

Can women relate????

Posted by shivisi - 24 Feb 2014 15:01

How can a women relate to her husband's sexual addiction struggle if she has no idea as to the nature of men's sexual challenges??? Can someone who drinks a lechaim once in a while relate to an alcoholics addiction? No! He can't because he has no idea what it's all about! So how can woman relate???

There are talks here all about women supporting their husbands in the struggle, and discussions about when and if one should "come out" to his wife, and what happens when they do, or when they discover it their own????

I'll give you an example from my personal life - (not concerning my sa struggle) - My mother passed away 10 months ago. My father was obviously totally broken up. during the shiva I asked a recent Almen (widower) what we,the children can do to help my father deal with it? - And his answer was "N O T H I N G ! ! ! " "There is no way in the world you can relate to the way a man feels at the loss of his wife of 54 years. We were surprised! - We did just lose our own mother too! Didn't we? But he quoted the Chazal who say "a woman's death is nothing compared to what it does to her husband!" (??? ????? ??? ??? ?????). You can only stand by his side and be there if he needs anything from you.

So if children who have just lost their mother cannot relate to the pain of their father who lost his wife, how can someone who has never experienced anything to do with the male sexual lust, relate to an addiction of such?

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Re: Can women relate????

Posted by Dr.Watson - 24 Feb 2014 15:05

First of all please stop shouting.

Second, who says they can?

Third, what's really on your mind friend?

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Re: Can women relate????

Posted by shivisi - 25 Feb 2014 12:43

Really????

Hey guys! I wrote this post Yesterday morning and not even one reply yet?????????

I'll tell you the truth - this post came about through a chat I had with 1 of the members on here.

HE said that there's no way his wife could in any way relate to his addiction.

And HE made the comparison to a once-in-a-while drinker not being able to relate to an alcoholics addiction and craving for alcohol.

I actually **DISAGREED** with him. I said that since EVERY (at least every married) woman, not only has "tasted" sexual pleasure, but was given an ingrained desire for sexual attraction, as it is clearly stated in the Torah in Parshas Beraishis,(3:17, and Rashi) that Hashem made a woman have a passion, a craving, a desire, therefore I believe that, although a woman cant understand the full gravity of what a sexual "addiction" is about, and neither can any1 who has never had an addiction, but she can still relate to it enough to "understand" that your struggling" and support you etc.

He argued that she is "totally on another planet" as far as MALE sexual cravings and addiction goes, and thus "is a complete waste of time" even talking to her about it.

In the end we "agreed to disagree".

I suggested to put it up in a forum post to see what other members here would say about it. I decided to be fair to HIM and post it as taking HIS stand on the subject, and while I was writing it I reminded myself of the story about my father, which I wrote above.

I still feel that there is a difference between sexual addiction and other addictions, feelings etc. since women DO have this type of an emotion as part of their character.

He says "They're wired completely differently!"

SO WHAT DO YOU ALL OUT THERE SAY?????

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Re: Can women relate????

Posted by shivisi - 25 Feb 2014 13:34

Response By Pidaini:

Pidaini: Is it just a theoretical question?

Me: I think its an IMPORTANT question for the help of any1 who it might be relevant to.

Pidaini: go on

Me: Whether they would like to have their wife as support or weather she already knows etc etc

Pidaini: I hear, I can't say though, I have no experience whatsoever!

Pidaini: my wife doesn't know, and I don't plan on telling her any time in the near future.

Me: But do u have any comment or idea about whether you think a woman CAN or cannot relate? and why or why not?

Pidaini: how can I? How can I possible know?

Me: your'e a smart person (from what Ive seen of your posting) - Think about the different angels of it

Me: Besides even some1 who does not "plan" to include his wife, sometimes she finds out anyway

Me: and you can't start then figuring out how to deal with it

Me: he must be prepared

Me: (I hope not by u)

Pidaini: ok - so here's the deal:

Pidaini: The smartest thing I've learned is that experience outweighs all logic

Pidaini: and no matter what logic might say, experience is much smarter!

Pidaini: That having been said, those that have experience in dealing with spouses of addicts have said that there is no way anyone can try figuring out what the reaction will be. Each case is different, each women will react differently.

Pidaini: so, the only preparation we can have, is to be prepared for the worst

Me: Im not talking about "**reaction**" Im talking about if u think it is or is not POSSIBLE for a woman to RELATE to such a thing at all??

Pidaini: well then, I for sure can't tell you that.

Pidaini: They can surely be supportive

Me: How can they be supportive if they can't relate to it??

