

The Weekly Farbrengens

MERKAZ ANASH
מרכז אנשי

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EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

REFRESHING OURSELVES (I)

THE BENEFITS OF RELAXING

The Rambam writes that taking care of one's health is part of serving *HaShem*, for when a person is not well, he is unable to serve Him properly.

Rebbi Yehuda HaChossid advises a person who is stressed to take a walk so that he can then return to his learning. Indeed, the *Midrash* relates that Dovid HaMelech would take walks in order to clear his mind and then learn further.

(רמב"ם הל' דעות רפ"ד, ס"ח אות תש"ע, יוסף אומץ אות של"ז)

Rebbi Yehuda HaNasi was so wealthy that he always had unique produce served at his table, even when it was out of season. Nevertheless, before his passing, he raised his hands and declared, "I did not have any pleasure at all!" The *Shelah* explains that although Rebbi ate these delicacies, he did so only in order to be strong and healthy for *avodas HaShem*.

The Rebbe says that similarly, a person can take breaks for the sake of his health so that he will be able to serve *HaShem*. For this reason, too, when children are allowed to play, this too is *kedusha*, for in the case of Yidden, a holy nation, their body too is holy.

(ע"ז י"א ע"א, כתובות ק"ד ע"א, של"ה עש"מ מ"ח, תר"מ תשמ"ז ע' 186 תשמ"ד ע' 2453)

When people notified the Rebbe of their vacation plans for rest, the Rebbe would often give a *bracha* that it should bring about the desired result - strengthening the body. As the Rebbe Rashab expressed it, "How precious is the Yiddishe body for which so much Torah was given!" At the same time, care must be taken that one does not arrive at a situation in which the strength of the body weakens the *neshamas*.

(אג"ק ח"ג ע' שד"ב)

REST, DON'T SLEEP

In a letter to one mother, the Frierdiker Rebbe writes, "Surely children must relax from time to time, from their toiling in learning; however, the relaxation of a *ben Torah* and *yiras Shamayim* does not mean to do nothing, but rather he uses this

time to spread *Torah* and *yiras Shamayim*."

(אג"ק רי"צ ח"ז ע' שיט)

The Rebbe taught:

We must conduct our lives contrary to the ways of the rest of the world. During the summer months, people often decrease their learning and focus on strengthening their physical health. We must do the opposite; we must focus on the health of the *neshamas*, and then, automatically, our physical lives will be strengthened as well.

Moreover, as *Chassidus* teaches, during the summer there is an additional measure of *Elokus* in the world, which also finds expression in the additional sunlight at that time.

(תורת מנחם חכ"ה ע' 268, לקו"ש ח"א ע' 4)

CONSIDER

Does indulging in the pleasures of vacation enhance its beneficial results or lessen them?
How does one ensure that they do not get drawn into excessive pleasures?

STANDING ON GUARD

Midrash Shmuel writes that because physical desires are stronger in the summer, we learn *Pirkei Avos* particularly at that time, in order to reinforce our proper conduct.

(מדרש שמואל בהקדמה)

The *Gemara* tells that one of the greatest *chachomim*, Rebbi Elazar ben Arach, traveled to distant lands and partook of the pleasures there, drinking the

wine and bathing in the springs. As a result, he forgot what he had learned, and when he returned to the *beis midrash* and was called to the Torah, instead of reading *לכם* החדש הזה, he mistakenly read *לכם* החדש הזה.

The Rebbe Maharash explains the significance of these words, which literally mean, "their heart grew deaf." They imply that the heart was stopped up - it became insensitive to *ruchniyus* - as a result of the pleasures of which he had partaken.

(שבת קמז ע"ב, סה"מ תרכ"ו ע' לא)

Addressing the *bochurim* who would be speaking in various *shuls*, the Rebbe instructed them to speak about the *avoda* of the summer months:

At that time, when nature blooms, one must be careful not to be overly drawn into physical pleasures, for he can be affected as Rebbi Elazar was. True, one must take care of his body, since this, too, is part of serving *HaShem*, yet one should not do so excessively. Rather, an appreciation of the beauty now apparent in nature, as in the blooming trees, can be channeled into *kedusha*: one should learn from them to grow in *avodas HaShem*.

(תורת מנחם, ח"א ע' 248, 255)

On one of the weekly trips from *datche* back to Lubavitch, where the Rebbe Rashab would visit his mother and receive guests for *yechidus*, Shaul the wagon driver stopped near a well so that his horses could drink. When they finished, he whipped their backs and said, "Fools! Do you think I've given you water for your own benefit, so that the hay you've eaten should be tastier?! Not at all! I've given you water so that you'll have more strength and desire to *shlepp* the wagon!"

Hearing this, the Rebbe sat deep in earnest thought for some time and then said, "The Baal Shem Tov taught that whatever a Yid hears and sees is a lesson in *avodas HaShem*. A Yid must remember that he is given his physical needs in order to have the strength to *shlepp* the *ruchniyus'dike* wagon, through Torah and *avoda*. One must not err and think that what really counts is the hay, just for our indulgence."

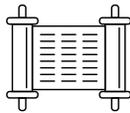
(אג"ק ח"ד ע' תכ"ו)

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SHARING A PICTURE

If I took a picture of someone in public, am I allowed to share it with others?

