

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 the.guard - 30 Aug 2009 20:02

Beautiful!

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by habib613 - 30 Aug 2009 21:00

wow :o

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by chl - 31 Aug 2009 09:53

bs"d

Dear Yechida,

i just caught up on 2 or so pages of your thread and you made me feel so good, baruch
HaSHem! And i was feeling LOUSY sheba LOUSY!!!

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 31 Aug 2009 13:08

Thank you dear friends.

Your divrei chizzuk mean alot to me.

Never think I don't appreciate the kind words you say

Hatzlacha & Bracha

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 31 Aug 2009 16:47

Dear friends,

Though I feel this is an important post, for those of you who especially in Elul would only look into seforim and nothing else, then continue to do so, and skip this for another time.

There is a powerful book written for teenagers called "Speak" by Laurie Halse Anderson.

This book was a winner of 8 state book awards and a finalist for 11.

It became required reading in many schools. It won't be in yeshiva because of the subject matter.

It deserved every single award it got-and more.

It seems like it's a book about one subject only, but you read deeper you realize that it addresses a lot of issues that young people go through in life. It's fictional but it hits home

It's about a girl named Melinda Sordino who busts an end-of-summer party by calling the cops, so she becomes an outcast because her old friends won't talk to her, and people she doesn't know hate her from a distance because of what she did.

What really happened was that she was molested at this party and that's why she called the cops, but when they came, she couldn't get herself to talk about it. And this book goes through the next school year, how she lived as an outcast and reject, how she is all alone, how she tries to block out of her head what happened at this summer party that she busted, how she is silent though she needs to speak and let it come out, and she feels filthy, and unworthy of anything.

Her school works deteriorates, cuts school often. The only subject she does well in is art. And she speaks through her artwork.

Her art teacher gives her encouragement.

H gives her a car ride and this is part of the conversation.

"I'm seeing a lot of growth in your work. You are learning more than you know."

She responds "I don't know anything. My trees suck"

He answers her "Don't be so hard on yourself. Art is about making mistakes and learning from them"

And the end of the car ride she thanks him. He says "Don't mention it...You're a good kid. I think you have a lot to say. I'd like to hear it"

A few pages later she talks about how seeds get planted. Later this reflection helps her heal. she didn't study much that year. but this, "I study"

This is what she writes (could have come straight out of a shiur by Rav Avidgor Miller ztl. That's where I heard this concept first.)

How seeds get planted: This is actually cool. Some plants spit their seeds into the wind. Others make seeds yummy enough for birds to eat, so they get pooped out on passing cars (this last sentence I did not hear from Rav Avigdor). Plants make way more seeds than they need, because they know that life is not perfect and all the seeds won't make it. Kind of smart, when you think about it.

What seeds need to germinate: Seeds are inefficient. If the seed is planted too deep, it doesn't warm up at the right time. Plant it too close to the surface and a crow eats it. Too much rain and the seed molds, Not enough rain and it never gets started. Even if it does manage to sprout, it can be choked by weeds, rooted up by a dog, smashed by a soccer ball or asphyxiated by car exhaust

It's amazing anything survives.

She continues there to explain how plants grow.

Then, towards the end of the book she is healing and almost ready to talk, almost ready to open up, she goes to this isolated calm place where there is this tree trunk

"I think about lying down. No, that would not do. I crouch by the trunk, my fingers stroking the bark, seeking a Braille code, a clue, a message on how to come back to life after my long undersnow dormancy. I have survived. I am here. Confused, screwed up, but here. So how can I find my way? Is there a chain saw of the soul, an axe I can take to my memories or fears? I dig my fingers into the dirt and squeeze. A small, clean part of me waits to warm and burst through the surface. Some quite Melinda girl I haven't seen in months. That is the seed I will care for."

I will conclude with the last page of this book. I have to change one word only and you will understand why I did so.

Why am I putting this story here? There will be those that are here that will read this and

understand why. And I truly believe that it will help greatly to some who are here. my brothers and sisters here who have tried to speak but have not spoken at all-a silent suffering that should no longer be silent. and I do not just mean silence in the face of molestation as in this story. I mean silence in face of many things in which silence is deadly.

