

## Life As A Happy Single Person

By Devora Jaye

I bought couches. They are beige, with button detail on the sides and dark wood trim. I bought a variety of pillows to go on them, chocolate brown and light blue—silk, suede and cotton. I rearranged the living room furniture (what there was of it) to accommodate my new purchases. It looked great. Friends came over to admire my new set-up. They all oohed and ahhed. Then one of them said, “What are you buying couches for? You’re still single.”

I thought of my china (that I had “borrowed” from my mom), my silverware, my glass goblets a friend had given me, my bookcases, my beautiful hand-blown red glass bowl. Why did I have any of it? I looked at my friend. “I’m still a person,” I reminded him. “I still want to sit down on something.”

As I have moved apartments, acquired new furniture and added and thrown away pieces, I have always strived to make my home as nice as possible. Yes, I am single, but who says that means I can’t have a set of Cutco knives, or a fancy headboard or couches? The home that I create as a single person is a home to others, and will one day hopefully propel me into a home as a not-

single person. But why should my single status mean that I shouldn’t try to be happy in my current home?

I get it a lot, the “why-do-you-have-nice-things-when-you-are-single” question. Well, I have a question, too. Why does being single mean I must only use paper plates and get my furniture from the garbage pile on the side of the street? Since when does being single mean that I am restricted to using other people’s trash to furnish my own living space?

A few years ago, while we were both living in New York, my sister got engaged. I naturally began organizing a bridal shower with two of her friends. As the date of the event drew closer, one of the co-hosts e-mailed me on behalf of herself and the other host. “Being that we are both married, we have the space and utensils to really host,” she wrote. “I really don’t see a reason why single people can’t get on the train and come downtown.” So, since she was married, and only she and the other host lived downtown, the twenty or so single guests (including the bride) should shlep for forty-five minutes because ... we were single? What’s more, did she really think that because she was married she therefore had a better apartment and better serving pieces than I? I have a three-tiered server and a trifle bowl, too. And I bet mine are nicer.

There is a lot of pressure to get married in the Orthodox world. With

two married sisters, I often feel it. I feel the pressure when well-meaning friends of my parents ask me if I have tried Frumster, tell me I “have to meet” their neighbor’s cousin and gently suggest that I wear more lipstick. I feel it every week, when I need to come up with Shabbat plans so I don’t eat alone. I felt it last year when I decided to move from New York, the “Jewish dating capital of the world,” to Atlanta, where there is pretty much no dating life.

**Why does being single mean I must only use paper plates and get my furniture from the garbage pile on the side of the street?**

My friends thought I was crazy for moving; my parents were hesitant. But I was tired of the scene; I was bored of going to Starbucks and Times Square and making small talk. I wanted to go someplace where I felt like I could make a difference, where I was not stressed out all the time about my next date. In a lot of ways, I should be more anxious now that I am in a social wasteland. Maybe the pressure is even greater now—being on my own—one of a handful of single people in a city of young couples and families.

It’s hard to be single in a Jewish community; it’s hard to feel like I am

---

*Devora Jaye moved to Atlanta in January 2007 to work as the regional coordinator for NCSY Southern Region. She is involved in different fundraising activities for non-profit organizations across the country and is currently writing a cookbook. Devora is a member of the Women’s Writers Workshop in Atlanta.*

**Impressive!**  
No one impresses the Jewish Market like the **JEWISH PRESS**

**MORE IMPRESSIONS!**

- Reaching the World's largest Jewish Market of its kind!
- The Jewish Press is the independent Jewish periodical with more single copy sales on newsstands than all other Jewish newspapers combined!
- Sold in all major Jewish Population centers in the USA, Canada, Israel and England.
- Read the weekly **Queens and Long Island Section** to stay informed about community news and events.

**Impressing readers with our cutting edge, behind the scenes editorial!**

- We provide first hand information on what's new in Kosher products - even before you find them on the shelf!
- We cover the world from a Jewish perspective - we give you information secular papers don't dare print.
- We carry articles written by erudite scholars on timely Torah thoughts.

**Reaching the World's Largest Jewish Market.**

**No Jewish home should be without it**

**JEWISH PRESS**  
THE LARGEST PERIODICAL AND QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

On newsstands & by subscription Telephone:  
718-330-1100 Fax: 718-330-1110  
Out of New York State: 1-800-992-1600  
www.thejewishpress.com

part of it when I don't have kids or a husband with whom to socialize after shul. But I'm happy where I am. I make a beautiful Shabbat table when I invite guests for meals. I enjoy giving the *kibbud* of making Kiddush and *Hamotzei* to different visitors. I will not stop cooking gourmet food or baking homemade challah. I will not make my Shabbat less enjoyable just because I am single. I will make myself part of a community, single or not. I am not bitter. I do not begrudge my friends' happiness when they get engaged and married—I'm just waiting patiently for my own turn, when I can move my new beige couches and my trifle bowl into an apartment with my spouse.

Of course I want to get married (know anyone?), but why be miserable in the meantime? There are some great things about being single. Sale on AirTran? Go to New York for the weekend. Want to bake apple pie in the middle of the night? There's no one I might wake up when chopping and mixing. People think nothing of calling me in the middle of the night to ask for advice. (Actually, that's not a positive!) I can stay up all night cooking gourmet meals, watching movies or reading *Harry Potter*. And sometimes there is no greater feeling than stretching out on my couch for an entire day, reading a magazine and watching the rain. Yes, there are times when I'd love some company. But there is something great about being alone and being okay with it. Especially if I'm on my couch. **JA**

A new collection of  
*stylish*  
women's clothing

**funkyFRUM.COM**