



CECE@Kinus 5777

**sources about Chinuch and young children
based on Rebbe's teachings**

from CECEmails through the years



The Rebbe Introduces Mivtzah Chinuch

In Iyar 5736, the Rebbe introduced the Mivtza Chinuch. On 2 Iyar, the Rebbe farbrenged for the THIRD time during Iyar, in connection with the launching of Mivtza Chinuch.

The 3 Farbrengens were: 1) Thurs. night Rosh Chodesh, 2) Shabbos Rosh Chodesh, 3) Sun. night Beis Iyar). The Rebbe explained why he farbrenged 3 times, to bring a Chazoko, extra strength into Mivtza Chinuch, that everyone - even children - will do what they can in Chinuch, with long life, and they will be a Dugma Chayo (a living example).

Some excerpts from [The Rebbe's Mivtzoym, Volume 1](#) by Rabbi Shmuel Bistritzky about Mivtzah Chinuch (pages 314-317):

Whatever is the past - is the past. From now on, we must make sure that every Jewish child receives an appropriate education.

And the necessity of speed in this regard is obvious. Indeed, every moment can be spent making the situation the way it needs to be, and the way that this will be done now is how it will continue in the future.

And especially - there needs to be an educational ideal that relates to each of the four sons: the one that is wise, the one that is wicked, the one that is simple, and the one that does not know how to ask. ...

And the manner of this activity is to be learned from the words of the Midrash - the instruction of the Torah - to "follow the rules of the state."

The custom of the country is to make a "noise" and a "storm" in the press and establish 'committees', etc. And in accordance with the words of the Midrash mentioned above, one should make a "noise" and a "storm" etc. regarding the education of boys and girls.

This is both in terms of educating those who are "small" in years and those who are "small" in knowledge and require an education.

It is not my intention to say these things for the sake of merely being heard, without it making a difference whether these things are remembered or not. Rather, these things must actually go down, and in the words of the Mishnah in Pirkei Avos for this Shabbos that "words are not the principal, but the actions."

With regard to what has been mentioned, everything should be done in a manner of a "tumult" of holiness and "storm" of holiness,

with "skipping" and "jumping" of holiness, and further more, there should be skipping and jumping within the skipping and jumping that is appropriate for activities on the Shabbos that comes after Pesach. This is an elevation ("Shabbos") in the actual skipping and jumping ("Pesach") in itself.

In a simple sense, anyone who has done this and succeeded in it until now will be able to succeed in this all the more and they need to succeed in this all the more. And they will succeed in this all the more, attaining the greatest and loftiest success!

Rebbe: Guidelines for Chinuch



from crownheights.info

*From upcoming book, **Letter and Spirit**, a letter from the Rebbe on the topic of Chinuch, in which he outlines three basic points and guidelines for the successful upbringing of one's children. The letter was written in English through the Rebbe's trusted secretary **Rabbi Nissan Mindel**, and was made available by the latter's son-in-law, **Rabbi Sholom Ber Shapiro**.*

By the Grace of G-d

24th of Adar , 5734
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Mr.
Cleveland, Ohio

Greeting and Blessing:

I am in receipt of your letter and will remember you in prayer for the fulfillment of your heart's desires for good.

With regard to the problem of how to deal with your oldest daughter, this like other *shaalot*, should be discussed with a competent and experienced Rav to whom you could give all the necessary details and who could then advise you. Furthermore, a Rav is bound to confidence, and therefore you could discuss the situation with him quite frankly.

As for asking for some guidance, I must be quite candid with you even though this may be somewhat painful, but I have no choice in the matter, for it is my duty to mention it, even though briefly:

Bringing up children requires of Jewish parents several basic principles. Firstly, the **parent must always try to provide a shining example to their children of the kind of conduct that they would like to see in them**. Moreover, children usually think that insofar as they are concerned, it would be quite sufficient for them to have standards

which it would be quite sufficient for them to have standards which are only half as good as those of their parents.

