

Shalom Bayis Newsletter

Hello,

I have included you in this shalom bayis newsletter (SBN) community because you have either purchased or expressed interest in one of my kuntreisim (Sameiach Tesamach for men or Chachmos Nashim for women), so I thought that you would like to be part of this. If not, please do go ahead and use the unsubscribe button! I certainly have no interest in filling your inbox with just another email to delete!

Ok, so for the topic of this first newsletter, I thought it would be an interesting twist of sorts to talk about how showing off is not always a bad thing. Especially in the context of marriage.

Rav Yaakov Kaminetzky and Rav Shnuer Kotler were once about to walk into a large banquet hall for a major event. Rav Shnuer said to Rav Yaakov, "Let's use the side entrance so as to minimize the number of people that will stand up for us and the amount of time that they will be standing because of us."

Rav Yaakov, though, said that, no, they should specifically use the front entrance so that everyone in the hall will stand up for them for the entire time that it will take for them to reach their dais table.

At first, Rav Shneur was awfully surprised, but Rav Yaakov immediately explained himself.

"Our wives are here. Throughout the year, they sacrifice tremendously for the sake of our learning and klal work. So much of our time, that could be otherwise spent with them, is taken by talmidim, petitioners, and askanim. For them to see the great honor that everyone will accord us makes it easier for them. It gives them a great feeling of satisfaction."

Ok, I wouldn't call that "showing off", per se, but it is in a way. Rav Yaakov insisted that they specifically use the main door so as to "show off" to their

wives how greatly respected and honored they are. It wasn't showing off for the sake of "tooting their own horns", but to give their wives the nachas.

There is a similar story about Rav Yechezkel Abramsky.

One time, Rav Moshe Aharon Stern went to speak with him about something. When Rav Stern arrived at the Abramsky home, the Rebbetzin told him he could take a seat and wait, for the Rav would be home any minute. Sure enough, Rav Abramsky soon walked in.

But he did not attend to his guest.

He first sat with his wife and told her about his morning. "I had to walk up such and such street which is a steep hill, but, baruch Hashem, I managed it alright. Then I met with Rav Yechezkel Sarna about trying to increase the ranks of the moetzes. Rav Sarna showed me great kavod..."

After he was finished speaking with his wife, Rav Abramsky attended to Rav Stern.

"My apologies for making you wait, but at least this way you got a lesson in how to properly treat one's wife. You see, my wife is home by herself all day while I am out either learning or dealing with klal matters. Perhaps my talk with her may have sounded mundane and petty, but that is what happened with me today. And me telling her about it is how she feels part of what I do."

In addition to the obvious points about first attending to your spouse and sharing your day with him/her, the part of this story that struck me the most is that Rav Abramsky included the detail about how the Rosh Yeshiva of Chevron, Rav Yechezkel Sarna, showed him great honor. Generally, that type of talk would be frowned upon, to say the least, as self-aggrandizing. Gaivah is not exactly a middah that we encourage in Yiddishkeit. Clearly, though, Rav Abramsky felt that it was important to share that point with his wife.

Think about it this way (for the men). As an example, imagine that you never ever got an aliyah in shul. It would be terrible, right? Well, then, make a point to share it with your wife when you do get an aliyah! After all, if she never hears about it, it may be, on a certain level, like you never getting an

aliyah!

And it's not as though this idea only applies from husband to wife.

Both spouses, if they have a healthy relationship, take great nachas in the achievements and esteem of their spouse. After all, they are as one, aren't they?

So if your neighbor asked you for your cholent recipe, or your students really enjoyed a class you gave, or your boss praised you for a job well done, or even it was your own mother expressing how appreciative she is of something you did or just who you are, go ahead and share that with your husband.

Because showing off is not always bad. Actually, sometimes it can be very good.

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Do you have a question you'd like to see addressed in a newsletter? A comment to share with the SBN community? Please do email it to me at kuntreisim@gmail.com.

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**Rabbi Yehoshua Berman**

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