Open HOUSE

SPOUSE, CHAVRUSA, OR BOTH?

I came across the following that the Rebbe said, and I would like to share it with others:

"I encourage husband and wife to learn together; the husband learning with his wife, or even the wife learning with [teaching] her husband (the *halachos* relevant to women [where she may therefore be more proficient]), especially in our times when women are scholars. It should be noted that Jewish history tells of righteous women who were learned in Torah, such as Rashi's daughters. It is said that Rashi had no sons, only daughters. He would teach them and they recorded his teachings" (*Sichah of Parshas Eikev*, 20 Menachem Av, 5750, page 162).

L. O.
Chicago, IL

THOSE ANNOYING THOUGHTS

This morning I was dropping four-year-old Yaakov off at preschool when I saw another boy getting dropped off by his older sisters. I know that boy's mother; she is my older daughter's principal. And not only that. She is an excellent principal, with just the perfect combination of passion for education, love for her students, and a thick skin to make her very, very good at what she does.

And just thinking of her, and her major contribution to educating the next generation of Jewish girls, made me feel bad about myself.

I have a BA, I have an MA, I'm a smart person with certain abilities. And what am I doing with those abilities? Taking care of errands, phone calls, and doctor's visits in the morning (with a bit of blogging squeezed in) and hanging out in the playground, and then in the kitchen (feeding and then cleaning and then feeding again) most of the afternoon.

And then a funny thing happened.

Later this morning, I had to pick something up for my husband in Kiryat Belz, and I saw a Belzer woman walking home from the grocery store pushing her shopping cart. And I noticed that in her cart she had eight bags of flour. I imagined the hours she would spend today baking *challos* and cakes, filling her apartment, and even the hall outside her apartment, with that heavenly, fresh-baked smell which is such a rarity in the Weisberg home.

And just thinking of her, and all her home-baked goods, made me feel bad about myself.

It's kind of like it never ends. Seeing this woman, and seeing that woman. And feeling badly because this one has a career and I don't. And this one makes her own *challah*, and I don't.

I think stuff like this all the time, but I am noticing it more now because I am taking Rabbi Aryeh Nivin's new "Belief Notebook" workshop. In this workshop, conducted over the phone [readers can find out more at newchabura.com], every day we need to write down a disempowering experience we had. And then we write down the false belief that caused us to feel disempowered, followed by the true, empowering belief that would make us see how silly we are to get so down on ourselves all the time.

For example, my belief notebook entry today was about the principal.

I wrote, "False belief: True success, fulfillment, and meaningful



contribution to the world only come from employment outside of the home."

Then I wrote, "True belief: I can be a successful, fulfilled person who makes a contribution to the world through caring for my family and myself and pursuing projects from my home."

The goal of this workshop is that we will create a "Belief Notebook" containing our false beliefs followed by the true beliefs, which we can review whenever those same old disempowering thoughts come up.

Sounds good. I hope it works. I really need it!

Chana Jenny Weisberg
Jerusalem, Israel

Chana Jenny Weisberg is a stay-at-home mother of eight in Jerusalem who provides inspiration and encouragement for other Jewish moms through her writing. To read more by Chana Jenny Weisberg, subscribe to her blog at JewishMom.com.

A GMACH YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

The Simchas Rochel & Golda Gown Gmach opened its doors in the summer of 2014 with two racks of gowns in Devora Wilmowsky's dinette.

Located in the heart of Crown Heights, it now consists of hundreds of gowns, and is situated in a serene space with three dressing rooms in the basement of a lovely brownstone on a quiet, tree-lined block.

The *gmach* could easily be mistaken for an exclusive boutique, with a carefully curated selection of evening wear for the observant Jewish woman.

Devora had a lot of experience with evening wear and *gmachs*, having volunteered for a local gown gmach for three years. It had always been her dream to open one for plus-sized women who, she found, were an underserved population.

She partnered with Chana Seligson, who had been a long-time care-giver to elderly parents and after their passing, found more available time on her hands. She sourced dozens of gowns for the *gmach*.

Together, they decided to maintain an inventory geared to women of all sizes. The two were joined by Devora's mother, Sorah Andrusier, who spearheaded the effort to raise funds to renovate a space.

