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TEACHER'S GUIDE

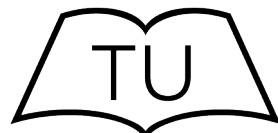
WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH

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CHAIM & CHAYA BAILA WOLF
TEACHERCENTER

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 WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH | SOURCES:

- בראשית רבה לב:ג
- נתת ליראיך נס להתנוסס מפני קשט סלה (תהלים נו:)
- כי את אשר יאהב ה' יוכיח, וכאב את בן ירצה (משלי ג:יב)

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 MATERIALS:



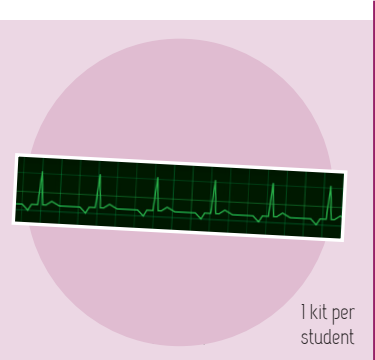
1 per student + 1 set lg. cards per class

DONKEY COMIC STRIP
Anticipatory Set



1 set per class

FE FI FO FUM POSTERS + PINS
Activity



1 kit per student

HEARTBEAT POSTER
Demonstration



1 per class

'THE CAT IN MY YARD' POEM
Read-Along

When the Going Gets Tough

LESSON AT A GLANCE

INTRODUCTION

CONCEPT:

Hashem sends us challenges so that we can grow stronger by overcoming them.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

Why does Hashem give me challenges; wouldn't I be able to serve Him much better if life was smoother?

ANTICIPATORY SET:

'Watch Me Grow'

Brainstorm: Is making things 'easier' always beneficial?

LESSON

ACTIVITY:

'Feel So Fun'

Purpose: Students analyze the specific positive effects of different challenges.

DEMONSTRATION:

'Pulsing With Life'

Purpose: Students will recognize that ups and downs are essential parts of life.

DISCUSSIONS:

- Is there Value to Academic Struggle?
- Is Easy Street the Best Way?
- Pain with a Purpose
- A Mature Understanding

READ-ALONG:

'The Cat in My Yard'

Message: Students will recognize that a life without responsibilities and goals is a life without purpose.

CLOSURE: 'Mountain Climbing' - Take it to Heart #12

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When the Going Gets Tough



Hashem sends us challenges
so that we can grow stronger by overcoming them.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Why does Hashem give me challenges; wouldn't I be able to serve Him much better if life was smoother?

ANTICIPATORY SET

WATCH ME GROW

BRAINSTORM: Is there any benefit to struggle?

Distribute "The Donkey in the Pit" handout and instruct students to put the scenes in order by numbering each square.

While students work, arrange the Comics Cards on the board in the same random order that they appear on the handout.

After a few minutes, ask a student volunteer to rearrange the Comics Cards on the board in the correct order.

Review the comics aloud with the class.

COMIC CARDS (in order):

1. Old donkey falls into a deep pit in the village
2. Villagers discuss how to rescue the donkey as it is suffering greatly
3. The warden decides that since the donkey is old, and they can't get him out, they should just bury the donkey here and stuff up the well so that nobody else falls in
4. All the villagers shovel dirt onto the poor donkey, which panics and starts braying louder
5. The villagers keep shoveling more dirt on the donkey's head when he realizes he can save his life if he views each shovelful differently.
6. Every shovelful of dirt, donkey shakes it off his head and climbs an inch higher.
7. Donkey starts to look forward and wait for each shovelful of dirt with anticipation, views each shovelful positively, as a way to get up higher and get out.
8. Donkey climbs out of the pit full of satisfaction.

🔗 **CONCLUSION:** The dirt that was thrown on the donkey actually gave it the ability to climb up and save himself.

🔗 **FOCUS!** Painful or difficult challenges are purposeful and designed by Hashem for the person's benefit.

