



The M.A.P.S Page

Empowerment Through Personal Guidance

BS"D
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לע"נ אבי מורי משה אהרן בן יהודה ואמי מורתי פערל לאה בת יצחק הכהן סטאלאו

Humility and Achievement

The Book of Vayikra, referred to as Leviticus, begins with the expression Vayikra el Moshe, which means "(and) He [G-d] called to Moshe". In Hebrew, the word Vayikra ends with the letter "א", "aleph". Typically, all letters within a word are written in uniform size; however, the aleph in this initial word is notably smaller than the other letters. Notably, the Hebrew word "Vayakar," which means "he chanced (upon him)," shares the exact spelling as "Vayikra," except it lacks the final aleph.

Our sages explain that Moshe, in his unequaled humility, did not want to write that "Vayikra" that Hashem "called him", implying that this was a common occurrence. Instead, he wanted to write that Vayakar, that Hashem "chanced upon him", that it was not an everyday occurrence that Hashem spoke to him, that Hashem speaking to Moshe was a sudden and unexpected occurrence. Yet, Hashem commanded that the verse be written "Vayikra". Demonstrating his modesty, Moshe wrote the "aleph" in a smaller size, indicating that this call was not typical.

Undoubtedly, Moshe recognized the extent of his accomplishments and understood that his relationship with Hashem was nearly unmatched. Yet, he was not motivated by the desire for honor or recognition. He lived with the awareness that his achievements, while undoubtedly the result of extensive self-reflection and personal growth, were ultimately rooted in the potential and abilities granted to him by Hashem. Therefore, when it is stated that "Hashem called Moshe", he preferred that this summons not be credited to his merit.

Humility

Authentic humility is frequently conflated with self-denigration. Self-denigration can be characterized as the tendency to undervalue oneself, accompanied by a sense of being unworthy of respect. Consequently, many individuals avoid exploring new ventures or initiating personal growth projects, as they grapple with feelings of inadequacy regarding their entitlement to such transformations or experiences. The feelings of being unworthy of respect, permitting oneself to be exploited, and the tendency to allow oneself to be treated as a doormat for others are unhealthy and defeatist responses that can often be linked to previous traumatic experiences.

Humility is an essential trait, grounded in a sincere and profound awareness of an individual's strengths, achievements, and limitations. Individuals are composed of multiple dimensions that shape their character and personality. Those who attain success often achieve their goals by identifying their strengths and harnessing them to move forward, whether in spiritual, emotional, career, relationship, or personal pursuits.

The Untapped Potential

Not being cognizant of one's strengths and weaknesses, which have facilitated prior accomplishments which have played a role in achieving previous successes, can be illustrated by the metaphor of an elephant tethered to a stake with a chain; the elephant does not comprehend that it can effortlessly dislodge the stake can be likened to an elephant bound to a stake by a chain; the creature fails to recognize that it has the power to pull out the stake and free itself.



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This phenomenon occurs because, during its infancy, the elephant is tethered to a stake driven into the ground, which can withstand the strength of a young elephant. Despite its efforts, the baby elephant is unable to escape. Over time, it has become resigned to this limitation, and even as an adult, weighing over 12,000 pounds, possessing the strength to uproot trees, it remains convinced that the chain and stake are unbreakable.

The same applies to individuals bound by the belief that they cannot attain their aspirations. Just as the elephant remains tethered to the past and wastes its potential strength, people often fail to recognize their capabilities due to outdated preconceived notions. Nevertheless, earlier difficulties do not necessarily dictate future results. By emphasizing their strengths and previous victories, individuals can forge a path to expand upon those accomplishments.

Success While Staying Humble

A significant challenge encountered by highly successful individuals is the ability to acknowledge their achievements while maintaining a sense of humility. Humility entails avoiding arrogance or pride. Notably, many awardees at award ceremonies, graduations, or following significant milestones often utilize their platform to convey appreciation to those who have supported them in their journey. Rather than focusing on their greatness, they tend to emphasize the talents they have been endowed with and the assistance received from others in realizing their potential.

Acknowledging that their achievements are contingent upon the support of others helps individuals refrain from diminishing the worth of others through their successes. They recognize that, while they possess distinct talents and abilities, others also have their own unique skills and strengths. This understanding enables individuals to evaluate success in terms of personal growth and potential, rather than merely focusing on external accomplishments.

The Humblest of Men and Us

It is crucial in our lives to develop a humility that arises from acknowledging our strengths and feeling content with our achievements. We should allow ourselves to take pride in our endeavors to pursue and accomplish our objectives. While bearing in mind that the distinction between an individual with low self-esteem and a humble person lies in their respective motivations and actions.

A person with low self-esteem often finds themselves immobilized, lacking both energy and the desire to engage in activities, as they believe they are incapable of achieving anything. In contrast, a humble individual acknowledges that their potential is a gift from Hashem. They understand that it is their responsibility to actualize this potential, which leads them to feel that they are perpetually striving to reach greater heights, thus motivating them to work diligently to utilize the gifts and capabilities bestowed upon them by Hashem.

Have a wonderful Shabbos,

Binyomin Stolov



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