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Men Follow their Intellect; Women Follow their Emotions

There exists a fundamental difference between men and women: Men naturally follow their logic and intellect, whereas women, as a rule, naturally follow the drawing of their emotion.

There are some exceptions to this rule. There are some couples where both the husband and the wife follow their intellect, and there are some couples where both the husband and wife follow their emotions. Sometimes, their roles are exchanged, and the husband is the one who is following his emotions and the wife is the more rational and logical thinker. However, in the majority of marriages, it will be the husband who will see the world through the prism of his intellect and the wife will view the world through the prism of her emotions. Let us therefore focus upon the fundamental dissimilarity that exists between them.

Which aspect of character is more important, the intellect or the emotions? This is like asking which one a person needs more, bread or water? Everyone knows that a person cannot live without bread or water, so obviously both are equally important and essential.

Similarly, when we are discussing personality and character strengths and we want to determine which strength is more important-- the emotion or the intellect-- it really isn't a question at all, because both factors are essential. Everyone needs to employ both aspects in order to be a well-balanced, functioning person. There are situations where the intellect should play a more prominent role in helping us reach our decisions, and there are situations where the drawings of the emotions should play the more prominent role, but there must always be a synthesis between the two, because life is essentially a fusion between the perception of the emotions with the understanding of the intellect.

Many times, however, the emotion-intellect ratio is incorrect, present in the wrong proportions and unbalanced. An improper balance of intellect and emotion will always create a problem. If too much importance and credence is given to the intellect, then everything is judged according to the bare facts and exact data and conclusions will be entirely based upon these factors, excluding feelings and emotions from the decision-making process. Chazal^[1] say that the approach of "Let the law pierce the mountain," is to consider the situation as it is solely by concentrating upon the bare facts and thereby to reach halachic conclusions.

But then the Gemara^[2] says: "Why was Jerusalem destroyed? Because they judged according to the

laws of the Torah!" The Gemara asks: "Would it be better if they would have judged in a non-Torah manner?" To this, the Gemara answers: "The problem was that they never went beyond the letter of the law."

Similarly, if too much strength and credence is given to emotions, one's viewpoint can become skewed and unrealistic. About this approach, Chazal^[3] say: "Whoever has mercy upon the cruel, he will ultimately be cruel towards those who deserve mercy."

How can we understand this? Someone has mercy upon a murderer who is sitting in jail, so he pleads on his behalf that he should be freed immediately. His emotions tell him that the murderer should be freed immediately, because otherwise, the murderer's poor wife will have to live many years alone like a widow, and the murderer's children will grow up fatherless. However, when we consider the situation in a more comprehensive and all encompassing way, taking the intellectual aspect into account, we understand that to free the murderer would be a grave mistake, because the lives of others would be endangered.

So, why do the emotions dictate that the murderer should be freed? It is because the emotions perceive only part of the picture, only relating to the feelings which emerge at first glance.

Encompassing Perception vs. Perception of Detail

The main difference between the intellect and the emotions is that the intellect takes in the big picture, while the emotions only see things as they appear at the moment.

When a person learns Torah and his intellect is engaged, it doesn't make a difference to him whether the topic that he is studying actually occurred or is merely theoretical. For example, when a person learns the *sugya*^[4] (Talmudic subject) of "The ox that gored a cow," he doesn't need to see the goring actually taking place in order to understand the laws. Even if the student never visited a farm, and the situations he is studying never actually occurred and never will occur, this will not disturb him from enjoying and understanding the subject, because he is involved in intellectual exercise and concepts which transcend all boundaries of time and place. Chazal tell us that the laws of *ben sorer u'moreh* ^[5](the rebellious child) "never occurred and never will occur. So why does the Torah tell us these laws?" The gemara answers, "In order that we should learn the laws and receive reward."

The rational and intellectual mind doesn't require discussion on matters taking place in the present because an intellectual concept is true in the past, present and in the future. This is why the understanding of the intellect is more conclusive and complete, because it is not limited by time or space constraints.

