

Britt's Beyond

Posted by briut - 02 Feb 2010 18:00

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Dear Friends: Sorry I've been off in my own mind these last couple of days and not posting.

I've had a very very emotionally busy couple of days as I approach the end of a 20-day kaballa to be clean. Here's an update, and I'm hoping for your insights/comments.

That kaballa ends this evening. I've learned a lot. I want to express my thanks to all of you for jumping in to post, even in the face of some pretty long rambling posts without clear message. It means a lot.

And to the author of many insightful PMs, your direct, almost brutal comments scared away a lot of delusional thinking and brought me a tremendous sense of clarity. Saying thank you doesn't even come close to my gratitude for your time. I'd love to hear from the decades of accumulated wisdom here on the forum.

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!

Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 15 Jul 2010 04:06

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hi Briut,

sorry if i put you in a tough spot, i only mean to help.

your honesty is very inspiring. i am sure you will get far with your consistent work and great attitude.

the nimshal you extracted from the pasuk in tachanun is awesome and profound. i think you are right on the money with that idea. Hashem can/will help us with our stress but if we want and plan to fall He won't stop us. awesome.

thanks

if you take a break from posting can you make it more like a 15 minute break? i think you are

zemiros

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!

Posted by installed - 15 Jul 2010 04:22

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So many thoughtless words!

Oy. I think it's time for a taa'nis dibbur.

In other words, a little break from posting.

HUH??!!!!!!

You really keep me going. I don't write too much on your thread because I don't think that I can add anything that you don't already know but I love reading your thread.

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Thanks for being here!

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!

Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 22 Jul 2010 16:29

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hi briut, just pulling your thread from oblivion - a.k.a. page 2

we miss you

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!  
Posted by 1daat - 23 Jul 2010 06:12

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[Briut wrote on 15 Jul 2010 03:24:](#)

oh, no.

1000 posts. whoaahhh.

Tatty, what have I done? 1000?!

So many thoughtless words!

The following was posted by Briut on my thread when I made a put down on myself.

"no.

13th step (or is that 11th commandment):

don't tell loshon hara against yourself.

you are strong and capable and more.

don't forget it.

usually I'll couch my words on this forum in 'conditional' tones like maybe, one person's opinion,

etc.

not here.

"don't tell loшон hara against yourself."

period.

even if, chas vashalom, you think it might be true.

especially."

Briut, Your postings throughout the site have been enormously helpful to me. Above all, in what you might think is mindless rambling, I find a deep talmudic mind searching to know Hashem's truth and mercy. I try to be so honest with myself and everybody here. Sometimes yes, sometimes, well, almost. But to quote chazal, "No. Not here. Don't tell lahon hora against yourself. "

I/we miss you.

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!

Posted by briut - 23 Jul 2010 16:09

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OK, I'm back.

First, I'm so touched that folks went looking for me. My ego enjoyed it, of course, but I think it was also chizuk that putting myself out there, all of me, is worth the emotional risk and also the risk of being identified (dare I say, outed). Thanks.

Yes, I'm still 'clean.' Haven't counted the days, (March 8 was day 1, aka day 70-minus-1). I'm still going. Sometimes white-knuckled, sometimes with kofrus (details later), but still going.

Many parts of me want a coupla days of falling to overcome the white knuckles and start again with more insight and a fresh slate in the white knuckles department. But the problem is, now that I know it's possible to continue, that takes me out of b'onus or even heter and squarely into

b'mazid. A crazy thought to separate intentional from negligent in my mind since the underlying aveira is identical. That's the life of someone who loves Hashem, though. Gotta put it in His hands because I'm no longer qualified/entitled to mess up on my own. We're all crazy. We're all bozos on this bus.

I saw that Eye posted a great piece recently, warning newbies that his talk about family and patience and frustration is NOT irrelevant here. In fact, at some point that's what the work becomes all about. Yep, Eye, I hear you well. As rough as it is to keep my hands from slipping below my belt, it's harder to keep my voice from slipping with my wife. And just as important.