Let me make this clear, This silence need not be broken on this forum. Perhaps it's best that it shouldn't be broken here. But, clearly, some of us here must daven for this, and then find the right person or people to which certain things must be discussed because they must be. You really have no other choice .put too much in a container that can not hold it, and it will bust

This last scene takes place the last hours of her school year in her Art class.

"My tree needs something. I walk over to the desk and take a piece of brown paper and a finger of chalk. Mr. Freeman talks about art galleries and I practice birds-little dashes of color on paper. It's awkward with the bandage on my hand, but I keep trying. I draw them without thinking-flight, flight, feather ,wing. Water drips on the paper and the birds bloom in light, their feathers expanding promise.

IT happened. There is no avoiding it, no forgetting. No running away or flying, or burying ,or hiding .Andy Evans molested me in August when I was drunk and too young to know what was happening. It wasn't my fault. He hurt me. It wasn't my fault. And I'm not going to let it kill me. I can grow.

I look at my homely sketch. It doesn't need anything. Even through the river in my eyes I can see that. It isn't perfect and that makes it just right.

The last bell rings. Mr Freeman comes to my table.

Mr Freeman : "Time's up Melinda. Are you ready?"

I hand over the picture. He takes it in his hand and studies it. I sniff again and wipe my eyes on my arm, The bruises are vivid, but will fade.

Mr Freeman: "No crying in my studio. It ruins the supplies. Salt, you know , saline. Etches like acid" He sits on the stool next to me and hands back my tree. "You get an A+. You worked hard at this." He hands me a box of tissues. "You have been through a lot, haven't you?"

The tears dissolve the last block of ice in my throat. I feel the frozen stillness melt down the inside of me, dripping shards of ice that vanish in a puddle of sunlight on the stained floor. Words float up.

Me: "Let me tell you about it"

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by chl - 31 Aug 2009 17:03

bs"d

wow, that sounds like an awesome book!

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 01 Sep 2009 19:54

The Sin of Omission by Margaret E Sangster

It isn't the thing you do, dear,

It's the thing you leave undone

That gives you a bit of a heartache

At the getting of the sun.

The tender word forgotten,

The letter you did not write,

The flowers you did not send, dear,

Are your haunting ghosts at night

The stone you might have lifted

Out of a brother's way;

The bit of heartsome counsel

You were hurried too much to say;

The loving touch of the hand, dear,

The gentle winning tone

Which you had no time nor thought of

With trouble enough of your own.

Those little acts of kindness

So easily out of mind,

Those chances to be angels

Which we poor mortals find-

They come in night and silence,

Each sad, reproachful wraith,

When hope is faint and flagging,

And a chill has fallen on faith

For life is all too short, dear,
And sorrow is all too great,
To suffer our slow compassion
That tarries until too late;
And it isn't the thing you do, dear,
It's the thing you leave undone
Which gives you a bit of heartache
At the setting of the sun.

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Re: yechida's reflections
Posted by yechidah - 02 Sep 2009 12:55

I'm in middle of the 2nd part of the tomar devorah.It's hard for me to write this one.please daven
that it comes out right.

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Re: yechida's reflections
Posted by yechidah - 02 Sep 2009 16:22

With Noora's permission,I post this PM

Thank you Noora

your kind words mean alot to me.

Hashem took pity on me and and the times that I was shaky in life He always shoved me up the hill.

I have no zechusim.and I know that I didn't deserve it.It came from Hashem and His Endless Rachmonus on me.

I was about 17 when I first heard a tape from Rav Avigdor Miller.and that caused me to listen to hundreds of his tapes.

I was not close to him.

But once I wrote him a letter and he answered as follows (I still have it in my wallet)

"Kovod Yedidi,N'Y"

"Ein lecho Mah Lidoeg"(ps this means don't worry)

You are doing what is right.Continue learning whenever possible,and you can acheive everything.

Hashem Yatzliach es kol Derochecha BaChaim

"Mokeercha"(mem,vov,kuf,vav,reish,chaf)

A.M(actually aleph,mem)

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 02 Sep 2009 19:50

In honor of Mom, may she be healthy and well.

(Hashem always helps. I did not think I would be able to write this one .and now after writing it I see that I have an added appreciation of Sefer Tehillim, and for that I thank you). .