Pidaini: Firstly, let's take the case with your father

You can't relate, but just by you being there and knowing that you can't relate, and knowing that he is going through a lot more than you can relate to -

That too is supportive!

and not only that, but Iv'e read countless times that people that when people have Ch"v lost a child, and friends go to be menacheim avel them, they will say "I know that nobody can do anything to ease your pain, and I know I can't understand the depth and and severity of your pain, but 'I'm here for you'"

Being supportive does not necessarily have to do with being able to relate to the pain / problem.

Me: That is a very good point!!

Would you mind if I put that up on the forum [in your name of course]?

Pidaini: for sure!

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Re: Can women relate????

Posted by MBJ - 25 Feb 2014 14:38

I am the anonymous forum member who started this whole thing.

It actually started by saying that if my children even my daughters c"v had a problem in this area, they could not turn to my wife, since she has no way of relating to the problem. It would be like one of those, well why can't you just control yourself and stop things. The compulsion would be alien to her. Truth is I feel compulsions in several areas of my life, most of them not hidden not this one, and my wife's reaction is always, why can't you just stop. I said specifically that is my wife and not a female thing.

I also said that I am more worried for my son than my daughters since this is a problem that can affect women, is probably much more prevalent and toxic in men, since we are wired differently. Truth is I have no way of knowing how female addicts are in their addiction, and for the present it is better I remain ignorant.

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Re: Can women relate????

Posted by shivisi - 25 Feb 2014 16:21

[MBJ wrote:](#)

I am the anonymous forum member who started this whole thing.

...If my children even my daughters c"v had a problem in this area, they could not turn to my wife, **since she has no way of relating to the problem**. It would be like one of those, well why can't you just control yourself and stop things. **The compulsion would be alien to her**.

I said specifically that is my wife and not a female thing.

Shivisi Responds:

First of all, Thank you for clarifying that.

Secondly, The question can now be divided into two categories:

1. Can women in general relate to men's sexual addictions?

and 2. Can someone who the idea of compulsiveness is "alien" to him, relate to an addiction problem?

But I think that What Pidaini said above about being **SUPPORTIVE** even without being able to relate to the problem, would be relevant in your case too!

Your wife could and should be able to say to the child **"I know I can't understand the depth and and severity of your pain / problem , but 'I'm here for you"**

So why would she not be able to be supportive even without being able to understand, and even though she is "wired completely differently" and even if "The compulsion would be alien to her"??

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Re: Can women relate????

Posted by MJB - 25 Feb 2014 16:59

Of course she can be supportive, if she realizes that it is out of her depth to understand and the only thing she can do is offer her support and reach out to those who can understand and be helpful.

But being supportive is not the same thing as being able to relate and offer help. That was my only point.

She can say I know you are going through a tough time, whatever you need I will be happy to help you, I will try to find people who can actually be a help. That is about all she can do. Now don't get me wrong that is invaluable, but it still doesn't solve the problem directly.

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Re: Can women relate????

Posted by shivisi - 26 Feb 2014 15:30

So that which you mentioned in your original post that "**if my children even my daughters c"v had a problem in this area, they could not turn to my wife**",... would not be true.

As you just said, They could [and should!] turn to your wife, their mother, for support, in knowing that she is "there for them" and as you put it "that she knows that they are going through a tough time, and that whatever they need she will be happy to help them with, and that she will try to find people who can actually be of help."

Yet you say "That is about '**all**' **she can do**".

and "being supportive is not the same thing as being able to relate and offer help."

That is WRONG!

This is doing very very much!

This is not only, as you said, "invaluable", It actually DOES (contrary to what you said) take a great part in solving the problem **Directly**.

As the whole concept of AA and SA and GYE groups have proven, **support** is not only an INDIRECT factor in solving the addiction problem, it is one of the greatest factors in the recovery process. Since the foundation of addictions are emotionally based, therefore emotional support is right there in the forefront of DIRECT recovery action.

And, so much more so, when the issue involves children, support of their parents, and (especially, but not exclusively, with girls), specifically **THEIR MOTHER**, is [should be] their greatest and strongest source for emotional recovery.

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Re: Can women relate????

Posted by cordnoy - 26 Feb 2014 15:52

As Pidaini stated in his opening remarks: Is this theoretical?

Don't beat it up!

Move on!

We need to fix ourselves, and allow anyone (safe) who is willing to help give us the support that we need...whatever gender they might be.

Read MBJ's last post on his thread:

guardyoureyes.com/forum/4-On-the-Way-to-90-Days/147170-MBJs-90-day-%28and-more%29-Journey?limit=15&start=255#228233

We cant make other people into something they are not.

This is in response to the "GYE addiction" issue as well.

Only you or your therapist or Rav will know how much medication you need and the amount of doses. I go thru stages myself. Like I just wrote on a different post (and many others here have said the same): "posting" is not the solution; it may be part of it, but action is required.

b'hatzlachah

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Re: Can women relate????