LESSON

PROOF OF QUALITY

🔗 **FROM THE SOURCE:** The Midrash in Bereishis explains that there are two main reasons why a person faces *nisyonos*. These **two purposes** are illustrated through *mashalim*:

1. High-Quality Glassware

MASHAL: Mr. Mittelman sells glass jars and vases. When a customer comes into his shop to look at his wares, Mr. Mittelman taps gently on some jars and vases and proudly exclaims, "See the quality! My handiwork can't be broken easily." Of course, Mr. Mittelman chooses to tap on the high quality vessels, which will not break from the pressure. Mr. Mittelman obviously does not choose to tap the delicate pieces that would shatter from even a gentle blow.

PURPOSE 1: When a person is challenged by a *nisayon* from Hashem, it indicates that he is a person of great quality. Hashem tests the person because He is certain that the individual has a strong character and can definitely pass the test. The person who successfully overcomes his *nisyonos* demonstrates that he is a high-caliber person. He should even feel honored by Hashem's belief in him!

1. Chosen for Improvement

MASHAL: Mr. Brown is a farmer who cultivates flax. He sorts through his crop at the end of the harvesting season. He pounds the plants that appear to be high quality in order to improve their value. However, the lower quality plants that don't have much value do not undergo this pounding process.

PURPOSE 2: *Nisyonos* improve a person. The people Hashem selects to experience *nisyonos* are people who are good and can become even better from challenges. Most *resha'im* would not use a *nisayon* to improve themselves. Hashem often allows them to waste away their lives with empty merry-making. Only *tzaddikim* get the opportunity to overcome challenges and improve themselves in the process.

These are two benefits of facing *nisyonos*. When we are chosen to face a *nisayon*, this testifies that Hashem sees that we are made of high quality, and we can withstand the test! When we face our *nisyonos* with the right attitude, and we overcome the challenge, we become better people.

Yocheved is a hard worker. She does all her homework as soon as she comes home from school, even before she continues working on her painting or playing on her keyboard. She spends a few hours studying for each test. Yet however hard she tries, Yocheved gets in the 60's or 70's on every test. This frustrates Yocheved so much! How can this challenge be for Yocheved's benefit?

Sample responses: Yocheved will value others, regardless of their intelligence; Yocheved will daven with more kavannah; She'll have become more resilient and be able to swallow disappointments in the future; She will remain humble and recognize that her strengths in music and art are from Hashem, just like her hardships with academics are from Him...

FOUNDATION OF STRENGTH

Before any building is built, the builders dig a foundation for the building. They insert strong beams deep into the ground, made of materials such as concrete and steel. The construction workers dig deep into the dark earth. They have the full knowledge that their work is worthwhile. The deeper they build the foundation, the taller the building above can be built, without the threat of being blown away or swept away by any natural influence. When a person faces a *nisayon*, he is like a construction worker, who enters an area of spiritual and emotional "darkness," of challenge. During this time period, he can choose to live with the knowledge that his hard work is worthwhile. He can live with the reassurance that overcoming a *nisayon* is building his foundation so that he can develop middos, hidden abilities and form a stronger relationship with Hashem.

Rav Pam used to carry around a special paper in his pocket all of the time. The paper had a quote from the Gra on it that said, "עיקר עבודת האדם לרקוק חסידו" - *Man's main purpose in this world is to correct his middos*. Rav Pam said he kept this paper in his pocket, because every time he saw it, it gave him *chizuk* to embrace any challenge he faced. Rav Pam said this only 18 months before he passed away!

ACTIVITY FE FI FO FUM GAME

» **PURPOSE:** Students analyze the specific positive effects of different challenges.

PROCESS:

- Four student volunteers are chosen to stand facing the blackboard.
- Teacher pins one of four character nametags to their backs: Bina, Dina, Rina and Tzina, in no specific order.
- The teacher posts the characters' challenges on the board (in a different order from the pins, and in

form of painful challenges. Yet these messages from Hashem are like a father who gives *tochacha* to his son, because he loves his son and wants to help him become better. (Explanation based on *Ralbag*)

EASY STREET?

The following poem depicts the purpose of working hard and experiencing challenges.

