



LOVE YOURSELF



Vayikra 19:18 ויקרא יט:יח

18.....*you shall love your friend as yourself. I
am Hashem.*

יח.....ואהבת לרעך כמוך אני ה'!



LOVE YOURSELF

Points to Ponder:

*Why is the commandment to love others
compared to loving yourself?*

Why is it important to love yourself?

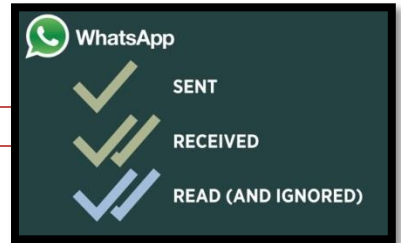
How do you love yourself?

BE POSITIVE. YOU ARE GREAT. DON'T SELL YOURSELF SHORT.

NO ONE
IS' GOING TO
LOVE YOU
IF YOU DON'T
LOVE YOURSELF



Allowing Others to Determine our Greatness

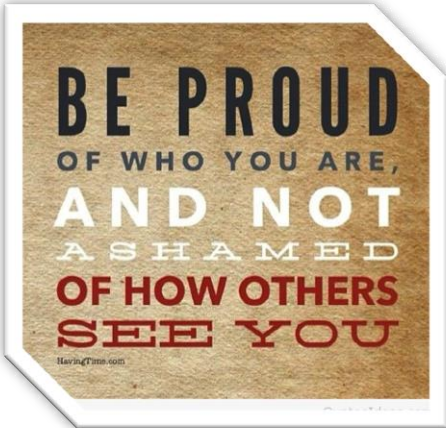


Discussion:
Have you ever posted a picture and people did not click the Like button? Have you ever written a comment and people did not respond? How does that make you feel? Why?



Ohr Gedalya Parshas Vayishlach
It is within our nature when we are alone with our own thoughts to wonder what others think of our own thoughts.

Kotzker Rebbe
“If I am I, because you are you, and you are you because I am I, then I am nothing and you are nothing. But if I am I, and you are you, because I am I, and you are you, then I am truly I, and you are truly you.”



Rabbi Abraham Twerski - Life's too Short page 18
“We naturally assume that what we perceive to be reality is also what **others** perceive as reality. For example, if I can see a bus coming down a street, I naturally assume that everyone else can see a bus coming down the street.

This is also true of self-image or self-perception. **If I see myself in a certain way that is reality, I do not go around thinking my perception is distorted.**”

Points to Ponder:

Why do we allow others to determine who we are?

Rashi Bamidbar 13:3 רש"י במדבר יג:ג

All of the spies were distinguished men and were the cream of the crop amongst the Jewish people.

כלם אנשים: כל אנשים שבמקרא לשון חשיבות, ואותה שעה כשרים היו:

Point to Ponder:

If the spies were such great people what did they do wrong that led them to sin?

Bamidbar 13:33 במדבר יג:לג

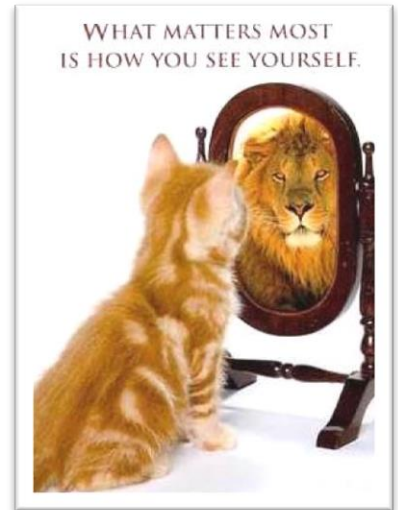
33 There we saw the Nephilim, the sons of Anak, descended from the Nephilim. **In our eyes, we seemed like grasshoppers, and so we were in their eyes.**

לג ושמ ראינו את הנפילים בני ענק מן הנפילים ונהי בעינינו כחגבים וכן היינו בעיניהם:



Kotzker Rebbe in Emet V'Emunah

After the spies spied out the land of Canaan and saw the 'giants' who were there, they claimed two things: "We were like grasshoppers in our eyes" and "we were like grasshoppers in their eyes". Saying that we were like grasshoppers in their eyes is a statement that is hard to understand, they saw themselves as small in the eyes of the giants. What is the idea of seeing yourself in the eyes of others? The main thing is how you see yourself in your own eyes.



Points to Ponder:

How did the spies view themselves?

What may have changed if the spies believed in themselves?

What repercussions did the spies' lack of self-esteem have on the Jewish people?

The Uniqueness of Each Individual

Mishna Avot Chapter 3 Mishna 14 - משנה מסכת אבות פרק ג משנה יד

.....Special is a person, for they were created in the image [of G-d]; it is a sign of even greater love that it has been made known to them that they were created in His image, as it is says, "For in the image of G-d, He made man" (Genesis 9:6).

....חביב אדם שנברא בצלם חבה יתירה נודעת לו שנברא בצלם שנאמר (בראשית ט) בצלם אלהים עשה את האדם



Points to Ponder:

What does it mean to be created in G-d's image?

What is so special about being created in G-d's image?



