

Communicating With Your Children  
From a lecture by Rabbi Yaakov Shapiro  
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My name is Yaakov Shapiro. About 12 years ago, I founded an organization called Project Rejuvenation. The Reason I founded it, then, was because it was pretty obvious 12 years ago, to many people that we in Klal Yisrael have a bit of a problem. And what was a bit of a problem then is shortly going to be a much bigger problem. The problem is, there are bachurim from Frum homes, sometimes very Frum homes sometimes very good homes that simply go off the derech. Now I know that you've probably heard a tremendous amount about this recently. In fact, it's not shayach almost to walk dalet amos in any frum neighborhood without hearing much about it. That's true. Unfortunately, a lot of communities and a lot of people have just woken up to this recently for various different reasons. The truth is that this has been going on, and has been progressing and snowballing for over a decade. Over a decade ago, we started speaking about it and we said this is what's going to happen. Now, we're just one voice among many. Which is in a way good, Baruch Hashem, in a way it's not so good. It depends what the other voices are saying. But both 12 years ago and today, the ysodos of prevention of this problem and the yesodos for the restoration once this problem happens are always the same and I'm going to go over just a few of the main points.

The first thing we need to understand is that when people ask about what to do with their children, both in terms of prevention and rachmana litzlan further than prevention, usually a question is asked in the wrong way. And the first thing is you need to know how to ask the question before you get the right answer. People usually ask, "Well what do I do in this and this case? If my son doesn't come home by his curfew, what should I do about it? Should I lock him out, should I yell at him? Should I ignore it?"

"What do I do if my son's Rebbe calls me from Yeshiva and tells me he's involved in some sort of mischief? What do I do in this case and what do I do in that case?" While there are probably answers to all of these questions, what you do is not the Ikar. The Ikar is, Who's the one doing the doing. In other words, two parents can do the exact same thing but one parent's actions have a positive effect on the child and the other parent doing the exact same thing has a negative effect. I'll give you one example. This one is from Rav Dessler in Michtav MeEliyahu..And here he talks about hitting children. We know on one hand it's clear everywhere from dozens of places in sefer Mishlei down to the Shulchan Aruch and beyond that the Torah's recommendation is to hit kids. However, the reality is that it usually doesn't work and Rav Dessler explains what's going on. He says it depends on the relationship between the parent and the child. Just like for instance medicine only works on a certain type of patient, and you give another type of patient

the same medicine and it makes it worse, so too this mahalach of hitting children works only if you have a certain type of relationship with your child and not if you have a different one. Dehainu, he says, that if the child feels that when the parent hits him, the parent is doing it for the sake of the parent, "You're making too much noise, I can't sleep, Whack!" So that whack was not for the benefit of the child it was l'toivas the parent because the parent can't sleep. If the Rebbe calls the parents and tells the parents that the child was involved in mischief in school and you better come down to cheder right away and the father gets so aggravated that he hits the kid but the hitting of the kid was because of the aggravation, the tirschah that the father has to go through in going down to the cheder then that was the result of frustration because of something that happened bad to the father, not that happened to the kid. If that's the case, says Rav Dessler, what the child is going to learn is that if you want something, and you can't get it, use violence. That's all the child learns. When my father wants something, my mother wants something, they can't get it and so, they hit me. They're a bunch of bullies. And that's not going to work. If, on the other hand, the relationship with the child is a lot different, namely that the child understands that when the father or the mother hits him or her, it's not to benefit the parent but rather to benefit the child, then the child's not going to look at it like that. Then it will have a positive effect. If the child understands that that the old saying is true, that the hit hurts the parent more than it does the child, then it's a positive thing. Unfortunately, our relationship with our children in many cases is such that if the parent hits the child, the child is going to look at it like the parent has just relieved their own frustrations. If that's the case, then you're better off not hitting them. Although, Shlomo Hamelech says chosech shivto soneh bno, Well that's true for a regular healthy relationship. And just like ein simchah eleh bbasar veyayin but a someone with liver damage can't eat meat or drink wine, otherwise they get sick, if your home has damage in the relationship between you and your children, then you don't have available to you the normal parent-child methodologies of discipline.

One example of this in halacha is the cheirum. There used to be, it's in the shulchan aruch that if someone did an aveira, you put him in cheirum. And that's it, it's finished until he does teshuva, then we took him out. Bizman hazeh we don't put people in cheirum. Says the Taz, because nowadays, if someone's put into cherem, we don't know how to treat him, we get into fights, they get into fights and because it's so counter-productive, we don't do cheirem anymore. So really it's actually a good thing but because we're not rai, we lose the availability of this. The same thing with hitting children. If your relationship with your child is not such that it's healthy enough for the child to understand the message that you want to give him, then it's mamash counter-productive. In other words, when you need to speak a language to your child, when you give him a message, you need to make sure that he's receiving the message that you want to give as opposed to receiving a different message than you intended to give.

I remember I was once teaching a class of Russian students Torah, I remember it came Succos and I was teaching them about the Succah and suddenly the whole class starts laughing in the middle of class. And I said,

What happened? And they explained to me that Succah or Succos is some kind of bad word in Russian. And then I explained to them about other things and the same thing happened. I want to explain to them one thing and they hear something else. If you're saying something with the intention of describing the mitzvah of a Succah and they're hearing something else because for them that's what it means then what's the point of saying it if they're not going to understand it. Therefore, the assumption is not so much a question of what you do. It's a question of how to get the proper relationship with your child so that you'll be able to do the things that everybody knows needs to be done. Everybody knows what parenting is. Klal Yisrael wasn't born yesterday. The problem is it's not working anymore. If it's not working anymore, it's not that we need to do different things, it's that the relationship with the children is such that the normal good things don't work. So principle number 1 is not so much what you do, it's who you are to your child. A lot of people make a mistake and they think that the answer lies in the realm of maybe psychology or social work or something to that effect and it's a very big mistake. Some people think that it's a matter of education. Which is also a mistake. Education is not hashpaah. What we want to do is be mashpiah on our children and psychology is not hashpaha either. The difference between education and influence, is education means that you know what I want you to know. Hashpaah means that you do what I want you to do. You can give somebody all the information in the world, they're not going to do what you want them to do because you have no hashpaah on them and you should know that the problem of kids going off the path is not merely a problem of those kids, it's even a problem with kids on the derech. get calls from menahalim and Rebbeim asking me why it is that they can't be mashpiah on their talmidim the way they want to.

For example, a menahel from a very chashuve messivta in America once called me up and says, "There's a problem, when the bachurim graduate the Yeshiva, they want to go to one yeshiva in Yerushalayim," and he doesn't want them to go to that yeshiva he wants them to go to the other yeshiva where his brother runs the yeshiva, and nobody's listening, they're all going to that yeshiva. And how come they're not listening to him, he's the menahel, he's the Rosh Yeshiva. I find it all over. You ask any Rebbe of 12, 13 years olds who's been a Rebbe for maybe 20 years and he'll tell you that today, the level of obedience and the level of influence that a Rebbe has on a Talmid is much much less than it was 20 years ago. And even less than it was 10 years ago.

