

## CHARACTER CHANGE (II)

### How to Change

In the year תרצ"ו (1936), someone asked the Frierdiker Rebbe: "How should I go about correcting my *middos*?"

He replied that the first step is to make an honest assessment of oneself, without exaggerating to either extreme. This skill, he explained, can be learned from the way a craftsman repairs a broken object. Before he starts he checks it carefully: some of its parts need cleaning and strengthening, some must be replaced. He then prepares his tools and begins to work. First, he removes the parts that are to be replaced, then busies himself with the cleaning and strengthening of the other parts, and finally, he shapes the new parts, gradually creating a strong and solid product.

Similarly, with regard to the *avoda* of correcting one's *middos*, a person must remove the negative traits and replace them with good ones. He must first analyze himself well, ridding himself of any undesirable traits, and then cleaning and strengthening those that are good.

The first task, removing whatever is bad, does not require special tools; anyone can do it. Similarly, the evil traits of anger and pride can be removed by anyone who has come to understand their evil nature, by learning *sifrei mussar*. The next step, producing strong, positive *middos*, requires the tools of *Chassidus*: one studies concepts that he can understand and that will arouse his heart (*farshandike inyonim un hartzike inyonim*).

(אג"ק אדהרי"צ ח"ג ע' תנ"ו - עיי"ש בארוכה)

The Frierdiker Rebbe said: *Chassidus* must make one into a chossid with *chassidische middos*; otherwise, it can be called *chochmah*, but not *Chassidus*. The path of *Chassidus* is broad and paved; it is the fault of those young chassidim who study *Chassidus* in selfmade ways that the clear path of *Chassidus* is blocked. This is the result of studying without *avoda*.

(לקוטי דיבורים ח"א ע' 48 ואילך)

### Transformative Experience

One day, after having stayed in Mezritch for a while, the Alter Rebbe planned to return home. He had intended to go by foot, but the Maggid directed that a wagon be hired to take him. When his *chavrusa* – the Maggid's son, Reb Avrohom HaMaloch – accompanied him to his wagon, he told the wagon driver loudly, "Whip the horses until they stop being horses."

Hearing this, the Alter Rebbe understood why the Maggid had arranged for the wagon. For the Alter Rebbe, those brief words opened up a new challenge in *avoda* – transforming the bad *middos* into good ones. And in order to internalize that message, he decided to extend his stay in Mezritch.

On this incident the Rebbe commented: Until one reaches this level of **transforming** one's *middos*, he must at least keep them under control, for he cannot wait until then...

(רשימת הימין ע' רמו, תנ"מ ח"ה ע' 137)

The Frierdiker Rebbe related:

My uncle Reb Zalman Aharon, the Razah, was a *baal middos tovos*, a person of refined character. Despite his many troubles, he was always smiling and never shed a tear over his situation. Yet when he encountered a fellow Yid in trouble, his smile would disappear and he would cry – though of course he would also do all he could to help the sufferer.

Once, during a *farbrengen*, the Razah said that the only way to correct one's *middos* is to use one's mind – just as one can safely walk across a narrow beam lying in a pool of mud, by using one's head to keep balance.

The Rebbe Rashab commented, "Why does controlling one's *middos* with the mind resemble walking across a narrow beam? Because safety is only insured when the **head** is keeping balance, preventing the *middos* from making one fall.

"This approach requires constant watchfulness of the mind so that the *middos* that have not yet been corrected will not

return to their natural, wild ways. True correction of character requires transforming the *middos* themselves, by using the mind together with *avoda* of the heart."

The Frierdiker Rebbe noted: Chassidim of earlier times were more devoted, and they corrected their *middos* on an entirely different level, both in quality and quantity. They were able to walk with slippers and white socks, and their socks would remain clean, for they knew how to sidestep the mud. Nowadays, we go across with boots and even our clothes get dirty.

(סה"ש ת"ש ע' 39)

When the elder chossid, Reb Zalman Zezmer, wanted to arouse his own heart, he would tell the following story:

In his town lived a great *lamdan* who had outstanding *middos*, but he was not acquainted with *Chassidus*, and Reb Zalman tried to explain to him the effect that *Chassidus* has on a person's *middos*. Later on, this man traveled to the Alter Rebbe and asked about this, and the Alter Rebbe answered, "Animals also have *middos*, but they are instinctive, part of their nature: the raven is mean and the eagle is kind. By contrast, when *HaShem* created people, He made their *middos* keep step with their intellect and not merely be dictated by nature – in order to give them the merit of doing *avoda* and working on themselves."

Hearing this, the man realized that all the good *middos* that he had developed were only instinctive, and he fell faint. When he came to, the Alter Rebbe showed him how to reach the superior *middos tovos* of *Chassidus*.

(ספר המאמרים תש"ע ע' 88)

### CONSIDER THIS!

- How does one learn *Chassidus* so that it should change his character?
- How does one *transform* his *middos*? And how is it actually different than controlling them?



