

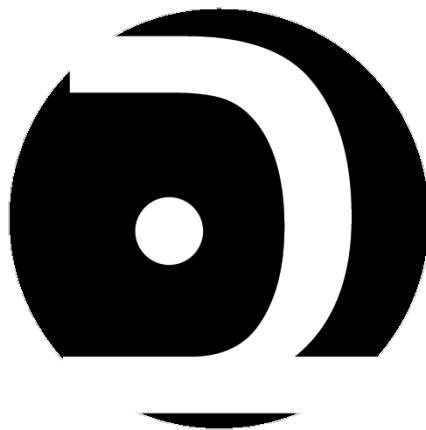
BILVAVI

**MY
HEART
ASKS**

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

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Chronic Sadness

Ever since I was a child I have had such difficult emotional suffering. I never felt serene in my mind for even one day of my life. I had it very well though from others and pretend that I'm not suffering inside, because my life is enough of a Gehinom (purgatory) and I don't need to add to it but turning off other people with my negativity which would make them avoid me and then I would be living a double Gehinom on this world. So many times I feel so discouraged that even when I daven it's all just on autopilot. I can't find the calmness to just sit down and learn. It's also very hard for me to separate even a bit from permitted taavah (physical desires). My life is basically on autopilot, I live like a robot. Yet my heart is sick inside me because I know all that's bothering me is all worthless and imaginary, and still even though I know this, I can't find any inner peace.

ANSWER

Every day, do at least one thing amidst a feeling of simchah (joy) and chiyus (energy), and from being deeply connected to what you are doing. And, with any moment of the day when you do feel serenity in your mind, be happy with each of these serene moments.

How To Relate To Our Son Who Gave Up Yiddishkeit

About 10 years ago, for various reasons our son left yeshiva. He was a very emotional and good-hearted type of child and he had been very talented. His ruchniyus began to spiral downward until he left Yiddishkeit totally. He had kept up with us though very minimally. About 3 years ago, though, he totally severed his connection with us. He says that no one understands or feels him (as a mother would to her child). Recently he has severed himself completely from Yiddishkeit and from the Creator, Rachmana Litzlan (may Hashem save him). As his parents, what should be our relationship with him? And how can I, as his mother, give him the mother-to-child bond that he feels I've let him down in?

ANSWER

Give him genuine love and help whenever he needs it, without thinking about how he acts. Help him in anything he needs, except if it's for something that's forbidden to help him with. Having pure motivations to help him and with being open towards him will, with assistance from Above, touch his heart. And if there is a zechus, this will even become the path for him to return to his root.

Tending To A Crying Infant

We have a 9-month old baby. Is it fine if we let him cry even though he's crying hysterically, and should we let him cry himself to sleep at night so that he will learn how to fall asleep on his own? Or is this damaging to the child? And in general, how much should we react or not reach to the baby when he cries?

ANSWER

You don't have to tender to every small cry of his. Whenever you feel acutely that he's bothered, that is when you should tend to his crying. However, you don't need to tend to his crying until he's crying hysterically.

The Joy of Dancing

I didn't understand a concept that the Rav said in a shiur about how dancing with the feet, which the Rav explained as the joy called alitzah (rejoicing), how this repairs the sadness that is caused by the impaired element of earth in the soul which is caused by Amalek. The verse which the Rav quotes "My heart rejoices within me" is referring to a joy that comes from the heart, not by dancing with the feet. I didn't find any of the commentaries explain this verse as referring to joy that comes from dancing, what does this joy of alitzah have to do with dancing?

ANSWER

There are 2 aspects to how dancing causes joy. The lower, physical aspect of dancing comes from the act of the dancing, which brings on joy, because "The heart is pulled after the actions." The higher, more spiritual part of dancing comes from the heart.

Expectations In Marriage & Parenting

1) Does a couple need to sit down together and tell each other what they expect from the other, in a non-demanding way and just from an understanding that "I have a certain need for such and such, and therefore I need you to act towards me based on my personal wishes."

ANSWER

1) First a couple needs to figure out if their expectations or wishes from each other are proper wishes from the other, because it's very possible that they are not being realistic or they have exaggerated their wishes from each other in a way that can't be met by the other. It would be

proper if they wouldn't have more than three wishes from the other spouse, and they should each choose what's most important to them personally.

QUESTION

2) Also, can a couple do this only if they already have a very strong, loving relationship with each other (meaning that they have already revealed "intrinsic love" towards the other) or even if they don't?

ANSWER

2) A couple doesn't need intrinsic love in order to ask each other to fulfill their wishes. They just need to have an open and developed relationship with each other, and they need wisdom of life.

QUESTION

3) And if a spouse is the more emotional type can he or she tell the other what he or she wishes from the other, or is it better not to do this?