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Yoshuv Yerachameinu (Part 2)

Dear Friends,

Let us continue with the holy words of the Tomer Devorah.

We left off last time with the point of the Hai, with no floor, open to evil underneath, and who ever wants to fall into evil, and leave the world of good, there are many ways in which to fall into it, many bad situations that a person can find himself in.

But then comes the concept of Teshuva in this world, the Teshuva within the Hai itself. The Hai is not like a Ches that is closed. The Hai has a little opening toward the top of left leg so that one who does tshuva could squeeze through that small opening back into the Hai.

“Vhee Posuach L’malah, Sheim Yoshuv Yekabluhu” which means that the Hai is open from above, so that when a person repents, he will be accepted.

The Chazal ask, why does the baal teshuva need to squeeze himself into that small opening of the Hai ? If he fell down that NO FLOOR of the Hai on the bottom, why doesn’t he just climb

back that way, from the opening that he originally fell from. After all, isn't that a much wider opening ?So wide that he should have the equal opportunity to climb up that wider way, but no ,he can't do this ,he has to climb up the outside of the Hai, then squeeze into that little opening on top.

Why does he need to do this, not fair!! He fell out the easy way (NO FLOOR BOTTOM),and he must fight back in the hard way (small opening on top),and if he didn't do that Diet plan ,it aint so easy to do that big squeeze.(I went to Howe Caverns once and at a certain point one poor guy was having a very hard time getting through.)

So "V'lahadurei B'hai"-let the baal teshuvah go back up the "big no floor bottom of the Hai" route?

The answer : "Lo Mistaya Milsa"

In simple English, this means that it's not going to work. You cannot go back the way you fell. Why not? So the Tomer Devorah explains why not.

We know the answer instinctively. It has been talked about a lot here. It is a very sobering wake-up call answer. If you learn this answer the wrong way, the way Mr YH wants you to, you will fall into a serious depression. You will find this answer very upsetting, very hurtful to you. because that protective fire-wall blocking out this answer out will be gone and you will no choice other than to face yourself as you are and for many that is a terrifying experience.

But if you learn the answer the right way, you will realize what the purpose of your life is, how great you are. how great you can become .and this seemingly depressing answer is the key to experience great happiness in life ,and feeling great closeness to Hashem. and all your struggles would have been worth it, because you will discover that this was the key all along to be close to Hashem

The Tomer Devorah explains (loose translation) "A person who sinned and is now doing teshuvah, it's not enough to create a fence to stay away from sin the way that the tzaddik does. Because the tzaddik didn't sin .and because the tzaddik didn't sin, a small fence is enough to protect him. But one who sins and then repents,,a small fence is not enough .He

must erect for himself tough high fences, because the small fence has already been breached once. and if you come too close to that once- breached- fence it will be easy to fall again so therefore “Tzarich L’hisrachek Harchek Godol M’oid”-you need to distance yourself very very far from the breach. Therefore, you cannot enter back through the opening where the breach is. You must go up and enter the Hai through the small opening, going through pain and affliction in the process, and by doing so, you close off all breaches and openings ,so that you don’t fall again.

The very fact that you are not a “tzaddik ”,you are vulnerable ,very vulnerable ,easily swayed to go back in the straying mode, that no matter how high and elevated you feel, you are different .you cannot trust yourself completely even when you are davening well ,learning well, and even when you are passing every single test that comes your way. you are still different ,still vulnerable, and you must keep those high closed off fences at all times.

Because you are not like that other young man. you are not like that other young woman.

You are different. You have much harder and more unique path.

You must be careful for the rest of your life.

This extra carefulness is a very heavy burden to bear. almost too hard. but it’s also the greatest gift.

We will deal with the gift side next post. Now we will focus on the burden side. Why? because that is the only way that you will appreciate how this burden creates the gift that you will see later in time but in truth it is really here now.

This difference, this burden, this unique path of one who experiences screwups and backslidings, and major falls-the realization of it all, it may be in the brain but when you finally see it on an instinctive level-in the heart, in the gut-the realization hits you like a ton of bricks and it can destroy you if you are not prepared.