Consequently, **parents must take this into account and see to it that their own standards are at least twice as high as the minimum they expect of their children.**

A further point and this too is essential, is that it is necessary also to take into account the strong pressures and influences to which children are constantly exposed in school and in the neighborhood where they live and are raised. And where **such influences are negative, the child must be provided with an ample dose of immunization to be able to resist those influences.**

A third point and this is also essential, is this: Jews have always been a minority among the nations and are of course a minority in the United States. Regardless of the democratic principles which are professed in this country, with emphasis on conventional values, it is natural for a minority to develop an inferiority complex in relation to the majority. Therefore, **it is necessary to implant in the Jewish child from earliest youth a feeling of pride in the heritage and tradition of his parents and ancestors and a strong feeling of Jewish identity.** Thus, instead of hiding his or her Jewishness they will be able to be proud of it without any inhibitions, despite any derision by non-Jewish neighbors or any prejudiced individuals. This calls for, above else, **instilling into the child the right sense of true Jewish values, with priority of the spiritual over the material, as well as of inner peace and harmony over materialistic considerations of career, which predominate in the non-Jewish environment.**

Needless to say, all the above is written not merely for the purpose of pointing out what the past should have been. We have a clear directive in the *Torah* that a Jew should never despair and there are ways of rectifying the past, to some extent at least.

Thus, in the light of all that has been said above, it is clear that the parents must at least henceforth conduct their lives in accordance with the points mentioned above, by strengthening their own commitment and adherence to the *Torah* way of life, in the daily life in every respect and detail. For Judaism is not a way of life that is limited to three days in the year, or one day in a week or on special occasions, but it is a daily experience.

Much more could have been said on such an important matter but I trust the above will suffice to realize the importance of ordering the daily life in accordance with the *Torah* and *mitzvos* in the fullest measure. Finally, **since a Jewish family is like one unit and one body, where a benefit to one part of it is a benefit to the whole, the strengthening of the daily conduct, permeated with *yirat Shomayim*, on the part of the parents, is bound to reflect favorably on the children, either consciously or unconsciously or both.**

May G-d grant that you have good news to report in all above.

With blessing,

For the Lubavitcher Rebbe

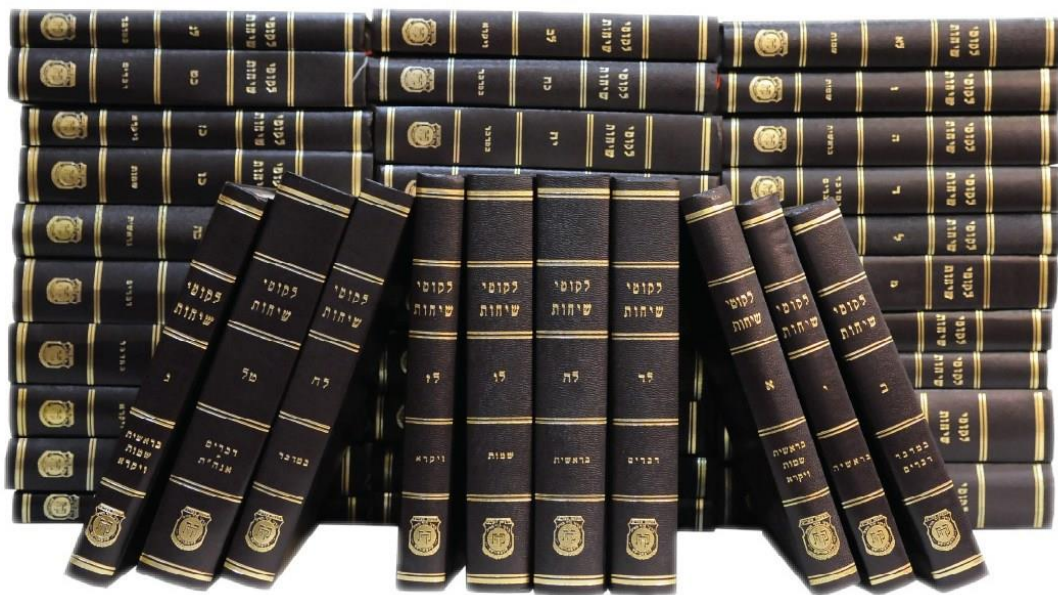
by

The above letter is from the forthcoming volume IV of The Letter and the Spirit by Nissan Mindel Publications. The letters are from the archives of Rabbi Dr. Nissan Mindel, a personal secretary to the Previous Rebbe and The Rebbe, whose responsibilities included the Rebbe's correspondence in English.