Emotions, on the other hand, are inextricably bound to time, place and circumstance. A person can look at something and become immensely emotional about it, and then find a couple of weeks later that the emotions have vanished without a trace. This is because the emotions react to the present, to the sight and situation which is presently before him. The intellect never changes. The same halachic decision which was arrived at last week, month, year, or century will remain the same today (unless the circumstances the decision was based on had changed) because the intellect and logic remain consistent at all times.

It says: ^[6] "This Torah will never be exchanged." The holy Torah is *chochmah* (knowledge). As the Zohar says: "The Torah comes forth from *chochmah*." Unlike the laws and practices of the non-Jews, which are liable to change at any time depending upon the times and opinions of the masses, the laws of the Torah are eternal and unchanging.

Pure wisdom and knowledge, therefore, have set rules. The laws of nature, such as the astronomical

cycles of the sun, moon and stars all have set and known patterns, because their laws are not based upon emotions, and therefore their patterns are fixed and unchanged.

Although the sun cycle does vary occasionally, and it may appear that there are differences occurring between the past, present and future, these variations are part of the original path and cycle of the sun, which was set to change and modulate over time. Similarly, the concept of *yeridas hadoros* (the spiritual decline of the world, resulting from the passing of generations) should not be viewed as a change in the pattern of the world, rather, that the world was originally created with this pattern of decline built into it as part of the encompassing pattern of the world. Emotions, however, do not have a complete, encompassing view. Each event is seen as it appears at the moment without taking the entire picture into account.

This explains why men generally pay less attention to details than women and tend to focus more on the entire picture. Chazal tell us: [7] "*Hakadosh Baruch Hu* gave extra *bina* (understanding) to the woman," while the man has more *chachmah*-knowledge. *Chachmah* represents encompassing knowledge, and *bina* represents understanding based on concentration on details.

Unifying the Two Concepts

Regardless of their attention to details or lack thereof, neither approach will ever present a full picture on its own.

Every home requires that specific attention be paid to its various functions. The house should be livable, and there should be adequate *parnassah*. But a home that is lacking even the smallest details, such as hangers in the closet, can destroy its entire atmosphere.

Some people think in an encompassing manner and some people think in a more detailed and meticulous manner. Both manners of thought are essential. The goal and the perfection is when both forms of perceptions unite.

The problem is the broader way of thinking often appears to contradict the detailed way. Instead of complementing each other and working together, they often appear incompatible.

We will give a practical example to understand this concept: A person earns a set amount every month. The broad thinker will say: Life isn't over today, and it will not be over tomorrow. It would be a wise idea to save some of the money for the children's weddings, for their own old-age, and for other future needs.

This is an example of a person who views life in an encompassing manner. He sees his entire life before him at one glance, including the expenses which he expects to have in the distant future. He tries to apportion his present wages so that part of the money he earns will provide for the present, and part of it will remain for the future, ten, twenty, even forty years away.

This type of thinker is willing to cut corners from his current needs in order to save for the future. Even if it is winter and it is cold, he is not willing to spend his money to buy a new coat, because he needs the money for the future. In the meanwhile he will use his old, worn-out coat.

The person who thinks in a detailed manner, on the other hand, focuses on the present. If it is cold outside and it would be more comfortable if he would have a new, warm coat, then he will pay the extra couple hundred dollars. He will disregard, at the moment of his decision, any expenses and needs that may be coming up in the future.

The encompassing thinker is not a fool. He is well aware that he cannot pass the winter with only the

shirt on his back. The difference between the encompassing thinker and the detailed thinker emerges when deciding how much one should invest in the present when it is in contradiction to the desires and needs of the future.

There are extreme examples of detailed thinkers who are prepared to buy everything they find in the store and think they might need, with total disregard for the future. These people will not only end up without a pension, and without money to marry off their children, they will also be unable to finish out the month. They may even lack money for tomorrow. There are people who take out their credit card, and as long as there is credit, they will use it. Where does this spendthrift attitude come from? It comes from people who only see the details – the present – but not the entire picture.