POEM // THE CAT IN MY YARD

I look at the cat who sits in my yard
As she goes through her day, nothing seems hard
Her father does not need to work for pay
Her mother does not prepare food each day
She simply rummages through our trash bin
And happily eats what she finds within
Washing her "clothing" is quite simple, too
Lick her fur clean is all Mother must do
My mother, on the other hand, works more
Giving my siblings a bath is a chore
Heating the water, not too hot or cold
Putting in toys so they'll go in when told

Scrubbing with shampoo, even when they cry
Trying not to get any suds in their eye
Yes, my mother works much harder than hers
Who simply licks her clean until she purrs
The cat does no homework, she never takes tests
Nobody checks if she's trying her best
She doesn't even have to brush or floss
She stays up too late, no one will fuss
The cat outside never gets a runny nose
For a doctor's checkup she never goes
Quite a contented existence has she
The cat's life is simple as can be

DISCUSS: Is Easy Street the Best Way?

What can we learn about *nisyonos* from the ease of an animal's life versus the struggles of a human being?

Unlike animals, which get everything they need handed to them, a person's needs are not given directly to him by Hashem, because a person is Hashem's most precious creation. Facing hardships helps every person use his strengths to the maximum. This is even something to thank Hashem for. In the *brachah* of *borei nefashos*, we praise Hashem with the following words: "בורא נפשות רבות וחסרונן" – *He creates many people and makes them lack some things. Why is this a praise? The answer is, because the effort and toil to obtain what we are missing is what builds us and makes us great!*

So when Hashem sends a challenge to you, He isn't saying that you have no value. On the contrary, Hashem knows that you have the ability to overcome the challenge and thereby become a stronger and better person, utilizing all of your

untapped abilities. Hashem never gives us challenges that He knows we cannot handle. So if a challenge comes your way, Hashem is telling you that He believes in your ability to overcome it and become better. He is telling you, "I want you to know, I am giving this to you so that you can grow, because I love you!"

CORRECTIVE SURGERY

PARABLE POINT // HEARTLESS?

In a hospital with inadequate security, Joey wandered out of the psychiatric ward and walked into an operating room. He found a man dressed in white, standing over a hapless patient whom he had tied down onto a bed. The man in white held up a razor sharp knife, and was about to insert it into the patient's heart! Joey ran into the room, screaming in protest. The nurses quickly dragged Joey, kicking and screaming, out of the operating room.

🗨️ DISCUSS: PAIN WITH A PURPOSE

WHERE DID JOEY GO WRONG? HOW CAN JOEY'S INCORRECT THOUGHT PROCESS ENCOURAGE US?

Joey failed to comprehend that the surgeon was not heartless and the pain of the surgeon's knife was not pointless. Although the patient may have been afraid to undergo surgery, he chose it because of the benefits. The pain would help him recover.

Hashem acts like a surgeon. He gives painful *nisyonos* because they are good for us. Joey's obvious misunderstanding can help a person realize that often his outlook on a *nisyaon* may be warped. Challenges help every person reach his potential.

TAME VS. TANTRUM

Picture two sick children who are taking medicine. One is a toddler. He is screaming, flailing his arms and kicking. The other is an older child. This child takes a deep breath, closes his eyes tightly, and quietly swallows the medicine.

🗨️ DISCUSS: A Mature Understanding

What does the older child understand, which enables him to swallow the medicine more calmly than the toddler? How can we use this scenario as a *mashal* for accepting *nisyonos*?

The older child understands that the medicine will make him feel better, so it is worthwhile to withstand the bitter taste of the medicine, in order to benefit long-term.

Now picture two people are going through an uncomfortable challenge. One complains about his situation, becomes embittered and negative. The other person tries to go through the challenge with an upbeat attitude.

The second person, like the older child in the previous scenario, understands that challenges are like medicine; they are uncomfortable, but it is worthwhile to undergo the discomfort, in order to benefit long-term.

CLOSURE

[Take it to Heart]

MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS



"The best view comes after the hardest climb."

Connect the image and quote to the topic of *visions*.

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