In general, a person should be aware that when they walk in the street or attend public gatherings, there may be people looking at them or taking pictures.¹ Legally, one may photograph someone on public property without their permission; if they are on private property, the law varies based on the country and how private the place is (e.g. in a house vs. on the porch).

Some *poskim* hold that photographing someone is comparable to drawing a picture and is considered the handiwork of the photographer. According to this, the photographer may use the picture and even do business with it without the permission of the person photographed.²

Other *poskim* argue that it is prohibited to photograph a person without their permission due to various reasons. Some are stringent to avoid being photographed out of *halachic* and *kabbalistic* concerns and one may not inflict this spiritual damage to them against their desire.³ The Rogatchover argued that benefiting from another person's appearance is a *halachic* "benefit" and may not be done if the person disapproves.⁴

Sometimes there is actual monetary value and potential profit that the one photographed could have made from his portrait, and some argue that taking this from them could be a form of theft.⁵

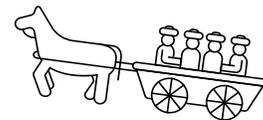
In any case, if the photo in question will cause someone harm or embarrassment, you may certainly not share it or show it to anyone. Sharing such a photo transgresses the *mitzva* of loving your fellow as yourself, and additionally, it is like relating something disparaging about someone, *lashon hara*.⁶ The Torah also forbids hurting someone's feelings, *ona'ah*.⁷

Even if it is a relatively benign picture, like someone on a trip, you must take into account if the one photographed would want this to be the first impression that others have of them. This is included in the words of Hillel, "Don't do to others what you wouldn't want done to yourself."⁸

In practice, one is allowed to share a respectable picture of someone else, yet if it's for a significant purpose, it's best to obtain permission from the one photographed as they might have a better photo which that will serve their interest better.

1. ראה ס' מידע לשידוכים הע' 181.
2. ראה שו"ת שלמת חיים ח"ב סי' ט"ט, ושו"ת בצל החכמה ח"ד סי' פ"ה.
3. שו"ת משנה הלכות ח"ז סי' ק"ד, פניני הקה"י ע"ק.
4. תשובות נדפסה בשולי הגליון של תשובת
5. השלמת חיים.
6. שו"ת משנה הלכות שם.
7. חפץ חיים ח"א כ"א במ"ח סק"ד.
8. ראה ב"מ נ"ח ע"ב.
- ראה שבת ל"א ע"א.

לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה



REBBETZIN CHAYA MUSHKA

Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, the wife of the Tzemach Tzedek, was born to her father the Mitteler Rebbe and her mother Rebbetzin Shaina in the year תק"ט (1790) in Liozna. On the 5th of Kislev תקס"ב (1802) she married her cousin the Tzemach Tzedek at the age of 14. She passed away on Friday, Erev Shabbos Parshas Vayigash, the 8th of Teves, תרכ"א (1861) and is buried in Lubavitch.

An *agunah* once came to the Tzemach Tzedek with her son who was totally mute and hard of hearing. Her husband had been missing for seven years, and now, several *rabbonim* had given her permission to remarry, on condition that the Rebbe agreed.

At that time, *agunos* would sit outside the Rebbe's room and, when their turn came, present their case while the door to the Rebbe's room was wide open. The Rebbe would listen to their story and instruct them where to travel via the *gabbai*. This woman waited several weeks, but her turn had not come.

Desperate for relief, she placed her son under the table in the *yechidus* room which was covered by a table

cloth, and instructed him that when *yechidus* begins he should crawl out and hand the Rebbe her note. When the boy came out of his hiding place, the *gabbai* became very angry and shouted at him. The Rebbe calmed the man and then said to the boy: "Go and tell your mother that your father is alive. She should travel to Denenburg."

This *agunah* had been sitting outside and weeping about her misfortune, when suddenly, her son entered and cried out in a loud voice, "The Rebbe told me to tell you that Father is alive, and that you should travel to Denenburg." At this, the *agunah* fainted.

This double miracle caused a great commotion. But Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka remarked: "Just look at what everyone's gotten so excited about! By my father and grandfather, miracles were scattered about, and no one bothered to pick them up. Grandfather said that he would prefer it if people understood Chassidus; as for getting excited over miracles, we leave that for the chassidim of Vohlyn."

(אג' אדהר"י צ"ח ב"ב מכ' ש'ד)

A Moment with The Rebbe



A HOLY FIRE

If transmitted right, the Rebbe showed, a message can carry its full import without hurting others. Indeed, this in itself is an indication of its truth.

Beginning in the early 5740s (1980s), an annual Kinus Hashluchim was held in Eretz Yisroel, where they would gather to inspire, strengthen and council each other in their mission.

In the summer of 5751 (1991), just days before the *kinus*, the *shliach* Reb Shmuel Greisman of Yerushalayim

came by the Rebbe in the dollars line.

After handing him a dollar, the Rebbe said, "You will certainly make a fiery speech at the upcoming *kinus*."

The Rebbe then added that the speech shouldn't "scorch anyone."

And the Rebbe went on to explain, "A *fier dikedusha farbrent nisht, es macht shtarker* – a fire of holiness doesn't burn others, it strengthens them."

(Video of dollars distribution, 17 Av 5751)