The problem is that we have to a great extent lost our ability to influence our children to the extent that we want to, everything else is perush. Yessod #1 - who's a person influenced by? A person is influenced by somebody with whom he has kiruv hadas and the first thing that we need to do is to understand how to get kiruv hadas with our children. The Sefas Emes on Megillas Esther says an interesting thing. At the beginning of the Megillah it says that Mordechai would go every day to to shaar beis hanashim to visit Esther. So the Sefas Emes asks, what was he doing there? Going to the shaar beis nashim every day. Says the Sefas Emes, that he went there because Esther was a little Yiddene in a big palace full of Iranians and he

wanted to visit her every day to show her that she shouldn't be scared and that she's not alone, that there's somebody who's thinking of her. And for this, he made the effort and took the trouble to go every day without fail. He was a member of the Sanhedrin. What was a member of the Sanhedrin doing every day by the shaar beis hanashim? A member of the Sanhedrin went every day to the shaar beis hanashim to show his cousin that she's not alone. And bezchus that, the miracle of Purim happened. Now the question is first of all, what's the midda knegged mida over here? What does one thing have to do with the other? What's the logic behind it? Where did the Sefas Emmes pick this up from? Another question: Esther wasn't alone. She was the Queen of Persia. Anything she wanted, she could have. She wanted a chevrat nashim she wanted a ladies shiur, whatever she wanted, she had. She was not alone, she was Queen. What was Mordechai giving her exactly that she didn't have? It's obvious that it didn't matter that she was Queen of Persia and had everything, because she didn't have anybody there that actually cared about her. She had everybody surrounding her but there was nobody like Mordechai, somebody who she cared about, somebody who cared about her. That's the only way you're going to have kiruv hadas. If you're a stranger, and you walk over to a kid and you try to be mekarev him so maybe he'll listen. But there's no comparison if you do it after you've already established a relationship. Because you could be the king of the world and have all the people in the world around you, doing anything you want but you'll still be lonely if you don't have anybody with kiruv hadaas. The yessod is that loneliness has nothing to do with whether you're alone. Loneliness has to do with whom you're with. There are children in homes that feel lonely. Even though they have a dozen brothers and sisters. And once a kid feels lonely, it's a big danger because al pi derech hatevah, nobody wants to be alone. And he's going to find a way not to feel lonely. And it doesn't matter if his Rebbe tries to be mekarev him. It doesn't matter if all the alter bochurim try to be mekarev him, it doesn't matter if his parents try to be mekarev him. But if he can't relate to them with a kiruv hadaas type relationship, that kid is lonely. No matter how many times they're nice to him, it doesn't matter. Esther had everybody in the world being nice to her, they literally served her hand and foot, but she needed Mordechai, who she had this relationship with, otherwise, she was alone. It doesn't matter what you do for the kid, it matters who you are. A kid would rather have a parent that can relate to him who maybe doesn't have a whole lot of time unfortunately for the kid than a parent who spends a lot of time with him but the child can't relate to. The Ikar is who you are.

If you want to influence somebody, the main thing is not the words that you tell him, it's who you are. If somebody wanted to convince you to move out of Bnei Brak and move to Tzefas, and adopt a whole new lifestyle. Which person in the world would be most qualified to do that? It would be your best friend. It would be somebody who you know means only your good and somebody who knows you through and through. It doesn't matter the logic that they would use. If you know that somebody is giving you advice and that somebody really loves you and cares about you and the advice is for your sake, then you're going to listen to him no matter what that advice is. What did Esther tell Ahashverosh that made him change his mind about killing the Jews? Haman

gave logical reasons to destroy them, They're not ameicha they're different who knows what they're going to do to the whole kingdom. Esther came and said ten et nafshi besheelati, ami bebakashati , that's it. What happened to all the reasons why achasheverosh wanted to kill the Jews? What went through Ahashverosh's head then? All the reasons that Haman gave were still true. You know what the Terutz is? It doesn't matter the reasons, it matters who's giving you the advice. Esther said, I'm your wife, I'm your favorite wife. I don't want them killed. Do it for me. Nafshi besheelati, vami bebakashati . Do it for me. It doesn't matter if you have a thousand reasons for killing them. I'm your wife. How could you kill them? Off with Haman's head! Estehr did not give Ahasheverosh one iota of a reason not to kill the Jews, only that it was her request. She wanted them saved, that's the only reason she gave. And because of that he ignored all the reasons that Haman had given him. What do you see from there? It doesn't matter what the eitza is, it matters who's giving the eitza. Who could be mashpiah on Ahasheverosh? Imagine if all the Jewish politicians had come to Ahashverosh and given a hundred reasons why not to kill the Jews. Imagine if all the philosophers had come and given him all the sevaras in the world why it's a bad thing for his kingdom, it wouldn't have helped. What helped? His wife. The kiruv haddas. With mamash no reason whatsoever. So now it's simple what the midda kneged midda was. Mordechai came every day leshaar beis hanashim to make sure that Esther wasn't lonely and she wouldn't feel alone. Even though she was surrounded by people, she wasn't alone, she had everything she wanted, she didn't have the right person. She had a thousand people but she didn't have the right one. She didn't have anybody whom she cared about. Mordechai he could have said, the Queen of Persia's lonely? I'm lonely. I'm sitting here. She has everything she wants in the world. But Mordechai knew that all that is worthless unless you are the right person. Mordechai's visit every day is what kept the Queen of Persia not lonely. Because Kiruv hadaas depends upon who you are not how many people you have. And bzechus that, Esther who had nothing whatsoever except that kiruv hadas relationship with Ahashverosh, that made the ness. And it makes perfect sense. Parents alswhyas ask should I be strict, should I be lenient? There are strict parents that are matzliach and there are lenient parents that are matzliach. And both that are not Matzliach. The yessod is that It matters who you are.

The Rambam says, In the mitzvah of tochacha, he says there are three conditions that must be met before you give somebody tochacha. Condition number 1, you have to speak nicely; Condition number 2, you can't do it in public; And condition number three, he says, you should make him know ,the person whom you're giving tochacha, that the only reason why you're telling him this tochacha, is for his sake to bring him to olam habah. Tthe first two tenaim of the Rambam come from a gemara in Eirubin, on the passuk Lo Tissa alav chet. But this thing that you have to let him know, that you're only doing it for his good, nobody brings a makpid to the Rambam. Not the Ketev Mishnah , not the Nosse Kelim not the Kiryat Melech either. Nobody has the makpid to the Rambam

In Behalosscha, when Moshe Rabbeinu gets aggravated by the assafsuf that come to him and unreasonably demand meat in the desert when they had all

the Man in the world that they wanted, Moshe Rabbeinu turns up to Hashem and he says, Hashem what do you want from me? What did I do to deserve this? What did I do wrong? Haanochi Hareissi et call haam hazeh? Did I give birth to these people? Says the Sforno, what does it mean? Haanochi hareisi et kol haam hazeh. He says if I had given birth to them, if I would be their father, they would listen to me. Sforno says, the only reason why children listen to their parents when they disagree is because the children know that the parents mean the children's own good and that they love them. That's a father and a child. Moshe Rabbeinu is saying, but they don't understand this about me. They don't understand that I mean their own good because I'm not their father. So in other words, I'm only Moshe Rabbeinu. I'm the Adon Haneviim, I'm the Gadol hador, I split Yam Suf, I received the Torah on Har Sinai and I spoke to Ribbono Shel Olam, Panim el Panim but regarding my having influence on Kelal Yisrael, I'm nothing compared to somebody else who they know means their own good.

