



LETTERS FROM THE REBBE

MENTAL HEALTH

The following letters were selected from the book *Healthy in Body, Mind and Spirit, Letters and Talks of the Lubavitcher Rebbe on Mental Health*.

The letters were compiled and translated by Rabbi Sholom Ber Wineberg. The book was published by Sichos in English and may be purchased at SIE.org/mentalhealth. The list price is \$20, but if you order on the website you pay \$18. Order it now; these letters are pure gold! -Ed



LIVE LIFE SIMPLY; STOP YOUR INCESSANT SELF-EXAMINATION

...It would be most beneficial if for about a year you would entirely cease dwelling on making an accounting of your life: how others treat you, your relationship to the entire world, etc.

Perform with simplicity that which our Torah states, “Serve G-d in a wholehearted manner” (*Devarim* 18:13), living the life of the *akeres habayis* in an uncomplicated and artless manner:

[Occupy yourself in seeing to] the *kashrus* of food and drink, *taharas hamishpachah*, receiving guests, the lessons of *Chitas*, and so on. And as mentioned above, do so in an utterly simple and unpretentious manner.

When you begin thinking soul-searching thoughts, tell yourself decisively and purposefully that you refuse to think about these matters before the year 5748* [and that you reaffirm to yourself that] presently my task is that my home and life be conducted with simplicity, wholeheartedness, and joy.

(*Likutei Sichos*, Vol. 34, p. 285)

*Not before a little over a year’s time, as the Rebbe’s letter to this individual was dated 10 Elul 5746, near the conclusion of the year 5746.

THE JEWISH CONSCIENCE

...A Jew can attain internal and external harmony only by living life as he or she is supposed to live it. If, for whatever reason, one’s daily conduct and life are not as they should be, this disturbs the person’s harmony and creates a feeling of restlessness, insecurity, etc.

... Sometimes, as you mention in your letter, it comes as a result of having a troubled conscience, all the more so since there is a special Jewish conscience over and above the general human conscience that is common to all decent human beings, Jews and non-Jews alike.

(*From a letter of the Rebbe*)

THE SOURCE OF YOUR INDECISIVENESS

...In reference to your writing about having doubts and the difficulty of making decisions, and about a general feeling of insecurity, it is unnecessary to elaborate to you at length that such feelings arise

when a person thinks that he is alone and can only rely upon himself and his own judgment, and therefore feels doubtful and insecure about each move he has to make.

And while he also trusts in G-d, this trust is somehow superficial, without permeating him and his way of life in every detail; and [when it does, it does so] only on certain days, such as the High Holy Days, [when] he feels closer to G-d.

But when a person's faith in G-d is deep, and when he reflects that G-d's benevolent providence extends to each and every person, and to each and every detail, and each and every minute, surely he must develop a profound sense of security and confidence....

(From a letter of the Rebbe dated 25 Elul 5735)

WHEN ONE'S HOME EVOKES SAD MEMORIES

...You write about moving. ... This is not advisable at the present time.

As to the fact that your present dwelling evokes memories which cause sadness: It may be beneficial to change around the furniture, or even the use of the rooms, and the like.

Additionally, it would be proper, if at all possible, that from time to time there should be a Torah class in your house (with at least a few people) whether in the revealed portion of Torah, or in the esoteric portion of Torah, which in our generations has been revealed in *Toras HaChassidus*—or in both together.

May you convey glad tidings regarding all of the above.

(Igros Kodesh, Vol. 20, p. 128)

INABILITY TO CONCENTRATE

...Regarding that which you write about your [difficulty in] concentrating:

There is the known counsel of studying while gazing in the book [from which you are studying] and praying from a prayer book. The

book should be open in front of you at the place where you are holding in your studies, even when you are studying by heart or engrossed in thought.

(Igros Kodesh, Vol. 17, p. 331)

DON'T FORCE YOUR CONTINUED CONCENTRATION ON A SUBJECT YOU GREW TIRED OF

...With regard to that which you write about your weak power of concentration:

One of the proven pieces of advice regarding this matter is that when becoming tired [of thinking about one area of learning and study], shift to some other area of study—whatever your heart desires. Do not force your power of thought to concentrate specifically about something that has already tired you out....

(Igros Kodesh, Vol. 9, p. 90)

DEALING WITH LONELINESS

I would like to confirm receipt of your letter—undated—in which you write about your emotional state, etc.

It is worse [to be] in Gan Eden all alone than to be in ... with the company of other Jews.

I believe that I have previously written, a few times, that in my opinion—and this is what I have clearly seen in actuality—every person, without exception, has a natural need for social contact, though obviously the level of dependency varies from person to person.

When one tries to ignore this natural need it understandably leads to complications and the like. For those who for some reason have difficulty connecting with others, their only solution is as in the case of learning how to swim, which is impossible before entering the water, even when standing close to the edge of the river. Rather, one must first jump into the water.

Automatically, the process of gaining swimming skills begins, and eventually one masters them. Contemplating whilst standing at the edge of the river how, what, and in which manner he will learn to swim is useless as it is impossible to learn how to swim unless one is in the water.

Pardon me for saying so, but this is the case in your regard. In your letter you argue whether or not to accept a job which will involve being in the presence and company of others, all whilst sitting in your own room or personal space.

Obviously I do not intend to admonish, rather to try once more; possibly, this time my words will be effective and you will jump in to a situation in which you will be forced (at least for the first few days) to be amongst people outside of your own home, and I strongly hope that within a short amount of time it will no longer be a strain and you will see the great importance and gain, also for others in society, as it is not for naught that man was created with a natural need for social contact.

... There is a known Chassidic saying repeated in the name of great Chassidic masters, that it is worse [to be] in Gan Eden all alone than to be in ... with the company of other Jews.

... May it be the will of G-d that there be drastic development for the good and that you will have good news in this area.

With blessings for good news...

(Igros Kodesh, Vol. 18, p. 534)

This edition of Letters From the Rebbe was generously sponsored in honor of Aharon Yitzchak ben Sara. May he have a *refuah sheleimah* and may all his needs be filled in the fastest, gentlest way possible. Please email info@nsheichabadnewsletter.com for sponsorship opportunities.

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