

GYE - Guard Your Eyes

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Dear R,R & R (Rabbi, Rav & Rebbe)
Posted by cordnoy - 18 May 2014 21:25

[I would like the Rabbinate to eventually read the followin' letter; however, I would like all on this site to chime in. What did I miss? What should be added? what should be subtracted? Have I missed the boat? How should this be sent out? Let me know please; thank you.]

Dear Rav, Rabbi, Rebbe (R,R & R.....all types....whether one is Modern Orhtodox, Reform, Chassidish, Yeshivish, Right wing or Left),

I am a member of your Shul, Synagogue, Sanctuary (S,S & S). I could be the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, First Gabbai, Second Gabbai, Board Member, Ordinary Member or Guest. I am writing this to you, for I feel that the Rabbinate in general is not addressing the following issue in the proper manner. The issue I am referring to is people who have a lust or sexual addiction. For this letter, it is not important to define the word 'addiction.' I simply mean: people who have an extremely difficult time guarding their eyes. We cannot walk or drive down the street without our eyes wandering and noticing all that we shouldn't. Every woman, her dress, heels, posture and everything else are scrutinized. No billboard is overlooked. We look again, turn around and gawk if we can. These images remain with us throughout the day/night. They/We/I begin to act out. We masturbate without control. We cannot stop ourselves. We view pornography on the internet. These images and videos remain embedded in our heads. They become a part of us. They invade during tefillah, learning, work and play. We develop relationships with women on the internet. We frequent clubs where naked women dance before us. Some of us are into phone sex. Others are into prostitutes. We are addicted to all types of sex. Some of us fantasize about other men; many of us fantasize about women. There are no restrictions; no limitations. Anything you have ever heard of, we have done or thought about. I can go on and on about all our particular fetishes, but I think you get the message.

Now, as a member of the Rabbinate, I am sure you are well aware of some of this. The way you address this is probably one of the following: You dedicate one speech, sermon, drashah to this topic. You warn your congregants how vigilant they must be to guard their eyes and minds. You tell them that it is dangerous to their souls. Some might even state how the aveirah/sin of Hz"l is a ticket to Hell/Gehinnom. Perhaps Avraham Avinu/our forefather Abraham will stand by the entrance of the Gan Eden and kindly/sternly tell us that we do not belong here. Some of you might discuss the chillul Hashem/desecration of God's Name that is involved. Can you imagine getting caught? Picture the damage it will do to your community, your family, your job, etc. Some might mention that we can become physically sick. We can catch diseases by close contact with multiple partners. This might even be contagious, and we will pass it on further to our spouses or our children God forbid!

Many of you, however, will choose a different route, one that is considerably 'safer.' You will talk about computers, internet and the need for filters and monitors. You will hang posters all around the S,S & S, announcing and informing us of the possible filters, protections and monitors that exist for computers, phones, I-pods and nooks. There are phone numbers to call to assist you in the installation of K-9, Web-chaver, V'shinantem, Net-nanny, Open Dns and Covenant Eyes. You will tell us about the dangers for our families and our innocent children. Some of you may volunteer to be our partner. You will receive in an email all the websites that we visit. There will even be those who set up classes/shiurim to learn from a mussar sefer/book that deals with this important issue.

Some of you will choose to make this into your lifelong battle. You will bring this up every other Shabbos. You will announce special speakers and events that will deal with this. You will try to convince your peers to make a convention about the topic. Let us duplicate Citi Field in our community. Another Asifah; another gathering. Let us create a group of those who can tell others that our house is now protected.

Now, perhaps I missed a method or two, but the above would be the general outlines of what has been happening for the past ten or fifteen years. There probably has been many success stories. You saved many marriages and protected many children. People have come back and reported that they are now clean. I/We commend you for this and we wish you continued success.

What I am here to tell you is that be'mechilas kevod torasam/I apologize to you great scholar there is a vital point that you are missing, and it is one that is crucial for us addicts. We are in hiding. This has become a stigma like no other before it. If we would walk to the bimah in the center of the S,S & S and announce that we are steeped into porn, we would be immediately banned and ostracized from the community. We are alone in the closet. Some of us feel that we are the only person in the world with this problem. We do not dare to tell our spouse, parent, Mashgiach or mentor. We hide our guilt and our filth. The danger of getting caught just adds to the thrill of the chase. We listen intently when you are hollering from the pulpit. We try not to squirm in our seats. We wonder if there's anyone else in this room that you are talking to. But ultimately, it doesn't help; we are not affected by your words. If we could, we would masturbate right there, right then; perhaps under our tallis or even with our tefillin on. We know and we heard many times that God has rejected us. We have been banned from His Presence a long time ago. We might feel a tinge of guilt; perhaps a lot of it, but it just leads to a vicious cycle. Within minutes, hours or days, we are back kneeling on the bathroom floor.