But even this nearsighted individual will understand that he must, at least, include the entire month into his plans and budget his money accordingly.

Most conflicts and disagreements which occur between husband and wife are actually debates over the encompassing view versus a detailed view.

For example: One of the couple expresses a certain opinion, only to have the spouse answer, “True, but yesterday it was different....” One of them is concentrating upon one small block of their life, while the other is seeing the broader picture.

Although in general the husband will be naturally inclined to view life through the prism of his intellect and the wife through the emotions, there are times when their roles are exchanged. This happens when the issue at hand is particularly disturbing or important to the husband. When this occurs, his deepest emotions are aroused, and he will react according to his emotions, while his wife may still remain intellectually inclined. In these situations, the husband will only see the present, while his wife will be able to include the entire picture into her vision.

There are many examples of these types of arguments. The goal, therefore, is to combine both visions together, to strive towards an encompassing view and to understand how details become part of a larger picture.

When a person’s sole focus is on the wider picture, he will automatically disregard the details. We see this happen all the time. There are fathers, for example, who invest large amounts of money to help their children succeed in the future, but at the same time, the children are wearing unclean clothing. The father is only concentrating upon the future, and his desire for his children to grow into successful adults, but he neglects the child’s present needs entirely.

On the other side of the spectrum, there are parents who dress their children in beautiful and clean clothing, but when the children become older they are lacking basic life skills, because no one ever thought to prepare them for the future.

So we see that it is essential to master both the encompassing view and the detailed view and to unite them together.

One Comes at The Expense of the Other

The encompassing, future-oriented view will often oppose and contradict the detailed and present focus view in almost every area. Every person has immediate needs and future needs. This is true in regards to all areas of life, including the home budget, the national budget, time management, etc.

Whether a person invests in the future or the present, the concentration of one interest will conflict with the other need. We live in a world that has limitations, and it is impossible to invest in all areas at

once. Focus upon the future will sacrifice one's present needs, and focus upon the present will sacrifice meeting future needs.

A person who sets aside a certain percentage of his money towards his retirement will not have that extra money to use for his present needs. But the person who has an encompassing and future oriented focus will claim that it is still worthwhile, so he can have a steady income in his elder years.

This is the most basic and most frequent contradiction that we deal with every day and every hour. This contradiction and battle of interests exists within every single person, and it exists within the husband/wife relationship as well.

The Loss which Occurs When One Doesn't Pay Attention to the Details

When a person is naturally inclined towards seeing life in an encompassing manner, he will naturally consider the details to be far less important, and he will neglect them. This negligence will ultimately be to his disadvantage.

For example: A person wants to sell his apartment. The apartment is large, comfortable, and airy, and it should sell easily. But there are full garbage bags in every corner of the house, and the floor is cluttered and dirty with the air-conditioner leaking, so even if everything is tidy, it gives an overall messy impression on the potential buyer who comes into the apartment.

The seller will emphasize the qualities of the apartment: "Notice how large the apartment is! Look at the wonderful view," but he will not make the sale because he overlooked some small details that he didn't think were important to correct before bringing the potential buyer into his home.

Even if we would tell him that it is worth fixing and correcting the minor problems in the apartment before bringing a potential buyer to look at it, he probably wouldn't listen. He would say that it is not necessary. The reason why he is not interested in the details is not only because concentration upon the details will take away his time and focus from the encompassing needs, but also because he doesn't consider the smaller details to be important or relevant.

We discussed the common conflict which exists between the encompassing and the detailed view, and how too much emphasis placed on one will detract from the other. Both are essential for living a balanced life. If this concept would be clear to us, most disagreements in the home would be resolved, because both the husband and the wife would see the truth and importance of the other one's view. The problem is that, generally, the person who naturally sees the details has difficulty seeing the encompassing picture. If we would try to explain to him the importance of focusing upon the future he would answer: "There is a long time before we have to worry about the future. When the time comes, everything will be alright..."