ANSWER

3) That should be very much avoided.

QUESTION

4) Also, are they supposed to just have emunah that they need to accept the other's personality even if it's not exactly as the other spouse hoped for, and they should just get rid of their expectations and wishes from each other? Or can they certainly have wishes from each other and they also need to work on their emunah along with this?

ANSWER

4) It depends on how much emunah they have. There is never total emunah, and therefore they can combine both emunah and expectations from each other, as you guessed.

QUESTION

5) Is the concept of "intrinsic love" between spouses expressed also on a physical level and basic emotional level of nefesh habehaimis, or is it a neshamah connection because they share one neshamah?

ANSWER

6) It is rooted in the neshamah and it can spread a bit to the body.

QUESTION

6) Can a parent ask their child what they would like to see from their child, what their hopes are from him or her? Or will this just pressure the child?

ANSWER

Regarding wishes that parents would like to see from children, they should only hope and wish that the child will act according to ratzon Hashem. They should also work on themselves to minimize any wishes they have from their child.

QUESTION

7) If a person is very emotional and especially around his family, and he acts childish around his children when he plays with them, but when he's alone with himself he realizes that he needs to act more mature like an adult, but it's hard for him to be mature when he's around his children, how can he work on himself to make himself more mature when he feels like acting childish around his children?

ANSWER

7) He should halt himself every so often while he is around people, to return to his inner world.

My Diligent Husband Doesn't Give Me My Needs

My husband is so diligent in his learning that he doesn't go to sleep until he's exhausted. I am not able to get my needs from him, physically and emotionally, because he's too tired. I already spoke to him many times about this and he says that he wants to change, but he said that he has a nature that he can't go to sleep at night until he finishes what he's in the middle of learning. How can I respect him in spite of the fact that he doesn't give me my needs? Also, what can I do to change the situation?

ANSWER

Firstly, respect him for being aware of his shortcoming and also because he says that he wants to change. Set aside regular time in which the two of you spend time together. With the help of Hashem, after making this agreement, he will be able to keep to it.

Increase of Orphans & Widows Today

There seem to be an increase of more orphans and widows in our generation today – what is the meaning of this?

ANSWER It is not any more than what was in the previous generations.

Kaballah – Above Keser

1) In sefer Bilvavi Mishkan Evneh Vol. IX, the Rav explains that above the 10 Sefiros are three more levels, the “worlds of the infinite” which, from lowest to highest, are: Sham (There), Etzem (Essence), and Shoresh HaShorashim (root of all roots). Do these three points correspond to the three points before the tzimtzum which the Mahari Srug wrote about, which are Avir Kadmon, Tiharu, and Malbush? Do these three levels also correspond to the 3 “prongs atop the crown” above Keser, which are called emunah, taanug and havayah?

ANSWER

1) Yes. The Mahari Srug describes three “heads” – the uppermost triad – the highest being Atik, the intermediate point being ayin, and the lower point being Arich.

QUESTION

2) Is the place of shoresh hashorashim “root of all roots” the innermost point of the soul that we can reach or are there any points above it or deeper than it? Also, how can anything be higher than Etzem, which implies the “essence” – if there’s a point higher than etzem/essence than how can etzem be called etzem if it’s not yet the very essence?

ANSWER

2) Yes – etzem is from the word atzimah, to “close”, as in closing the eyes, to negate, the perspective of darkness (not seeing this world), which enables one to see the perspective of emunah, “Your faith at nights.”

QUESTION

3) Is shoresh hashorashim, the “root all roots” above havayah? Is the havayah the Yechidah of a person which is connected to the ohr EinSof but the ohr EinSof is higher than a person?

ANSWER 3) According to the view of Mahari Srug, Arich is synonymous with Yeish (something), Ayin is hedair (absence), and Atik is the connecting point to the higher world, to the “infinite light”. According to Rav Chaim Vital, there are only two levels [with no intermediate point]: Atik

(which is also called Efes/zero) and Arich (ayin/nothingness). The view of Mahari Srug, however, is that ayin is the intermediate level between Arich and Atik. This is a fundamental, expansive matter. In the teachings of Rav Chaim Vital, the Sefiros of Keser and Daas are not able to co-exist – wherever there can be Keser, there is no Daas, and whenever there is Daas, there is no Keser. There is either the triad of Keser, Chochmah, and Binah, or the triad of Chochmah, Binah, and Daas. Also, according to Rav Chaim Vital, there are always two general levels – the mochin, the two perspectives, which are Chochmah and Binah, rooted in the kav (the ray of infinite light – the root of chochmah) and tzimtzum (the contraction of infinite light – the root of binah). But according to Mahari Srug, there are always three levels – either Keser-Chochmah-Binah, or Chochmah- Binah- Daas.



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