

Dear ...

I received your letter.

The foundation of every marriage and a crucial means to achieve *shalom bayis* is for husband and wife to be open with each other. If there is a problem, there must be an honest discussion that will address it. A couple that does not communicate cannot have true *shalom bayis*.

The Rebbe considered *shalom bayis* to be a fundamental part of *Yiddishkeit*. He never allowed single men to come to him and he insisted that his *chassidim* must treat their wives well. The Rebbe explains (*Sichos Haran 9*) that women endure so much: the pain of carrying children, the pain of childbirth and the pain of raising children. Therefore, it is so important that their husbands value their hard work and respect them.

Don't ever argue. Mohorosh used to repeat time and time again, "Your wife is always right - don't argue with her!"

Make sure to support your wife and take care of her, both physically and emotionally. Speak kindly to her and be generous with compliments. Look for opportunities to show that you appreciate her and value her opinion, and she will naturally go out of her way to please you.

Chazal state (*Sanhedrin 22b*) "A woman will only obligate herself to a person who causes her to become a vessel." Mohorosh explains that this refers to a man who boosts his wife's self-worth, thereby transforming her from a broken vessel into a complete one. **Encourage your wife and build her confidence; say things like, "You mean everything to me!" "You're so capable!" "There's no one like you in the entire world!" Only once she is a complete vessel can the two of you can become one entity.**

If there will be harmony between you, your home will be a *mishkan* - a dwelling place for the *shechina*. May Hashem help you approach your upcoming *chasunah* with joy and with lots of *hatzlacha*.

Adapted from *The Light of Emunah #2, page 154*



spectfully showed him to a quiet corner where he settled with his *sefarim*.

With the *gadol hador* in their own home, the blaming and bickering instantly ceased. The couple was simply too embarrassed to fight in front of a *tzaddik*, and so they actually spent an enjoyable day preparing for *Shabbos*.

R' Meir did this for three consecutive weeks. On the third week (after a *chazaka*), the voice of the *satan* was heard crying out, "Oh no! Poor me! R' Meir sent me out of this home."

The Same Story

While this took place centuries ago, the *satan* still has not retired. Every *erev Shabbos* he visits each of our homes, using all the means at his disposal to try and instigate *machlokes* among us. He causes such tension that we get angry over trivialities, blame each other for every mishap, and exchange harsh words that we would be ashamed to hear played back to us. Inevitably, we end up downhearted and in low spirits, and this poisons the atmosphere for the entire *Shabbos*.

What does the *satan* gain by causing us to fight? What's the point of it all?

The *yetzer hara* knows that *Shabbos* is the source for all goodness, and that if we have a joyous *Shabbos*, we will have a successful week. When we are happy on *Shabbos*, we are blessed with *hatzlacha* in all areas - in our relationships, in being *mechanech* our children, in business matters... and of course, in spiritual pursuits as well. This is the *yetzer hara's* worst nightmare; therefore, he works overtime to make our *erev Shabbos* tense. In this way, he spoils *Shabbos* for us too, and ultimately ruins the entire week.

The Torah says (*Shemos 35:3*) לא תבערו אש בכל משבתיכם ביום השבת - do not light a fire on *Shabbos*. The *Zohar* teaches (*Tikunei Zohar 125*) that this refers to the fire of temper. Anger on *Shabbos* is the cause of poverty and the loss of good *mazel*, and it brings about all *tzaaros*. We need to be so mindful not to lose ourselves or get angry, because this will cause us to lose all *bracha* in life as a result.

By no means is this easy. We work so hard all week just to make ends meet and we eagerly anticipate a calm and quiet *Shabbos* to recharge. With so much pressuring us, it takes only seconds to lose our control when things don't go exactly as planned. However, if we would know the hardships we can spare ourselves by staying calm, we would invest much more effort to do so. What don't we do for *parnassa*? What don't we do for health? Our success is dependent on *Shabbos*.

Try it. Stop the arguing. Use this *erev Shabbos* to imbue yourself and your family with *simcha*, and the entire atmosphere will change. If you will try to stay





calm and happy, your positivity will spill over into the following week and bring *bracha, hatzlacha* and *siyatta dishmaya* in its wake.

For the Children's Sake

The *seudos* we eat on Shabbos are a tremendous opportunity to transform our homes into *Gan Eden*. We are so busy throughout the week, so taken over by our daily struggles that we don't have time for our greatest treasure: our children. Shabbos is a day to reconnect. When we sit at the table with the our family, we can use the time to really listen to them and to speak about *emunah*, tell stories of *tzaddikim*, sing *zemiros* and just enjoy the time together.

