



## Relationships 101 - Torah Insights for Successful Relationships

### Part II Summary

#### A) Different People, Different Perspectives, Different Feelings

**It is human nature to project our own feelings and attitudes onto others. Being aware of and understanding that every person has different interests, emotional needs, and sensitivities is one of the most necessary traits for healthy relationships.**

**1)** When Moses prayed for a worthy successor to lead the Jewish people, he singled out the ability to relate to the different nature of each individual as a quality of utmost importance.

**2)** The Torah teaches that the amount of charity one gives to an individual depends on the unique needs and sensitivities of the recipient. If the recipient was formerly wealthy, a higher level of support will be needed to alleviate the pain of his plight, than would be for one who was never accustomed to luxury. If this is true in regards to mere physical assets, how much more so regarding a person's enormously sensitive emotional needs.

- a) When we are approached by a spouse, relative or friend with a need or a concern that *seems* exaggerated, or unreasonable, let's remind ourselves that the person with whom we are interacting is a completely different person. For that person, the concern may feel very real and reasonable. Let's be honest with ourselves and recognize that there are certainly things that bother *us*, and needs that *we* have, that others might find unreasonable.

Phrases to be careful of: "That's ridiculous!", "What's the big deal?", "Just get over it."

- b) Conversely, let us also work to understand that when something is of concern to *us*, while we are entitled to sensitivity, we cannot expect the other party to completely understand and relate to our concerns and issues; to him or her, they might not be issues at all.

#### B) "Swing Thoughts"

In the midst of a potentially confrontational situation, we are liable to *over-analyze* and thereby develop a rationalization for an inappropriate response. The Torah teaches us that sometimes we need to simply focus on certain **basic ideas** that we know internally to be true. (Abraham on his way to the binding of Isaac) (Golf "swing thoughts" - "not now!", "let me give it 5 minutes", awareness of phrases or words that should always be avoided)

#### C) Expectations

**Unfair and unrealistic expectations are the source of a lot of unhappiness.**

##### Entering the Door:

- 1) When we are about to enter our homes, let's pause for a moment and make sure we have realistic and fair expectations of what awaits us.
- 2) Let's recognize the power and impact of how we act the first moment we enter. **That first moment can completely shape –for better or worse- the rest of the day for our entire family.**