

Announcing the new WOMEN'S Forum

Posted by the.guard - 26 Jan 2009 12:26

After much deliberation, it was decided to start a unique and separate section on this forum for women. I also moved all previous threads by women to the new section. (A special thanks to "Boruch" and "strugglingWoman" for being catalysts to this important step).

Here are the deliberations, the pros- the cons - and the final decision.

1) The 12 Steps groups around the world are intentionally mixed, even though it is known that the opposite sexes do trigger each other in group support - especially for addicts. And yes, this can -and has - led to trouble, but only with those who hadn't really hit bottom or weren't really ready for the groups yet. The idea behind the intentional mixing, is that the men **should learn to stop objectifying and sexualizing women**, and through hearing about their struggles and giving each other support, the men begin to see women in a different light. And this is an important part of the healing process.

2) **HOWEVER** - and this is a big HOWEVER, as frum people, we can't take these kind of risks, even if there is some benefit to be found in it. The risk of even one person falling is not worth the gain.

3) On the other hand, a forum is not the same as a live-group, and the risk on a forum is much smaller *le'chatchilah*. Therefore, there is more reason to say that the benefit mentioned above in #1 (of learning not to objectify women by hearing about their struggles too) would perhaps justify the miniscule risk, **even** on a frum forum.

4) Therefore, it was decided to make a compromise by starting a new board for women only, as outlined in the rules below.

Here are the new rules (and I would be happy to hear your feedback):

1) Women will start NEW threads only on the Women's Forum, and Men on the men's forum.

- 2) Both women and men will only be allowed to hook up with "partners" and "sponsors" of the same gender.
- 3) Both women and men may post replies to existing threads on both forums, to offer each other Chizuk.
- 4) Men or women who do post on forum's of the opposite gender will not go into detail about their own personal struggles.
- 5) Men will not send women, and women will not send men, personal messages through the forum, nor will they send each other e-mails, nor will they ask each other for phone numbers, even if the intention is to strengthen one another.
- 6) No one will post graphic details of their struggles on ANY of the forums, so as not to possibly trigger other people's imaginations. If you want to send us your story in more graphic detail (so that others can see that there is hope even when falling very low), you can send it first to eyes.guard@gmail.com and we will decide if/what parts are appropriate. (Note: Members should privately relay to the administrator any triggers they may spot in any post, so we can respond accordingly).
- 7) Anyone found deliberately violating the above rules will be "blocked" from the forum.

And one last "word to the wise". *"Yode'ah Tzadik Nefesh Be'hemto"...* If you feel you may be triggered by hearing about the struggles of the opposite gender, DO NOT ENTER the forum of the opposite gender **even if** you would like to offer Chizuk (you can press on the little "minus" sign next to the words "Internet Addiction Forum for Jewish Men/Women" to collapse it and keep it out of sight).

I think the above is a pretty good compromise. Happy to hear any thoughts or advice.

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Re: Announcing the new WOMEN'S Forum
Posted by mdmjerusalem - 26 Jan 2009 14:51

Being this an extremely **vital** concern, it can *chas vesholom* make our holy forum a feeding tube for sexual addictions, I would consider adding an additional ruling.

Members should **privately** relay to our administrator **any** triggers (even the most minor) they have (through the men/woman forum issue) so he would adjust the rules accordingly.

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Re: Announcing the new WOMEN'S Forum
Posted by boruch - 26 Jan 2009 14:52

[guardureyes wrote on 26 Jan 2009 12:26:](#)

Here are the new rules (and I would be happy to hear your feedback):

- 1) Women will start NEW threads only on the Women's Forum, and Men on the men's forum.
- 2) Both women and men will only be allowed to hook up with "partners" of the same gender.
- 3) Women may hook up with a man "sponsor" who has good recovery experience behind him (preferably only for e-mail contact though).
- 4) Both women and men may post replies to existing threads on both forums, to offer each other Chizuk.
- 5) Men or women who do post on forum's of the opposite gender will not go into detail about their own personal struggles.
- 6) Men will not send women, and women will not send men, personal messages through the forum, nor will they send each other e-mails, nor will they ask each other for phone numbers, even if the intention is to strengthen one another.
- 7) Anyone found deliberately violating the above rules will be "blocked" from the forum.