And it is very rare that you are prepared. It's not part of the curriculum. not on the syllabus .I know what to do when an ox gores an ox, thank you very much, but I have no idea what to do about this. And I have seen this with my own eyes. The Elul that elevated many- killed many more. (Here is a mathematical formula for you .It works 100% of the time. Too much Yirah+ Zero Ahavah=Disaster) . the dead eyes of despair in bochurim much higher than myself. Those eyes haunt me till today. The Yid that works himself to the bone but couldn't concentrate on Maariv so he berates himself .or nebach, after 18 hours of davening and learning, he crosses the street to the dormitory and sees something not good .My YH enjoys doing these things .He picks on this erlicher bocher-a perfect target ,after 18 hours of Avodas Hashem –BOOM-all gone up in smoke(not true, but this is what he thinks). Elul now for him turns from a month of hope into a month of a nightmare. Rosh Hashana for him is now a dreaded day and Mr YH had done his job .Another in tears, I ask him what's the matter ,he tells me that no matter how much he tries he can't daven, he can't daven ,he can't daven and he tries and tries and tries .and no matter what he gets confused, crazy stuff comes to his head .I tell him go to the Rosh Yeshiva a true tzaddik and he tells this Yid, you think that even at my age, and even after working on myself all these years, do you think that I don't have trouble davening with kavanah? This Yid's life was saved because of this Rosh Yeshiva said to him. The bocher still feel so low but he is much calmer about it because he was told that this is normal.

The fact that this Rosh Yeshiva sometimes had difficulty davening with kavanah was not printed in his biography. and will never be printed. even though it is the truth. because he would never lie. not even to help another Yid feel better.

In any case ,we were never prepared, so we get hit with a ton of bricks and we don't know what to do about it.

And there is no nice way to say it-this is what happens when you realize you are not mr "tzaddik"

It hurts like hell.

It hurts even worse then that.

To accept your condition, your inner state, your fence that was breached, the fence that you must stay away from, the inherent tendency towards unhealthy things, the black streak, this bleak knowledge that you are always prone to fall into darkness—this is a very very tough pill to

swallow.

It takes almost superhuman courage to accept this.

Like one special neshomah here put it, the black hole, this seemingly going in circles ,being punched around viciously, being smashed against walls, getting back up, back down, getting up again, back down, now back up for 2 months straight, BAM!!, smashed down again, up again this time 6 month or a year, then a curveball, an almost deadly blow to the head, and down you go again, this time laying there dazed and bleeding, in shock, disoriented, giving up, giving up, giving up ,it's all over ,it's all over ,road straight to hell for me ,if married I screwed up wife and kids, if single who would marry a screwed up boy like me, who would love a defective girl like me, once they know who I am ,sees past the makeup and externals, my husband will hate me, throw me away in disgust. You lay there and you have no energy and no interest in getting up. Maybe if the Yid like Reb Shlomo would have spotted you, he would have given you a smile and a big hug and gently helped you up, would sing a song to you, tell you how beloved you were to your Father in Heaven, given you some hope for the future. But no one comes to pick you up. So you lay there like a half dead carcass, waiting for the end to come.

But finally ,at the darkest moment, you start feeling Hashem's love and life comes into you, He lifts you up, you are much better but you are very shaken. Why? Because you know that you could fall into that nightmare again. And next time, how will I survive it?

The way to deal with all this is to realize that this almost unbearable burden is also the greatest gift you have, the greatest opportunity, and also one of the main reasons why you were put into this world in the first place.

Look at Dovid HaMelech. The beginning of the line of true kings, the line that will come to Moshiach his descendant ,the heart of the Yid ,the author of our one and only Tehilim .

Now we all know his true greatness. But during his troubles lifetime he was a perceived by many many Yidin as a Reject-He wasn't the typical Yeshiva bochur. couldn't sit in Kolllel, Hashem wouldn't let him. Looked more like Mr Esav then Reb Yaakov. Who knows? Maybe the young men, the ones in Reb Doeg's highest shuir, saw him singing to Hashem as he was leading his sheep and they thought he was nuts. -Shmuel didn't see his greatness, he had to