[Perhaps that's why se\*ual crimes get the death penalty just like murder, and of course embarrassing anyone including your wife is like killing them. So who's to judge which ones are the worst aveiras -- I like to think it's shatnez, BTW.]

The biggest recent lesson has been in shmiras einayim. I could write for hours on it (and may someday soon), but the biggest lesson is that Hashem does not suffer half-naked joggers in order to be our eye candy. The world is not here to be our eye candy. And I've probably learned this twice as deeply and twice as quickly as most other guys here, because I've had to practice it with both men and women. Which means, pretty much, the whole human race. (Women per halacha, men per my own stirrings.) I thought it would be impossible, but it's simply been a new view of the world. Anyhow, more later.

As to kofrus, I've been asking HKBH for a deal: keep me rolling in work and money, and I'll take it as the signal I should keep going. And the signal worked for a few weeks (REALLY worked), but now it's trickled down to very little. I "told" Him that if the work stopped, all bets were off. So now I'm doing it for some reason other than keeping my side of a "deal" as it were. We'll see.

Staying clean thru Tisha B'Av involved nedarim I won't detail, and motzoi T b'Av my wife went to mikveh and we had a couple of days of amazing [catching up]. Staying clean for these couple weeks won't be so rough. But... when she becomes assur to me again, I've got a big conversation with the Y'H staring me in the face. Meantime, it's ODAAT.

And folks, please let me know on my thread or by PM if I should slow down in my postings. One thousand has GOT to be too much! I value your frank insights.

Thanks for listening.

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!  
Posted by 1daat - 25 Jul 2010 04:48

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a thousand is just a good start. You'll look back when you hit ten thousand and laugh.

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!  
Posted by briut - 25 Jul 2010 19:39

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Thanks, 1daat. I think....

Anyhow, Sturggle recently posted a rehash of his autobio. Good idea, Sturg. Thx. I wonder how concisely I could do the same?

Kosher-style upbringing. Hit "a baal tshuva yeshiva" after college & took on mitzvos, a few decades ago. Now happily married, house fulla kids, life is B'H good.

While I love my Yiddishkeit, I also love men. Knew this in kindergarden. Still knew it as a teen. After college, lived with a nice Jewish doctor for a coupla years. Ended up marrying a lesbian officer of the G&L shul. (A long story.) Built a straight, Shomer Shabbos home. Coupla successful and growth-filled decades here, BSD!!

I suppose my P&M helped blow off the steam of desiring men. I never felt very guilty, since the alternative outlets for blowing off steam seemed LESS kosher. Hashem knew I was trying, and I lived with it.

I found GYE 6 mo ago, with no idea what I was taking on. And I've found that I am physically capable of giving up the P&M, maybe even the wandering eye. But while most guys here might have a "kosher" substitute for assur activities, I'm not sure I will; this leaves me a little sad. But I know and trust HKB'H is running this train, so I'll stay on as long as He'll let me. Even if it feels like a bucking bronco.

OK, the bio's not short, but just putting it down gives me a little clarity as to what I'm doing here. Thanks for listening. Thanks even more for comments....

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!  
Posted by briut - 25 Jul 2010 19:42

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Funny, what I THOUGHT I was going to post a minute ago was my memory of a great Rav saying two things on two successive weeks. Great chizzuk, I thought.

Week One: Yiddishkeit requires balance in all things. All chessed and no gevurah is fatal, so is the opposite. Where you're weak, look to get a little stronger, and where you're really strong, try to lighten up a bit.

Week Two: Everyone wants to know their own tafkid (purpose) in life. And to find it, look first for the place where you're the most scared, the most weak, feeling the least competent. The one that makes you sweat at the thought of it. THAT, he said, is probably where your tafkid lies. To heal that corner and bring it back into balance. To overcome the fear that lies in that corner. To make it balanced again.

For those of us here, the idea that working on our se\*ual weaknesses could indeed be our tafkid is probably either wonderful or terrible. It's such a wonderful opportunity to heal ourselves and heal the world, if we can meet the challenge. And it's such a terrible thought that we can't just move Mt Everest or something but instead have to take on this trickier task. But if it's really our tafkid from Hashem, we've got no choice if we really love Hashem and his ways -- this is our calling.