If you have two people giving advice, one means it with a deep sincerity for the benefit of the person to whom he's giving the advice, and the other one is Moshe Rabbeinu with all the madregas in the world, he could be Melech HamaShiach himself, you're going to listen to the first one. Furthermore, Moshe Rabbeinu did mean it for the benefit of Klal Yisrael. But he couldn't get the message across, they didn't believe it. Even if you do mean it for their own good, you have to make them understand it, otherwise, they're not going to listen. That's what he says there. They don't listen to me because I'm not their father. If I were their father, they'd understand. That the mitzvah of tochacha the Gemarah clearly states that if someone's not going to listen to you, there's no mitzvah. The Sforno says the only reason children listen to parents or anybody listens to anybody is because they know they mean it for their own good, therefore it's a condition to let him know that you're doing it for his good. Otherwise they're not going to listen. It's not enough to say it, you have to make them understand it.

Who doesn't mean everything for their children's good? It's very simple. If parents want their children to behave a certain way because otherwise it's an embarrassment for the parents, maybe the parents are right and maybe the children will listen, because they're scared not to, but that's not hashpaah. Because you're not impacting on your child's values. You're just making him do something. If parents want their children to do something so they can be matzliachdike parents that benefits the parents, not the child. If parents want their children to act or grow up a certain way in order for them to get their kavod or because they're going to be embarrassed near their neighbors that's letovas the parent, not letovas the child. The first yessod on being mashpiah on the children is that the children need to understand that when you give them advice, the advice is for their sake and not for your sake and this is a very very big hurdle. It's a very big nissayon, whether you're a parent or an educator. If you're a mechanech it's very simple, if you give your bachurim a certain derech, or you make certain decisions for the good of the Yeshiva, not the bachurim, you're not going to have any influence on them. If they know that you're giving them advice because you want to be a matzliachdike Rosh Yeshiva or you want a bigger yeshiva, they're not going to listen. If a bachur is

sitting there at his entrance examination for the mechinah and he thinks that his chances of being let into the yeshiva are dependent upon how much he can be an asset to the yeshiva, and he thinks well if I'm a good asset to the yeshiva, the yeshiva's going to let me in, then the bachur won't be mushpa from the yeshiva very much. If when the bachur goes to the Rebbe and says Rebbe, I want to learn in a different Yeshiva because I think I can learn better there and the Menahel tries to convince him no, you should stay here, if the bachur thinks that it's really for his sake, it'll work. If the bachur thinks that of course, he just wants me to stay over here, that's not hashpaah. I was once at a Lakewood yeshiva dinner and across the table from me were two people, , one was a mashgiach one was a menahel, of two of the big yeshivas in America. And sitting next to us was a person that knew all three of us, I had never met the other two yidden before and he introduces us. And they say, "Oh, you're *that* Rabbi Shapiro. Nu , so tell us, what's the problem with the kids." So I said there are a lot of problems. But for now, I think that it would be an eitz tova if your yeshivas and these particular yeshivahs, would care more about the bachurim and not about the Yeshivah. So they look at each other and they say to me, you know it's true, but not in our yeshivahs. In other yeshivahs. "It's takke a good eitz but by us, everybody is mamash dedicated and the rabbeim." So I said: "Okay, let's see if it's true. I have a question. I have one question. Just answer this question any way you like and we'll see. What would you do if the menahel of your yeshiva came to you and said Rosh Yeshiva, Mashgiach, Menahel, whatever, the bachurim want to leave the yeshiva. The yeshiva's in danger of closing next zeman. They want to go away. How would you handle it?" They weren't going to get trapped into saying the wrong answer. They said, "Oh no, you don't understand. We want the bachurim to be tzufrieden. We would ask mamash every single bachur what the problem is and we'd make sure we would listen to the bachurim and we would respect them and we would show them that they're important to us, and we would make sure that all of their complaints were taken care of. Even if we had to fire Rabbeim which is not shayach al pi derech hateva we would fight in order to do it to make sure the bachurim were tzufrieden,..." and this went on for about 10 minutes like this. So I said okay, now let me tell you a story. This actually happened about 35 years ago in the Pupe yeshiva in Williamsberg in Brooklyn. The menahel came to the Pupe Ruv and told the Pupe Ruv that the yeshiva's in danger of closing. Because the Bachrim want to leave. The Pupe Rav was all upset and he immediately called an emergency meeting at his house that night and everybody was around his table that evening, the menahel the administrators, the rebbeim and he was sitting at the head of the table white like a ghost and you could tell that he wasn't thinking about anything else the whole day and he hadn't eaten, he had cancelled all his appointments, he was just shaking. And he opens up the meeting, and says, "Kkodem kol Rabbosai, I want to ask you something. You say the bachurim are leaving. Where are they going?" So they immediately take out the papers and they look at the list and say they're going to Tsalem to Wien to Satmar wherever. So he says,"Stop! Tsalem, Wien, Satmar, I thought they were going to public school. They're going to Tsalem, they're going to Wien, let them go. What do I need a Yeshiva for? I need a Yeshiva so the bachurim should have a yeshiva. If they have another yeshiva, they want to go there, gezinterheid. What's the problem? There's a chilik where the

bachurim go to Yeshiva. I need a yeshiva? Can somebody tell me what the problem is here?" Now it was their turn to be white like a ghost. You hear this mussar? A yeshiva is letovas the bachurim not the bachurim letovas the yeshiva. An example of a Rebbe that really meant the good of his students that really would have a hashpaah. I always use the example of Rabbi Elchonon Wasserman zatzal . Everybody knows the story about Reb Elchonon where he was safe on the West side of Manhattan, in World War II and then he went back for his Talmidim and lo aleinu, he didn't get out. What people don't know is that the talmidim of Brawnovitche yeshiva expected Reb Elchonon to come back. I spoke to two Talmidim of Brownovitch from New York who Baruch Hashem were not there in 1939 when this happened, they left a year or two earlier, but they said that there's no doubt in their minds that the bochurim were sitting there saying to themselves "Reb Elchonon is not going to leave us here alone, Reb Elchonon he's safe in America, in Manhattan. Uh Uh. Reb Elchonon is not going to let us sit here and die cold and alone. Reb Elchonon is coming back." And when he came back, they were not surprised. Reb Elchonon cultivated an atmosphere in his yeshiva such that the talmidim knew that he would not stay safe in America, he would give his life, not to save them, that would be good enough, but to give his life to be there with them that they shouldn't die cold and alone and not only that he did that, but they all expected it. Do you understand what kind of Rebbe that is? Now here's my question. If you had a Rebbe like that who you knew that about him that that's what he would do and he gave you an eitza to go to this yeshiva that yeshiva whatever , How many split seconds would it be before you jumped to do what he says? And that's the yessod. That Reb Elchonon was a gaon and a Tzaddik , that wasn't the reason that they would listen to him. Moshe Rabbeinu was a bigger Gaon and a bigger tzaddik. And Klal Yisrael didn't listen to him over there. But Reb Elchonon, they understood for whatever reason that Reb Elchonon did mean letovassam. To bring them into the next world.