And one last "word to the wise". *"Yode'ah Tzadik Nefesh Be'hemto"*... If you feel you may be triggered by hearing about the struggles of the opposite gender, DO NOT ENTER the forum of the opposite gender **even if** you would like to offer Chizuk (you can press on the little "minus" sign next to the words "Internet Addiction Forum for Jewish Men/Women" to fold it up and put it

out of sight).

Guard,

In the words of the Mishna in Succah 51a referring to the Ezras Noshim in the Beis Hamikdosh, Umesaknin shom tikkun godol --- and they arranged there (in the Ezras Noshim) a great arrangement.

The Rambam in his Peirush - commentary, adds a few words that are easy to overlook but extremely profound. The Rambam clarifies, godol - great here in the Mishna, means of great benefit. What is the significance of this clarification and how would I have understood the word godol in the Mishna without the Rambam's clarification?

We would have understood the word godol in the Mishna to refer to the extent of the physical characteristics of the separation that was created in the Ezras Noshim -- big strong walls that make a big massive statement. But there is a danger in making massive statements when it comes to separating men and women. If you get involved with big statements you get involved chas vesholom in big triggers. So the Rambam is teaching us what needs to be great, not the extremity and demonstrativeness of the statement, that can be counter-productive and lead to triggers, but rather we have to aim for *great effect* and *great benefit*.

Guard, if there is a way to describe your goal in creating these new rules, it is that you are looking not for great statements but great effect.

May Hashem bless you and everyone in these forums, men and women, that we should all be zocheh --- we should all merit full success in our quest to become the people we are striving to be and to serve as an inspiration to others seeking to do the same. May Hashem bless us all that these new rules should have great effect.

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Re: Announcing the new WOMEN'S Forum
Posted by boruch - 26 Jan 2009 15:01

[MDM.jerusalem wrote on 26 Jan 2009 14:51:](#)

Being this an extremely **vital** concern, it can *chas vesholom* make our holy forum a feeding tube for sexual addictions, I would consider adding an additional ruling.

Members should **privately** relay to our administrator **any** triggers (even the most minor) they have (through the men/woman forum issue) so he would adjust the rules accordingly.

I would put it this way MDM,

Members should **privately** relay to our administrator **any** triggers (even the most minor) they have (through the men/woman forum issue) so he would **respond** accordingly.

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Re: Announcing the new WOMEN'S Forum
Posted by mdmjerusalem - 26 Jan 2009 15:06

between you and me i am very concerned about this addition

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Re: Announcing the new WOMEN'S Forum
Posted by Ano Nymous - 26 Jan 2009 15:15

I think the addition is appropriate. Maybe down the line an entirely separate forum would be possible. I can say for myself that if someone posts something triggering, I will edit it out just as I would delete those spammer posts (which gue has thankfully gotten rid of entirely). I don't think

anyone would be offended by this. And I have one bit of advice to those who feel this is a dangerous move: collapse the women's forum and DON'T GO TO IT. It's as simple as that. :D

P.S. @Guard It looks like you accidentally set out the announcement 8 times.

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Re: Announcing the new WOMEN'S Forum
Posted by boruch - 26 Jan 2009 15:28

[MDM jerusalem wrote on 26 Jan 2009 15:06:](#)

between you and me i am very concerned about this addition

MDM, I understand your concern and from the get-go I have advocated that we should not decide these things on our own but get both religious and professional advice. I have singled out Rabbi Dr Twersky who has been involved with these forums as a great resource, combining as he does, both areas.

