

yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 29 Jun 2009 19:47

(any questions , insights & suggestions about this thread,feel free to email me at taryaga@gmail.com)

There are many reasons we need to be where we are and who we are,most are unknown.Why do we even have to be in a situation or have in our soul so much darkness and a pull toward self-destructing negative behaviors?

I saw once an amazing thought in a sefer.Moshe Rabeinu came from a union that after the Torah was given would have deemed him a mamzer(parents being an aunt & nephew).He could not boast of his lineage.This is one reason that let him be the greatest Anov that ever lived.

We who have to deal with the stuff that's in us that we would rather not have in the first place-this pain and shame over the course of time -makes us realize that even when we b'ezras Hashem pull out of the addictions-we will never look at another Yid that is struggling with this in a negative way

We catch a Yid looking where he shouldn't be looking and our hearts are full of compassion.We will daven for him,treat him with respect,gently try to get him out of it.We would never disgrace him-not even in our hearts-because we were there.We know what it's like.In our eyes he is a potential tzaddik.

This is surely one reason Hashem gave us this urge towards baseness with all it's shades of ugliness.Yes you are special-like every Yid is-but never ever judge harshly My son or daughter that is struggling-because I love him or her - he or she is part of Klall Yisroel.Just as indispensable as you are.

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 03 Jun 2011 16:46

Endings and Beginnings

by Laurel D Rund

Endings and Beginnings

When I gaze at a sunset, it fills me with awe.

Watching the orange glow of the sun recede,
it takes me to a place of serenity and optimism.

As sundown arrives, I cannot help but
stand still, be quiet and bear witness.

Nature's golden moments and breath-taking beauty
offer the gift of tranquility.

A sunset brings with it the soft whisper of life's possibilities - the promise of a new day!

When this magnificent source of light
recedes behind the clouds far into the horizon,
and daylight starts to dim,
I know with certainty that life always

renews itself with Endings and Beginnings

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 06 Jun 2011 17:31

Aish Article

Falling in love is the easy part. Here's how to keep your love thriving.

by Slovie Jungreis-Wolff

June is here and wedding music is in the air. As we share in ceremonies and watch couples embark on their life together, many tears are shed. I often wonder if perhaps some of us are crying for lost dreams of promised love as we recall our own chuppah moments.

Marriages that we thought would last forever somehow did not. And those that remain are often lacking.

Marriage takes hard work. Falling in love is the easy part; keeping the love alive is the challenge. Here are the five best ways to keep your love thriving.

1. BECOME A POSITIVE PERSON

Who wants to live with a miserable, negative spouse? It is frustrating to share life with one who always sees the downside. Sour faces and moodiness destroy the happy feeling that makes home a haven.

You can create joy by developing a positive eye and attitude. Begin by giving a smile to those you love, even if you don't feel like it. I know this sounds small but you cannot imagine the impact your face has on others. Our sages teach us that greater than the white of milk is the nourishment we give from the white of teeth as we smile.

Love flourishes in a positive atmosphere. So try to stop complaining and see the good. You'll find that your loved one reflects your new attitude and soon smiles right back at you.

2. NEVER SPEAK IN ANGER

If you feel the rage that means it is NOT the time to speak about what's bothering you. When we speak in anger, our emotions take over. We say things we don't mean and mean things we don't say. We raise our voices and lose control. I have met too many couples who were seething and uttered words they came to painfully regret.

"That's it. I'm outta here!" "I wish I'd never married you; what a mistake!" "Maybe we should just get a divorce!"

Though we try to explain ourselves later, ("I didn't really mean it, I was just in a bad mood.") the damage was done and deep wounds remain.

3. BE A GIVER

'Ahavah' is the Hebrew word for love. It comes from the word 'hav', which means to give. The more we give, the more we love.

Too often we mistakenly believe that the more we get, the more we will come to love.

We assume that it is the gorgeous diamond ring, the expensive watch, or the latest tech toy we receive from our beloved that makes us feel special and adored. Sure it's nice to get gifts. But that's not what makes love last. It only feeds our desire to want more. We become takers instead of givers. We await the next gift; anticipate the 'next thing' that will make us happy. And as soon as we feel that we are not getting enough we become unhappy. Our 'gimme more' love begins to dim.

Make your love grow by investing in your relationship.

Don't let a day pass without giving of yourself as you initiate love. Giving does not have to mean expensive. Extend your hand as you offer an encouraging word, prepare a favorite dish, or send a loving text 'just because'. Some people save their rumpled look for their spouse but give their best to everyone else. What a mistake! Take a moment, brush your hair, take off that stained t-shirt and put yourself together just like you used to when you first met. Show your loved one that you still care.

4. SEE THE WHOLE PERSON

It's easy to get caught up in what annoys us and drives us mad.

"Why can't he ever pick up after himself?"