SUBSCRIBE TO THE ALL NEW AND EXPANDED  
PERSPECTIVES DIGEST  
MERKAZANASH.COM/SUBSCRIBE



Higher standards of  
kashrus & quality

MachonStam.com  
718-778-STAM  
415 Kingston Avenue



www.SELLMILESNOW.com  
732-987-7765



# A WAY OF LIFE

Rabbi Chaim Hillel Raskin  
Moreh Hora'ah - Beis Horaa Rechovot

## Deodorant on Shabbos

### May I use unscented deodorant on Shabbos?

#### Stick:

- In the building of the *Mishkan* they would sand hides of animals to prepare the *yerios* (coverings of the *mishkan*). Sanding wood or sharpening a knife is therefore considered a *melacha*.
- Some *poskim* contend that it is likewise prohibited to use a bar of soap or deodorant since in the process the surface of the soap is shaved and smoothed.<sup>1</sup> However, many disagree since one has no interest or benefit in smoothing the already smooth soap bar (unlike in previous centuries when soap bars were rough).<sup>2</sup> Still, some argue that applying the deodorant on the body constitutes *memareiach*, smearing a soft substance on a surface, since one wants the deodorant to be spread.<sup>3</sup>

#### Spray:

- It is prohibited to scatter particles into the wind on Shabbos, which is like winnowing grain, and *poskim* discuss whether spraying liquid would be included. However, several distinctions from winnowing are made: (1) It's not of growing or living origin.<sup>4</sup> (2) It is sprayed onto a surface and not into the air.<sup>5</sup> (3) The user generates the air pressure, unlike winnowing which uses the wind.<sup>6</sup> (4) In aerosols the air doesn't leave the can, it only forces the liquid out. This allowance would not apply to spray bottles where the air is pumped out.
- In practice: When spraying against a surface both types of spray may be used.<sup>7</sup>

#### Roll-On:

- Since neither of these problems exist by roll-on deodorant, it is permitted for use on Shabbos.
- Scented deodorant may pose a problem of *molid reiach*, generating a scent, and will be discussed in another issue.

1. משנ"ב ס"י שכ"ו סק"ל מעשה רוקח פכ"ב מהלכות שבת דין י"ג.
2. קצוה"ש ס"י קמ"ו בדה"ש סק"ב. וראה שו"ת בני הארון ס"י י"ב. וכן משמע מדברי אדה"ז שולחן איסור נולד ה"י מותר.
3. ראה שש"כ פ"ד ס"ז, שו"ת אור לציון ח"ב פל"ה תשו"ה. אך בסבון יש גם איסור משום בורא ונולד כשממיסו שוע"ר ס"י שכ"ו ס"י.
4. שו"ת רעק"א ס"י כ' שמלאכת זורה הוא דווקא בגידולי קרקע.
5. ראה פסק"ת שבת ח"ב ס"י ש"ט סעיף מ"ח והערה 673.
6. שבת כהלכה פרק י"ח הע"ל ב"ב, שו"ת מנח"ח ח"ו ס"י כ"ו.
7. ראה נתיבים בשדה השליחות ח"א ס"י י"א.

לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה

לזכות הילד יעקב בן יחיאל מיכל ושיינא עלקא שיחי  
שיגדלוהו הוריו לתורה, לחופה ולמעשים טובים

# OUR HEROES

## Chidushei HoRim



Reb Yitzchok Meir Alter was born in the year 5559 (1799). His father was a *talmid* of Reb Levi Yitzchok Barditchever. Reb Yitzchok Meir was a *talmid* of Reb Simcha Bunim of Pshischa and Reb Mendele of Kotzk, and was known as the "Iluy of Warsaw." He is known by his *seforim*, *Chidushei HoRim*. Towards the end of his life he became a Rebbe and founded Chassidus Ger. He passed away on 23 Adar 5626 (1866).

A *misnaged* once asked Reb Yitzchok Meir, "Why do the chassidim *daven* after *zman tefila*? It is an *aveira* and it's going against a clear *din* in *Shulchon Aruch*!" Reb Yitzchok Meir responded, "A sign for an *aveira* is when it leads to another *aveira*, as it says 'Aveira goreres aveira.' But when the chassidim transgress *zman tefilah*, they do not come to transgress another *aveira* as a result. Rather they learn and become inspired to *daven*, thereby doing Hashem's will."

(באר החסידות ע' 165)



In one of his *deroshos* he spoke about King Achav, and brought out something good in him. One chossid present thought it was not right to be *melamed zchus* on a *rasha* like Achav, and Reb Yitzchok Meir told him, "Make a *kal vchomer*. If chassidim, which can only imagine that their Rebbe has *giluy Eliyohu*, travel to him and learn from his mouth, it is definitely worthwhile to find some *zchus* to Achav, who everyone knows saw Eliyohu *Hanovi* face-to-face..."

(באר החסידות ע' 145)



A non-religious man once asked Reb Yitzchok Meir: "It says in *Krias Shema* that if the *Yidden* sin the skies won't give rain, etc. and they will suffer physically. But I am a sinner and I am nonetheless very rich. Now how does that make sense?" The Gerer Rebbe explained: "It seems from your words that at least once in your lifetime you have recited the *Shema*. That being the case, however many riches you have, it is very little compared to what you deserve!"

(באר החסידות ע' 641)

לזכות יהושע העשל בן חנה שי' לרפו"ש וקרובה

## A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

### Harav Chodakov Meets the Rebbe

Towards the end of the month of Tishrei 5687 (1926), on *motzoei Shabbos Parshas Noach*, the young Latvian chossid, Reb Chaim Mordechai Aizik Chodakov, met the Friediker Rebbe's son-in-law for the first time. Their meeting marked the beginning of the respect of the young educator to the Rebbe, developing into fifty years of working at the Rebbe's side as the chief *mazkir*.

*Harav Chodakov* never spoke about himself or his personal experiences. Still, he considered this experience exceptional, and would become emotional as he described the meeting.

"I entered the house of the Friediker Rebbe on *Motzoei Shabbos*, and before my eyes was this most wonderful scene. The new guest from *Yaketrinislav* was saying 'V'yiten Lecho.' He stood and held the *siddur* with both hands, and said it quietly and simply.

"It is difficult to describe, but it captured me completely. At that moment, when I saw this guest, I saw and sensed truth in its purest form. In that 'V'yiten Lecho' I saw the truth itself."

(Kfar Chabad issue 894 p. 24)