We thank Rabbi Sholom Ber Shapiro, director of Nissan Mindel Publications and the one entrusted by Rabbi Mindel, his father-in-law, with his archives, for making these letters available to the wider public. May the merit of the many stand him in good stead.

Sicha about Chinuch of little children

February 4, 2016 by [deekras](#) [Leave a comment](#)



During the CECE@ Kinus event (5776), Chanie Baron read excerpts of a Sicha about **Chinuch of little children – Likutei Sichos 15 – Vayera, page 129.**

It is so much richer to learn it from the original – in Yiddish. I tried to find the sicha translated into English, but couldn't find it. After googling, I found 3 sources that more or less bring out the same point (see below). The Rebbe did mention this point several times, hence the different sichos mentioned in the resources below. - DK

In his early childhood, the Rebbe Rashab would visit his grandfather the Tzemach Tzedek to receive his blessings. Once, upon the occasion of his birthday, he entered his grandfather's chambers crying hysterically, and asked his grandfather: "Why did Hashem appear to our forefather Avraham, but does not appear to us (me)?" The Tzemach Tzedek answered: "When a Jew (who is a tzaddik) of ninety-nine years resolves to become circumcised, he deserves the merit of having Hashem appear to him."

This story teaches us a remarkable lesson: Since this event occurred while the Rebbe Rashab was merely a child of four or five years of age ["Less than six years old" – the age when a child is introduced to the cheder according to the Talmud – ed.], we may infer that **with a proper education, one can evoke within a child of only four or five years of age, a powerful thirst for spirituality and G-dliness**, to the point where the child breaks down in tears.

In consideration of the above, it should be noted that this does not pose a contradiction to the directive of the Rambam in regard to the method of teaching a child, namely to encourage the child with "articles that please his childish mind.... awarding him with nuts, etc." because the above event (particularly after being publicized by the [previous] Rebbe) revealed and revolutionized a novel approach in education. In chassidic expression, this event "opened a new channel" that enables us to imbue a child with a sensitivity to G-dliness, to the point where he considers G-dliness equivalent to "articles which please his childish mind" and can thus be utilized as an award in his childhood years.

... Because the darkness of the present generations pulsates with such intensity, it is particularly now that we have been given the potential to educate children who are even "less than six years old" to make spirituality and G-dliness become a part of their lives.

(Likkutei Sichos vol. 20, p. 61) The Rebbe's Holy Care, Issue 19

<https://www.facebook.com/AnashChinuchhoraah/posts/1143663588996421>

The Rebbe quotes the famous story about the Rebbe Rashab, as told by the Frierdiker Rebbe:

"When my father was four or five years old he went to his grandfather, the Tzemach Tzedek, on Shabbos Vayeira, and began to cry as he asked, "Why did Hashem show Himself to our father Avraham – but He does not show Himself to us?" The Tzemach Tzedek answered him: "When a tzadik decides at the age of ninety-nine years that he should be circumcised, he deserves that Hashem appear to him."

The Rebbe asks the following question: Why did the Frierdiker Rebbe emphasize that the story happened with his father when he was only four or five years old?

The answer: In order to teach us a fundamental lesson in the chinuch of (even) very young children, as follows:

The Rambam writes (in his introduction to his commentary to Mishnayos) that in order to get a child to learn Torah, you need to "bribe" him, by promising him prizes (nuts, shoes, honor etc.); basically, things that he loves (דברים האהובים אצלו).

Now, is it possible to train a young child that G-dliness should be דברים האהובים אצלו? In other words, to learn לשמה, just for Hashem's sake?

The Rebbe says YES!

In fact, this is indeed the reason why the Frierdiker Rebbe emphasized that his father was only four or five years old when the story took place. In order to teach us, that a **NEW**

CHANNEL (צינור) in chinuch has been opened, namely, **that a child of merely four or five years old can become accustomed to want Ruchnius and Elokus (G-dliness), to the point that he yearns for Hashem to reveal Himself to him.**

And once the Rebbe Rashab "paved" this NEW path, ANY child can reach this level.

Even a child of four or five years old, does not have to be "bribed" to learn Torah (through offering him prizes etc.), but he can learn Torah just because he wants Elokus; It became דברים האהובים אצלו.

The Rebbe emphasizes that specifically NOW, since a new channel has been opened, it is possible to accomplish this by a child¹.

