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TEACHER'S GUIDE

MY VEHICLE TO SUCCESS

PRODUCED BY:

Torah Umesorah Brooklyn Teachers Center
620 Foster Ave. Brooklyn, NY 11230
frontdesk@torah-umesorah.org
718.744.3100

Coordinated by: Mrs. Goldy Goldberger

Written by: Mrs. Shana Rosenbaum, Mrs. Chana Leah Hertz, Mrs. Miriam Kurgel, Mrs. Nechami Sagi

Design by: Mrs. Malky Honigwachs, Mrs. Faigy Reich

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✂ MY VEHICLE TO SUCCESS | SOURCES:

- שעל ידי התחברות הנפש עם הגוף יוכל לזכות לאורח חיים למעלה (פלא יועץ)
- כי יסוד ושורש כל התורה הוא להגביה ולהעלות הנפש על הגוף מעלה מעלה (תניא חלק א':לב)
- חטוף ואכול חטוף ואשתי דעלמא דאזלינן מיניה כהילולא דמי... (עירובין נד:א)

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✂ MATERIALS:



1 per partnership

NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS
Anticipatory Set



1 per class

'WHO'S THE LEADER?' POSTER
Activity



1 per class

STEIPLER STORIES
Read-Along

My Vehicle to Success

LESSON AT A GLANCE

INTRODUCTION

CONCEPT:

The *guf* is a powerful tool; we must guide it to do the right thing.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

Whose commands do I obey - my *guf* or my *neshama*?

ANTICIPATORY SET:

'Two Newspaper Clippings' Activity

Brainstorm: How can I determine my success on the roads of life?

LESSON

PARABLE POINT:

The King's Guardsman

Message: The *guf* and the *neshama* work together as a pair to perform *mitzvos* and *aveiros*

DEMONSTRATION:

'Who is the Leader?'

Purpose: Students will understand what it means to lead and be in control.

READ-ALONG:

- Just 5 More Minutes
- Standing Up for What's Right
- Grab What You Can

CLOSURE:

'*Neshama vs. Guf*'

Take it to Heart #3

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My Vehicle to Success



The guf is a powerful tool;
we must guide it to do the right thing.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Whose commands do I obey - my guf, or my neshama?

ANTICIPATORY SET

TWO NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS

BRAINSTORM: How can I determine my success on the roads of life?

Pair up students and distribute a newspaper clipping to each pair. Half of the class receives Story A; the other half receives Story B.

Newspaper Story A:

"On May 26th, in Jersey City, there was a terrible crash on the interstate highway. Dan Fitz, a 26-year-old man, was driving his 2014 Toyota Camry down the street when he suddenly lost control of the wheel. The car, traveling at 80 miles per hour, swerved wildly across the lanes. It crashed into two cars on its way, and finally came to a stop, completely overturned."

Newspaper Story B:

"On May 26th, Jersey City celebrated the victory of one of their residents in the annual car race. Stan Ritz, a 26-year-old man, drove his 2014 Toyota Camry around the racetrack with superb skill. Driving at 80 miles per hour, he completed the last lap of the race track and was greeted with applause and pride."

Then, each pair answers the following questions:

- What type of car was the driver in this story driving? How powerful was that car? How fast was it going?
- What was the outcome of the drive?

Finally, call on two pairs to read their responses: one pair from Story A, and the other from Story B. Emphasize to students how the first answer is identical, yet the second answer is drastically different.

What caused the difference?

The first driver lost control of the steering wheel, with terrifying consequences. The second driver had excellent control, and steered his car to victory.

CONCLUSION: If we 'take hold of the reins,' we can guide our bodies to help us do ratzon Hashem.

FOCUS! The *guf* and the *neshama* are partners. We must learn to elevate and use our *guf* to help us do *mitzvos*.

LESSON

THE GUF IS OUR VEHICLE

Each of us was gifted with a vehicle of tremendous power and speed. What will determine our success on roads of life? Whether or not we control our vehicle.

What is that vehicle? Our *guf*.

