

Answer to the "Let them Not Look" argument

Posted by shivisi - 31 Jul 2014 12:34

I put this topic in the "What works for me" section. But the problem is that what works for me often does not work for others, and when I come into a situation where I'm trying to help others understand, and act accordingly, I need to find what will work for them.

We have all heard the argument many (women or their advocates) give when faced with issues of tznius, where the point being addressed is being machshil [=causing others to stumble] men who look at them and have hirhurim (=inappropriate, lustful thoughts).

(Aside from the fact that if there is an issue of ?????? ????, it is forbidden regardless of whether anyone will stumble or not).

Their argument is: **"That's THEIR problem, not mine, Let them not look!"**

I have always tried to answer this argument by saying that even if it might be their problem, one still is forbidden to put a stumbling block in someones path if they know it will cause him to fall. So it IS your problem also.

But at times I have been asked, and maybe even have asked myself, WHY??

Why must one refrain from doing something which may otherwise be ok to do, only because someone else is not doing his job, and not restricting himself as obligated according to the law/halacha, often committing a much more severe transgression. Why does it become MY problem. Is it because of "kol yisrael areivim ze lazeh"? (=Every Jew is responsible for one another's Torah and Mitzvah observance).

When I finally merited becoming part of the amazing GYE group, and I learned the definition and dynamics of addictions, and lust addiction in particular, I have come to realize that although lust is "His problem", nevertheless it may very well be uncontrollable by him.

Thus, if someone places before such a person a "trigger" which causes him to stumble, there cannot be an argument of "let them not look".

The problem which remains, as I said before, is that "what works for me, often does not work for others". As we are also taught by the GYE experts, and which has been confirmed many times by addicts themselves, those who have never experienced addiction themselves, can usually not fully, (or even sometimes at all,) comprehend, this concept of totally not being in control.

Thus we come back to the original question, How would one explain to a non addict the concept that they cannot blame the one who falls, and that they must refrain from doing something which may be a trigger in effecting this fall?

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Re: Answer to the
Posted by dms1234 - 31 Jul 2014 21:26

Perhaps, everyone has a part to play. So, yes we should control ourselves but that doesn't absolve them of responsibility

I heard a shiur by Rabbi Orlofsky. He was having 2 (good, frum) girls over for a shabbos meal and he noticed they kept on pulling down their skirts, trying to cover their knees. He bluntly asked: why don't you wear a longer skirt? They did the eye roll and he asked them why do you think Tzenious is talked about so much/ what is its purpose? The girls were giving all these esoteric reasons..... Rabbi Orlofsky said perhaps, but really its so boys don't look up your skirts and down your shirts!!! A Rabbi, possibly Rabbi Orlofsky or Rabbi Dovid Kaplan said if they spent 10 minutes in a guys body, they would dress head to toe!

Not sure if this helps it definitely emphasizes the extent to which girls don't understand guys.

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Re: Answer to the
Posted by metalking - 07 Oct 2014 06:10

One of the things I've been slowly learning in this whole addiction battle is that in the serenity prayer, one of the "things I cannot change" are people's minds and opinions. That includes tirelessly trying to explain to a woman why she should dress more modestly.

Only Hashem can do that.

Having said that, here is some food for thought: Some women claim they dress for other women, not for men. Personally, I think it shows how awful the Western culture has become in that its now okay to admit you're showing off. Since when did we start teaching our kids that its ok to show off everything that you have that somebody else doesn't, including your amazing physique? (Probably with whichever dead-inside celebrity said "Flaunt it if you got it!")

Then there are the really stubborn women who will insist theyre dressing for themselves, not anyone else! I've found that most of the time, their actions don't match their claimed motives. If you truly dont care how anyone else sees you, then why do you only shave so carefully in the summer when you're wearing something revealing? If you truly are dressing for you, why aren't you dressed up nicely in the house? Why only to leave the house?

The bottom line is we are all aware of each other and how we all look and dress. And people's response of "Let them not look" is just their own selfish desire to lay the blame for their side of a human interaction entirely on the other side. Thats what Lifnei Eyver really teaches us. In every situation involving two people talk, dress, action, there is responsibility on both people to act in an appropriate manner.

But again, don't ever try and tell a woman that! :-)

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Re: Answer to the
Posted by dms1234 - 08 Oct 2014 06:14

Bottom line is we have to do what we gotta do, regardless how anyone dresses.

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Re: Answer to the
Posted by dms1234 - 08 Oct 2014 20:44

Not my problem so i don't care. Good thing to think about for my daughters (when i have them bezras Hashem) but I'm not changing any other girl's opinion about this!

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Re: Answer to the
Posted by inastruggle - 13 Oct 2014 10:30

First of all, for ourselves we should definitely be doing the "let them not look". Them being a trigger does not mean that we have to look. It might mean that once we look then we'll be triggered and in danger of falling, but that's about it.

Of course they are responsible for being triggers, but once they're there, we're just as responsible for looking.

It is a silly argument because once they are dressed that way then naturally they are going get looked at since men are not very well known for their self control in this area, and then forget about "kol yisroel", it simply is a very disgusting thing to do to someone, but this really doesn't concern us.

If there is a specific girl that you are arguing with then I would recommend a book called "inside outside" by Gila Manolson.

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