

## Nourishment for the Neshama

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### **Once an ego reaction is interrupted for a moment, how can an ego reaction be redirected to serve Hashem?**

Many of the insults and affronts to our egos come from messages that we relate to as diminishing us. Perhaps we were as children taught to cooperate in a way that has left baggage points, and perhaps we realize that we are re-playing those messages with internal responses that need improvement. How can we re-direct what feels like automatic magnetic pulls to such painful and seemingly threatening affronts?

Step one is to understand this part of our soul as trapped in a false idea, revealed to be false by virtue of it being negative. Every fear has its roots in the fear of abandonment or fear of annihilation that is built into our brains because of Adam's eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

Step two is to understand that doing so is exactly what Hashem wants from us in the moment, to release the part of our soul that is clanging between our heads and hearts, generating negativity within us so that it can re-unite with our higher soul and give off tremendous light. Thus, we open a channel of love for Hashem and step onto the path of releasing to unify His Name and create something good.

Step three is to realize that by choosing step 2, we are attempting to emulate Hashem's patience. The word patience is the same as the word bearing the burden in Hebrew. What burden are we bearing? By moving to step 2, we are shifting from what has happened to "me" that "I" have been insulted to "this is happening because we are all suffering from confusion of mind due to Adam's eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil." This shifts us to a place of building shalom, of unity, of seeing the common shared pit of human nature from which we must climb out in order to repair Adam's sin.

Step four is to patiently sit with that a little longer, bearing the burden, seeing internally how the boundaries of the experience shift. Perhaps we will see a time when we did the same thing to someone. Perhaps we will experience a wave of the first time we ever felt that insult, perhaps it will cause an old pain to surface. As it does, just let it come out of our hearts and exhale and tell Hashem we wish to release this part of us that has been stuck, that we wish to unify His Name.

Step five is to say (and we may have to strain our intellect to do so, meaning hold the strength in our hands yet keep the newly re-directed emotion from flowing back into the "me,") Please Hashem with that same strength and more, please bless us, heal us, forgive us, renew us and redeem us. By so doing, we align ourselves with Hashem's midda of cleansing us of our sins. The arousal within us to forgive and to cleanse opens the channel from above. We virtually make ourselves into the vessel through which the forgiveness and cleansing comes into the world.

Repeat as often as necessary. This is a process and it may take several times even with the same trapped issue. It could even take years. But doing this process should **immediately bring a moment of calm and clarity, called the pleasure of connecting to Hashem** and each time break the strength of the reaction so that we comprehend that we can eventually dig ourselves out from its grip. We are literally

retraining our mind and heart to serve Hashem in the moment.

May the light we shine in the process bring a new light to the world.