And if we would try to speak to a person who has an encompassing view of life about a certain detail, he would respond: "The details are not important. They will work out on their own in the end. The important thing is to focus on the main goal."

For example: A contractor is hired to build a house, and he invests a lot of energy in preparing the plans. He hires an assistant contractor and workers, he orders the required material, and he's only left out a few small details. However, because of those few small, missing details, the home wasn't ready to be inhabited until four months later. If the contractor was building an apartment building that had 26 apartments, and he had to pay their rent for four months because of the delay, then his negligence over the small details would end up costing him tens of thousands of dollars.

If he would have originally taken the small details into account, he would have saved himself this

great expense. The contractor's view however was: Building is such a large undertaking! There are so many things to take care of. I will take care of the small details later. But those small details that he pushed off resulted in the delay of the entire project.

The contractor's original disregard of the small details was not because he didn't want to remove his focus from the more important, encompassing plans, so he chose to sacrifice some minor details for the sake of the overall project. His mistake was in disregarding and pushing off taking care of the minor details because he didn't understand that the minor details are also immensely important.

A correct view of life is to take into account the broader, encompassing view together with the details, to recognize that they are both important, and then to find the correct balance between them and to measure how much should be invested in the overall picture and how much in the details.

Do Not Neglect Developing Your Emotions

The person who is intellectually inclined and views life in an encompassing manner will tend to view emotions as fleeting and unstable feelings. The truth is, emotions often do change, from positive to negative, back and forth.

He sees that emotions are temporary and often unrealistic, and comes to the conclusion that it is impossible to base one's life's view upon the impressions of the emotions. As a result, he chooses to ignore his emotions entirely. He doesn't see any importance in emotions, and therefore he only utilizes his mind and intellect.

There are many people who live this way, without emotion. But the negative side-effects of living without emotion become immediately clear when he tries to deal with his fellow man, and even in the way that he will relate to his Creator.

Some people have a relationship with Hashem that can be called, "a rational relationship." These people almost never cry. The passuk: "Hashem will erase all tears from upon all faces"[\[8\]](#) has already been realized in him... He simply never cries.

Why?

It is because his relationship with people is rational and logical, while his emotional feelings barely exist. In the best scenario, when his children are still young he may be able to express a drop of compassion and feeling, but among adults, especially in the Western world, his relationships will never become emotional because it appears disgraceful and frivolous.

The repercussions of this attitude are very severe. Turning off his emotions entirely will affect his relationship with his children and his spouse. It will be difficult for him to relate to them. His rational mind informs him that there must be some expression of emotion in marriage, so he creates for himself something like a split personality: in his daily life his emotions are stored away, as in a storage room, and he doesn't use them at all, but since he understands that he has to show some emotions towards his spouse, he tries to take them out of storage.

But if his emotions are kept in storage and only taken out occasionally he will have to clean off the dust the dust that has accumulated due to lack of use, and sometimes he will also have to scrape off the rust - in short, his emotions will not function properly. If he suppresses his emotions in the course of his daily life, he cannot expect them to automatically appear when he returns home. Even if he will try to arouse and reveal the emotions and the feelings which are concealed within him, he will not be able to change suddenly and become a different person.

But if he acknowledges his emotions in his daily life, then when he will return to his home he will continue to feel the same series of emotions. He must obviously be careful to show his emotions in a positive manner, and not negatively.

We must understand the root of the problem. There are experts who claim that the problem is that men have difficulty expressing their emotions.

However, Reb Chaim of Brisk had a very deep and true thought: "If a person cannot express himself it is because he doesn't really understand."

Similarly, in regards to emotions, the problem doesn't begin with the fact that it is hard for men to express their emotions. It begins with the reality of a husband who doesn't acknowledge his emotions, which are therefore murky and unclear to him. Just as a person cannot express an intellectual idea which is not clear to him, an unclear emotion is also difficult to express. He doesn't give importance and value to his own emotions.