There are those who make the mistake of sharing only *divrei Torah* at the Shabbos table; they don't realize that after an entire week of *cheder/school*, children usually don't have patience to sit and listen to speeches. They want to hear stories and have their stories heard. Warmth and camaraderie is the key to their hearts.



Not too long ago lived a talmid chacham named R' Menashe. Scholarly and erudite as he was, he unfortunately struggled greatly with his children. His next-door neighbor, an unlearned fellow, was zoche to have erliche and successful children.

There were many who wondered about this phenomenon. Why was it that the talmid chacham had children who only caused him heart-ache, and the ordinary, "nothing-special" one had so much nachas? Toward the end of his life, R' Menashe shared what he thought to be the key difference between the two.

"I love to learn and value Torah learning above all else," he explained. "Throughout the years, I rushed through the Shabbos seudos so that I could get back to my sefarim. My neighbor, though, enjoyed each meal with his family. He sang with his children and conversed with them, and the entire family had a wonderful time, week after week. Unlike my children, his have grown up to become confident adults who enjoy and value Yiddishkeit."

R' Menashe sighed and said, "If only I would have focused more on my children... Perhaps then I would have seen some nachas from them..."

In order to be successful both in *ruchniyus* and *gashmiyus*, children need their parents to spend time with them. Shabbos is a golden opportunity to do just this: talk to your children. Spend time with them. Not with *lashon hara* or foolishness, but rather with wholesome and healthy enjoyment. It may not be easy, but it's an investment. An investment worth working for.

Kuntres Gut Shabbos



Rebbe's *seder derech halimud*. The Rebbe says (*Sichos Haran 19*) that the Torah has tremendous power; anyone

who learns each day will become an *erliche Yid*, no matter how low he has fallen.

R' Nosson relates (*Chayei Moharan 573*) that after he heard the Rebbe say this, he asked if Torah learning can also help a person who has succumbed to the *aveira of pgam habris R"l*. In response, the Rebbe cried out with passion, "Do you know how powerful the Torah is? Torah is stronger and greater than everything."

Start today. Take a *mishnayos* and start saying the words of *Masechtas Brachos* aloud, even if you don't understand what you are saying. When you finish, continue to the next *masechta* and the next until you will complete the entire *shisha sidrei mishna*. Then start again (and again and again and again) and continue with this your entire life.

The same is for *Gemara*: start *shas* from the beginning. Buy a *Masechtas Brachos* and say the words of the holy *Gemara*; say one *blatt* after another until you finish the entire *masechta*. Then take *Masechtas Shabbos*, then *Eiruvim*, then *Pesachim*, etc. until you finish the entire *shas*.

Even if you don't initially understand what you're saying, just continue to learn without comprehension and eventually you will understand. The holy words of Torah will infuse you with energy, and you will start to feel that life is worth living.

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.

Adapted from The Light of Emunah #1, page 100, page 164

DEEP DOWN, ALL I FEEL IS... NOTHING



Question:

To the Rosh Yeshiva *shlita*,

I hope you can help me. I don't know what's wrong with me - to others, I seem to be living it up, but I feel like I am dying a slow death.

I feel a sense of emptiness at my very core, as if everything is hollow, dead and pointless. I know that it isn't really true; there are times in my life that are pleasant and full of accomplishments, yet deep down all I feel is... nothing. The pain of this situation is excruciating. Is there something I can do to help myself?

Thank you.



The Rosh Yeshiva's Response:

Dear...,

I received your letter.

Your question reminds me of a story Mohorosh used to share about R' Avraham Kalisker *zt"l*:

An elderly Yid once came to the tzaddik and exclaimed, "I'm so fed up with life - all I want is to die already!"

R' Avraham replied "How foolish of you! It's worth living for eighty years just to be able to put on tefillin once - and you want to die already? You can do the mitzva of putting on tefillin each day you are alive, and in this merit, Hashem will forgive you for all your aveiros."

The feeling of emptiness and worthlessness comes from doing *aveiros*. When a person doesn't guard his eyes and watches immorality, he ends up sinking into the *aveira* of *pgam habris*. The Rebbe says that this causes him to be-

come very depressed, his spirit is shattered and his life loses its appeal. (*Likutei Moharan, 1:50*)

The only way to escape this terrible habit is through *tefilla* and *hisbodedus*. Accustom yourself to talking to Hashem; describe all your pain and suffering and tell Him your troubles. Cry out to Him - you can use the tefilla below and add your own words.

Hashem, have pity on me and help me get out of my situation. Please forgive me for my sins and help me overcome my yetzer hara and stop doing aveiros. I will no longer do what I am not allowed to. I'm going to do whatever I can to be erlich. Please help me overcome my yetzer hara and stop doing aveiros. Help me remain strong in the face of my nisyonas.

Another thing you can do is learn Torah with the

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