Do You Have a Friend?
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Do You Have a Friend?
How Would You Respond?

1. You and your spouse have been watching pennies for three years to save enough money for a needed family vacation. Several days before the deposits must be made to the travel agent, your best friend calls to tell you that corporate downsizing has resulted in the loss of employment. Your friend's family desperately needs a loan to tide them over through this difficult period.

2. In response to a blind ad that you placed in the Wall Street Journal on behalf of your large corporate employer, your closest childhood friend applies for a job at your company. As the individual responsible for filling the position, you note that your friend is qualified for the job, but not the most qualified.

3. For years, you and your good friend have shared both good times and bad, and exchanged the most intimate of feelings and confidences. One day, your friend confides in you that (s)he has embezzled a large amount of funds from his/her company.
MAKE FOR YOURSELF A TEACHER,
ACQUIRE FOR YOURSELF A FRIEND.

— Pirkei Avos

friend (frend) n. 1. One who is attached to another by affection, or who entertains for another sentiments of esteem and respect, which lead him to desire his company and to seek to promote his happiness and prosperity.

— Webster's Universal Unabridged Dictionary, 1936

friend (frend) n. 1. A person whom one knows well and is fond of.

— Webster's Universal Unabridged Dictionary, 1983
May it be Your will, Hashem, my G-d and G-d of my fathers, that You illuminate my eyes with the light of your Torah and that You save me from all stumbling blocks and errors, whether it be in discussions of what is prohibited and what is permitted or in monetary matters, whether it be in any other Halachic decisions or just in theoretical study. I pray that I do not make any mistakes, and if I do, my study partners should not take delight in them. I pray that I should not proclaim the impure pure or the pure impure, the permitted forbidden or the forbidden permitted. I pray that I should not derive joy from the errors of my study partner. Open my eyes and allow me to see the wonders of Your Torah because it is from G-d that all wisdom comes forth, it is from His mouth that I will acquire wisdom and understanding. Amen.

Points for Study

1. Two are better than one... For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him who is alone when he falls: for he has not another to help him up...

   Koheles 4:9

   Source, pg. 18

2. A wise man once asked his young son: “How many friends have you acquired in your lifetime?” “One hundred,” replied the son. The wise man then said: “Son, I want you to know that which our sages teach us. You can’t consider someone a friend until you have tested his loyalty. I am older than you and have spent many years trying to establish friendship, but I’ve only managed to acquire half a friendship! So how could you have acquired one hundred friends? Go out and test their loyalty and you will see how many friends you really have.”

   After some time had passed the son returned to his father and said, “You are so right. Of all of my friends I have not even found one who would stand by me during my troubled times.”

   Medrash quoted in MeAm Loaz Avos

   Source, pg. 19
3. Choni fell asleep for 70 years. When he awoke, he went to the house where he had lived. He found new people living there and inquired, "Is the son of Choni alive?" They answered, "His son is not alive, but his grandson is alive." He stated, "I am Choni," but they did not believe him.

He then went to his old house of study, where he heard the rabbis say, "Our teachings are as clear to us as they used to be in the times of Choni, who used to clarify every obscurity we had in our studies." Choni desperately declared, "I am Choni!", but they, too, did not believe him.

Unhappy and alone, Choni prayed for divine mercy, and was granted it in the form of death. Said Rava, "This is what people mean when they say, 'Give me friendship or give me death.'"

Talmud Taanis 23a

Source, pg. 20

4. Maimonides describes three levels of friendship:

1. PRAGMATIC FRIENDSHIPS. This is a utilitarian association where two people need each other for practical benefits, as in a business partnership. When their mutual needs cease, their friendship lapses. There is no bond between them.

2. EMPATHETIC FRIENDSHIPS. Such comradeship involves a caring responsiveness, a sharing of innermost feelings, both sad and joyful. Life's burdens are lightened and its celebrations are heightened in a relationship of emotional rapport which is rooted in faith and confidence. Such friendships are firmly based and enduring.