If your children think that the reason you want them to behave is because you're getting aggravated because they don't behave, they may listen to you, but that's not hashpaah, they won't internalize it, and they won't grow with the value, they won't care about what you're saying. Now, I'm not saying that if they're running around wild and you're sleeping, you shouldn't tell them be quiet, I'm trying to sleep. But there it's clear that you mean letovascha, you're entitled, you have rights. You have a right to sleep. And where you mean letovascha then good, it's letovascha. There's nothing wrong with that. But if There you don't want to be mashpiah, you just want him to be quiet and that's fine. But if you want your child to grow up a certain way and to get a certain derech and a certain mahalach hachaim, in those matters, the things that are really for his benefit, you need to make him understand that it's for his sake. But if it's letovas him and you make it letovas you, you want him to be a Ben Torah so then he could get a good shidduch and you can be very proud or you're annoyed when the Rebbe calls you down to yeshiva... it's not a good thing when rebbeim do, I tell this to the Rebbeim where they threaten kids," if you don't behave, I'm going to call your father and shlep him down here, and he's going to have to take a day off from yeshiva, to come down here because of you." So what does the Rebbe say? the Rebbe is saying that

really your father doesn't want to come here because of you. And I'm going to call him and he's going to get aggravated, and if he gets aggravated, you better watch out! So I'm using the father's aggravation as a stick to make sure you behave.

If you're the father in that position, you know what you do? You tell the kid, "You know what? The Rebbe called me down, I go down gladly. What you did, I'll scream at you about later, but your Rebbe calls me down, something about your chinuch, I'll gladly take a week off, if that's what I have to do." Never let him think that you going to speak to the Rebbe or whatever for his chinuch is something that you davka don't want to do, something that's not worth it to you. You do it willingly, gladly and knowingly. What he did, you can handle it later but beshaaas you go down, you have to make him understand that it's your, not pleasure, but it's your like run to shul to catch a minyan because that's what a yid is supposed to do. A yid is supposed to run down to the cheder to speak to the Rebbe. Bezrizus. Not that you're going to be aggravated and he's going to suffer because of it. The child needs to know that his chinuch is first and foremost of what's on the agenda of what's important to you. If let's say, and this is more nogea to the mother, If you have a six, seven, eight year old child, and in school they're making a presentation for lunch. Everybody takes turns, making a five minute speech, on whatever subject they have and if you have a gellegenheit to be there beshaat maaseh, I highly recommend that you go there even if it takes you an hour there and an hour back but your child should know that those five minutes that were important to them, are important to you too. That their simcha and their kavod and their hatzlocho was so important to you that you were willing to spend the hour to go there and the hour to go back. Does it mean if you don't, your kid's going to go off the derech? No, absolutely not. But it means that if you do this, your child will really really know that their hatzlacha is the most important thing to you in the world; More important than your convenience and your comfort. I always notice when I say these things, parents start writing down "Go to yeshiva when there's five minute presentation," "do this do that." That's not really my kavannah. The ikar is not what you do, the ikar is that the child should know that you want to do it. The child should know in any way you can express it. Maybe you can express it in other ways. Everybody has their own personality and their own ways of expressing themselves. Your child should know, even if you can't go down to the presentation, that you wanted to. And you know what that's better than if you do go down, because you heard it in a shiur from Rabbi Shapiro one night in Bnei Brak.

I'll give you a mashal it's very simple. Which would you rather have? That your husband spends less time with you but you know that he really really wants to spend more time with you even though he's not there, he really wants it just he can't, or he really doesn't want you but he heard in some shlom bayit shiur that he has to spend time with you. So he spends time with you. Which would you rather have? Everybody has their own feelings but personally, I'd rather want somebody that really cares about me even if Imaaseh, they don't have all the time.

The Ramban in Eiruvim says, how an eiruv techumim works is that if you hold that there's an issur doraisa of techum and you put a bottle of ketchup and a challah out on the road, suddenly it's mutar, the techum is batul. So the Ramban says, the peshat is, where a person's food is that's where his thoughts are and al pi halachah, that's his dira. If you're sitting in your house, but you're thinking about someplace else, you're over there, you're not here. And if you're with your children, but you're thinking about when you can get back home but you have to be here because someone told you to spend time with your children, you're not there with them. But if you're somewhere else, and your children know that you're really thinking about them, that's much more important to them, it's a question of who you are more than what you do. When you're in yeshiva, you may be working, give your children a telephone call, five minutes bein hasdarim whatever it is, just to say hello. That's it. Not to make sure that the house isn't a wreck; "Hello what's doing, is everybody behaving?" Usually that's the phone calls that the children get when the parents are not home. First thing is everybody okay, is everybody behaving, is Rivky sleeping? Did you cook supper, is everything cleaned up, will the house be a mess when I get home? You're entitled to ask that. Those phone calls however should be batul brov, you should have an equal and greater amount of phone calls where you've just called your child to say, "Hi, I was thinking about you."

Now if you're not the type to do it, if it's fake, then don't do it. The yessod is that you should really want to do it. If you want your children to think that you really, really care about them, and machshiv them and they are the most important things in your life, then the eitza is they should takke be so. We shouldn't take them for granted. And we should understand that their five minutes not make believe that their five minutes, presentation is so important to us, it should takke be so important to us. Every child should know that the parents go crazy over them. And I'm not teaching tricks. I make tapes and people ask me if I mind if the kids listen to the tapes. And I say, I don't make any tricks. It's gevaldig if your children hear that you are trying, you are striving to have a better relationship with them, it's a wonderful thing, they don't have to know that you're a failure, if you are, they don't have to know that. But everyone is entitled to know you're trying. I imagine how your wife would feel if she found out that suddenly you're going to classes that teach you how to have a stronger relationship with your wife. You don't want to tell her because then she'll know your tricks. If it's tricks you're right, but the vort is it's not tricks, it's a feeling and an attitude towards your children. Like with Reb Elchanon, the bachurim knew that he cared about them more than anything else in the world. The main thing if you want your children to be mushpah from you, they need to know that you care about them more than anything else in the world.