Chazak chazak v'nitchazek -- we're all gonna have to get each other through this together. Oy.

At least it's good there's a website to help. And a chevra. Thanks.

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!

Posted by Jooboy - 25 Jul 2010 23:47

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Briut,

Thanks for sharing some of your story, I have not been around for that long and don't know everyone here that well.

I hear where your coming from, feeling that there is no kosher outlet for the desires you struggle with.

However at the root of the issue there is a similarity with all of us here. We all have a drive for lust whatever form it takes and the only eventual path to real freedom is a freedom from lust. If I am just "letting off steam" on my wife or "white-knuckling" it then I may have a nice day count but it is unlikely that I will be living a life of freedom. I have found that my need for sex in any form, even "kosher" forms holds me back from the freedom I desire and that the more I can feel it is optional the greater the freedom. That is not to say that freedom from the act of sex is the only real freedom but that freedom from the "need" for sex is the only real freedom from this condition. There is certainly a lot of good that can come from real holy intimacy, but if it is an absolute need that must be fulfilled it is probably coming from lust.

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!

Posted by Sturggle - 27 Jul 2010 04:48

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Hey Briut. Thanks for the mention and you're welcome for the idea.

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!

Posted by ZemiroShabbos - 27 Jul 2010 18:22

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hi Briut,

great to see you back and posting again in your usual thought-provoking and insightful style.

IMHO, you should continue posting and not slow down. it seems like you enjoy it and you are able to organize your thoughts and feelings by writing so why give it up?

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!

Posted by briut - 27 Jul 2010 22:58

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Today, in the East Coast heat wave, I've been working on shmiras eynayim -- the concept that the RBS'O did not put homo [sic] sapiens on this earth to serve as random eye candy for one another. As I saw here recently, to focus on an objectified person having a mother, a child, a boss, etc to take them out of the parsha of eye candy.

So, I guess I feel like a tzaddik when I avoid glancing at women, since frankly I thought I was avoiding the glances strictly out of the Torah prohibition. Even with women, though, there's a whole discipline in thinking that NO ONE is eye candy, not even a fat, blue-haired 70-y-o widow lady.

And as for the hunky young ones who could EASILY be my eye candy, I can try avoiding the second glance by reminding myself that I'm above that. (As if I believe that (!), but one step at a time....)

I'm not doing perfectly, but it's a good exercise. Certainly different than my past approach of

trying to fill up my bucket of lust with furtive glances... so I'd have a full bucket to select from in my own bedroom that night.

I wonder if I can survive/enjoy summer like this.... And thinking of "marital life" without a bucket full of fantasies to hold onto -- feels like a noble but unattainable goal.

Anyhow, I could use some chizzuk on this topic, by the way (hint hint).

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!

Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 27 Jul 2010 23:15

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[Briut wrote on 27 Jul 2010 22:58:](#)

Today, in the East Coast heat wave, I've been working on shmiras eynayim --

...I avoid glancing at women, since frankly I thought I was avoiding the glances strictly out of the Torah prohibition....I can try avoiding the second glance by reminding myself that I'm above that. (As if I believe that (!), but one step at a time....)

[Yosef Hatzadik wrote on 27 Jul 2010 22:53:](#)

Rav Dessler Z'tzal ..... He was using his Gaavah to fight his Taavah!

You are also!!!!

[Briut wrote on 27 Jul 2010 22:58:](#)

So, I guess I feel like a tzaddik

;D :D ;D :D

.D :D  
[Briut wrote on 27 Jul 2010 22:58:](#)

Anyhow, I could use some chizzuk on this topic, by the way (hint hint).

Does this qualify?

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Re: La-Briut and Beyond!  
Posted by 1daat - 27 Jul 2010 23:43

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[Briut wrote on 27 Jul 2010 22:58:](#)

NO ONE is eye candy, not even a fat, blue-haired 70-y-o widow lady.

I'm 64. You got something against fat, 70 yo widows? Hair can be recolored! You got her email or phone number, please pm me.

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