



Finding Joy in the Depths

Session 7 - Growing from Pain

WALDER
FOUNDATION

POWERING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE



This curriculum was made possible by a donation from the Walder Foundation in memory of Daniel Azari obm

Finding Joy in the Depths

Session 7 - Growing from Pain

Terminology

Fabrengen: an informal gathering of Chassidim for mutual edification and brotherly criticism

Atzvus: a heavy-hearted sense of depression

Merirus: a bitter feeling which spurs a person to positive activity

Cheshbon hanefesh: self-reflection to know one's spiritual standing

Mitzvah: one of the 613 commandments Jews received from G-d on Mount Sinai

Matzah: the unleavened bread eaten on Passover

Pesach Seder: the order of service done at the home the first two nights of Passover

Mashpi'im: spiritual mentors

Kosher /kashrus: the state of being fit to used, generally used to refer to food

Daven: to pray

Vocabulary

Inertia: having no inherent power of action

Divert: to turn aside, from a path or course

Adage: a traditional saying expressing a common experience or observation

Physiological: consistent with the normal functioning of an organism

Complacent: pleased especially with oneself or one's merits

Remorse: deep and painful regret for wrongdoing

Discern: to distinguish mentally

Catharsis: the purging of the emotions or relieving emotional tensions

Perpetuate: to cause something to continue or last for ever

Ramifications: consequences, complications



A. Goal Question

How can we use our pain to transform ourselves?

In this chapter, we learn that it is good to set aside specific times to focus on painful experiences in order to grow, develop and change. We need to use bitterness to help us improve ourselves while not falling into depression.



B. Read

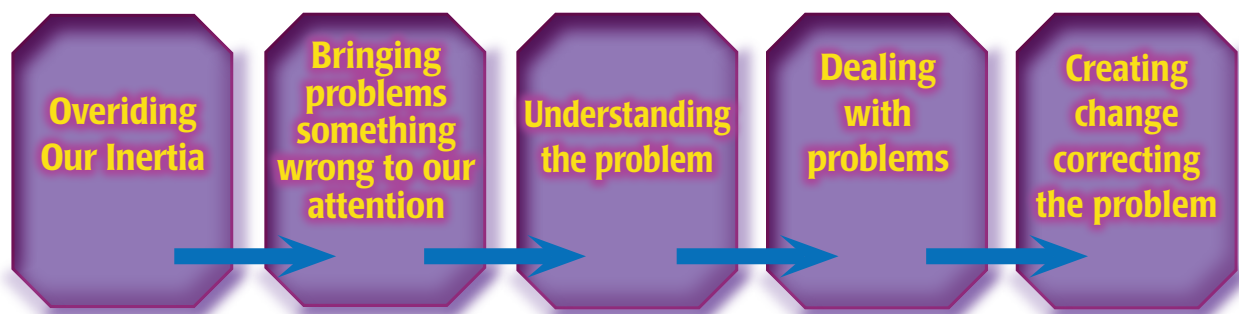
Read Chap. 8 "Growing from Pain" in the textbook "The Chassidic Approach to Joy".



C. Check your Understanding

Write all answers in full sentences in your notebook or in this workbook.

1. Look at the process below. Explain how pain can benefit us in multiple ways at different points of our growth process. Why is it important to focus on negative some times? Can we focus on the negative and still feel joy?



***The
knowledge
of the
disease is
half the cure***

2) a) Compare atzvus (depression) to meirus (bitterness) in the table below.

	Atzvus Dullness Depression	Merirus Bitterness
Is this feeling valuable? Is it positive?		
What is the result of this feeling? Which feeling is full of energy?		
Is the feeling temporary or does it perpetuate itself?		
Has the event or problem been corrected in each of these cases? Has the person changed their behavior? Has a practical solution been found		
Which emotion is transformative?		

b) Why do we still need to exercise mind control during the process of remorse and regret and only do it at certain times? How can depression ruin our lives?



***Antibiotics
need to be
taken in
small amounts
at certain
times***



D. Think About it

- Is there a value to pain? When is pain and bitterness productive?
Outline 3 ways in which pain helps us grow?
- How does pain help us to solve problems and develop?
How can we get beyond the bad things we did; prevent bad habits to grow?
- What is the difference between depression (atzvus) and bitterness (merirus)?
- What are some strategies we can use to avoid falling into paralyzing depression while using pain to transform ourselves?



E. Write and Apply

a) Write jot-notes on your thoughts on any or all of the topics discussed in each session. You can add these reflections to your diary (optional).

b) Create an outline and write a half page on one of the topics below. Organize your thoughts and use full sentences. Your mentor will correct the half page to help you to develop your writing skills. Alternatively, you can choose one the questions above in section D. Apply the topic to events in your life. If possible use some of the new vocabulary you learned.

- Describe a situation in which pain helped you to grow.
- Describe how you can use "Merirus" bitterness to get beyond mistakes of the past.



F. Extra Activities (Optional)

- Set aside some time in the evening or at the end of the week (Thursday night) or last day of the month or before Yom Kippur to do “cheshbon hanefesh” (set aside specific times to think about your spiritual well-being).
- Write a list of things you want to improve then write a list of what you are going to do to change. Check off what you have done.



G. Extra Reading (Optional)

You can borrow the books listed at the beginning of this course from our loaning library on this subject. Alternatively, you can send us an email to get extra readings on any subject.



F. Audios (Optional)

You can listen to the following Audiofiles on your MP3 player or tablet through GTL.

- Why me G-d? Where is G-d when it hurts? (Rabbi YY Jacobson)