

Dealing with Taivas Before Marriage.

Attitude towards the issue:

1. Empowered or disempowered?

If you are overwhelmed, feel guilt or shame, feel it's too difficult, it takes too much energy and effort, if you make it over significant - it's a very hard issue to deal with.

If on the other hand you approach it as a test, a challenge, an opportunity - like a soldier preparing to defend their country, an athlete or mountain climber etc - then you'll have much more energy and resources to overcome and succeed.

Be excited by the challenge, not daunted by it.

2. Keep your eye on the prize!

What do you stand to gain from conquering your taivah?

- a) Immense self respect.
- b) Personal and spiritual growth.
- c) Connection to Hashem.
- d) A much better wife and marriage.

Remember, the opposite is true for failing the test.

Practical

1. Sur meh rah:

a) Stay away from temptations - don't watch/look at things that arouse desire, avoid places with women - gym, beach - go really early in the morning, parties and bars etc.

b) Control your mind (which is really the key to everything). Take this analogy. When someone goes surfing, they paddle out and then turn to face the beach, ready to catch a wave. Do they get on every wave that comes along? Absolutely not. Some are too small, some are too big, some are heading straight for the rocks. So what do they do when those waves come along? They don't repress, fight or ignore the waves; you can't do that. What they do is acknowledge the wave and then pull a turtle or duck roll. What this basically means is they are aware of the wave, have judged that it's not beneficial to get on it, so slip under the wave and let it wash over them. You must understand that thoughts are like waves. They come and then naturally move on, unless we jump on them and ride them. All we have to do is be conscious enough to choose which thought waves to ride and make significant, and which ones to let wash over us. There are three choices we can make as soon as we become aware of taiva-dikka thoughts. We can

- 1) choose to carry it on (ride the wave) - bad idea.
- 2) choose to fight it (judge it and ourselves, blame others, wish it wasn't there) - bad idea, just gives it strength and significance.
- 3) choose to be conscious enough to identify and acknowledge it and let it flow passed. (let the wave wash over us).

See this as a game and a test. Become a mental martial artist. You'll get better at it.

The Tanya (27) says that when a forbidden thought enters your mind, rather than getting upset, you should actually be very happy and excited because you now have the opportunity to fulfil the mitzvah from the Torah - do not follow after your heart and eyes! This gives Hashem immense nachas!

2. Aseh Tov

a) Positive affirmations: "I've got this! I'm a master! It's all for my wife!"

b) Involve yourself in good, healthy and holy things

- Tefillah, Torah learning, Mitzvahs, Chesed - volunteering/teaching, Tikkun HaKlali

- Sport, art, music, nature, writing, projects, life goals, meaningful friendships.

- Mikveh is essential for psychological and spiritual reasons.

At least before Shabbes and if you spill seed, but no good reason not to go every day.