be told, scorned by his brothers, hated by Shaul, wars and wars and more wars ,running here,running there,being chased all over the place like a trapped animal.his son forces himself on his daughter, his son killed by his other son, the son that chases him and wants to kill him and take the kingdom, He gets killed too. Doeg wanting to destroy him, then Achitophel, Shimi cursing him, throwing stones at him ,Naval treating him like dirt, his wives kidnapped by Amalek ,many ridiculing him for what happened with Bas Sheva ,the death of the young child as a punishment, making the error of counting Klall Yisroel and witnessing the death of many because of it, the rebellion of Sheva ben Bichri. chased out of Eretz Yisroel, forced to act like a deranged person to save his life ,and even at the end always cold and having to deal with the rebellion of Adoniyahu. Eliav his brother accusing him of something he wasn't, his greatest yearning and desire to build the Bais Hamikdash, he prepares everything for years, he is told you cannot build it. He asks Hashem that that shame of the story of Bas Sheva be removed in his lifetime and he was told that his innocence will not be known in his lifetime-only much later will it be revealed, at the time of the Chanukas Habais which he would not see. his mistake of putting the Aron on a wagon, indirectly causing the death of Uzza, scarring a day that could have been one of pure simcha and wasn't. Michal,the wife of his youth, who snuck him out the window when he father was trying to kill him, later looks down at his behavior, causing punishment to come to her which certainly affected him as well, the burden of the death of the City of Nov weighing on his shoulders, because he asked for the Lechem Hapanim and the sword, forced to send the 7 sons of Shaul to their deaths because of the cruelty of the Givonim, he gets close to Avner, he gets killed he gets close to Amasa, he gets killed, He loves Avsholom, he gets killed, I'm sure he loved Amnon too, he gets killed, he loves Tamar(despite unconventional background),she gets destroyed, Unknowingly, Dovid sends his daughter to her destruction. a second tragedy of one who wore the Kesones Pasim, made for true children of Kings .both are torn, both are destroyed, both are ruined. Why? because the ones who were wearing them were perceived by their brother/brothers in the wrong way. Yosef was exonerated, Tamar not. true, it is not her fault, she is a victim, but a victim that carries great shame, (which "heiliga" Yid would want to marry her? you think I'm crazy?)She lives now amongst us, living in that shadow, in a darkness that will not go away until Moshiach comes. That what happens when you perceive someone in the wrong way, for the wrong reasons,

In Tamar's case the wrong reason is clear. In Yosef's case, not so clear but just as wrong. Every one of his brother's admitted it,and became truly great because of this.And back to Dovid's troubles.he has to deal with this complex general Yoav who helps him and hurts him at different times,and must order his death at the end,Noson Hanavi chastising him for stealing that only sheep of the very poor man(causing his death too),and Gad Hanavi telling him you have 3 choices and none of them are good.

You get the point.

but you think Dovid became great despite his troubles

Not true.

Dovid became great because of his troubles. Tehillim would not be Tehillim if it wouldn't have been for his very difficult life.

And he gave us a great gift, the gift of teshuva, the gift of simcha, the gift of knowing the heart of Klall Yisroel, because that is what Dovid was and that's what tehillim is., a Yid loving Hashem and wanting to be close to Him even in the toughest situations ,it's a Yid in Golus, it's a Yid in pain, but it's also a Yid who never gives up.

Dovid Hamelech saw you bleeding and dazed on the ground. He, the Heart of Klall Yisroel, loves you, because you are in his heart, because you are a Yid ,he saw your despair, and he asks Hashem, pick this Yid up, pick him up, pick my son up ,pick my daughter up ,my precious son, my priceless daughter, they are in the Shadow of Death, just like I was in my own way, but I don't fear evil because You are with me.

Everyone can find himself or herself in Tehillim.

In Tehillim you see the burden of the pain and loneliness and heartache. But you will also see the great gift of healing, of the love of Hashem coming to you.

In the next part we will talk more about the gift side. the side that tells you that Hashem loved you all along, never looked down at you, always. hoped to pick you up and heal your wounded spirit, and bring you home ,the home that is in your heart ,the home that He wants to dwell in, the home He wants to be in always and forever.