If a person wants to express an emotion, it first has to begin growing within him. When it is mature, it will emerge.

If a person lives without any emotions developing and growing within him in the course of his daily life, then it will be hard for him to express emotions in the home. If he does express some emotions, they will likely be generated from his logical and rational understanding that it is now proper to express some emotions, but they will not emerge from his heart.

The preferred and correct manner to develop emotions therefore is to first recognize that emotions are important, to value them and to live with them. This understanding must come first, and then he will be able to express them in the home as well.

Emotions are actually half of the person. There are two kings residing within a person - the mind and the heart. The mind is the intellectual power, and the heart is the emotional strength.

Emotions are considered negative when they are not connected to the intellect. However, when the mind is connected with the heart, when the intellectual faculties are connected to his emotions, then the emotions become an essential part of the puzzle that completes the *tzuras ha'adam* (human being).

Emotions - a True Reality

There is a deep lesson that is concealed here that we have to fully understand.

Would we consider a table to be real? Definitely! Just as we consider a house to be real. No rational person will ever consider driving a car into a house because he knows that he cannot drive through because the house that is in front of him is a true reality.

Now let us apply this to our emotions. If we consider our emotions to be unreal, we are basically uprooting a true reality from existence. We must know clearly and perfectly that just as a table is real, so too are our emotions. They exist on a deeper plane, but they are real and existing.

People naturally view emotions to be a non-realistic existence, because they come and go. We see that the earth stays forever and that emotions come now and disappear only a couple of minutes later, so it is easy to conclude that emotions aren't real and we don't need to view them as such.

Emotions disappear quickly when they are not connected to the intellect. If we would connect our

emotions to our intellect and understanding, then the intellect would shine its understanding on the emotions, and give them more permanence.

The relationship between husband and wife, even when there are healthy emotions, often experience many ups and downs. These occur when the emotions are only experienced in the detailed, limited view, without the light of intelligence and encompassing view integrated with the emotions.

Emotions are no less of a reality than a table! If a person would steal a table from his friend, it would certainly be considered theft. Likewise, if a person degrades the emotions of his friend, he is sinning severely. If a person would “embarrass his friend in public,” he is harming another person’s emotions. Chazal consider this sin to be a sub-category of murder, even when there is no physical damage involved. According to some opinions, a person is obligated to sacrifice his life rather than to embarrass his friend, just as one is obligated to sacrifice his life rather than to murder another person.

Why? The emotions are no less real than the physical reality that we see and touch. When a person understands that emotions are a reality equal to all other matter of life, then he is on the right road towards developing healthy and successful relationships. As long as he will view physical existence as real and the emotions imaginary, then there is no way that this person can succeed in building a true relationship in his marriage.

Genuine Love

The love between the husband and wife must reach the level which is called *ahavas etzem*, a genuine love that is not dependent upon other factors. What is the difference between the love which is dependent upon other factors and the love which isn’t?

When love is dependent upon other factors, the relationship is based upon what we called earlier a detailed view. Only love which isn’t dependent upon any external factors is a continuous, eternal love. This kind of love develops when intelligence and emotion are united.

We learned earlier that there are three forms of love: the love which is built upon the attraction that people have for the differences (in nature) that they see in their spouse; the love which is built upon the fact that they are similar; and the love which does not depend upon any external factors – “genuine love.” The “opposite attraction” love is not eternal, because they may not be opposites from one another forever. The “similarity love” is also temporary, because their similarities may change and they can become dissimilar. Only genuine love can be called eternal.

The forms of love that most people experience are the “opposite attraction love” and the “similarity love.” In the same manner that the husband loves other parts of life, such as food, he loves his wife. A person might love a certain food and after a half year despise it, because the love was temporary and not genuine. A person could love his spouse this way.

If the couple only experiences love in these temporary and artificial ways, it will be impossible for them to truly love one another. The love that they are familiar with is merely a temporary sensation, a passing phase in life, not something which lasts forever. Even if the couple will never divorce, G-d forbid, they will still never consider their love to one another as being eternal, because they know that their love is being built upon unstable and altering foundations.