That means, that through a proper Chinch, we can "breach" the nature of children, and train them to want Ruchniyus. To desire nothing else but Elokus.

The Rebbe concludes by saying, that if the teacher is not successful in accomplishing this with his students, it is simply because the teacher has not spoken from his heart. If the teacher would have spoken **from his heart**, he would have surely succeeded.

¹ The Rebbe adds (in a footnote): This is similar to the rule that's found concerning certain instances in halacha, that "הטבעים נשתנו" (the nature of people's character has actually "changed").

<http://www.chinuchtime.com/articles/Rebbe.doc>

The Rebbe Rayatz told a story about his father, the Rebbe Rashab, which appears in *Likkutei Sichos*, Volume 20, Parshas VaYeira. When the Rebbe Rashab was four or five years old, he went to his grandfather, the Tzemach Tzedek, on Shabbos Parshas VaYeira and cried bitterly: why doesn't Hashem reveal Himself to me!? Among other points, in the *sichas* the Rebbe mentions that one would think that a child so young, with the soul powers and abilities of a 4-5 year old, wouldn't yearn for Hashem's revelation so intensely. However, despite his

youth, the Rebbe Rashab strongly desired to see Hashem! This longing wasn't buried deep in his soul. It was so apparent that it was expressed with tears. The Rebbe concludes that the story was told to us by a *Nasi*, the Rebbe Rayatz, about a *Nasi*, the Rebbe Rashab, in order to reveal to us that every *Jewish child*, even at a young age, has the mighty potential to yearn for the loftiest things, including longing to see Hashem and crying bitterly over this! This is despite the fact that the child's abilities are underdeveloped and his soul powers have not matured.

From this episode, we see that there is no need for so-called early "personality development." You don't even have to work according to the Rambam's approach (in his introduction to *Mishnayos*) by bribing the child with nuts and gifts. We might use persuasive means to get a child to learn or *daven*, but to get a child to want to see

Hashem, you don't have to do a thing. Every Jewish child, by his very nature, wants to see Hashem.

At the end of the *sicha*, the Rebbe makes a radical statement that ought to shake us up (namely, the parents and educators). The Rebbe declared that nowadays, "nature has changed," and children today are different than those of earlier times. Every Jewish child openly wants, to the point of tears, to have Hashem appear to him.

This *sicha*, which was said decades ago, did indeed make waves, primarily among educators. I remember that when the Rebbe said the *sicha*, he added that if teachers were still skeptical and found it hard to believe what he said, they should ask a *rav* whether they were allowed to continue teaching!!

<http://www.beismoshiach.org/Chinuch/chinuch313.htm>

Rebbe: Children Should Kiss Mezuzah and Sefer Torah

from <http://ichossid.com/Print/PDFs/chinuch.pdf> - page 18

KISSING THE MEZUZAH AND SEFER TORAH

We see for ourselves that Jewish children by nature are drawn to kiss the mezuzah. We, then, should lift them up to kiss the mezuzah many times throughout the day, especially at the beginning of the day when they awake, and at the end of the day before sleep.⁶⁷

We bring children to shul to kiss the Torah with love - the kind of love with which they

kiss their own father and mother, and even more. Since his parents and teachers educate him properly, the child already knows that when we kiss the Torah, it is with an even greater love than when kissing our parents.⁶⁸

67. Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayera 5752 (Sefer HaSichos, p. 89).

68. Sichas Night of Simchas Torah 5749 (Hisva'aduyos, p. 203).

Rebbe: School Principals Should Distribute Tzedakah

from <http://ichossid.com/Print/PDFs/chinuch.pdf> – page 25-26

Principals of every kind of educational institution – primary schools, Hebrew schools, high schools, rabbinical seminaries, and even non-Jewish schools⁹⁵ – should distribute monies from either their own or the school's funds for the students and teachers to give tzedakah.⁹⁶

In order that this not become an excessive burden, the principals may give out just a penny or more to each person. The main thing is to set an example that encourages the students and teachers to give tzedakah and maybe even to give extra tzedakah from their own generosity.⁹⁷

This should be done at least once a week, ideally on Erev Shabbos when the needs of the poor are most pressing.⁹⁸

This directive should be publicized in every place and it will certainly be accepted with immeasurable success.⁹⁹

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95. Sichas Shabbos Parshas Lech Lecha 5750 (Hisva'aduyos, p. 336): "...Since tzedakah is connected with the settling and civil inhabitation of the world — and according to many opinions, tzedakah is also one of the Seven Noachide Laws — and especially in this nation [The United States] whose central pillar is giving tzedakah..."