The Satmar Rebbe was an adam gadol who lo aleinu left the world without leaving any children. But he says a gevaldig vort about having children. By the akeida, Avraham Avinu, it says, asked Hakadosh Baruch Hu, after Hashem told him al tishlach yadcha al hanaar so Avraham Avinu tells Hakadosh Baruch Hu, Hashem I don't understand. First you tell me, ki beYitzchak ikara becha zara, that yitzchak is going to live, then you tell me

that I should schecht him, now you tell me I shouldn't schecht him, well it's a three-way stira, which way is it? So the Satmar Rebbe asks, why did Avraham have to wait for a three way stira? After Hashem told him to sacrifice him, Avraham Avinu should have asked Hashem, Ribbono Shel Olam, first you said Yitzchak is going to live, byitzchak ikara lecha zara, now you say I should schecht him, why did he have to wait for the third stira? So listen to what he says, he says, that Avraham Avinu didn't want to ask that question to Hashem, because he knew, in his anivus of course, that he wouldn't be able to be mekabel the answer. He says Hashem tells him scheck your son, he says there's no love in the world stronger than a father to a son, and even Avraham Avinu would run into a kivshan Haesh for Hakadosh Baruch Hu, but that he should accept a reason from Hashem to scheck his son, he'll do it but that he should be mekabel a reason and understand it, not shayach al pi derech hateva. It's not shayach al pi derech hateva, that a father even Avraham Avinu should be able to accept even mipi Hakadosh Baruch Hu himself, to understand that he should have to lose his son, even as a korban for Hashem. So he didn't want to ask a question whose answer he wouldn't be able to accept. Of course he says it's in Avraham's anivus or whatever madrege in was. After Hashem told him, al tishlach yad banaar, and Yitzchak was safe now he can ask Him what did you mean then when I thought I was going to lose him. So you hear this? Parents come to me and sometimes they want to even throw their child out of the home. And they have a frumer cheshbon. How can I have a home like this, with this child in it? It's gevaldiger frume cheshbon. But you know what? I'm amazed at how Avraham Avinu couldn't understand the logic, the sevara of losing a son for frum reasons, and these people have no problem. No problem. Throw him out, kill him, whatever I'm a frumemr Yid, I'm a Ben-Torah, and I'm going to scheck him for Hakadosh Baruch Hu, and good. Scheck him for Hakadosh Baruch Hu, Avraham was willing to do, but I don't understand why it's a pashuter sevara, no problem,. Avraham Avinu couldn't understand that. He wasn't willing to accept that but we're more frum than he is.

We need to understand what our children mean to us, and how valuable they are to us, and we need them to understand that. From Rav Dessler again, you know he has a letter from his michatv miEliyahu that was written to his 13 year old daughter. It happened that his wife and his daughter left England to go on a trip and then the war broke out and they were separated from Rav Dessler and they couldn't get back. So he writes her a letter. How much he misses her and how are you doing and eitzes that she should do while they're separate. And the words he uses, you'd take a look at it, it's in chelek daled, biti chayaiy, bit libi and over and over and over again you're my life you're my love, you're my heart, to a 13 year old girl, he says this. You're my life, he tells her, you're my heart he tells her, and on the top of every page, he wrote biti chayay, biti libi, biti ahuvi, biti machma li. I called up this 13 year old girl who lives in Queens now, her name is Rebbetzin Geltfeiler. And I asked her this. ?????? She was crying, "I can't speak about it." She just was crying.

Rav Dessler wouldn't have a hard time understanding the Satmar Rebbe's Vort, If we understand what are children are, this is derech hateva. It's just that we've become so far from them. Not that we should act like it, to do

maasim and to do peulos to be nice to them or to be very nice to them, that's not the peshat, the peshat is that just like your wife or your husband really understand when you mean it and when you don't, and when you want to be around them and when your mind is elsewhere, your children do also. And you can't fool them. And if you want your children to be mushpah from you, you have to be the right person, like the Sforno says, the reason that children listen to their parents is because they know that their parents love them, perush more than anything else in the world and what they mean is only letovassam of the children. When their friends give them an eitza, it's not necessarily for their good, when Moshe Rabbeinu gives them an eitza, it's not necessarily letovassam in their mind but when a father gives an eitza, the children would definitely know it's letovassam, that's the way a father-child relationship and a mother-child relationship is supposed to be.

So principal number 1, we can work on it for years and years. Every day when we wake up in the morning and we see our children over there we should thank Hakadosh Baruch Hu and realize how valuable these entities are to us and we should think of Rav Dessler, we should think of the Satmar Rebbe's Vort. Nebech somebody, who as I said, left the world without any children. He has another Vort the Satmar Rebbe, on the same thing. He says, if you notice, he says tzaddikim are mekabel yesurim beahava right? But there's one place where we find that it's not so. One place we find where even tzaddikim complain, I don't want to use that word, but tzaddikim what to change the matzav they were given, one place, he says, Hakadosh Baruch Hu says mesavel tefillatam shel tzaddikim, Hashem wants to hear the tefillos of tzaddikim, a tefillah asking for something. So what does Hashem do in every single instance when he wants to hear tefillos of tzadikkim?. One thing he does and one thing only, he doesn't make them poor because they'd be mekabel yessurim beahava. What tefilla, I should be rich? He doesn't give them physical pain because tzaddikim mekablim yressurim beahava. One thing he does, he makes them akaros. That's what we find. The one place we find that Hakadosh Baruch Hu knows what's going to push the taddikim to pray to change the situation that they were given, the only time we find that is when Hakadosh Baruch Hu made tzaddikim not have children. That even tzaddikim can't endure. It's the same vort. Now of course they're mekabel that beahava too but they ask for another situation to be mekabel beahava. We need to study like a sugiya what our children are supposed to mean to us, like a sugya in a massechat yevamos, if we have that then a lot of things fall into place. If we would really understand what our children are, it would really fall into place.

The second thing is that it's not so easy to love somebody. Many parents don't really love their children, they love the person who they think their child is. That's not necessarily their child. There's a vort Rav Nachman of Breslev once said. They asked him how does he explain the fact that there are so many chashuve yidden misnagdim that are against him. So Rav Nachman said, "Me? They have nothing against me, they have something against the person who they think I am. And he deserves it." What do we see from Rav Nachman? That you can't have a complaint against somebody unless you know who he is. You'd have a taana against some imaginary guy. It's the

same thing with love. You can't love somebody unless you know who they are. Because otherwise they say, "My father, my mother, they say they love me, they don't love me. They love the kid who they think I am. How could they love me, they don't even know me."