Every person is made up of a *guf* and a *neshama*. The *guf* is the body; the physical container that holds our *neshama*. The body and soul are partners; they journey through life as a pair. Every action that we take involves both the *guf* and the *neshama*. One cannot accomplish without the other.

We spoke at length about our *neshama* and how it is who we are, while the *guf* is merely an external trapping. A *guf* without a *neshama* within cannot stand, talk, and move; it is not alive! The *neshama* gives life to a person - it's the essence of a person.

But what if there was a free floating soul, without a body to contain it? Would an independent *neshama* be able to shake a *leib* and *אוהב* or do *חסד* for another? No -- the *neshama* needs the *guf* in order to accomplish its will.

We see that the *guf* and *neshama* are truly partners: without the *neshama*, the *guf* is simply an inanimate physical form.

And without the *guf*, the *neshama* cannot perform *מצוות* or accomplish its goals. Although our essence and our *ikar* is the *neshama*, in this world the *neshama* is completely dependent on the *guf*.

PARTNERS IN RESPONSIBILITY

FROM THE SOURCE: The Gemara tells us: After a person leaves this world, the body and soul can each say that they were not responsible for any sins. The body will say, "How can I possibly be accountable for any sins? As you can see, since the day I've died, I've been lying here, unmoving, like a stone! I'm incapable of sin!" And the soul will claim, "How can I possibly be accountable for any sins? As you can see, since the day I've died, I'm floating around like a bird. I'm incapable of sin!"

The גמרא explains with a משל:

PARABLE POINT: // THE KING'S GUARDSMEN:

A king hired two men to guard his royal orchards. One of the men was physically lame; he could hardly walk. The other man was blind. Together, the two men were tasked with guarding the royal orchard.

The orchard was tempting; its trees boasted luscious, low-hanging fruit. One day, the lame man said to the blind man, "I see some figs that look delicious! Let's steal a few of them."

This was not so simple. How could the lame man climb the tree by himself? And how would the blind man be able to find the figs and pick them alone? The two men devised a plan. The blind man bent down and lifted the lame man onto his shoulders. Then, the lame man guided the blind man where to walk. Together, they approached the tree. The lame man lifted his hand and snatched the figs. As partners in crime, they indulged in their stolen fruit.

Alas, the king realized that someone had stolen from his royal orchard. He brought the two guards before him, and each one immediately cried out that he was innocent. "I am a cripple! I can hardly walk!" exclaimed the lame one. "How could I possibly steal the figs?" The blind man insisted, "I cannot see! Clearly, I could not have spotted the figs and stolen them!"

The wise king realized what had occurred. He ordered the lame man to sit on top of the blind man's shoulders, and said, "Now, I can punish you together."

Who are the guardsmen? The *guf* and the *neshama*. Together, they were tasked with 'guarding the orchard' - doing the מצוות. The *neshama* is like the crippled man; it cannot accomplish physical tasks on its own. And the *guf* is like the blind man; it cannot "see" spirituality and רוחניות. Together, they can work as a pair to do מצוות or עבירות.

FROM THE SOURCE: This is what the *Sefer Peleh Yoetz* teaches, when discussing the *guf*:

שעל ידי התחברות הנפש עם הגוף יוכל לזכות לזיווג למעלה - That through the bonding of the *neshama* with the *guf*- through partnership, where they work together to do mitzvos and serve Hashem - one can merit *Olam Habah*.

DIFFERENT DESIRES

We see that the *guf* is a powerful and essential tool, for without it we could not accomplish anything. We need a mouth to daven. We need hands to shake a לולב and אתרוג. We need eyes to see when others are in need of חסד, and legs to run and help them out.

However, there is a danger in the *guf*! What is the danger? The *guf* has different desires than the *neshama*. The *neshama* wants to do Hashem's will. It wants to do מצוות. What does the *guf* want? The *guf* wants to feel good, to indulge in material desires. It wants to have all its physical needs met. And so, often, the desires of these two partners clash!