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 03 Sep 2009 18:05

Dear Friends

As an introduction to this poem I will post what read in a book called "Broken Open" by Elizabeth Lesser

"So please forgive me when I say that everything that happens to us in life is a blessing-whether it comes as a gift wrapped in happy times or as a heartbreak,loss,or tragedy.It is true:There is meaning hidden in the small changes of everyday life,and wisdom to be found in the shards of your most broken moments.At the end of a dark night of the soul is the beginning of a new life.But it's hard to accept that when your in pain,and it's tiresome to hear about it from someone who's not"

Whatever is-is best by Ella Wheeler Wilcox

I know, as life grows older

And mine eyes have clearer sight

That under each rank wrong somewhere

There lies the root of Right;

That each sorrow has its purpose,

By the sorrowing oft unguessed;

But as sure as the sun brings morning,

Whatever is-is best.

I know that each sinful action,

As sure as the night brings shade

Is somewhere sometimes punished, \

Tho' the hour be longed delayed

I know the soul is aided

Sometimes by the hearts unrest,

And to grow means to suffer-

But whatever is –is best

I know there are no errors,

In the great Eternal plan

And all things work together

For the final good of man.

And I know when my soul speeds onward,

In it's grand Eternal quest,

I shall say as I look back earthward,

Whatever is-is best

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by yechidah - 04 Sep 2009 16:59

Little Things by Julia A Fletcher

Little drops of water,

Little grains of sand

Make a mighty ocean

And the pleasant land,

Thus the little minutes,

Humble though they be

Make the mighty ages

Of eternity

dear friends, have a wonderful shabbos, may all shabbosim of your life always be calm and peaceful and happy and may the bracha of shabbos overflow into the rest of the week.

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by TrYiNg - 06 Sep 2009 10:03

Thank you for the poems yechida. Luv em ;D Still need to find the time to read your longer posts

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Re: yechida's reflections

Posted by Noorah BAmram - 06 Sep 2009 15:14

Yechida'leh Dearest,

You are a diamond and your posts are platinum!

[yechida wrote on 26 Aug 2009 23:45:](#)

Dear friends

There are 10 possible cognitive distortions that can cause this emotional turmoil. Nine of them clearly are according to the Torah completely, and if I had the time to research I would write a small book proving from chazal that these 9 are in accordance to Torah on every possible level. So there is only good coming from working on fighting against these 9 errors in thinking that causes a person to fall into inner chaos.

There is one however that needs to be modified somewhat.

It's called the "Should Statement"-you criticize yourself or other people with "shoulds" "shouldn'ts" "musts" "oughts" or "have dos"

The idea behind this distortion is a good one. People place unrealistic expectations on

But the truth is that we cannot throw the shoulds and shouldn'ts away. We have 248 shoulds and 365 shouldn'ts in the Torah.

So we cannot use this cognitive distortion in the way it is described in the books on CBT.

But what we can do is throw away the partial unrealistic expectation which the Torah itself allows us to do.

You did something wrong, you should not have done it. You cannot just say ok that "shouldn't" was not realistic so forget about it.

But what you can do is say, Ok I shouldn't have, but I did, and Hashem is so kind and patient that He allows me time to correct the problem, even erase it.

Once modified, this CBT is amazing, even people with average range emotion can benefit from this and can lead very productive and happy lives once freed from these negative thoughts that pull them down.

Regarding the "should and ought and must" cognitive distortion I don't think there is an inherent contradiction to Torah, rather the distortion is usually from an "ignorance" of halacha! From not have a Rov! From having chumros that stem from "am aratzus" from not knowing what is chasidus and what is "me'ikir hadin" ala mishkal hachasidus!

Case in point: here is a man that makes bedikas chometz a whole night on a 2 bedroom apartment no less!- the stress on him and his family, the guilt of the wife, the burden of the whole "yom tov peasach" no simcha @ all! and to top it all off the feeling "I ought to be on higher madreiga and have simcha in all the mitzvos of the yom tov!" Why do I dread pesach etc etc

Now if the couple had a rov whom they both- and I underline the word both- ask all this nonsense wouldn't happen.

To summarize its that sure we have 248 mitzvos aseï and 365 mitzvos lo sasie- the distortions and related emotional stresses don't come from them! To the contrary "all its ways are pleasantness and peace".....and we all know the dubnos mashal on "its not me u called O Jacob for you are tired of me Yisrael!"

This is one of my pet peeves, sorry for the rant

Love to all

Noora

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