"Why can't she ever be on time?"

We are forgiving of ourselves when we mess up. We brush over our flaws and decide that overall, we are a pretty good person. Why not do the same with our spouse?

Think of three good qualities that you can find in your loved one. (If you can't think of three, then you know where your homework lies.) The next time you find yourself concentrating on all those annoying habits, change gear. Fill your mind with the good qualities that make this person

special. Don't limit your sight to irritants or you will end up missing out on all the blessings.

5. STOP COMPARING

"How come they always get to go on vacation together?"

"Why does her husband buy her jewelry for their anniversary?"

"Why does his wife prepare gourmet dinners for him and look what I get every night?"

There is no poison like the poison of comparing lives. Others seem better off, more in love, happier, and having a better time together. The truth is you never know what is going on behind closed doors. Besides, maybe he buys her jewelry but she wishes he would spend more time with her and the kids, the way your husband does. And perhaps she does prepare gourmet meals but all he wants is an easy, no stressed dinner and good conversation, the way your wife does.

Comparing is never healthy. It eats away at our happiness and strips us of appreciation for that which we have. We become so busy looking at the lives of others we neglect to see all that we must be grateful for. As we concentrate on those around us we believe that we are lacking. We grow resentful without realizing why and feel an undercurrent of unhappiness.

If I am able to create a life filled with cherished moments then even the most difficult days become doable because I have my best friend besides me. Together we can build. Together we can overcome. Hold onto your blessings and bring the magic of peace into your home.

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 06 Jun 2011 19:35

A powerful insight from Rav Kook

Shavuot: Seeing Sound

"And all the people saw the sounds ..." (Ex. 20:15).

The Midrash calls our attention to an amazing aspect of the revelation at Sinai: the Jewish people were able to see what is normally only heard. What does this mean?

Standing near the Source

At their source, sound and sight are united. Only in our limited, physical world, in this alma deperuda (disjointed world), are these phenomena disconnected and detached. It is similar to our perception of lightning and thunder, which become increasingly separated from one another as the observer is more distanced from the source.

If we are bound and limited to the present, if we can only perceive the universe through the viewpoint of the temporal and the material, then we will always be aware of the divide between sight and sound. The prophetic vision at Mount Sinai, however, granted the people a unique perspective, as if they were standing near the source of Creation. From that vantage point, they were able to witness the underlying unity of the universe. They were able to see sounds and hear sights. God's revelation at Sinai was registered by all their senses simultaneously, as a single, undivided perception.

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 06 Jun 2011 20:34

another classic Rav Kook

Practical Steps towards Ahavat Chinam

In his magnum opus Orot HaKodesh, Rav Kook gave practical advice on how to achieve this love.

Love for the Jewish people does not start from the heart, but from the head. **To truly love and understand the Jewish people — each individual Jew and the nation as a whole — requires a wisdom that is both insightful and multifaceted.** This intellectual inquiry is an important discipline of Torah study.

Loving others does not mean indifference to baseness and moral decline. Our goal is to awaken knowledge and morality, integrity and refinement; to clearly mark the purpose of life, its purity and holiness. Even our acts of loving-kindness should be based on a hidden Gevurah, an inner outrage at the world's — and thus our own — spiritual failures.

If we take note of others' positive traits, we will come to love them with an inner affection. **This is not a form of insincere flattery, nor does it mean white-washing their faults and foibles. But by concentrating on their positive characteristics — and every person has a good side — the negative aspects become less significant.**

This method provides an additional benefit. The Sages cautioned against joining with the wicked and exposing oneself to their negative influences. **But if we connect to their positive traits, then this connection will not endanger our own moral and spiritual purity.**

We can attain a high level of love for Israel by deepening our awareness of the inner ties that bind together all the souls of the Jewish people, throughout all the generations. In the following revealing passage, Rav Kook expressed his own profound sense of connection with and love for every Jewish soul:

"Listen to me, my people! I speak to you from my soul, from within my innermost soul. I call out

to you from the living connection by which I am bound to all of you, and by which all of you are bound to me. I feel this more deeply than any other feeling:

"That only you — all of you, all of your souls, throughout all of your generations — you alone are the meaning of my life. In you I live. In the aggregation of all of you, my life has that content that is called 'life.' Without you, I have nothing. All hopes, all aspirations, all purpose in life, all that I find inside myself — these are only when I am with you. I need to connect with all of your souls. I must love you with a boundless love....

"Each one of you, each individual soul from the aggregation of all of you, **is a great spark from the torch of infinite light which enlightens my existence.** You give meaning to life and work, to Torah and prayer, to song and hope. It is through the conduit of your being that I sense everything and love everything."