This is true in all areas of life. People do not give credence to anything which is not built upon solid and firm foundations.

For example, a person is striving vigorously to grow spiritually. As is expected, he experiences ups and downs, as it is written: “The *tzaddik* falls seven times, and he stands himself up [again]”[\[9\]](#).

Sometimes he experiences lofty, uplifting moments, and other times his emotions are not aroused; sometimes his heart is open, at other times it is closed.

If he will not merit to stand up after his seven downfalls and reach the eighth level, the level of spiritual stability, the level upon which it is written “Who can *stand* in the place of His holiness,” [10] then he will not experience a continuous spiritual reality and he won’t even know what it is. Deep in his heart, he will not value his spiritual experiences, because he knows they are temporary in nature and not everlasting. They are like a drying-up well which doesn’t have a live fountain to replenish it. He doesn’t consider his experiences to be real, because they do not remain with him.

We can compare this to the person who starts his own business. He never knows how much money he will earn because his earnings fluctuate from week to week. This person will have a hard time setting a budget and planning his life based upon his profits because they are unstable and constantly changing. The person who is working for him, on the other hand, receives a steady wage and knows how much he will earn. He has stability in his life, and he is able to plan his life and expenses according to his salary. So we see that whenever something is instable, it is hard to consider it as a true reality.

The love which comes from the attraction to opposites or the attraction to similarities is not eternal, and therefore it is impossible to build upon it. When a person only experiences these two forms of love, in his heart he may be upset because he knows that his love is not genuine. This is like a person who loves a certain food. He eats it and enjoys it, even though deep down in his heart he feels a certain disgust in his love towards the food. He knows that the love he feels for it is external and shallow. A couple can love each other, but deep down realize that their love is lacking depth.

That is why it is important to connect the emotions with the intellect, to give the emotions an enduring and everlasting existence. The mixture of intelligence with emotions is not like making a salad from cucumbers and tomatoes and tossing them together in a bowl... Not at all! The mixture of intelligence and emotions gives the emotions their permanence. Just as everyone understands that two plus two equals four, because that is the obvious reality, with the same clarity and truth, when the emotions are connected to the reality of the intelligence, they become eternal as well.

The intellect is compared to the sun and the heart is compared to the moon. The sun shines brightly and nonstop every day, but from the middle of the month, the moon appears to wane.

When only a portion of the moon is shining, it appears to our physical eye that the moon has become smaller and it is not the same as it was before. When a child who hasn’t yet studied the moon, sees the moon when it is small, he believes that that is its true and unchanging size.

This is the way the intellect views the emotions of the heart. When the emotions change and subsequently diminish, the intellect thinks that the emotions which were previously there are now non-existent. Therefore, the intellect distrusts the emotions. Even when the emotions are present, the intellect doesn’t consider them to be real, because the intellect knows that they will soon pass.

The Woman also Understands that Her Emotions are Unreal
Without the Integration of The Intelligence

It may appear that our discussion is only to teach men to value their emotions as a reality, whereas women naturally trust their emotions and do not need to be convinced that they are real. But that is not the case.

A man considers his intelligence as his primary guide in his life, and the wife follows her emotions. Who is right? The answer is that they are both wrong, because life should be viewed through both

prisms simultaneously.

The perspective of the emotions without the intellect is an incomplete view. Even a woman who follows her emotions knows deep down that she cannot completely trust her emotions without the guidance of her intellect, because emotions are unstable. Today she is angry, or she is happy, but she knows that tomorrow everything can turn around and become just the opposite.

So, it is not only the man who may not take his emotions seriously. Every intelligent woman is well aware that her emotions are unstable and that they fluctuate and vary. She also doesn't take her emotions seriously without the integration of the intelligence.