So, what you ask, are you missing? What more can you do? You have told us all how harmful

and detrimental this is to us, our lives, our families, our community and our souls. The answer, the solution, at least partly, or as a positive step forward, would be for a bit of empathy, some compassion, some concern, and most of all, some knowledge. Spend some time on the Guard your Eyes website. Learn about all the hundreds and thousands of frum/orthodox/modern orthodox, chassidish, yeshivish, bochurim, teenagers, students, yungerleit, Roshei Kollel, doctors, lawyers and professionals that are experiencing this problem. Learn what makes them tick. Study the causes. Speak to the therapists. Find out why this is becoming more widespread than ever before. Determine if filters or monitors would help these people. Let these people open up to you and listen to their concerns, worries, troubles, guilt, shame and anxiety. Investigate who are the therapists that are available for the different type of addictions. Do you even know what an SA group is? Do you know if they are accessible to your community members? Become experts in the field. Perhaps not all of you have the time and the wherewithal to obtain the status and the level of expertise as Rabbi Dr. Twerski and Duvid Chaim and Dov; but some of you can. Perhaps appoint one of your colleagues to become that expert. Learn about us. And most of all, speak to your congregants; not as a group, but in a private setting. Ask them about life (might be a good idea in general). And then tell them that you would like to ask some personal questions, and that you are asking everyone in the S,S & S the same questions; for this way, they will not be worried that they are under suspicion. Ask them if they have issues with guarding their eyes. They will answer: Who doesn't? Ask further. Tell them that there is help out there. In each S,S & S, there is probably 5 or 10 % of the members that suffer some type of sexual addiction. If my numbers are too high, then put it at 3 %, but you can help. One who suffers alone will suffer forever. That is what all the books and all the studies and all the experts have determined. Ask further. Be a bit of a nudge. Explain that although this particular person sitting before you might not appreciate this line of questioning, but it is worth it to you (and it should be worth it for him), to save or to assist one fellow in this community. R,R & R, I am afraid that you will be surprised, or perhaps even shocked about the amount of people that will "come out of the closet." And maybe, you say, I am saying that, for I would like to be part of a larger group....that might be true, but that is what many people are saying. And again, even if it isn't, can you imagine the relief of that one guilt-ridden, full of shame person will have when he finally is able to reveal his suffering and his grief that he has silently and shamefully endured all by himself for so many years.

R, R & R: either tell me why I am wrong, or please, I beg of you, take heed to some of what I wrote. You will be saving so many suffering souls.

Thank you so much

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Re: Dear R,R & R (Rabbi, Rav & Rebbe)
Posted by markz - 10 Jan 2016 05:22

[Rabbi Rav Rebbe Cordnoy wrote:](#)

In conclusion: if there is one idea that everyone associated with GYE can agree upon (and yes, i mean you as well), and if you would ask yourself, what would be the number one advice you can give someone, or what would be somethin' that can help another get out of this mess? I believe the answer would be to somehow get out of the isolation. Remove the blanket. GEt out of the closet! Somehow, get it into the open (and no; don't broadcast it on CNN), for a heavy load will be removed from your shoulders. Our leaders can help with that....somehow.

Thanks (and sorry for the ramble)

b'hatzlachah

The idea of having a rabbi asking personal question, only works if the congregant is close to him personally, as was in prior generations, not anymore

Many rabbis are great in one area only, each to his own. Some specialize in Halacha, some in hashkafa, some in rhetoric...

What I do believe should be encouraged by RRR's is general awakening to the guardyoureyes website at least 2x/yr for awareness how to protect yourself and your children from devices, Internet etc...

If the rabbi sounds intelligent, members may of their own accord feel comfortable to approach him, after his broaching the topic in general terms.

Posters of gye should be placed bi-annually, and many curious eyes will decide to check it out - why not

I wish I would have found gye many years ago...

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Re: Dear R,R & R (Rabbi, Rav & Rebbe)
Posted by cordnoy - 10 Jan 2016 05:34

[markz wrote:](#)

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Don't agree at all.

I think it might even be exactly the opposite.

time for you to get a new Rav.

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Re: Dear R,R & R (Rabbi, Rav & Rebbe)
Posted by markz - 10 Jan 2016 05:37

[cordnoy wrote:](#)

[markz wrote:](#)

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Don't agree at all.

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My personal Rav is not my synagogue Rav, and I'm not the only guy like that

You're asking the synagogue rav to do something that in my opinion isn't practical for more than 50% of our holy / hoping to be holy brothers

I read basically all the posts on this thread, and wrote what I feel makes 2 cents

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Re: Dear R,R & R (Rabbi, Rav & Rebbe)

Posted by cordnoy - 10 Jan 2016 05:42

[markz wrote:](#)

[cordnoy wrote:](#)

[markz wrote:](#)

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firstly, if my suggestion is good for even a few, that is perfect.

Secondly (and please don't make a poll), where do you get your 50% number from? In today's day and age, the warmth and personality of a Rav is a top priority in the hirin' process.