How many times do I have parents and kids sitting in my office, and the kid says "My mother doesn't love me." And the mother starts crying and she says "I love you, I love you, I love you." And the kid says "You do not, you do not." And the mothers, usually it's the mothers who get all cracked up when this happens, think that the kid's being unreasonable, lying even. And it's not true. And they're fighting and they really mean it, just the niggun is wrong. The kid says "you don't love me and he means, you don't love me." The kid can't articulate this. In all these cases, if you ask the kid, "Do your parents know you, do they know who you really are, do they know what's inside you?" they'll say, "No, I'm a stranger in my own home." Well if you're a stranger in your own home, you're not going to feel your parents love, no matter how much they love you. And I have a raaya from the Gemorrah. You know the story of Choni HaMaagal? Oich a chavrusa, missusa, I have a kasha. Why couldn't Choni hamagal find new friends? He was a big Baal Middos. He needed davka those friends? If somebody moves to a new town they can't find new friends? You move to another part of the world, you want to die? You find new friends. So why couldn't he find new friends? Terutz is, Nobody knew who he was. They didn't believe he was Choni and if you don't know who somebody is, you don't really love him. Just like Rav Nachman's Vort. "They're not friends with me," Choni would say, "they're friends with that guy who they think I am." I don't know who they thought he was but they clearly did not believe that he was who he was. And if you don't know who I am, you're not my friend. You're friends with that imaginary person. And this could be a very simple. Another pshat in the Sefas Emes why Esther was lonely. Because even though she had all the friends in the world in the palace, she was also in disguise, they didn't know who she was either. So if they don't know who she is, they can't be her friend, she'll for sure be lonely. Just like Choni Hamaagal. "I who am surrounded by all these friends, they're not friends with me, they're friends with that queen who they think I am. And she's lucky."

If you want to love somebody, particularly your children, the suggestion is that you need to get to know who they are. How many parents know their child's favorite color? The child's favorite subject in school? Not the best subject, where they get the highest marks, the favorite subject in school. How many parents know what the child wants to be when they grow up? And I'm not talking parnassah wise, I'm talking mehalach hachayim wise. How many people know what their child's taste is in friends, what the child's potentials are in life? What's going on inside the child's mind, things that you probably know about your best and closest friend. If there's something that you know about your best and closest friend that you do not know about your children. Then you have to keep trying because to the extent that you don't know your children, to that extent, they're not going to feel your love. Plus, it's not possible that somebody should think when you give them an eitza they mean letovascha if you believe they don't even know you. Imagine going to ask advice from somebody that doesn't know you. I'm not talking about, a Rebbe,

a mekubal, I'm talking about going to someone who has no idea who you are, no idea of anything and you ask him, should I sell my house, move to Yerushalayim or not? How in the world, if he doesn't know you is he going to give you an answer. And if he does give you an answer, so, you're not going to be machshiv it because he doesn't know you at all. Same thing with parents and kids. Step 1 was that you should get the sincerity and you should understand what the child is but step two is even if that's true, it's still not enough because you have to know who the child is, you have to direct the love to the child. And the raaya that it's not enough is from Moshe Rabbeinu because Moshe Rabbeinu certainly loved Klal Yisrael and meant everything letovassam but they still didn't understand it. So you see from there that there's a special effort needed to make people understand what you really feel inside. For some reason it's not just devarim sheyotzim mehalev nichnassim el halev. It's not good enough that you should mean his good, says the Ramban, Veyodio, You should make him understand that you mean his good, there's a special extra peula, extra avoda in that. Get to know your children!

A way to get to know your children is to waste a lot of time with them. It's wonderful and gevaldig for fathers to learn with their sons. It's a hundred percent good. But it's also important for fathers to Batul with their sons. Because fathers to learn with their sons, teaching them Torah, it's wonderful but you need to get to know them also. And you need them to feel comfortable with you too. You need for them to speak to you devarim batteilim, all those things that are inside, them because when you give them eitzas, if you're only going to give them eitzas peshat letosafos or how to learn the Rashba then all you're going to need is to learn with them but if you're going to give them eitzas what to do with their life, about how to run a house and what mahalach chaim to have, then you need to understand what's going on inside them regarding those issues. You tell them what friends to have, what friends not to have, This passt yeah for you this past nicht for you, just from learning with them, you're not going to know if that's true. And maybe you will know from other reasons but they won't think that you know. They have to be able to understand that you really know them. That's step number 2.

Step number three. There's another nekudah about being mashpiah on people and that is being similar to them. People will only take mussar, tochacha, etzas from people who they believe are similar to them. And that's part of what I said before. The way the psychology of people works, is that if somebody is so different from you, you're not going to believe that he really understands you. Even if you do, a kid is certainly not going to believe it. It says in the midrash Tanchuma, that when the Satan came to Avraham and Yitzchak with the Akeida, he came to Avraham disguised as a Rosh Yeshiva, it says, and he came to Yitzchak disguised as a Naar. So what do we learn from the Satan? That if you want to convince somebody to do something, you have to be a shtickel similar to them, There's a vort from the Yetev Lev. He says the pshat to a passuk in Mishlei like this. The passuk says, Tov lishmoa gaarat chacham meish shomea shir kesilla. Says the Yetev Lev, what's the Peshat? It's good to hear the mussar of a chacham. What type of a chacham? Meish shomea shir kesilim, from a chacham who understands shir kessilim,

then his mussar would be accepted because the person will think that he can understand the situation. The Pele Yoetz says the same thing in the title Tochecha. He says that the chiyuv on the average baalabas to give mussar is more than the chiyuv on the Rav. Because When the Rav gives mussar then the balabatim say, "Well he's the Rav, it's easy for him to talk." But when a balabas gives mussar, a balabas can say, "look, I'm in the same boat as you, I understand what you're going through, and you know, this is how you can get out of it." Now this doesn't mean that you should listen to a shir kessilim, that's not what it means, it's just a mashal, that's why they call it Mishlei. What it does mean is that if you want to give your child an eitzah about something, you need to understand what matzav he's in. There's again a word from the Satmar Rebbe Zatsal. The parashah with the egel. He says, when Moshe Rabbeinu came down, he asks Aharon HaCohen what happened over here? I put you in charge, what is this? Aharon HaCohen answers Ata Yodeah et haam haze ki berah hu, You know this nation how bad they are. What's peshah?. Ata Yodeah, it's a chiyuv on a manhig to know all about the aveiras and the things that his kehilla's doing. Otherwise how can you know what tochecha to give, how to give tochecha? And this what the Baal Shem Tov once said, that if you see bad in somebody it means that there's a pasul in you that doesn't apply to a leader because it's a leader's obligation to know what's going on. And if he doesn't know what's going on, if he doesn't know the matzav then it's a chissaron on him. Aharon HaCohen wasn't the manhig all these years, he tells Moshe Rabbeinu, you're the manhig, I don't have to know what's going on, I don't have to know all the shmutz that they're involved in, I'm not interested, but you're the manhig, you have a chiyuv, you know what's going on with this nation, I don't. I didn't expect this to happen. If we want to be able to be mahpiah on our children, we have to understand what the dangers are if rachmana litzlan a child has a sickness so the parents will naturally spend a lot of time learning whatever they can about the sickness. So they can know when some new medicine comes out, if when something different happens, it's a siman of what? If rachmana litzlan a child were involved in a cult, before you'd try to get somebody out of a cult, before you convince them, you have to understand what the avodah zara is, you have to be baki in avoda zara, kdei leharot, it's permissible to learn whatever you have to learn. A parent is a manhig in his own home. This is certainly kdei leharot. And depending upon the situation of the kid, you need to understand what the dangers are for the child. If a child has a bad friend, you need to know details about exactly how bad the friend is and what exactly they're involved in and how they got there and what the eitzah is to get them out of that particular type of problem. Too often parents come to me and say:  
"Well he's hanging around with bad friends, he's doing bad things."

