

## Nourishment for the Neshama

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### **Arousing love of Hashem and awe of Hashem - Two Constant mitzvahs to help us with netzach of gevurah and hod of gevurah**

Arousing love of Hashem and awe of Hashem is not only the basis of esteem, it is hishtadlus as well. On Shabbos will be the midda of netzach of gevurah, endurance in our discipline and Sunday will be hod of gevurah, the humility in discipline. When we are experiencing negative charges, we need discipline to endure our positive service of Hashem and we need discipline to be able to shift our identity and nullify the ego in favor of the Torah's basis for esteem. Discipline is effortful hishtadlus that tells Hashem something urgently important - we are making effort to move from self-referencing to Gd-consciousness.

Rabbi Yaakov Zalman Labinsky teaches in his classes at [www.becomingdivine.com](http://www.becomingdivine.com) that all of our negativities and difficulties have as their root fear of abandonment planted since we were expelled from Gan Eden and fear of annihilation planted since Adam was made mortal. He also teaches that these fears ARE externalities even though they feel internal. The reason they are "externalities" is that they are rooted in the kelipas of talva and galva, respectively, and form the magnets that draw our intellect from living purposefully to reveal Hashem in this world to logical ways to fulfill self-interest based on self-referencing.

The beauty is that the system built into us is so subconscious, it is a strong box that dominates our entire sense of reality. What an amazing thing!! Imagine now that this very strong box that dominates our entire sense of reality could be a beacon to reveal Torah and Hashem's attributes!! Does this sound impossible? Does it sound too hard? By ourselves, we could never change our nature. Our nature is just like nature itself, and Hashem is running nature. Yet Hashem tells us in the Torah that the task is doable and that we can serve Him in this moment by moment way, a way that is within our abilities. Enter free willed choice!

Is it within our skill group to arouse love in our heart? How about belief that Hashem is One? Simply by arousing love for Hashem and awe of the creation and its Creator, we are doing hishtadlus. The challenge is to bring this choice from the intellect deeper and deeper so that it penetrates our hearts and is visible through our elevated speech and action. How?

Have you ever used a measuring cup for oil and then wanted to use it for something else? The oil remains a drop on the bottom and sticks to the sides. In order to reuse the measuring cup, we want to remove all the oil because otherwise the oil will be in the other items we are measuring, affecting it. So we turn on the faucet and pour into the measuring cup water. Because oil rises, the water sinks into the cup and as the water fills the cup, the oil floats to the top until it spills out of the cup and is totally displaced by the water. Sometimes, we have to scrub the oil off the walls of the cup or off the bottom, so we put in our hand and rub and rub loosening the oil so that it too rises to the top as the water continues to pour in.

When we have a strong reaction, our vessel is filled with the fear of abandonment and annihilation in various sticky hard to identify subconscious disguises that we don't even need to understand! Our highest gift, speech, which distinguishes us from animals and is meant to be used for prayer and words of kindness, becomes a tool in the hand of the more animalistic self-referencing subconscious fears operating within us. How can we begin to displace our fearful subconscious with Torah?

What we need to do is NOT IDENTIFY our esteem with the messages of our reaction, messages directing us to re-establish our sense of value, giving us logical reasons and suggestions for saying and doing things that are self-referencing and self-interested and self-defending. By immediately arousing love of Hashem and awe of Hashem with our intellect instead, **we tell Hashem that we identify with His purpose and will and wish only to bring Torah and His attributes into the matter, dedicating ourselves to His service so that He can be revealed in this world.**

Love Hashem and Fear Hashem are two of the six constant mitzvahs and these mitzvahs provide a Torah pathway through our characteristics: chesed, gevurah, tiferes, netzach, hod and yesod are an emotional pathway to bring wisdom and understanding into this world. We verbally introspect in order to gain insight on how to expand our speech and deeds that reveal love of Hashem with chesed and endurance and on how to stop what is blocking us from loving Hashem by having awe of Hashem in order that we do not do anything hurtful or harmful. By utilizing endurance (netzach) and humility (hod) within discipline (gevurah), our efforts bring us to what will be the next step, to bond our intellect to His purposes, yesod, with an integrated understanding of what He desires of us and what our esteem is based on. From this place of bonding with Hashem, with integrated knowledge that all there is in the world is Hashem, we demonstrate to Hashem by using free will to direct our intellect to choosing to love Hashem and have awe of Hashem that we are bringing Torah and Hashem into the matter because we wish to displace the fears of abandonment and annihilation so that we may reveal His Torah or His Attributes of Mercy in time and space. The act of arousing love and awe, that effortful choice alone, is the basis of our esteem. When we begin to identify our esteem with our free-willed choices over time to arouse love and awe of Hashem because we desire to serve Hashem, we find that the negative charges we previously experienced when trying to restore value to ourselves based on satisfying what is triggering the subconscious fears of abandonment or annihilation are not as compelling. Instead we begin to experience *relief* from the charged emotions and see them dissolve, realizing that our negativity is OPTIONAL. Because the negativity dissolves, we begin to grow in emunah that Torah is the pathway to pleasantness and peace and this increases our resolve for the intellect to identify esteem based on free-willed choice to arouse love and awe of Hashem in order to reveal His Torah and attributes in the world. Verbal introspection, speaking out loud to Hashem about the circumstances, our charges, our wish to only serve Him and be who He wants us to be, and speaking out loud of our love of Hashem and our awe of how He creates us and the world and His Omniscience, is the hishtadlus. What follows in speech and deed is now going to return to its intended elevated purpose as speaking beings, rather than having speech and deeds serving animalistic goals for their own sake.

No matter what the circumstances, because Hashem is in charge of the circumstances and all success, because we use verbal introspection to reveal through speech the intellect's choice to pursue Hashem's purpose in creating us over the desiring emotions, we have made hishtadlus. Often we get an insight, but the actions and speech we use in the moment are now infused with Hashem in the picture, and that relationship is so precious to us that nothing takes priority over the feeling of closeness to Hashem, the pleasure He designs for us in time and space, part of the pleasure for which Hashem creates us. When we love and fear Hashem in the moment in this way, He Who runs the world is present in our lives. No matter what the outcome, we have esteem and relationship with Hashem, the ultimate source of pleasure in our lives even if, heaven forbid, we perish. This is the example of Rabbi Akiva's martyrdom from which we take constant inspiration: to love Hashem with all our heart no matter what. When we do this, in a two-world picture, everything is good AND we avert saying and doing things that bring into the world reflections of our fears of abandonment and annihilation, reflections that inevitably involve saying or doing something of self-interest that removes relationship with Hashem from the picture in many cases by substituting ego and self-referencing values, heaven forbid.

Hashem in creating us with a subconscious made an incredible vessel. Left without Torah, we have no awareness that we are behaving with self-interest because of subconscious fears of abandonment and annihilation that touch the ingredients and relationships in our lives with reflected pain. With Torah (water), we can extinguish the radioactivity of the animal soul, displacing the fears so that in the strong neurocircuitry of our mind we can utilize our hearts to reveal warmth, light, bracha and Torah values, the ultimate service for which we are created. Displacing the fears with love and awe of Hashem (Torah mitzvahs) is a lifelong process – the effort is what Hashem desires from us every moment. This is our

Immense value in every moment, to make this choice and produce positive influence. This is what gives Hashem nachas. And may our effort to arouse love and awe of Hashem be precious in His eyes and may we create brachas that help us merit redemption.