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 07 Jun 2011 03:20

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 07 Jun 2011 18:14

The Story by Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky

Yesterday, my dear friend, Shloime Dachs, related this story to me: Rav Avraham Yaakov HaKohen Pam, of blessed memory, was a beloved Rosh Yeshiva of Mesivta Torah Vodaath. One of his last missions the last decade before he passed away in August 2001, was to establish Shuvu, a network of Yeshivot Israel, to help educate Russian immigrants about Torah and return them to their glorious roots.

Together with trusted students, he worked relentlessly on behalf of Shuvu, helping it grow into a major force in Jewish education in the State of Israel. Almost a decade after he had established Shuvu, Rav Pam fell very ill. That did not deter him for exerting every effort on behalf of Shuvu. In fact, in July 2010, the summer before Rav Pam passed away, his body racked with cancer, and his health diminished by both the plague and the chemotherapy and radiation that were trying to stop it, he pledged to personally attend the summer parlor meeting on behalf of Shuvu.

The word was out in full force, and posters were plastered all over the streets of the Flatbush and Boro Park sections of Brooklyn with a picture of the frail and weary Rav Pam, his ubiquitous smile enjoining others to join the great work of Shuvu.

Clearly the organizers were sending a powerful message, "Rav Pam, despite his critical health, was going to attend the meeting, shouldn't you?"

Seeing Rav Pam's picture all over the streets surely tugged at the heartstrings and even purse strings of many admirers, but there was one person who felt that something was wrong. Mrs. Pam.

The Rebbetzin understood that sometimes her husband had to be exploited for the sake of the important work of Shuvu, but she felt it was totally improper to staple signs illegally to lampposts and even worse, neighbors' trees. She decided that she would at least take care of her own block and apologize to her neighbor, a black family, whose beautiful tree was "defaced" with a poster of her ailing husband.

As she entered, the man said, "I really don't mind your husband's picture on the tree. In fact, please step into the dining room."

"We all know your husband is a saint. There is not a day that he does not greet us so warmly. His kindness and gentleness is such a reminder to our family that we put his picture in our own living quarters. Surely his picture on my tree is an honor, not an insult!"

Posted by yechidah - 16 Jun 2011 18:29

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 16 Jun 2011 20:45

From Rav Kook

"And [the spies] began to speak badly about the land that they had explored." (Num. 13:32)

Shortly after the end of World War II, at a Shabbat table in Jerusalem, the discussion turned to the deplorable phenomenon of visitors who tour the land of Israel and then return home disparaging the country. 'These tourists complain about the heat, the poverty, the backwardness, the political situation — and discourage other Jews from moving here,' lamented one of those present.

The room became quiet. Rabbi Tzvi Yehudah Kook, son of Rav Avraham Yitzchak Kook, the first chief rabbi, responded by relating the following parable.

The Failed Match

There was once a wealthy man who desired to marry a certain young lady. She was the most beautiful girl in town, and was blessed with many talents and a truly refined character. Since her family was not well-off, they were eager about the possible match with the wealthy man.

The young woman, however, was not interested in the match. Rich or not, the young man was coarse and ill-mannered. She refused to meet with him.

The father, anxious that his daughter should get married, pressured her to meet with the young

man. 'After all, one meeting doesn't obligate you to marry him!' To please her father, the young woman agreed.

The following Shabbat, the fellow arrived at the house as arranged. Shortly afterwards, the girl made her entrance: her hair uncombed, wearing a crumpled, worn dress and shabby house slippers. Appalled at her disheveled appearance, it did not take long before the young man excused himself and made a hurried exit.

'What everyone says about this girl — it's not true,' exclaimed the astonished young man to his friends. 'She's a hideous old hag!'

Rabbi Tzvi Yehudah then explained his parable. Superficially, it would appear that the young fellow had rejected the young woman. But in truth, she who had rejected him.

So too, the Land of Israel does not reveal her beauty to all who visit. Not everyone is worthy enough to merit seeing the unique qualities and special holiness of Eretz Yisrael. It may appear as if the dissatisfied visitors are the ones who reject the Land of Israel. But in fact, it is the Land that rejects them.

Seeing the Goodness of Jerusalem

Rabbi Tzvi Yehudah's response was most appropriate for the son of Rav Avraham Yitzchak Kook. When visitors from outside of Israel would come to the chief rabbi for a blessing, Rav Kook (the father) would quote from Psalms 128:5, "May God bless you from Zion." And what exactly is this 'blessing from Zion'? The blessing is described in the continuation of the verse: "And may you see the goodness of Jerusalem."

Rav Kook would then note: it does not say that one should merit seeing Jerusalem, but that one should merit seeing "the goodness of Jerusalem." Many people visit Jerusalem, but not all merit seeing the goodness hidden in the holy city.

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 21 Jun 2011 20:41

SIN

S-self

I-inflicted

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(Rabbi Laibl Wolf)

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 22 Jun 2011 15:36

#3-korach

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 22 Jun 2011 16:06

IF YOU DESIRE by Rav Kook

If you desire, human being, look at the light of God's Presence in everything.