96. Ibid.

97. Ibid.

98. Ibid.

99. Ibid.

Rebbe: Label with "L'HASHEM HA'ARETZ U'MLOAH"

from <http://ichossid.com/Print/PDFs/chinuch.pdf> – page 23

LABELING THE CHILD'S POSSESSIONS

In order to demonstrate and stress the importance and preciousness of our connection to G-d, every child should write in his sidur or Chumash or on the outside of his tzedaka box and other items, that these things are the property of G-d. In the

standard text, "L'HASH-M HA'ARETZ U'MLOAH." Then, under these words, the child should write his own name as his signature verifying that indeed, "The earth and all that is in it are the Lord's." ⁸⁵

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85. Sichas 2nd Day Choel HaMoed Sukkos 5750 (Hisva'aduyos, p. 170).

Shaar Blatt Tanya in every Classroom



Years ago, when I visited Geula Newman in Los Angeles, I noticed that she had a Shaar Blatt from Tanya in the classrooms.

It makes total sense. The Rebbe talks about starting to learn Aleph Bet from the Shaar Blatt (see below). And to the parents it is a simple page of Hebrew letters, just like any other. So why not hang it in every classroom. And we can talk to the children about the Tanya, that this Jewish book talks about Hashem (or not).

My father-in-law, the Rebbe, relates in one of his journal notes that when he began to learn *alef beis*, he was shown the letters

from the page of the *shaar blatt* (title page) of Tanya.

It seems that we need to understand: What is the connection between learning the form of the *osiyos* of the *alef beis* and the *shaar blatt* of the *sefer Tanya*? The *sefer Tanya* discusses Hakadosh Baruch Hu as well as various ways of serving Hashem, and it is based on the *pasuk* כי קרוב אליך הדבר מאד בפיך (For the thing is very close to you, in your mouth and in your heart, to do it").¹...

From this we learn a wondrous lesson. When we start to teach Torah to a Jewish child, beginning from the form of the letters of the *alef beis*, we immediately connect it to the Written Torah of Chassidus, *sefer Tanya*, by showing him the shape of the letters in the title page of *sefer Tanya*. We explain to him that this *sefer* talks about Hashem and *avodas Hashem* – more than this the child cannot yet understand – and from this *sefer* he is shown the form of the letters of the *alef-beis*. ... In this way, even the beginning of study of the form of the letters is permeated with the teachings of Chassidus. (*Hisvaaduyos* 5743, vol. 2, p. 792)

Telling Stories to build the Children's Faith/ Emunah

I recently learned/ read this Sich'a - Chelek 19 - Eikev. This section struck me as important to bring up here with CECers.

Instead of trying to translate it myself, I found this free translation online from <http://crownheights.info/something-jewish/27931/sicha-of-the-rebbe-parshas-eikev/> Some excerpts:

5. The Rebbe now tells us a story which illustrates this point and shows us how to educate our children:

The Previous Rebbe (Rebbe Yosef Yitzchak Schneerson) said that when his children were young he hired a teacher for them who thought that it is incorrect to teach youngsters about miracles and wonders which do not make sense. Only older people, said the teacher, who have already developed and can understand things properly, should be taught things which are higher than understanding. When the Rebbe Rashab (Rebbe Shalom DovBer) heard about this, said the Previous Rebbe, he immediately told the teacher off.

Based on this,

- what stories might we be telling the children? (which not to just yet)

- how might we tell the story (when, where, wording, pitfalls to avoid, things to consider about your particular group)

*Continuing on this topic. I delved further and found this wonderful resource online - **Teachings of the Rebbe on Chinuch***

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Wq5-oR4vcSoKijZ1Nwo9O336LM2PqMSpRaA8BuiNsdI/pub>

Removes intimidation of learning, arouses child's interest

...Stories should be utilized, because stories remove the fear from children of learning something difficult (the fear that he might not be able to understand with his intellect). Stories arouse the interest of the child, so they want to hear more and more. In the words of the text: "שאל אביך ויגדך" ו"זקניך ויאמרו לך". This is to say that the child himself requests to be told more and more stories about what happened to the Yidden- as it is told in short (but in a clear way- "בלשון ברורה ודרך קצרה" (In a clear and concise way of speaking).