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Re: Dear R,R & R (Rabbi, Rav & Rebbe)

Posted by markz - 10 Jan 2016 06:00

1- Watson's prior comment, which speaks to me too, that if 'confronted' (in a nice way) by the RRR, I wouldn't open up

2- Although people choose a synagogue based on location, and happens to be there's hopefully (not always) a warm personable rabbi officiating there

Yet, people choose their personal Rav based on many factors not necessarily dependent on location

I'm not making polls and have no stats, but in my humble assessment, a certain percent of the religious population don't have a family Rav at all, eg Chassidim of many groise Rebbes, is the heilige rebbe available for them day in day out like mine?

Then there's a certain percent like myself that have a Rav but he's not the Rav of my shul...

Then there's a small percent that the shul Rav is their family Rav, but he's not the warm personable type

Are we close to 50%

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Re: Dear R,R & R (Rabbi, Rav & Rebbe)

Posted by cordnoy - 10 Jan 2016 06:07

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Are we close to 50%

I have no idea, and it's not the point.

And Watson's point also is not the point.

It is for the rabbis to try.

And the sad note that people don't have rabbonim that they feel close to (if that's accurate) is exactly that....sad.

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Re: Dear R,R & R (Rabbi, Rav & Rebbe)
Posted by markz - 10 Jan 2016 06:17

[cordnoy wrote:](#)

[markz wrote:](#)

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unfortunately very true and very sad

And boy does it affect their ???? ???...

I've been shouting for years that guys need a personal Rav, and people just don't listen

Warning: Spoiler!

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Re: Dear R,R & R (Rabbi, Rav & Rebbe)

Posted by markz - 11 Jan 2016 18:19

[markz wrote:](#)

[cordnoy wrote:](#)

[markz wrote:](#)

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[stillgoing wrote:](#)

Why do you think that they just don't listen? You can't just go buy a rav in walmart. How do you just get a rav?

[andsm1 wrote:](#)

now i am married with 3 kids and i only now struggle with both taharat mishpachamostly lack of knowlege because of a lack of a rabbi i trust...

...its not that i dont trust rabbis i just dont have a keshr with any rabbi who i can see as a mentor yet

If your life and your marriage depends on it you'd travel the entire country to find one

No rabbi is perfect, but if I think I'm more perfect than all rabbis...

Even a rabbi that has dealt with his lust issues may be of help (see oisvorfs thread I bumped last night)

Also many of us can do with a personal coach / counselor / therapist, and because it's pushed to the back burner we land up in very hot water

Each man to his own truck, but I don't have lifeguard training, only towing...

Whoever doesn't have a close Rav - go get one!

Whoever has - Hatzlacha!

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Re: Dear R,R & R (Rabbi, Rav & Rebbe)
Posted by markz - 11 Jan 2016 22:55

Cord' sorry this is getting a little off topic

[stillgoing wrote:](#)

I don't think that i'm more important then Rabbi's, but i feel that by and large they are all too busy with important things to be nuded by me. I've tried, i really have. I've learnt in shuls no where near my house just so the rav would get to know me, but i feel that for every understanding rav, there are a thousand people like me that need him. I don't like to push myself at the expense of others, so i just loose out.

Jan 11 2016

If your marriage and life depends on it, you'd do it...

Yes there are times that i can look a fool for asking, so what, I have my daas Torah, and I'll do what it takes to do what's right in my life

Same thing as this amazing website

I look like a fool to some guys

they may be right

and for my recovery it requires other guys to help me on my long haul

You gonna stay away from the forums cos youre worried not to take too much of cordnoy or anyone else's time?

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Re: Dear R,R & R (Rabbi, Rav & Rebbe)

Posted by markz - 17 Jan 2016 21:33

[markz wrote:](#)

[Rabbi Rav Rebbe Cordnoy wrote:](#)

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This mornings Chizuk email seems to be a classic case in point

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Re: Dear R,R & R (Rabbi, Rav & Rebbe)
Posted by stillgoing - 17 Jan 2016 21:44

[markz wrote:](#)

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[stillgoing wrote:](#)

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You gonna stay away from the forums cos youre worried not to take too much of cordnoy or anyone else's time?

I don't want to bother them. I don't want to be a hindrance, a nudge, a.. you know what I mean

Warning: Spoiler!

It's not that I'm afraid to look like a fool. I can't hide that

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Re: Dear R,R & R (Rabbi, Rav & Rebbe)

Posted by markz - 17 Jan 2016 21:51

There was something inappropriate on the girl's screen and she was just using her shoes to cover it

?? ??? she was smashing the screen...

As I said before - you do what you gotta do...

But better not to be a nudge... Don't call your Rav at 2am

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Re: Dear R,R & R (Rabbi, Rav & Rebbe)

Posted by stillgoing - 17 Jan 2016 22:43

[markz wrote:](#)

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?? ??? she was smashing the screen...

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But better not to be a nudge... Don't call your Rav at 2am

I've gotta mull it over. You may have convinced me. Don't start partying yet - I said MAY.

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Re: Dear R,R & R (Rabbi, Rav & Rebbe)
Posted by Aryeh821 - 19 Jan 2016 03:51

I think it would probably be a good idea to add yeshiva/high school to the letter as the percentage is probably higher but at the very least for sure equal to any shul ETC....

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