The role of the husband in the marriage is not only to understand that the wife is more in tune with her emotions and therefore he should respond to her emotions according to her needs. It is important, but it is not the primary goal. The goal is for both of them, together, to reveal their genuine love; the result of a combination of heart and mind.

They didn't get married only to reveal the love derived from "opposite attraction" or the love derived from "similarity attraction." Their goal is to develop genuine love, founded upon their union of the encompassing mind and the detailed heart; the union between the intellect and the emotion, creating a third dimension that neither the husband nor the wife can attain by themselves; a dimension called genuine love.

Adjustment Built upon Stability

The genuine love and deep connection that exists between husband and wife is comparable to the love and relationship that they both have with their Creator.

"A Jew remains a Jew, even if he is a sinner."[\[11\]](#) The relationship a Jew has with Hashem is a relationship built upon a consistent and unwavering foundation. Regardless of what the Jew will do, he will still remain connected.

The inner dimension of man is to connect to reality, to connect to the areas where there is consistency and stability. As it is written: "The world stands eternally."[\[12\]](#)

But daily life in our generation constantly teeters towards instability. The economy is unstable, national security is unstable, health, for most people, is also unstable, and people have accustomed themselves to live in this unstable world.

How do they do this?

They've learned how to be flexible, to adjust to and live with the situation that is around them, regardless of how hard it may be. During tranquil times people learn how to live with tranquility, during turbulent times people learn how to live with turbulence. Sometimes there is more *parnassah*, sometimes there is less. Sometimes there is peace, sometimes there is less peace. In order to succeed in life one needs to be able to adjust according to the times and needs.

Sometimes, however, adjustment and flexibility can be a sign of a very serious emotional condition. The negative form of flexibility occurs when a person has no goals or opinions of his own. He accepts every struggle that comes his way, because he doesn't care anymore. Water also conforms itself into whatever shape container it is poured into, because it has no form of its own.

Nowadays, because of the general instability in our society, it is very difficult to anticipate the future and to build upon it. There are many variables which can change our present reality, and therefore

people don't want to build anything upon it.

For example: A company begins to work on a project. A month and a half later, the owner of the company tells his workers to discontinue the project and to begin a different project. Three weeks later, the second project is also stopped because there aren't enough funds to finance it. A person quickly gets the message that he is unable to build anything. When a person is forced to readjust himself and his expectations again and again, he can end up losing all ambition to grow and to build, and he just floats along with whatever is happening to him.

When is there a positive form of adjustment?

A person who is not hungry for wealth, and only seeks to live comfortably will not be worried if the dollar falls ten percent, or even twenty percent, if he had a million dollars in his bank account. He feels secure that he has enough money to live comfortably until his final day and to support his children and even his grandchildren.

However, if the fellow is a paid worker barely able to cover his monthly expenses, if he will lose ten or twenty percent of his income he will feel like the floor is being taken out from under his feet. This loss will destabilize his entire life.

A person can only feel stable when he is certain he is standing upon firm ground, and the aspects that he is lacking and losing are peripheral to his main foundation.

Genuine Love: the Stable Foundation

Now we can understand how flexibility and adjustment can exist between a man and wife.

After all, there are many things which he/she is displeased with in the spouse. Not everything flows smoothly with the spouse (and later with the children). How can one possibly adjust and overlook these unpleasant issues?

If a person will only develop within his personality the love which is derived from attraction to opposites or the love which comes from similarities, then he will never be able to adjust to the changes and difficulties that occur in the marriage. If one moment there is love based on an opposite attraction, and the next moment there is love based on their similarities, then it will be impossible for him to ever adjust to the things that he doesn't appreciate. If he does adjust at all, it is really lack of interest and loss of destination instead of actual adjustment to the reality.

Whenever a person adjusts himself to the challenging experiences that occur to him in his marriage, it can only be explained with one of the following two possibilities. Either he has completely lost interest in his marriage and his life, so he adjusts because he really doesn't care anymore; or he has developed a deep and genuine relationship with his spouse so he is able to adjust himself and overlook their differences. He bends himself and adjusts to the situation because the changes which are occurring are external and do not affect the foundation of their marriage.