This applies to all matters of Torah, Torah from the word "horaah" (instruction), as is known and explained in a few places that the instructions of the Torah are told in the way of a story. The advantage of this relating to *chinuch* is- that when an instruction is told in the way of a story, then it is received more easily in the heart of the child.

(Hisvaaduyos 5745, vol.4, p.2302-2303)

First stories should be of miracles, wonders, mesiras nefesh

The first stories children are taught should be of miracles, wonders and *mesiras nefesh* that are beyond reason. This is the way to plant the *emunah* within them. We need to begin *chinuch* with *emunah* and

kabolas ol, and not intellect. Even the matters of intellect need to be fulfilled through *kabolas ol*.

(Likkutei Sichos, vol.19, p.91), Shaarei Chinuch p.54

First stories should be from written and oral Torah, tzaddikim

The stories told to children should be stories taken from the oral and written Torah or true stories told about tzaddikim. We should not be telling children old-wives tales as others do.

(Sichos Kodesh 5741, vol.1, p.246), Shaarei Chinuch p.55-57

Instead of telling children "stories" and "news" from the newspaper etc.- children should be told stories from the Torah (and also matters they have not yet been taught in *cheder*), with liveliness and passion, as though they are *כחדשים* (like new) until they become "alive". In this way the children receive a true Jewish *chinuch* that will impact them all their lives.

(Hisvaaduyos 5746, vol.3, p.394), Shaarei Chinuch p.151-152

Before age five, chinuch is mainly through Torah stories

Before the child reaches "*ben chamesh lemikreh*", chinuch is done mainly through stories of the Torah- the written and oral Torah, *agadot* and *midrashei razal* that are in *Ein Yaakov*.

(Hisvaaduyos 5748, vol.3, p.307), Shaarei Chinuch p.152

A child can relate to mesiras nefesh more than an adult

My father-in-law, the Rebbe instructed that children need to be taught also the *parsha* of *Akeidas Yitzchok* and the like. Some people mistakenly think that this will scare the child. It is the nature of a Jewish child to feel and understand the matter of *mesiras nefesh* (self-sacrifice). What's more, the child can relate to it even more than an adult.

(Hisvaaduyos 5749, vol.1, p. 349), Shaarei Chinuch p.85

Rabbi Hadakov: Preciousness of Time



*from The Educator's Handbook, Rabbi Mordechai I Hadakov
from chapter 22: Managing One's Time*

A child in kindergarten is not too young to be taught to value time: that it must sacrifice not a moment to idleness, but use its time in productive ways. Even play-time and recess should be geared towards the development of the child, and everything should be organized around the idea of the benefit to be gained for him or her – for example, whatever games and sports they take part in, and the manner of their participation, can make a real difference in this respect.

Play-time is a critical factor in a child's development. Here too, time should be put to the best use; the child's games should have educational value and not just be designed to keep it from making a nuisance of itself, for a vital phase in its development is taking place at this very time. So much so that this time is not used to the best

advantage, the child's development may well be delayed. The same set of factors affects us all, young or old – our time must be used sensibly and well.

When the student is orderly and disciplined in the use he makes of his time, so that he can be said to be using time properly – this leads to orderliness of thought, thence to orderliness in all of his undertakings, which ultimately lifts him to a higher level of existence, one where "the brain rules over the heart."

Time (Properly Used) is a Shield for Thought

Our task is to get the students to internalize this value. This will lead to discipline of the inner life, for – rest assured – idleness, lack of purpose and tedium can lead us down the path of destructive, impure thoughts, thoughts with no saving grace whatsoever. Therefore, we must strive to engage the student's mind constantly, in order not to leave him or her prey to any sort of distraction.

How often do we hear a child – or a grown-up, for that matter – saying, "I'm bored, I've got nothing to do." But when that child realizes that nothing G-d made is without purpose and that there is a reason for everything, and that, if he wants, he can use his mind for higher things, and that there is so much to do, so much to be done – then he will find himself bemoaning the scarcity of time, given all that he now proposes to accomplish. Surely then he will come to prize time and cherish it!

