

Still Shopping?

There are many quite complex situations taking place in the Lubavitch community now with regard to shidduchim. I am so happy to see that the issue has been addressed lately in the *N'shei Chabad Newsletter*, as whatever happens over the next few years is going to have a major impact on our future, to put it mildly.

We have more and more men approaching their thirties not married. True, we also have a large number of women approaching their thirties not married.

The difference is that the longer the females remain single, the less particular they get, and the longer the males remain single,

the more particular they get.

One simple reason for this is that the men can afford to get fussier and fussier with each passing year. After all, with each passing year, the pool of potential spouses for a man grows exponentially. For example, a 23-year-old man is considered a potential husband for those women aged 23 and younger, whereas a 30-year-old man has so many, many more potential mates to consider. He can still consider all the 20-year-olds, but he can also consider all the 24- to 30-year-olds.

On the other hand, assuming that we continue with the generally accepted pattern of women marrying men older than them, with each passing year, the women have fewer potential spouses to consider. It is highly unlikely that a 30-year-old female will get engaged to a 25-year-old male.

But there is more to it than that.

It is basic male biology to always be looking for more and for better. There are those who say that monogamy is not a natural state for a vibrant young male. It is natural that a male will have a bit of a hard time before he commits to a single female for the rest of his life. Traditionally, we in the frum community have dealt with this issue by encouraging our young men to enter committed relationships before they start shopping, because we know that once the shopping starts, it is hard to stop.

At the same time, the women are also doing what comes naturally to them – they are tuning in to their desire to create a home and a nest. So, with each passing year, a woman becomes more tolerant of imperfections in a potential mate.

(Everyone is doing what comes naturally to them. But, as frum Jews, we know

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that we are not always to do what comes naturally. We must channel our urges and do what is right. For example, I naturally like to sleep late and eat ice cream.)

And so, we have a situation where some older males feel like they are Achashverosh, accepting auditions from maidens who would be queen. It is a system that works, because the maidens get on line to audition.

There are “good bochurim” who have dated over a hundred girls, and have still not found “the right one.”

This is understandable, because (newsflash) nobody is perfect!

And so, we have young women internally beating themselves up as only young women can – if only I did not have a hook nose, or did not have stringy hair, or was five pounds thinner, or had smaller feet, or earned more money, or earned less money, or was funnier...

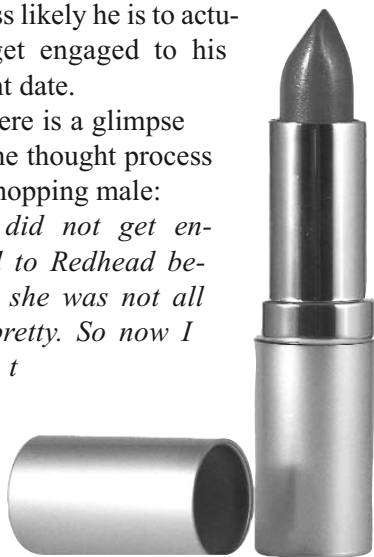
(Ironically, a lot of the attributes that are considered big negatives for females are perfectly acceptable attributes for the males. It is perfectly okay for a male to be balding, or have a paunch, or be a bookworm. But G-d forbid that a female should possess any of those attributes!)

So here is the theory:

The longer a man dates, the less likely he is to actually get engaged to his current date.

Here is a glimpse into the thought process of a shopping male:

I did not get engaged to Redhead because she was not all that pretty. So now I
j u s t
met



Blondie, and yes, she is pretty, but her family is such a pain. How can I get engaged to a girl with such a family? If I am going to go for the family that is a pain, I might as well go for Curlyhead – her family is rich so she is probably high-need, but at least they have yichus, so it's worth it. But Curlyhead is chubby, and her mother is obese. I certainly do not want my wife to look like that in twenty years. Maybe I should have gone for the girl from California, whatever her name was – but she seemed so shallow. I cannot tolerate shallow. Yes, I myself am rather deep, and I need depth in a mate, like that one with the gap between her front teeth. If only her parents had gotten her braces, that one