3. VALUE FRIENDSHIPS. This association allows for the deepest level of friendship to thrive, for besides their being committed to each other, they share a dedication to a noble idea and value. They collaborate toward the furtherance of a lofty cause. Theirs is a unity of purpose and a joining of dreams. Their relationship is deepened and ennobled as they transcend their personal concerns.

As Rav J.B. Soloveitchik quoted in Man of Faith in the Modern World, Besdin, chapter 5

Source, pg. 21

5. It's amazing how lofty spiritual achievements that seem virtually impossible for an individual to attain can become almost simple when striven for together with a friend. It is, however, only people of unusually high character who are capable of acquiring a friend. True friendship is a spiritual connection. Friends are one soul which is divided into separate bodies. This is the friendship that our sages speak of when they say, 'Acquire for
yourself a friend".... true friends whose hearts are connected as one. They receive from and give to each other good character, holiness, and purity. The Talmud (Sanhedrin 110) teaches that if one is suspicious of his teacher, it is as if he is being suspicious of G-d. The same is true of a friend.

Rabbi Shalom Noach Brozofsky in Nesivos Shalom; Chassidus essay 5

Source, pg. 22

6 Rabbi Moshe Leib Sosover commented that he never understood friendship until he saw two drunkards who were sitting together on the curbside. One asked the other: “Are you my friend?” The other responded immediately: “Of course! What do you need?” The first drunkard answered: “Obviously you are not my friend; if you were my friend you would know what I need!”

Reb Moshe Leib of Sosov

7 A man without a friend is like a left hand without a right...A wise man wrote, “When I hear of the death of one of my friends, I feel as if I lost a limb.” A true friend will love his friend as he loves himself...A true friend will suffer harm for the benefit of his friend...Friendship should endure in all its strength and never diminish for any reason. He should love his friend at times of poverty more than at times of wealth; at times of trouble more than at times of comfort.

Meiri Mishlei 17:17

Source, pg. 23

8 A person should acquire a friend with whom he will eat and drink with, study with, live in close quarters with, tell all his secrets to...and when they study Torah together, if one makes a mistake, his friend will correct him.

Avos DeRebbe Noson 8;3

Source, pg. 24

9 Every Jew has within him a particular aspect of goodness and Godliness that no one else has...The purpose of friendship is for two people with differing greatness to come together to connect spiritually, to uplift and inspire each other and receive each other’s greatness.

Reb Menachem Mendel of Vitovsk in Likutei Amaran 34;4

Source, pg. 25

10 According to the Talmud, there are instances which require one to hate. This can only apply to a friend... If one is not a friend, don’t hate him, but rather take the advice of Hillel and be of the students of Aaron; to love peace, pursue peace, love people and bring them closer to Torah.

Rav Shneur Zalman of Liadi in Tanya 32;2

Source, pg. 26
11 One is required to love his friend just as he loves himself. Just as a person who is struggling for spiritual perfection hates the evil that internalizes within him, so too, must he hate the evil which internalizes within his friend.

Rav Tzadok HaKohen Machshovos Choritz pg. 166

Source, pg. 27

12 There are fifteen things that are required of a true friend:
1. Always greet him/her.
2. Invite him/her to all his/her personal events.
3. Only refer to him/her by his/her preferred name.
4. Never reveal his/her confidences.
5. Rescue him/her in times of distress.
6. Visit him/her when (s)he is sick.
7. Be involved in his/her burial arrangements if (s)he dies.
8. Take care of his/her needs in his/her presence and even more so in his/her absence.
9. Ignore and forgive any wrongdoing (s)he has done to him/her.
10. Admonish him/her if (s)he has acted wrongly.
11. Always honor him/her.
12. Do not cheat him/her.
13. Keep all his/her commitments to him/her.
14. Do not lie to him/her.
15. Constantly pray for him/her and in his/her innermost heart wish only for that which is best for him/her.