Rabbi Hadakov: Honoring One's Parents



*from The Educator's Handbook, Rabbi Mordechai I Hadakov
from chapter 14: Halacha in Everyday Life*

Honoring one's parents, as we read daily in the *Mishnah*, 'Eilu D'varim' in the morning *brachot*, belongs to that class of mitzvot for which no fixed measure is prescribed. We must accordingly place tremendous weight on the fulfillment of the mitzvah in the hope that the students will truly excel in it and, by the force of their own example, inspire those around them to fulfill it too.

Aside from the obligation and the mitzvah to honor one's parents per se – and that it is incumbent upon the educator to train the student to perform mitzvot – there are additional factors to be reckoned with:

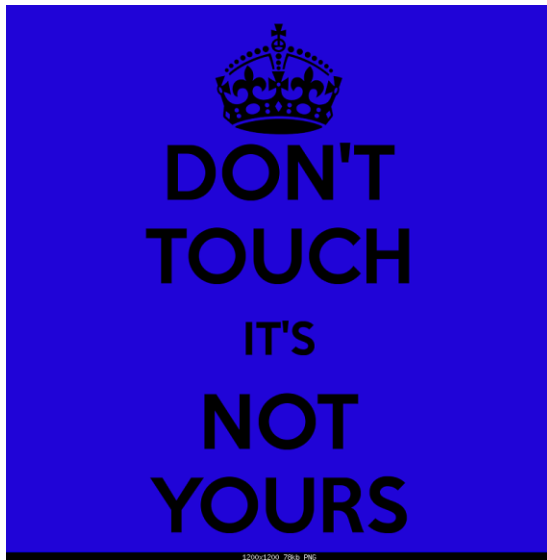
1. When a student brings his parents fully into his frame of reference, his education and training benefit from the fact, root, leaf and branch. (In general, every mitzvah that the student performs puts marrow into the educational process.)
2. The parents will value the educational institution and its personnel more highly than they did before, leading to a broader range of cooperation between them.
3. We sometimes find parents deciding that a religious education simply makes too many demands of them. On the

other hand, when they consider how much respect they are shown by their child, they are reluctant to remove it from that institution.

4. When a child's relationship with his parents is marked by harmony and refinement, this fact cannot fail to impress the neighbors, and some at least will be motivated to send their young ones to a religious institution capable of turning out such fine students. In the same way, these parents will inform their near and dear ones of their decision, and yet more students will be added to the roll.
5. As the parents come to discover the importance and value of this mitzvah, they will give greater honor to their own elderly parents. Apropos, the Rebbe has spoken a great deal of the verse, "And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children," (*Malachi*, 3:24 and *Rashi*).

It is not uncommon for parents to ask their child to perform an act which entails a breach of Shabbat observance, and when the child refuses the parent's anger is aroused, resulting in bad feelings on both sides. If, however, during the rest of the week, the child never fails to defer to its parent's wishes, the parent will realize that his or her authority is not being challenged and that the child's non-compliance stems only from concern for the holiness of Shabbat, not from any other cause.

Rabbi Hadakov: Respecting Property



*from The Educator's Handbook, Rabbi Mordechai I Hodakov
Chapter 14: Halacha in Everyday Life*

Not to Destroy Wantonly

This important prohibition reminds the students of, and sensitizes them, to the fact that everything in the world is part of G-d's plan, and for this reason one may not destroy anything without good cause. This knowledge will also strengthen their faith

since it deepens their awareness of the Creator and Commander of the world.

Respecting Other People's Property

We must teach the students to respect and to be mindful of other people's property.

Everyone must acknowledge that "To G-d belongs the earth and its fullness", and that what He gives to others He gives for a particular reason, namely, that they should use it to fulfill His purposes. Now if I come along and help myself to what is not mine, I deny its owner the possibility of fulfilling the purpose for which it was granted to him in the first place, thereby frustrating the plan of Creation.

We must also stress that the prohibition against theft has not to do primarily with the monetary value of the article in question; the issue applies as much to a princely sum to a pittance – the total figure having relevance to the scale of the loss sustained by the injured party, but not to the prohibition itself. We must also underline the point that the prohibition applies even in a case where we take what belongs to another but have every intention of returning it.