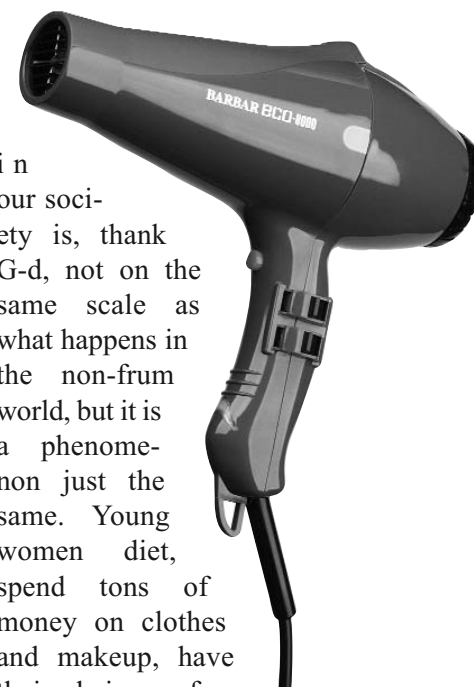
might have gone somewhere...

After all, the shopping male is getting multiple offers daily, why rush into anything? The next one may just be better.

Either consciously or unconsciously, the shopping male is aware that the females have ticking biological clocks, which makes them anxious to please him, while he can afford to bide his time.

This phenomenon is very common in the non-frum world, but it is new in the frum world (on such a large scale).

In the non-frum world, we have young women doing all kinds of things that they do not feel comfortable with in order to win the favor of the shopping males, because they feel they have no choice. They know if they will not please the shopping male, he will move on. What is currently happening



in our society is, thank G-d, not on the same scale as what happens in the non-frum world, but it is a phenomenon just the same. Young women diet, spend tons of money on clothes and makeup, have their hair professionally done for dates, bend themselves into pretzels trying to be whatever the guy wants, and for what? To be rejected or, worse,

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ignored.

I was recently involved with a young woman who had still not received a response from a male whom she had dated the week before. To quote the shadchan's words to the girl's mother: “You and your daughter are so much more invested in this than he is in your daughter. He has dated many girls and he will probably date many more girls. There is no point in pressuring him for an answer. If you pressure him, the answer is for sure no.”

This was a young man who had been described by the shadchan as a gentleman – he always buys his dates expensive drinks and rents a nice car and holds the door for his date and says please and thank you. Yes, those are gentlemanly behaviors that we value because we assume that they are indicators of thoughtfulness on a deeper

level as well. But, in our current age, they are not always good indicators.

As a public service to the young women of Lubavitch and their parents, I am going to help you spot the shopping males so that you can avoid heartache and save yourself time and money, not to mention anguish.

This list of helpful hints is in no way complete, it is just what I can think of right now, based on my experience.

Hint #1: The shopping male and his representatives do not bother with Dor Yeshorim numbers. Why waste time when it is probably not going to work out anyway?

Hint #2: The shopping male does not travel to meet a potential mate. It is the female who is auditioning before him, remember? Why should he travel? Let the female travel to him, or if they both happen to be in the same city at the same time, some time in the vague future, they can meet then.

Hint #3: The shopping male does



not do research. If she is pretty and has "curb appeal," he will do research then.

Hint #4: The shopping male is in no rush to get back to the girl or her representative after the date. Whereas in the normal shidduch world it is considered proper etiquette for both sides to communicate their reactions some time the next morning, the shopping male may take a week or longer to communicate his reaction.

Imagine, if all females (and their

families) would stop tolerating this rude and arrogant behavior from the males, it might just stop!

It is not a new concept that it is up to the females of a community to provide standards that males need to live up to. I know that it is not easy, especially with so many older single women wanting to start families of their own, but it is time to expose the shameful behavior of the shopping male. ■

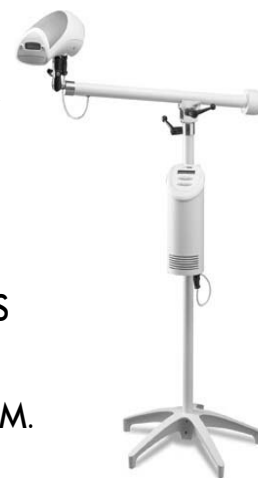
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