

Emuna, Why some of us act out as teenagers.

Posted by 14 - 17 Sep 2010 09:16

The following is a copy of a letter I recently wrote to one of my Rabbi's who I have opened up to in the past, I thought I'd post it here to see what people with a similar experience, have to say for themselves.

Thanx in advance for any modifications corrections additions etc.

Gmar chasima tova!

Dear ----

I'm going to be very open, I hope that's ok.

Firstly I just wanted to say that I have now committed myself very strongly, to changing, and in so doing I have noticed a few things.

For starters, as you were telling me, that a possible reason for me being so insensitive to ruchniyus emuna kedusha etc, may be because My involvement in pornography etc causes my subconscious to project a 'lack of clarity' and a 'confusion' into my mind, this way I don't feel so guilty.

So just to support this I'll have you know that over the last few days, although I can't say I have been devoted to Davening or Teshuva etc, I can say however, that as apposed to the way things were up until now, (that anything to do with Yiddishkiet was automatically 'wrong until proven right',) I am now able to sit listen and even consider a vort or shiur etc. This is because, my subconscious 'will no longer gain anything' so to speak, by having this constant "knee jerk reaction" to anything holy, because I'm anyway not planning to go down the wrong road!

Also I had an interesting thought, and I wonder what you think.

I used to think that the reason why teenagers are always looking for opportunities to speak, walk, be secluded, with a girl, or have girlfriends, is simply because we have normal sexual desires etc and some of us can't resist them so we ACT ON them, thereby fulfilling these desires.

I have now been thinking that it's the opposite!

Although the above is indeed true in some cases (mainly amongst more mature people), particularly in our sort of community the following is true at least lemechtzo, leshlish, ulirevia.

For one reason or another we find the need to hide our sexual side, this could in some cases be because one is confused and maybe even scared of this new development as a young adult, and in some cases, (as I think in my case) because we feel very uncomfortable with our lack of control of these very powerful feelings, and this being exposed to others is no comfortable experience, I don't want others to know that there is something that is going to dictate what I think about and how I am likely act on it, and that I'm extremely vulnerable to this overtaking power .

Now, in keeping a distance from girls in whichever way, is an exposure, to either our peers or to the girl herself, of our helplessness in this area, because its basically saying, 'I can't have anything to do with you, because I'm scared you will arouse within me - uncontrollable feelings towards you',

This can be very embarrassing, so the best option is, to indeed talk, spend time, touch, etc, to girls. But not in an warm intimate fashion because that would also be exposing oneself (- it's a sign that very strong physical feelings have indeed overtaken my being), rather in a very cold, cool, and open manner, almost anything is done without any affection! Or sometimes maybe it's just a talk about the weather.

(I do remember that I once met a girl (I was 14) who I sort of kept in touch with for a while, and we did act very, very inappropriately at times, but I never enjoyed it because I was always scared to show affection or emotion, I had to always give over the image that I was on top of things and I wasn't getting carried away.)

The problem is that in truth, the demands of our natural sexual drive are not merely to do XYZ, but to do so with a certain emotion and intimate spirit, so all we are doing in the above style relationships, is blocking our true feelings from coming through in the most intimate actions, if so we are not acting ON or fulfilling our sexual feelings; rather we are numbing them by ignoring them - acting against them.

Trouble is that, depending on how far one goes in this 'numbing' technique; one may end up feeling nothing intimate about the most intimate things.

In fact It could be that our lack of control with regard to food for example, is much the same and would be just as embarrassing, only we have completely 'numbed out' the shame in it because everyone does it in public daily etc, etc.

Anyway, I have definitely noticed that in myself, that a big issue of mine is to admit even to myself that these things are more powerful than me, hence I am hesitant to sit with a notebook on the 12 steps, because this makes me feel weak and powerless over a particular problem I have and I'm ashamed of it, and how much more so, it's hard to speak about it or confront someone about it. And for the same reason I hate restricting my self from looking at anything, because I like to think I can handle anything - it would be below my dignity to be careful where I look. And so on.

So my perspective is slowly starting to change, instead of taking pride in my lack of innocence – that I know more etc, on the contrary it can sometimes even bother me that I can find myself casually looking at a half dressed woman on a bus, without any sexual arousal, I've now realized that it is only a unhealthy symptom of burying my sexual emotions.

Although I must admit that I still sometimes do take pride in my lack of innocence, so I still need to internalize this idea.

As I'm writing this it has dawned upon me that this is essentially the first step! To admit powerlessness except I now really understand it, it's not just words.

Thanx

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Re: Emuna, Why some of us act out as teenagers.
Posted by kutan - 17 Sep 2010 12:31

Very interesting... thanks!

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Re: Emuna, Why some of us act out as teenagers.
Posted by 14 - 26 Sep 2010 14:00

thanx kutan.

and to everyone else, I will asume 1 of 3 things

- 1) you agree, its just obvious.
- 2)you disagree, but you dont know where to start.
- 3)its just too long to read!