Rabbi Eliyahu de Vidas in Reishit Chochma,
Shaar Anava; 29, Source, pg. 28

13 Rabban Yochanan Ben Zakai said to his students, "Go forth and see which is the right path to which a man should adhere." Rabbi Yehoshua answered, "[Be] a good friend."

Pirkel Avos 2; 9

Source, pg. 29

14 A good friend is not only something to find, but more importantly, something to become. Being a good friend implies intrinsic growth within the person independent of the relationship.

Rabbi Avrohom Grodzansky, Toras Avrohom

Source, pg. 30
Source Biography

**Rav Joseph B. Soloveitchik (1903-1993)**

Rav J.B. Soloveitchik was born into a family already known for its great Torah learning. His grandfather and father, emphasized a thorough analysis of Talmud, and it is in this way that Rav Soloveitchik studied and taught his own students. He was awarded a Ph.D. from the University of Berlin, and then settled in Boston in the early 1930's. He became the Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshiva University, and gave weekly shiurim to senior students, while delivering philosophy lectures to graduate students. His accomplishments in both Halachic study and secular study made him a unique Torah personality to Torah scholars all over.

**Rabbi Shalom Noach Brodsky**

Current leader of the relatively small, but influential Slonimer Chassidim. A profound thinker and lucid writer, Rabbi Brodsky has preserved Slonimer classics and thought in his numerous works. His Nesivos Shalom includes a volume on hashkafa and musar (philosophy and ethics), a volume on the Jewish holidays and a volume on each of the first three books of the Chumash. These are not collections of vertalach (pithy sayings), but short essays on major issues and themes. He has also written essays on education (Nesivei Chinuch) and the Holocaust (Ha'Haruga Alecha).

**Reb Moshe Leib of Sosov (1745-1807)**

Third generation Chassidic rabbi known for his great sanctity and love of Jews. He spent much time redeeming Jews from captivity (pidyon shvyim). Characteristic of the regard in which he was held is the story told in the name of Rabbi Mendel of Rymanov: When Reb Moshe Leib passed away, he declined entry to Gan Eden (paradise) until all the evildoers were released from gehenom and could join him. He succeeded in redeeming them and gehenom was emptied out. Among his disciples were Rabbi Zvi Hirsch of Zhidachov and Rabbi Simcha Bunim of Pshishkhah. He died at the age of 62.

**Rabbi Menachem ben Solomon Meiri (1249-1316)**

Rabbi Menachem ben Solomon Meiri was a Provincial scholar and commentator of the Talmud. He summarized the teachings of his predecessors of the previous three centuries. His literary activity covered halachic rulings, talmudic exposition, biblical thought, customs, ethics, and philosophy. Meiri summarized the subject matter of the
Talmud giving both the meaning and the halacha derived from it. He utilized all the rabbinic literature available to him, so that his work may be considered a digest which gives a synoptic and comprehensive presentation of the whole expository and halachic activity up to his own time.

**Reb Shneur Zalman (1745-1813)**

Reb Shneur Zalman was the founder of Chabad Chassidus, and learned about Hasidism from Rabbi Dov Baer HaMaggid, leader of the Hasidic movement. Under The Maggid, Reb Shneur Zalman wrote updated and profound commentaries about the Shulchan Aruch. When the anti-Chassidic movement was taking place in the mid-18th century, Reb Shneur Zalman went to Vilna and attempted to speak to the Gaon of Vilna to try to reach some kind of understanding between Chassidim and Misanagdim. Reb Shneur Zalman later published the Tanya, which was accepted as the written law of Chabad Chassidus. His ability to explain even the most complex issues of Torah made his writings popular with Torah scholars everywhere. Reb Zalman had a vast knowledge of mathematics and science as well. His son, Rabbi Shalom Dov Baer Schneerson, became the leader of the Chassidic movement after Reb Zalman’s death.