Why do so many marriages fail and collapse? If the love between them is based solely upon their attraction to the opposites or their attraction to the similarities, then the moment that this weak balance changes even slightly in either direction, the entire foundation of the home is affected.

However, when their relationship is based upon genuine love, then even if there will be sometimes disruptions between them in their external levels of love, the main and primary foundation of their marriage is still firm. Their relationship is established upon a much deeper dimension.

Their love can be compared to the love that parents have for their children. Although at times the children are not bringing their parents *nachas*, rather the opposite, there will always be deep love between the parents and children, because the love is genuine and real. In the exact same manner, the love between husband and wife is genuine and eternal, and cannot be changed and altered. However, if there isn't genuine love between them, and their relationship is based upon shaky foundations, then there is the Talmudic tractate on *gittin* (divorce) which explains very well what to do.

We have to reveal, within the depths of our souls, emotions which aren't at all related to the passing and temporary form of love. The love that a person has for himself is an eternal love, an everlasting love. This is the same dimension of love that a person should have for his spouse, who is "... a bone from my bones, flesh from my body..."^[13] He must reveal a love that will never change because it is genuine and real. The economy can go up and down, because it is not a reality, but something which is real and eternal will never change.

As long as their relationship is based upon fluctuating attractions, they will not be able to build a strong relationship. The relationship of marriage must pass through the filter of the emotions in order to exist. Every relationship in this world unites through emotions. People can connect and relate with one another on an intellectual plane, but they will not unite and become like one from the intellect alone. Even if they will have similar ideas and thoughts, they will not have a perfect connection without emotions.

Genuine Love: Finding the Oneness from Within

There is a deep point here which needs to be understood.

External love, so often mistaken for the real thing, is a complete falsehood. It is actually a self-centered involvement, or a slightly deeper love. However, genuine love is from the most hidden items of creation.

Genuine love is when a person reaches his inner core, and he reveals his deepest emotions.

Everyone loves himself. For hours, every day, people are involved in their love for themselves. Psychologists categorize a person who is involved with his love for himself as being emotionally ill, an egoist who only thinks about himself.

But that is only when a person is interested in himself at the expense of others: He cuts in front of other people who are waiting at line at the bank, or when he is driving he makes sure that he is the first to cross the intersection... This is an obsessed and unhealthy individual, and it is not the genuine love for oneself that we are referring to. When a person genuinely loves himself, and experiences and discovers his uniqueness and oneness, he is revealing the depths of his personality.

For a couple to unite in a deeper realm, a person must first reach the point of depth that is in his soul, to reveal this true point and from there, to connect with his spouse.

The goal: To reveal the Eternal

In conclusion, the purpose of expounding upon the differences between the emotions and the intellect and their combinations isn't merely to understand that a woman, who is usually more emotional, will express herself in one way, and the husband, who is usually intellectual, will express himself differently.

This is all true, but there is a far deeper point. The purpose of connecting the emotions with the

intellect is to create a third and new dimension, a dimension of emotions which will never change or vary, an emotion of love which isn't dependent upon any external variables, a genuine love.

The smaller details and the external emotions are also beneficial, because they will help lead the couple towards this eternal and genuine love. First, a person has to know the encompassing goal and the direction he is headed towards, and then he can utilize all the details to reach the greater goal.

[1] Sanhedrin 6b

[2] Baba Metzia 30b

[3] Yalkut Shmuel Aleph Remez 121

[4] Sanhedrin 71a

[5] Sanhedrin 71a

[6] Rambam 13 Principles of Faith

[7] Niddah 45b

[8] Yeshayahu 25:8

[9] Mishlei 24:16

[10] Tehillim 24:3

[11] Sanhedrin 44a

[12] Koheles 1:4

[13] Bereishis 2:23

Source: <https://bilvavi.net/english/getting-know-your-home-006-uniting-emotions-intellect>