"What is he doing?"

"I don't know, ich vais, he goes out at night, he comes back at five o'clock in the morning, I don't know what he's doing."

I have no answer. I have no answer for that. There are so many different possibilities that it's impossible to explain to somebody what they should do. Before you go to a doctor, you can't just say I'm sick. You have to say whether my head hurts, does my foot hurt. Does my head hurt for this amount of time? Same thing over here. A person needs to understand what exactly is the problem, what exactly he's doing, where it started, how it started. This

also goes back to a person knowing his child. Knowing his child means knowing the maalos and chesronos and as the manhig of your home, you are supposed to know what the child is involved in. There's a vort from Rav Shimon Schwab, he once wrote it in the Yated years ago, later they reprinted it in one of his books. Rav Schwab was once Rav in Baltimore Maryland, a long time ago. And he himself was a very big zokeh, bsof yamav. And he was a Rav for a very, very long time. When Rav Schwab was young, there was a zaken in Baltimore, Rav Michael Forschlage? who was a Talmid of the Avnei Nezer and Rav Schwab was very close with him. Rav Schwab said over a vort from this Rav. There's a ? from Rashi that a parent is supposed to be a friend to his child.. Yossef Hatzaddik says to his brothers, Vayisimeni Leav leParoh, Paroh made me an av over him. Says Rashi, what does Av mean? A friend.. So you see a father is supposed to be a friend. What does this mean, is the father supposed to be on the same level as the child? Absolutely not. The father's supposed to be in a mechubadike position, definitely not on the same level as the child. Rav Michael ssays that if you want to know the taich of any word, you see the first time it comes up in the Torah, and where's the first time a mussag of a friend comes up in the Torah? By Chirah and Yehudah. A friend is someone you can tell anything to. Even if it's an aveira and that's what a father is supposed to be for a son. A father is supposed to have the type of relationship with his child that his child is able to tell his father anything. Even if he did something wrong. The child is supposed to have a lot of kavod for the father and a lot of yirat horim but it's not supposed to be to the extent that when a child did something wrong and he needs somebody to talk to, he'd be scared to go to the parents. A child should be able to understand that the parents are there for him when he has a problem. If you can go to a Rebbe and say that you did an aveira why shouldn't you be able to go to your parents? You should. That's what Rashi is saying.

So now how in the world do we get to this madreiga? That's very nice it's supposed to be that way. But how do you do it? You have to show the kid that what he did was wrong, you have to punish him and every kid knows that if he says he did something wrong he'll get punished, that's the way it's supposed to be so how do you set up a situation where the child isn't scared? This is very, very prevalent. I was once teaching a class, a number of years ago in a girls' high school in America. And I said over this vort and I asked the 30 14 year old girls in the class, "How many of you girls would, if you were in trouble, tell your parents if you had an opportunity not to. If they wouldn't find out anyway?" These were Frum girls. These were all Bais Yaakov girls. One girl out of 30 raised her hand. And everyone said from her it's no raaya, she never does anything wrong anyway so she doesn't know what it's like.

So this is what you do. You're entitled to be angry at a child when they do something wrong. You're entitled to be mad, you're entitled to be upset. But very often we find in the Torah that even though you have one emotion it's sometimes battul inside another emotion as well. In other words, we just said, how important it is to understand how much you love your children. But there's a halachah you're not allowed to kiss your children in the bais Midrash. In the Shulchan Aruch it's written that even though you love your child as we described above that ein ahava keahavat haMakom. So now, what would

happen if a child would come home afterwards and say to himself, well, my father wouldn't kiss me in the Beis Midrash must be he doesn't love me. That's very possible, can happen, right? How do you prevent that? If outside of the Beis Midrash you showed him all the love all the time and he really understands it, then inside the Beis Midrash, if you don't kiss him, he'll understand it properly. . But if outside the Beis Midrash you never really showed him how much you love him, then he may misinterpret your behavior inside the Beis Midrash. So in other words, for a person to get the proper message across to his child, he has to have the right relationship with him, all throughout. It's the same thing over here. When a child comes to you and says he did an aveira, what's your first reaction? I mean what is he telling you? What's more he says, "I've been doing a certain aveira for the last six months and I have to tell you. What did he just tell you?"

He told you two things, not one. He told you number one, he's involved in an aveira, and number two, he said to you, that he feels so distant from you that he couldn't even tell you about this from the beginning. Which is a worse problem? That the child was involved in an aveira or that your relationship with him is so weak that he can't even talk to you? They're both bad, but the second problem is worse. And that should be your first reaction. When the kid comes and says I did this and this and I didn't tell you about it, the reaction is "You know, I feel so bad that you couldn't tell me about it." After that issue is over with, then there's the issue of what the aveira was. But if before this, you really did show the child the relationship that he's supposed to see, the way a father acts towards a child, then when this happens, he will take it in the proper context. If you tell him, you know I feel so bad that you weren't able to tell me, or you know what, I feel so bad for you that you did this, or we're in this together rather than showing anger. Parents are going to think well that shows approval right? If I don't slap him in the face on the spot. It shows approval only if you don't have the right relationship with him. Let's say a kid does a terrible thing, he takes the car without permission, passes a red light, gets into an accident rachmana litzlan ends up in the hospital with broken bones. Now, a policeman comes to visit him in the hospital because the police heard about it and asks him what happened. The kid tells him what happened, and the policeman leaves without giving him a ticket. Clearly, in the child's mind, that means that the policeman feels that he didn't do anything wrong. Otherwise, he would have given him a ticket. If a father comes to visit the child, what's the first reaction that the father should have? Obviously everybody understands this. "Are you okay?" Are you alive? Will you be okay? Are you hurt?" And the fact that he did this, you deal with it later, Everybody knows that. Now if the father doesn't mention first thing, the aveil that the child did, does that mean that the father's, maskim? Of course not. Hopefully, the child will take it to mean that of course he's not maskim and I'm going to get it later, but right now he's more concerned with my welfare than he is about what I did.

Two people come and have the same kind of conversation, the policeman and the father. If the policeman doesn't give him a ticket, he's maskim. If the father doesn't punish him, it doesn't mean he's maskim. So what's the Yessod? The yesod is, that if you want to be able to make your child not scared to speak to

you, yet not show that you're maskim, be more of a father and less of a policeman. If your whole relationship with him is that you're a policeman, and all he hears from you is that you did this bad and you did this good and you did this that and you don't have this interpersonal relationship with him such like we described before, and all your life that's all you are, then of course if he does an aveira and you don't yell at him on the spot he's going to think that you're maskim. Because it's a policeman's job, he cares most about the aveira. But if you have that real relationship with him and if he understands from before the day of the accident that he's the most important thing to you in the world, and that his welfare is more important to you than anything else that you could think of, then if you come, and you don't mention the aveila first, you mention whatever trouble he's in and you want to try to get him out of it, he'll understand.