The *gmach* is named for Devora's grandmother who is also Sorah's

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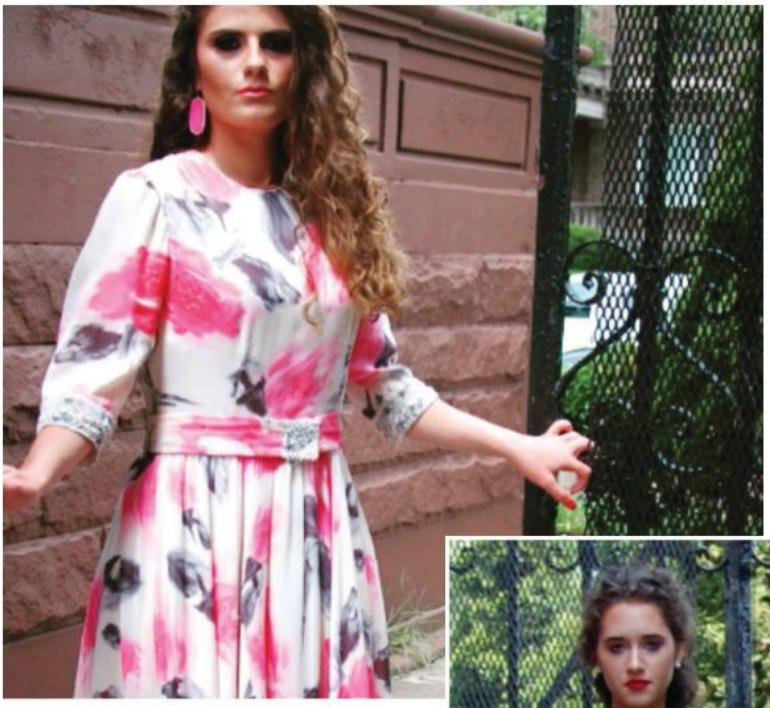
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mother, Mrs. Rochel Kloc *a"h*, and Chana's mother, Mrs. Goldie Glicksman *a"h*. Both were courageous Holocaust survivors who rebuilt their lives in the United States and left generations of descendants.

Both elderly ladies, who were always impeccably dressed, met in the office of a local Brooklyn physician while accompanied by their respective care-giving daughters. No one could have known that posthumously, these two wonderful women would be linked through this charitable endeavor.

The *gmach* is open by appointment during the following hours:

Sundays:1:00 to 4:30 p.m.

Mondays: 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Wednesdays: 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Call or text 347-770-4136 to book your appointment.

To see the latest styles as they come in and photos of happy patrons looking glamorous, follow the *gmach* on Instagram @gowngmach or on Facebook at Simchas Rochel & Golda Gown Gmach. Mazel tov!

Faye Mink
Crown Heights

I CAN'T SAY NO

I am very kind and good-hearted. My whole family is. In fact, I was raised to do *chessed* wherever I go and whenever I can. If I have a spare moment or a spare penny, it immediately goes to help people in need.

But as my family has grown, I have become aware that the fact that I can't say no is sometimes more of a handicap than an advantage. Because when I can't say no to one person, I end up saying no to another person.

For example, I can't say no to Shabbos guests. So I end up saying no to my children who need some attention from their parents on Shabbos when phones and computers are turned off.

I can't say no to people who want me to do freelance work for them, so I end up shortchanging my first employers to whom I owe loyalty and well-restedness.

I can't say no to people who need a place to stay for a few weeks, so I end up saying no to my three young daughters who need their room sometimes.

I can't say no to my younger siblings who love to visit whenever they have vacation, so I end up saying no to my husband who wants a peaceful private evening after a hard day's work.

I realize that when I don't say no to one person, I am saying no to someone else, so I have to really think about what's right and choose wisely how my time/money/space is spent.

Because when I can't say no, I am saying no. And I don't want to lead my life making decisions along the path of least resistance.

Shayna R.
Brooklyn, NY

We understand that you want to vent, and that's what Open House is for—but if you keep it constructive and polite, your chances of it being printed go way, way up! Kindly shorten your submission to 350 words or less, and e-mail it to submissions@nsheichabadnewsletter.com. N'shei Chabad Newsletter reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity or length. Please be aware that if you do not sign your essay, you might not be consulted regarding edits. —Ed.