Posted by skeptical - 27 Feb 2014 09:33

Hi,

I just saw this thread and as I do have this experience, I figured I could share what I have come to know.

No, women who are not addicts will never really understand (I don't know about ones who are).

Being a wife (victim) will make it even more difficult for them to relate as there is a ton of pain that clouds over everything else. They will never truly understand (no matter how hard one tries to explain) that the reason for acting out has nothing to do with them. They will always see it that they are lacking in some way that we had to go looking elsewhere, otherwise it doesn't make sense to them, and possibly even more than that is the feeling of mistrust. My wife tries very hard to be supportive of me, yet she still sometimes gets upset if she is reminded of old memories, because the hurt is there.

About wives being supportive, as long as the support is on her terms, it will not work. There is a theory that if when a wife tries to be supportive of her husband (read: push him into getting help), he doesn't comply, she should help him "hit rock bottom" by giving a sincere ultimatum. This is essentially manipulation, and most people don't react well to being manipulated. I know I didn't. The only person whose behavior we can control is our own.

A wife is really supportive when her husband knows that he can count on her being there for him through the ups and downs. She has the right to be unhappy at times and to share her feelings, but being supportive means that despite those feelings she has made a commitment to being there for her husband, on his terms, to help him if or when he needs it.

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Re: Can women relate????

Posted by shivisi - 27 Feb 2014 11:32

Very well put. Thank you Skep.

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Re: Can women relate????

Posted by cordnoy - 27 Feb 2014 12:25

Skep, while I agree with many of the things you said, but how come you keep saying "they"? I have seen your thread and spoken to you enough times to know that what you are writing is regarding your situation. And by the way, you are blessed to even have that much support; I have support, but only because she doesn't really know the extent of my issues. But how can you say that regarding all wives? There are many on this site that attest to the fact that their wives are extremely supportive; some on their terms and some on the terms of both of them. I know of a real life situation (outside GYE) where the wife is very supportive of her husband, although he got caught with his @\$%^ down. So, can they relate? Some could. They need to be explained what it is that is going on. Are there some women that will not relate? Yes! Are there many? Also yes; but it is not absolute.

My personal opinion is that if one's wife does not know and there is no need to tell her, don't, and if that is the case, don't fret about what would happen if she does. Just make the right decision at this very moment.

b'hatzlachah!

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Re: Can women relate????

Posted by bechal levavecha - 28 Feb 2014 01:03

Hi

I would add just a few basics gleaned from "shalom bayis" sources

women are very different from men, and specifically in the area of intimacy, women are not interested in the pleasure as they are in the emotional aspect

this is what drives them, and they can never understand on any deep level how men can have a drive to have relations with just any woman

a "blinded" man (i.e. one blinded by his lusts) only sees the "physical" - whereas every woman doesn't have these blinders and looks for the deeper relationship, its part of their binah yeseirah (extra insight) woman are gifted with (men may be gifted with more sechel - logic, but how often does their logic win over their lust?)

so while there may be many wonderful wives who support their husbands, they never fully grasp the drive which pushes their husbands to graze in foreign pastures....

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Re: Can women relate????

Posted by cordnoy - 28 Feb 2014 02:11

[bechal levavecha wrote:](#)

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so while there may be many wonderful wives who support their husbands, they never fully grasp the drive which pushes their husbands to graze in foreign pastures....

Before I disagree with this, please tell me the mekoros for this, and also if it applies to non-Jews as well.

I'm also wonderin' what they discuss in the SA for women....Sheitels, Supper, Sefer halichos yisroel, Sechel, Supporting their husbands.....??

Thanks

B'hatzlachah!

I also assume that in your opening sentence, you meant to say this: women are not interested in the pleasure as **much as** they are in the emotional aspect.

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Re: Can women relate????

Posted by kilochalu - 28 Feb 2014 02:45

[shivisi wrote:](#)

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this is true but the sa and aa and gye groups also unanimously agree that the support of a fellow addict has by far the best results more than any other support, because they are the only ones who can truly relate

it is also important to make a distinction between relying on the support of a wife to help one recover which can result in many problems, as opposed an addict who is working on himself through other channels and also getting support from his wife as an extra source of encouragement in his path to remaining sober.

i think the pros and cons and different experiences expressed above are mostly discussing the second tzad.

also, and most importantly it should be mentioned that it is very helpful for wives of addicts (who are aware of their husbands issue) also to get outside support (can a husband truly relate to what the wife is going through when he doesn't really understand that she doesn't fully understand what is going on!) and among other things that they discuss there is the importance of surrendering and not being controlling (as was brought up before that they should know this)

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