Look at the Eden of spiritual life, at how it blazes into each corner and crevice of life, spiritual and of this world, right before your eyes of flesh and your eyes of soul.

Gaze at the wonders of creation, at their divine life-not like some dim phenomenon that is placed before your eyes from afar.

But know the reality in which you live.

Know yourself and your world.

Know the thoughts of your heart, and of all who speak and think.

Find the source of life inside you, higher than you, around you. [Find] the beautiful ones alive in this generation in whose midst you are immersed.

The love within you: lift it up to its mighty root, to its beauty of Eden.

Send it spreading out to the entire flood of the soul of the Life of worlds, Whose light is reduced only by incapable human expression.

Gaze at the lights, at what they contain.

Do not let the Names, phrases and letters swallow up your soul.

They have been given over to you.

You have not been given over to them.

Rise up.

Rise up, for you have the power.

You have wings of the spirit, wings of powerful eagles.

Do not deny them, or they will deny you.

Seek them, and you will find them instantly.

Orot Hakodesh I, pp. 83-84

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 23 Jun 2011 19:57

“Always put off until tomorrow what you shouldn't do at all.”

(Morris Mandel)

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by Serene smile - 24 Jun 2011 00:26

Great!

("I've had a horrible life; most of which never even occurred"- mark twain. Sorry I couldn't resist)

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 28 Jun 2011 15:45

Part of Aish Article

Dear Emuna,

What do you do if you marry a wonderful man and then find out he does not desire any physical intimacy?

-- Confused

Dear Confused,

This is such a serious and private issue that it is impossible to adequately address it in this forum. But because I have received a number of similar letters recently, I will just make some general statements.

Among your husband's obligations to you are conjugal rights (it's right there in the ketuba, the marriage contract). The Torah considers that to be a man's responsibility. While every marriage

and every relationship is different, **a marriage without physical intimacy is unlikely to survive, let alone thrive.** We call it intimacy not just to use more appropriate language but because it is an accurate description. It is a deep and profound way for a couple to connect and if it is missing from the marriage, then the union itself is **dramatically limited.**

Every woman wants to feel attractive and needs to feel that her husband in particular desires her. I'm concerned that your sense of self-esteem will be harmed if this is an ongoing lack. Or that you will be tempted, God forbid, to look for **this validation elsewhere.**

You and your husband need to sit down with a competent therapist to discuss and understand this issue and its implications. Your marriage is at risk, and you need to take action to save it. Now.

-- Emuna

Dear Emuna,

My best friend's husband is so good to her. He brings her flowers every week, helps out around the house and is one of those fathers who is always down on the floor playing with the kids. He looks at her with such love and affection that whenever we go out together I feel jealous. And I feel resentful that my husband doesn't behave in a similar fashion. What should I do about it?

-- BFF

Dear BFF,

Jewish tradition gives us interesting guidance here. In the first place, it discourages socializing with other couples. I know this may sound odd and archaic but hear me out. One reason for this is the risk of immorality. **You may pooh-pooh the thought and find it absurd or overly cautious but if you think about it, you will discover that you know of more than one situation where marriages broke up because of his or her “best friend.”** The second reason to limit this social contact is because of the exact situation you describe. We get jealous. He’s more generous. She’s more attractive. He’s more accomplished. She’s more thoughtful. He’s more solicitous. She’s a better cook. **All of the sudden, our partner seems inadequate. Comparisons like this are dangerous and damaging.** We should avoid situations where they seem inevitable.

Additionally, you need to remind yourself that no marriages – and no husbands – are alike. Everyone has their unique strengths and weaknesses. **You’re only seeing his best sides and not what goes on behind closed doors.** The secret is to stop focusing on the good in someone else’s husband and start focusing on the good in yours.

--Emuna

Dear Emuna,

I have three married sons and two married daughters. None of us live in the same city and staying in touch seems like a full-time job. Just speaking to each of my children and in-law children every day seems to take so much time. I’m feeling frazzled but trying to be a good mother and mother-in-law.

Conscientious

Dear Conscientious,

I think you should relax and cut back on the calls. My guess is that your daughters-in-law really don't want to speak to you every day – no matter how wonderful and non-interfering you are! Even your daughters may want a little less contact. I mean, who has that much to say? Even if they really like you! When your children get married, it's best to let them call the shots, and to let their spouses be in control of their relationship with you. When they want to speak, they know your number. It's better not to be too intrusive, not to make yourself a burden to them.

Just "chill" (as my kids constantly say) and back off. The result will probably be more frequent calls – and more meaningful ones, not to mention less risk of saying the wrong thing! Relinquish control; you'll actually end up with a better relationship, not a worse one.

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