Rabbi Hadakov: Self-Mastery



*from The Educator's Handbook, Rabbi Mordechai I Hadakov
from chapter 23: Jewish Values*

Itkafiya – Self-Mastery

Teach the student to leave a little of the candy-bar unconsumed, that is, strive to develop in him or her the state of mind capable of such a 'feat': the brain dominating the candy, and not vice versa – the candy dominating the brain.

Rabbi Hadakov: Teaching Etiquette



from *The Educator's Handbook*, Rabbi Mordechai I Hodakov
Chapter 19: Principles of Conduct and Decorum

The Rambam emphasizes, (*Hilchot De'ot* 5:1), we recognize the wise by everything they do: not only by their actions, but by the way they speak, the way they eat and the way they drink – in a word, by their manners. All this is a fundamental principle in education.

In various editions of the *Chumash Chok L'Yisrael*, are printed the *Orchot Chaim* of the *Rosh*, and the *Archei Yisrael*, both of which provide us with practical definitions of civility and decorous behavior.

It is vital to restore this subject to its rightful place in the curriculum, and thence to the minds and hearts of the students.

Admittedly, there is a temptation to downplay it because it only has to do with 'externals', but – externals act upon the inner person and upon all that a person does, and beyond this, help to shape and refine our moral being.

If we will only attend to this, the character and temperament of our students will be

transformed before our eyes, bringing with it a *Kiddush Hashem* – a sanctification of the name of G-d – causing the world to sit up and take notice, and exclaim "See how noble are their ways when we compare them to ..."

Cleanliness

"Cleanliness brings one to a state of purity." (Sotah, chap. 9, mishnah 15)

the beginning of the *Shulchan Aruch*, which deals with the first activities of the day, is much occupied with matters of cleanliness (the washing of the hands, examining oneself before prayer, washing out one's mouth, and so on).

Garments

Cleanliness in the garments of the body can lead to cleanliness in the 'garments' of the soul, which are thought, speech and action.

— *there's more in the chapter* —

A letter from the Rebbe to Children



From Geula Newman

I just translated an amazing letter from the Rebbe to children from a preschool in Israel in 1974 who sent in "panim" drawings for Yud Shevat. It is part of a sefer which I came across about early childhood chinuch:

(it's my choppy word for word version)

Notice how the Rebbe comments on what he sees in their drawings (these are young preschool children)... knowing what their intent is of course...

BH

Erev Tu B'Shvat, 5725
Brooklyn, NY

Dear Children sheyichyu,

Peace and Blessings:

I have received with joy your drawings together with the letter of your teacher and "ganenet" Mrs. Rochel shetichye Zamir. The drawings and the letter reached me before the Hillulah (Yahrtzeit) of C"K M"vch A"dmur, and my response is being written on the eve of Tu B'Shvat, the New Year for Trees. And since in your drawings I have seen boys and girls and trees and flowers, in connection to all of these ideas, I will remind you of the endearment and added love which the Frierdiker Rebbe held toward all

daughters and sons of Bnei Yisroel, the older and younger ones, and specifically the younger ones which he was concerned about their education and their well-being in any place they may be found.

And in every boy and girl, he saw a sapling which in the future will grow and become a beautiful fruit bearing tree carrying good and wonderful fruits. Obviously (yet), this idea depends on the will and service of the boy and the girl, and the parable for this is the tree.

When you plant a seed or a young sapling, you need to guard it from harmful weeds and all harmful things, and to give it enough water, etc. until it will grow and become a tree which bears good fruits. And this is the thing with every boy and girl, which Hashem says through His prophets that they are "the branch of My planting, the work of My hands for beauty."

And behold, the Creator Blessed be He planted in each one of you a holy neshama, an actual piece of Hashem, and it is your duty to guard this G-dly "seed" from harmful weeds and other damaging things, meaning friends who are of not good influence, and to give it enough water, and water refers to Torah, the Torah of Life, and its Mitzvos which are life to those who perform them, and then Hashem will give and give again His blessing that you should be successful in being "trees" which bear good and exceptional fruits, to the joy of your parents and teachers and to the pride and glory of our Nation, B'nei Yisroel.

With Blessing and Success

And Good News

The Rebbe's Signature