashem loves you. Because Hashem wants the best possible world for all of us... which demands strong Jewish marriages/homes for building a next generation.

You're gonna do this. (And talking with a Rav is always good.)

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far
Posted by Holy Yid - 29 Aug 2010 21:15

[sonicReducer wrote on 27 Aug 2010 16:00:](#)

I look at women in the street a lot, and usually feel bad about it. I think in a way since my callah isn't 'giving' me what I want, I start to look for other outlets.

I have seen other people on the site express similar thoughts, in my lay opinion this kind of attitude that if your wife/ Kallah etc is not *giving* you what you want then you are *entitled/ justified/ have the right* to act out in some way, most probably wont lead you to a happy life. I would think about exploring it with a Rav or your therapist.

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far
Posted by Me3 - 30 Aug 2010 00:07

SR bad news for you. That same attitude will pop back the half a month your kallah (wife) will be assur to you. So now would be a good time to learn to deal with it. Just speaking from unfortunate experience.

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far
Posted by briut - 30 Aug 2010 15:27

[Me3 wrote on 30 Aug 2010 00:07:](#)

SR bad news for you. That same attitude will pop back the half a month your kallah (wife) will be assur to you. So now would be a good time to learn to deal with it. Just speaking from unfortunate experience.
Ditto. In spades!

In the past (pre-GYE), I never really saw a problem acting out when we're assur to each other. I always tried to limit acting out to the separate times of the month and to focus on being with her during the muttar times.

I was mistaken.

I'm not talking about mistaken in terms of chet, going over a lav, etc. I'm talking about mistaken in terms of how I relate to my wife for half the month. (You know, when I don't 'need' her and so won't 'miss' her and so can't show the same longing for her that she's showing for me. And that's mostly about what this does to a relationship.)

When we can both SHARE that space of feeling a LACK, there's a level of intimacy during niddah that doesn't happen when I'm simply taking care of myself.

I HATE admitting this, and I'd probably never own these words in my non-virtual life, but I'm afraid it's true. Brutal honesty - yuk.

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far
Posted by Me3 - 30 Aug 2010 16:30

I have to rethink what I wrote, Briut agreeing with me?

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far
Posted by sonicReducer - 30 Aug 2010 17:56

Hi gents,

Thanks for the replies and the advice.

In all honesty, my callah and I have expressed to each other that being shomrei negiah is tough and we're looking forward to getting past it.

I feel for me that it's not just that I expect sex from her, and on the occasions that I can't get it I'd forget about her / ignore her / find something else ... I feel for her too much already, and I care for her too much to risk hurting her in such a way. Sex is really just a little part of physical intimacy I'm looking forward to ... just giving her a hug hello would be a big geschmack. I think in a way I'm looking at other things/women because that's what I've done in the past when I've felt this teiva, I don't really know how else to deal with it, and 'waiting for her' is a strange concept, because I essentially have no idea of what I am in fact waiting for.

Sex and physical intimacy is scary new ground for me. I've waited for marriage, and I recognize that any and all representations of sex I've seen in the secular world are sheker v'hevel, and not what I want. Of course I want the geschmach, there wouldn't be such a big deal made of it if it wasn't geschmack, but I know that there could be much, much more.

I'm relying a lot on my rabbonim at the moment. I'm learning with two, doing hilchos niddah with one , and with the other doing the more hashkafic side of things. His approach already (and we've only learnt together once so far) I've found to be very, very positive and helpful.

Even the hashkafic side of things is new to me. This wasn't really discussed with me at all as a bochur, so I'm only learning **now** (3 months into my engagement) how I should be approaching these big subjects.

I will discuss this side of things for certain when I get there. I admit my viewpoint is skew, but mostly cos it's the only viewpoint that has been presented to me. I will post further if there is anything on my mind or anything I need to ask. Thank you all for the advice and just for listening (reading?) :D

Kol tov,

sR

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far
Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 31 Jan 2011 17:40

90!!!

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