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**Rav Tzadok HaCohen (1823-1900)**

Rav Tzaddok, as he was known amongst Chassidim, was one of the most prolific authors in the history of the Chassidic movement. Born into a non-Chassidic rabbinic family, Rav Tzadok became famous as a child prodigy authoring articles and books which later became classics. Later in life, Rav Tzadok became Chassidic and became a Chassid of the Izbitcher Rebbe. Having excelled in both the Chassidic and non-Chassidic world, Rav Tzadok’s writings became a synthesis of analytical logic and mysticism. Eventually, Rav Tzadok became the Rebbe of Lublin. His writings are treasured by scholars everywhere.

**Rabbi Eliyahu de Vidas**

Sixteenth century Kabbalist and disciple of the Master of Kabbala, Rabbi Moshe Cordovero. Rabbi Eliyahu authored the massive musar work, Reshit Chochma, which enjoyed great popularity and was reprinted many times. A number of abbreviated versions were also prepared and they, too, appeared in numerous editions. Rabbi Eliyahu and his rebe, Rabbi Moshe, were so close, that Rabbi Chaim Vital stated that their souls were derived from the same root.
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Sources

1. Koheles 4:9

Medrash quoted in MeAm Loaz Avos
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Maimonides as explained by Rav J.B. Soleveitchik, quoted in Man of Faith in the Modern World, Besdin, chapter 5
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Rabbi Shalom Noach Brozofsky in
Nesivos Shalom; Chassidus essay 5

הברחתא

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Meiri Mishlei 17:17

הברחתא

עולה מעשה δύο עימה שלושה ולבר נأمن ובר בו התברר צאך
כי עלונה מפניני השכונה עתה תבואו алкוהות בancockו ומכותיו
והם מהוויה שריין ארכי שלהים שמגלו אתו
ותום עלו מעsão השכונה על הכרו הוהי.

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One Thousand Homes of Dialogue

The Pardes Project
Do You Have A Friend?

Reb Menachem Mendel of Vitwask in Likutei Amarim 34;4

ערכו חסידות

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יש בכל אחת אחת משראלה דבר יקר ונקודתוIVA מיהודה

מה שיאفى harder.entence לא את על בגבי עזיב לכל

והיה, נכו השה hoped רוציקenade אם הנכודה טעבה שול.

עיין טמר: "אמוק של נעיקים" (ישועה ק, כ), יותר שמש רביעי

נכודה שם שתהיה ההווה אזי דצק, אוכל, ורכז והתעוים

וזה הוא הגאון שלמה, כי בברכות ההוא שבי"א גיội המחבר

והוא משלו מואר מאוריו, המדריך, מבין כעב, התעוררות

בהינו ההוא מוסיפה (לקריא, ל"ד — שמל תבות, ו"א).
לַיְּכוֹפֶּי, אָפְרִים

שַׁרְחָא בְּרֵכַת שֵׁמוֹ וְשַׁמָּתוֹ לְשָׁמַא אָדָם מַלְאָךְ לְדָמוֹר שִׁמְעַא. וִיוָה בְּרֵכַת בְּרֶדֶת. לְזָרַע עָבַר עַד שִׁמְעַא בְּרֶדֶת וִיוָה בְּרֵכַת בְּרֶדֶת. לְזָרַע עָבַר עַד שִׁמְעַא בְּרֶדֶת. לְזָרַע עָבַר עַד שִׁמְעַא בְּרֶדֶת. לְזָרַע עָבַר עַד שִׁמְעַא בְּרֶדֶת. לְזָרַע עָבַר עַד שִׁמְעַא בְּרֶדֶת. לְזָרַע עָבַר עַד שִׁמְעַא בְּרֶדֶת. לְזָרַע עָבַר עַד שִׁמְעַא בְּרֶדֶת. לְזָרַע עָבַר עַד שִׁמְעַא בְּרֶדֶת. L

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שִׁמְעַא בְּרֵכַת בְּרֶדֶת. L
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PIRKEI AVOT
CHAPTER 2
MISHNAH 9

One Thousand Homes of Dialogue
The Pardes Project
עינאת הכהונה

רבי אבוחה גרדנברג, טורים אבוחה

Do You Have A Friend?