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Re: Emuna, Why some of us act out as teenagers.
Posted by Holy Yid - 26 Sep 2010 17:46

it's long, read most of it.

I thank G-d don't know from experience so I can't comment but it sounds like there is truth in what you write.

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Re: Emuna, Why some of us act out as teenagers.

Posted by desperate_teddybear - 26 Sep 2010 18:34

it can sometimes even bother me that I can find myself casually looking at a half dressed woman on a bus, without any sexual arousal, I've now realized that it is only a unhealthy symptom of burying my sexual emotions.

i've found this statement very striking, and i will tell you why.

in reading through this forum, i have occasionally stumbled on **the disturbing claim: i've been clean for z amount of days, and i've started to notice that when such-and-such happens, or i see such-and-such, i have no desire/it doesn't bother me anymore.**

the person saying it is often very pleased and happy about this

these statements bothered me. i personally feel that if something made you feel triggered in the past, the fact that you no longer felt aroused could be caused either by

a) the person is in denial/lying to himself and trying to convince himself he is no longer are affected

b) the person is so scared of these feelings they have psychologically attempted to stem/bury them, which is unhealthy and can only have disasterous results

b) there is something wrong- but i couldn't figure out what.

RABOISAI- the object of becoming clean is not so that we no longer have desire when gazing innappropriately. **the object of becoming clean is to prevent ourselves from gazing in the first place and train ourselves in how to react when we do.**

Not14, thank you for sharing your letter with us. KOT, brother!

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Re: Emuna, Why some of us act out as teenagers.

Posted by kutan - 26 Sep 2010 19:08

Having been there, desperate bear, I can tell you that you are right on the money!

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Re: Emuna, Why some of us act out as teenagers.

Posted by 14 - 26 Sep 2010 22:20

teddy,

you are 100 hundred percent right on your analysis!

its partly because of what im saying, that some people cant stand loosing control when they are aroused, so as you correctly suggest denial kicks in!

the question is now how do we indeed tackle this challenge? i mean we constantly see triggers everywhere! on a bus on a web add etc etc etc you name it, if you dont ignore it- your in for trouble!

so how do we acknowlage the arousal but not enough to act on it?

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Re: Emuna, Why some of us act out as teenagers.

Posted by frumfiend - 26 Sep 2010 23:38

There is a whole book from a chabad chosid about this very topic. He discusses how hashem wanted that when we touch a women we will feel an electric charge. Western society with its loosness has desensetized us to the point that if its not kinky were not feeling anything.

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Re: Emuna, Why some of us act out as teenagers.

Posted by strugglingandstrivngBT - 27 Sep 2010 02:33

this is very interesting. I think I agree with most if not all, but I need to reread when I'm not half asleep to judge better.

btw, just curious, if youre not 14 how old are you?

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Re: Emuna, Why some of us act out as teenagers.

Posted by silentbattle - 27 Sep 2010 08:04

Interesting. Perhaps even if that's not the entire motivation, that's part of it...

I would also point out that issues with kedusha, emunah, etc. are indeed effected like you said - because it leaves us room to do as we please. However, on a deeper level, these issues also effect us spiritually, and rot away our ability to feel and connect with hashem. Becoming clean allows us to reconnect.

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Re: Emuna, Why some of us act out as teenagers.

Posted by 14 - 28 Sep 2010 19:38

frumfiend,

whats the book called??? im very interested!

strugeling, im 17, someone already told me in private that in order to belive me he would have to see my passport, but what can i do.....

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Re: Emuna, Why some of us act out as teenagers.

Posted by 14 - 28 Sep 2010 21:32

[silentbattle wrote on 27 Sep 2010 08:04:](#)

I would also point out that issues with kedusha, emunah, etc. are indeed effected like you said - because it leaves us room to do as we please. However, on a deeper level, these issues also effect us spiritually, and rot away our ability to feel and connect with hashem. Becoming clean allows us to reconnect.

sillentbatle! wow! thats exactly what the rabbi responded!

i agree to that aswell

thanx

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Re: Emuna, Why some of us act out as teenagers.

Posted by 14 - 28 Sep 2010 21:34

[Not14 wrote on 26 Sep 2010 22:20:](#)

the question is now how do we indeed tackle this chalenge? i mean we constantly see triggers everywhere! on a bus on a web add etc etc etc you name it, if you dont ignore it- your in for trouble!

so how do we acknolage the arousal but not enough to act on it?

anyone got an answer? its bothering me very much!

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Re: Emuna, Why some of us act out as teenagers.
Posted by kutan - 28 Sep 2010 21:53

We change the ratzon.

Follow Dov around the forum.

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Re: Emuna, Why some of us act out as teenagers.
Posted by 14 - 28 Sep 2010 21:53

[kutan shel hachabura wrote on 28 Sep 2010 21:53:](#)

We change the ratzon.

Follow Dov around the forum.

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