"Hello Tatie, I'm in trouble, I may get thrown out of Yeshiva," there are 2 reactions. The wrong reaction is "Well, what did you do, to get thrown out of Yeshiva?" that's a policeman. A parent's reaction is: "Okay, let's see what we can do to help you." Then afterwards, the biggest danger is he's going to be thrown out of yeshiva. That's nogeah his welfare. There's also a problem whatever he did to deserve that. It's like the accident, the first thing, "Are you okay, let's get you out of the hospital, when you're safe and sound then we can yell at you and do whatever's necessary." But just imagine what kind of sick relationship it would be if the kid is sitting there in the hospital and the father comes and says with tears in his eyes, "How are you doing are you okay I heard about it, I came running over." He comes to the doctors, "Is he going to be alright, ach Baruch Hashem everything's fine," and he leaves. And the kid says, ah see, he's maskim. That's sick, that's an extreme example. But that little sickness is quite often very present in parent-child relationships not to that extreme, but if a parent's relationship with the child is such that if the child confides in the parent that he's in trouble and the parent's response is okay let's help you get out of trouble without mentioning the aveila, if the child believes because of this that the parent's maskim, then there's a problem in the relationship. The relationship isn't what it was supposed to be. And so the answer to the question of how do I get my child to be able to confide in me and not be scared of me and I can't show that I'm maskim, the answer is if you have the proper relationship with him, such as we described, the ikkar is the issue of the attitude, the relationship, everything else falls into place. Then when you tell him what you're supposed to tell him after, he won't be scared, because the ikkar is, you're going to get him out of trouble. He'll understand that. If not, it's like somebody coming and saying, all my life I've had no yachas with this kid, I've had the wrong relationship. Now he's in trouble, how do I try to get him out of trouble without making him scared to confide? You can't. Mi shetarach berev shabbos yochal beshabbos. The advice is to torreach berev shabbos. And then you'll have the right relationship with him. All of the above, and then all of these things fall into place.

You have no idea how much children starve for their parents, for their parent's attention. Even if the child acts and behaves completely, totally and utterly as if he doesn't care about what his father says and does it's not true. It's like the rasha whose neshuma is starving for Torah and mitzvos even though he

doesn't act like it but we know inside he's mamash starving for it . It's the same thing. Children starve for their father's and mother's love and attention and they get such chizzuk from it. To a child it means the most in the world if they know they're on their parents' mind first and foremost.

Yossef Hatzaddik , sent back with his brothers Yaakov Avinu agalot or eiglot, there are two different pshatim . The reason he sent them to Yaakov, was to remind him, of the last sugiyah they learned together. Why was it important to tell him that? There's a vort from the alter from Kelm. On eggel harufa and he asked a kasha. It says that the Sanhedrin Hagadol makes a vidui , yaddenu lo shafchu et hadam haze veinenu lerao. And Rashi says that it means, that they didn't escort him out of town. So asked the alter from Kelm, I don't understand Let's say there's a hundred miles between towns. And this guy was killed 75 miles outside of the town. If you malaveh him, what would be? It would be different? You escort him dalet amos, you melaveh him until you can't see him anymore. If he's killed a hundred miles between towns, why are you shuldif? He says a hafeldicher vort and it shows the yessod of everything we're saying in a nutshell. He says like this. It does help because if a guy in the middle of nowhere is attacked by robbers, he has to fight them off, and a person inside has gevaldige koichus, everybody knows stories about mothers whose kids are stuck under cars and they lift up the cars to get the kids out . These things really happen. People theoretically have gevalige koichus, to fight against the robebrs. If he knows nobody cares about him, he doesn't have any koichus. Because you didn't escort him those dalet amos, when the robbers come and attack him, he says, "Alright take me. Nobody cares about me anyway. What does it matter what happens to me." And even if he doesn't say it and he puts up a little fight, he's not going to put up a big fight because people get chizuk from other people. He thinks nobody cares about me, nobody melaved me, what am I, I'm a nothing. I'm a nothing? Where am I going to get the koichus to fight? If the Sanhedrin Hagadol, would have escorted him out of the town, he'd say, "I'm somebody, I'm not going to let them kill me, I'm going to have koichus to fight them." And he really would have the koichus. So because you weren't melaveh him, because you didn't give him the chizzuk, you didn't care about him, he just let it go, he didn't have any strength. The Alter of Kelm said the following and it's worth saying over to everybody in the world that you know. The peshat is that because Yaakov Avinu it says in all the mefarshim, was very scared about what happened to Yossef Hatzaddik bemitzrayim, with everything Yossef was exposed to all these years, Yossef Hatzaddik says to Yaakov Avinu, "You don't have to worry about me, Yaakov Avinu, I was your favorite son, you gave me the kuttonit passim, I know how much you loved me, you remember me learned the aigel arufa, you remember the Alter from Kelm's vort that we learned then? How a person gets chizuk and koichus to resist everything based on somebody else's chizzuk that's given to him. If that's the case, I'm not going off the derech. I could be anywhere in the world but you don't have to worry about me. The other brothers efshar, yeah, but me you don't have to worry about me. And that you see from egel arufa." People think Yossef had a vision of his father and he was suddenly so petrified of Yaakov Avinu. He was more petrified of Hakadosh Baruch Hu than of Yaakov Avinu I'm certain. And if shivti Hashem Kenengdi then obviously the awe of his father wouldn't do it

either. But, if it's true like the Alter from Kelm says, that people get the strength to resist davka from other people, then the Sanhedrin can't say -go get chizzuk from the Ribbono shel Olam. They know it's from chaverus where this chizzuk comes from. Then the mussar yukneam from Yaakov Avinu means something completely different. It means that warm feeling that reminder of all the chizuk, all that love and positive attention that Yaakov gave Yossef, that's what prevents people from doing aveiras. That's the mussar yukne shel av.

If we want our children to be able to resist doing aveiras, we need to be able to create a situation where the mussar deyukne shel av, vem, will remind him of all the chizuk and love and attention that the parents give them, based on the type of relationship we described before and if that happens the streets outside, won't be as dangerous. Everywhere the street is dangerous. Some places worse than others, it's better in Bnei Brak than in other places but it's definitely not a hundred percent safe over here either. The eitz is to fortify, to strengthen a person. There comes a point where it's just between a person and the Ribbono shel Olam. When that point comes, it's the input of the parents, that love and attention and chizuk that gives the child the koach to be able to resist all temptations, both in ruchnius and gashmius and when that happens, if we're able to create that relationship, then all the do's and the don'ts and the if's and the whens, everything falls into place. That's the ikkar.