For example:

- I have an urge to grab a bag of Kliks and pop some chocolate in my mouth. As I am reaching my hand into the snack drawer, I remember that I just ate chicken for supper. My *guf* wants chocolate now!
- It's Sunday morning, and I'm warm and cozy in my bed. The alarm clock next to me flashes: '11:30 AM'. I know that I should really get up and daven שחרית before it's too late, but all I want to do is pull the covers back up to my chin and catch another hour of sleep.
- I am relaxing on the couch and reading a good book. "Can you check the noodles on the stove, and drain them if they're ready?" my mother calls to me from the next room. I feel glued to the couch. I don't feel like getting up and walking to the kitchen.
- I'm shopping at a store, and I find the perfect outfit. It looks gorgeous on me; my figure looks so slender and pretty. It's a drop too short, and also a bit tight. It feels so good to look good, though!

Our *guf* wants pleasure and fun. The *guf* wants us to sleep, eat good food, and wear nice clothing. At times, the *guf* urges us to indulge in things which involve doing an עבירה, or things which will lead to doing an עבירה. At such times, our *neshama*, which wants to do what is right, encourages us: "Choose right over wrong!" Who's in control, my *guf* or my *neshama*? Who is leading, and who is following along? The choice is ours! We choose who is in control.

DEMONSTRATION WHO IS THE LEADER?

➤ **PURPOSE:** Students will understand what it means to lead and be in control

Process:

- Teacher hands up a poster on the board, depicting the following two scenes: one of a man walking his dog, and the second of the dog tied to a post.
- Teacher asks the students: *Who is leading in the first scene? Even though it seems as though the man is following his dog, who is really in charge? Where do you see this?*
- Teacher prompts students to draw a parallel between the scenes on the poster, and the relationship between the *guf* and *neshama*.

 **CONCLUSION:** The leader, the one in charge, is the one who decides where to go and what to do.

 **LINK to LESSON:** We need to allow our *neshama* to lead our *guf* to do the right things. Although it appears like the *guf* is performing the actions we do, our *neshama* should be in charge of guiding our physical selves to achieve our spiritual goals.

GUIDING THE GUF PROPERLY

Let's go back to the previous משל of the car and the driver. What would happen if the person driving the vehicle would stop steering the vehicle in the right direction? The vehicle would crash!

A vehicle is only useful if it is being steered by a good driver. If the driver is not in control of the car, the car will skid off the road. If the conductor does not properly guide the train along the tracks, the train will fall off the rails. If the construction worker does not man the tractor well, the tractor will roll into the ditch.

So too, the *guf* must be guided by the *neshama*.

🔗 FROM THE SOURCE: (תניא חלק א':לב) "תניא חלק א':לב) - The foundation and purpose of the whole Torah is to elevate the *neshama* over the *guf*.

When the *neshama* is "steering" the *guf* in the right direction and guiding it to do מצוות, then that *guf* is a priceless tool that is being used properly. That *guf* will enable the *neshama* to reach its goal of doing רצון ה'.

If, on the other hand, the *neshama* is not guiding the *guf*, then the *guf* will cause a disastrous "crash"! It will get involved in worthless, destructive activities. A *guf* that is not guided by the *neshama* causes harm to itself and its "driver," the *neshama*.

But a driver who is in control of his *guf* can accomplish incredible things! Therefore, how important it is for us to hear the voice of our *neshama* as our GPS! If we don't even know it or recognize it, how are we to succeed?!

THE IDEAL GUF-NESHAMA RELATIONSHIP

The Steipler Gaon, Harav Yaakov Yisrael Kanievsky, is the quintessential example of a 'driver' who let his *neshama* guide his every move. *Distribute the 'Steipler Stories' handout for students so that they can read along.*

STORY / JUST FIVE MORE MINUTES:

The famous Steipler Gaon was conscripted into the Red army. One שבת, on a frigid Russian night, the Steipler had guard duty. To protect the guard on duty from the freezing conditions, there was a special coat that was passed from the outgoing soldier to the incoming soldier. Unfortunately, when the Steipler arrived at his post, he realized that the soldier who had been there before him had hung the coat on a nearby tree. The Steipler was not willing to take the coat, as it is prohibited to remove anything from a tree on שבת. However, he reasoned, it is certainly permitted to remove the coat in a situation that is life-threatening.