Talmud Bavli Tractate Sanhedrin 37a עמוד דף לז עמוד א

"Each person is obligated to say, 'The universe was created for me.'"

כל אחד ואחד חייב לומר: בשבילי נברא העולם.



Points to Ponder:

What do you think the Gemara mean that we need to say "the universe was created for me?"



Rabbi Shlomo Wolbe

The Gemara is saying that a person has to believe that there is no one else in the world like them. And there will be no one else ever like them ever created.

Points to Ponder:

How do you understand Rabbi Shlomo Wolbe's explanation of the Gemara?

The Uniqueness of Each Individual Continued

Rabbeinu Yona Shaarei Teshuva Chapter 1

The first principle is that a person who is a servant of G-d should know his own value and self-worth and that he should recognize his own greatness and the greatness of his ancestors.

Rav Moshe Chaim Luzzato

Every person is obligated to fulfill our unique purpose. It is unique in that no other person, in this generation or in past ones, can fulfill your purpose other than you.

Reb Tzadok Hakohein; Pri Tzadik Shekalim 4

Every Jew has at least one aspect that raises him or her above every other person. In this area, that person is considered a ruler over all of Israel. There is no such thing as a Jew that doesn't have a crown that only he can wear.

Reb Tzadok Hakohein; Tzidkis Hatzadik 231

Just as even one missing letter in a Torah invalidates the entire scroll, and just as every limb in the human body has its irreplaceable purpose, the contribution of every single Jew is vital to the entire people of Israel.

Rav Yerochum Levovitz of Mir Chaver HaMamarim 58

It is as if the Creator Himself met with every single Jew and empowered him or her as an individual – as if He told them “Besides for being part of the world, you as a person are an entity unto yourself.”

Points to Ponder:

How can you discover your specific purpose?

Why do you think G-d created each person with a unique purpose?

How does knowing you have a unique purpose impact your self-esteem?

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The Balance of Selfhood and Selflessness

Midrash Vayikra Rabbah 14a

G-d created the mosquito before man to let man realize that they really are not so special.

Midrash Vayikra Rabbah 14:1 Psalms 8:5-6

Right after saying that man is nothing, equal to a mosquito the next pasuk says that man is just a little lower than the angels.

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Points to Ponder:

How can we be nothing, equal to a mosquito and at the same time, be just a little lower than angels? What is the Midrash teaching us here?

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The foundational principle of the universe is a balance between selfhood and selflessness. When a person discovers this balance they can simultaneously maintain humility and self-esteem.

Rabbi Bunim of Pshischa

Everyone should have two pockets each containing a slip of paper. On one should be written "I am but dust and ashes" and on the other it should say "The world was created for me." From time to time we must reach into one pocket or the other. The secret of living lies in knowing when to reach into each pocket.

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Points to Ponder:

How do we strike this balance of selfhood and selflessness?

Give an example when we should reach into each pocket.

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Chulin 89a

“It was not because you were greater than any people that Hashem set His love upon you and chose you.” (Devarim 7:7). Hashem said to Israel: I love you because even when I bestow greatness upon you, you humble yourselves before Me.

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Points to Ponder:

What quality does Hashem love about us?

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A Tip on How to Acquire High Self-Esteem



Chovot Halevavot Shaar Hapirshut Chapter 2

“Imagination can convince us that our stomach is our god, and our Torah is our clothing, and as for our values – rather than finding absolute values, we let the social climate dictate what your value system should be.”

Maharal on Derech chaim in Avos I

Silence means to be proactively and consciously be alone with your own thoughts. Silence is a sign that you are comfortable with yourself and with yourself. Silence and introspection allows a person to get in touch with themselves and who they really are.

Rabbeinu Yonah Shaar Haavodah 1

Finding one’s special purpose is to know oneself very well, to understand one’s strengths and weaknesses, and to come close to G-d by fulfilling that mission.

Sforno Bereishis 3:1

The evil inclination uses the power of imagination to distract us from the reality of serving Hashem.

Rav Shlomo Wolbe

The force that turns our dreams into reality is our imagination. Our imagination allows us to see who we want to become and who we can be. We need to make sure to take advantage of the power of imagination because we live in our imagination more than in any other spiritual state.



Points to Ponder:

How can imagination impact your self-esteem?

What do you think about this tidbit of how to gain high self-esteem?



Hashem's Belief in Us

Points to Ponder: What does it mean רבה אמונתך (Your faithfulness)?

Yad Ramah Sanhedrin 37a

The world was created for me is how Hashem sees you. That YOU are valuable in Hashem's eyes, in that you were created with a unique self and psyche, that the world was created just as your unique self.



The Sifrei explains that Hashem believes in the world. Hashem trusts in the world and each individual therein, believing that they will eventually fulfill their potential. He believes in the value of every person and deems it worthwhile to invest them with life each and every day. Hashem has faith in US!

Bereishit 2:7

"And Hashem, He blew into his nostrils a living soul"

Hashem, Himself blew our souls into us. He did not send one of his angels. In Hashem's mind we all have intrinsic value that every morning He, Himself reawakens us because He believes in US! He believes that we are going to accomplish something great each day!

Point to Ponder:

How does Hashem's belief in us, impact our belief in ourselves?