In the interim it does not sound like we are there yet and between the lines it sounds like we are still trying to find our way on our own. But I have not complained at all and as you can see above I commented with only approval. Here's why. In my own opinion, the new addition is a vast improvement on the situation until now. Although the men/women issue was in some ways less visible and less obvious before, that does not in any way mean that it was in any way less dangerous. On the contrary, better to deal with a problem that you recognize than to deal with a problem that you are busy denying.

So, am I glad that I have not heard that the Professional and Religious direction has been charted with the help of experts? I would be much more comfortable to hear that it had. But I will support any move in the right direction. And there is absolutely no question at all in my mind that this is a step in the right direction and therefore you can count me in as a supporter. Could

we do better, of course we could, but let's support any move in the right direction.

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Re: Announcing the new WOMEN'S Forum

Posted by the.guard - 26 Jan 2009 15:50

MDM, I added your comment. Thank you!

Ano, I'm sorry about the 8 times. I was having trouble sending the message. Each time it told me it didn't finish going through so I kept trying again. Did anyone else get it 8 times?

Boruch, if you have any ideas how to make it even better, feel free to share (remember - kid gloves please :-) I don't know if I should bother Rabbi Twerski about this. I explained the reasoning of the compromise in 4 clear steps above. Remember, there IS still a benefit to see the struggles of the women, and so I think we are balancing it pretty well now **thanks to y'all**.

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Re: Announcing the new WOMEN'S Forum

Posted by me - 26 Jan 2009 16:56

I am impressed by the rules, and can see that they were very well thought out. I cannot speak for other's, but I presently do not feel any possible trigger whatsoever with the present rules in place, and can in fact see that the good intended from this change can in fact be realized.

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Re: Announcing the new WOMEN'S Forum

Posted by battleworn - 26 Jan 2009 17:07

Don't you think there may be a possibility that in a "women's only" section there's a greater chance of women posting triggering posts?

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Re: Announcing the new WOMEN'S Forum
Posted by mevakesh - 26 Jan 2009 17:40

Thank you for making the women's board GUE ...

Although I respect and admire the women on this board who have come to be *metaher* themselves, the insidious nature of the addiction was causing me to become triggered very easily. I don't think it is a good idea in general to test our limits feel that a female board is really a win/win for everybody.

Bracha & Hatzlacha to you!

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Re: Announcing the new WOMEN'S Forum
Posted by mevakesh - 26 Jan 2009 17:44

Don't you think there may be a possibility that in a "women's only" section there's a greater chance of women posting triggering posts?

This is a very good point battleworn.

In my humble opinion, I think that this consideration should be weighed against the chance of triggering material being present in full sight of all on the general boards. Although the presence of a female board may be tempting to look at, the specific posts will not be visible unless one *chooses* to look at them.

An excellent point battleworn ...

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Re: Announcing the new WOMEN'S Forum
Posted by Someone - 26 Jan 2009 18:00

Ty guard! I can safely cruise the forum again, with the womens section collapsed.

To be frank and honest, and with all due respect to the ladies, some posts were triggering me and I could not read them. Gave me a little hard time yesterday. B"H, I was helped through yesterday. Can't tell you how happy I am ;D

/JG

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Re: Announcing the new WOMEN'S Forum
Posted by me - 26 Jan 2009 18:28

My understanding of the rules, is that the new womens section is meant to serve as a mechtiza between us. All in lines with trying to make/maintain an aura of kedushah that already is meant to exist between the men and women of our Holy Am Yisroel.

The women are NOT meant to post any explicit triggering details there, just as they were requested not to do so on the mixed boards.

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Re: Announcing the new WOMEN'S Forum
Posted by MW - 26 Jan 2009 21:19

I have an idea although I don't know if it's feasible. Guard, are you able to block access to or make the women's sections invisible to certain users? If yes, a user who feels threatened by the women's forum will ask for his access to be limited to the men's only.

As I write this, I realize it makes no sense because you don't have to be registered for access to the forum. I'm posting it anyway in case it leads to a better idea.

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