Nevertheless, the Steipler did not don the coat to protect himself from the freezing conditions. "Yes," he said, "it is permissible in a case that is life-threatening, but I can certainly wait another five minutes before I will be in danger." After five minutes, he again told himself that he could last another five minutes before the situation would be deemed life-threatening. He continued in this way all through the night, in five-minute increments, until morning.

Can you imagine how the Steipler's *guf* must have been crying out? It was in discomfort. It was in pain. It needed warmth! Yet, the voice of the Steipler's *neshama* was more powerful. He knew the voice of his *neshama* well and listened to it so that it grew far louder than the voice of his *guf*. That is greatness! That is a driver who accomplishes incredible things with his vehicle!

STORY // STANDING UP FOR WHAT'S RIGHT:

The Steipler's practice as a bochur was to learn for eighteen hours a day and then sleep for six, before starting the cycle again. When he was to meet his future kallah, the trip entailed traveling a few hours on a train. Knowing that it would be difficult to learn on the train, the Steipler pushed himself to learn an additional six hours right before the trip - learning 24 hours straight! - so that he could sleep on the train. However, when he entered the train compartment, he realized that the cushions on the benches looked like the type of fabric that might *shaatnez*. It is forbidden to sit on a cushion of *shaatnez*. And so, the Steipler struggled to remain standing and awake throughout the night, as the train bumped over the tracks. Surely, he was exhausted. Imagine how his *guf* must have been crying out, desperate to rest his tired feet and sit! Imagine how his eyes must have been desperate to close! Yet, the Steipler did not give into the voice of his *guf*.
(As soon as he arrived, the Steipler asked his future in-laws for some time to sleep after his journey. The prospective kallah was not too impressed when the bochur she met appeared sleepy even after sleeping few hours - until he explained why he was understandably still a bit tired...!)

GRAB EVERY OPPORTUNITY FOR THE NESHAMA

How did the Steipler have such strength? Such control over his *guf*? Perhaps we can understand this through a *third* story about the Steipler.

STORY // GRAB WHAT YOU CAN:

R' Yankel Galinsky was a great מגיד in Bnei Brak. At the לוייה of the Steipler, he related an incident that happened when he was a young boy in Russia. Late at night, he passed by a small Shul. He heard a cry from the window. He listened, and realized that it was the Steipler, repating these words in a heartrending tone:

"חטוף ואכול! חטוף ושתי! חטוף, חטוף, חטוף!"

"Grab and eat! Grab and drink! Grab, grab, grab!"

The Steipler continued his cry:

"חטוף ואכול, חטוף ושתי, דעלמא דאזלינן מיניה כהלול..."

The Steipler was repeating the words of a גמרא:

"Grab and eat, grab and drink, for the world that we leave from is like a party..."

Some people make a tragic mistake. They believe that this world is like a party -- for the *guf* to enjoy! They spend their life trying to have as much fun as possible, amassing all the wealth and pleasure that they can. They waste their years indulging in their physical needs and desires, satisfying the body and ignoring the soul.

But great people like the Steipler realized a different reality. Indeed, the world is like a party -- but it is a feast for the *neshama*. In our short stay on this earth, we need to grab every opportunity possible to feed the soul. "Grab and eat, grab and drink..."

CLOSURE

[Take it to Heart]

GUF VS. NESHAMA

Instruct students to write a scenario depicting a conflict between the *guf* and the *neshama*. Then, students exchange cards with their partners. On the other side, students should respond to the following 3 prompts:

What is the *guf's* desire in this scenario?

What is the *neshama's* desire in this scenario?

Suggest some thoughts that can help one overcome the struggle in this scenario.

Which small step can I take toward reaching this goal?

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