

## ***Bitachon/Trust***

*Bitachon* may be one of the most difficult *middot* to acquire. The Hebrew root for *Bitachon* is .נ.ט.ב (B.T.Ch.) which means to be at ease, to trust and to be confident. In modern Hebrew the word *Bitachon* also means security and thus the *Misrad HaBitachon* is the Defense Ministry and *Bituach Leumi* is the National Insurance system. In classic Jewish literature the ultimate source of this sense of security is God.

There are compelling reasons why *Bitachon* is so challenging. For moderns, whose belief in an all-powerful, all-knowing and loving deity has been severely weakened by over two centuries of rationalist, scientific thinking and horrific violence and suffering of two world wars, to simply rely on God to take care of you rings hollow. How can I trust a God who allowed Auschwitz to happen? There is not much stronger a challenge to the idea that we can rely on God than that. However, our post-Holocaust generations were not the first to struggle with *Bitachon*. *Bitachon* was also a challenge in Biblical times when Jewish society more readily accepted the idea of an all-powerful God.

*Bitachon* as a *middah* does not require that we have absolute trust in an omnipotent God. Like with all *middot*, there is a continuum and we each get to locate our own souls on the continuum. Some people move through life with an unshakeable belief in God's goodness and protection. Others are much more anxious and worry fills their days. Neither extreme is necessarily good. Wherever you are on this continuum, working on *Bitachon* means moving towards balancing trust in a loving God or a benign universe with taking initiative. You never have to believe something you actually don't believe to grow in *Bitachon*. We will start with a very practical issue, our livelihood.

### ***Bitachon and Making a Living – the “Manna Test”***

Just days after the Israelites crossed the Reed Sea accompanied by ample Divine pyrotechnics God gives them a test to see if they internalized the faith they professed at the sea. God provides Manna, but only allows the people to take exactly what they need and not save any for the next day. If they do save it, it rots (Exodus 16:4-20).

Why did God choose food as the object of this test? Food is symbolic of our livelihood, our *parnassah*. Providing for our own material well-being and that of our family has been one of the core sources of anxiety throughout human history. Will we have enough to eat? The feeling of scarcity awakened by this question is closely connected to the *Yetzer Hara*. An overly developed feeling of scarcity can lead to greed, violence and the worst aspects of human behavior.

The manna test was very carefully crafted. God could have just given every household the amount of Manna it needed to fulfill its daily nutritional requirements. Rather, they needed to work for their food by collecting the manna from the field. This requirement echoes the curse given to Adam in the Garden of Eden, “Cursed be the ground because of you; By toil shall you eat of it...By the sweat of your brow shall you get bread to eat...” (Genesis 3:17-19). Part of being human is that we need to work for our food. But this comes with another challenge. We feel pride in our labor and our ability to make things and support ourselves. The Torah warns us not to say, “My own power and the might of my own hand have won this wealth for me.” (Deuteronomy 8:17) The Torah is calling on us to do something quite counterintuitive and perhaps paradoxical. We need to use our capability to earn a livelihood (symbolized by



collecting the manna). At the same time recognize that it was not just our own capabilities that earned us this livelihood (symbolized by the need to trust that more food will be there tomorrow) and thus, we don't get to do whatever we want with it (symbolized by the need to not hoard the leftover manna). *Tzedakah* is one of the *mitzvot* that trains us to do this. We earn money through our effort, but need to recognize that a portion of those earnings actually belong to the needy.

*Bitachon* calls on us to be powerful actors in the world, and employ what is called *Hishtadlut*, human effort. At the same time it reminds us constantly that we are not ultimately in control.

*Where are you on the continuum of trust and control?*

*In what ways do you try to control things too much? What is the impact on yourself and others?*

*In what ways do you take too much credit for your successes or failures?*

*In which areas of your life do you think you have too much trust and might assume more initiative?*

#### ***Bitachon* as a Source of Renewal and Life**

כִּי שְׁתִּימִם רְעוֹת עֲשָׂה עִמִּי אֲתִי עֲזְבוּ מְקוֹר מַיִם חַיִּים לְחַצְב לָהֶם בְּאֵרוֹת  
בְּאֵרוֹת נִשְׁבְּרִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִכְלוּ הַמַּיִם:

Two evils have My people committed: they have forsaken Me, a freshwater spring (*makor mayyim hayyim*), to hew themselves cisterns (*borot*), cracked cisterns that can hold no water. (Jeremiah 2:13)

A freshwater spring's water flows out of its source, whereas the water in a cistern is collected from somewhere else. It is separated from its source. Jeremiah relates Trust to water in another famous passage:

(ה) כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲרֻר הַגֹּבֵר אֲשֶׁר יִבְטַח בְּאָדָם וְשָׂם בְּשׂוֹר זִרְעוֹ וּמִן יְהוָה יִסוֹר  
לְבוֹ:

(ו) וְהָיָה כְּעֵרְעֵר בְּעֵרְבָה וְלֹא יִרְאֶה כִּי יָבֹא טוֹב וְשָׁכַן חֲרָרִים בְּמִדְבָּר אֲרָץ  
מְלַחָה וְלֹא תִשָּׁב:

(ז) בְּרוּךְ הַגֹּבֵר אֲשֶׁר יִבְטַח בִּיהוָה וְהָיָה יְהוָה מְבִטְחוֹ:

(ח) וְהָיָה כְּעֵץ שְׂתוּל עַל מַיִם וְעַל יוֹבֵל יִשְׁלַח שָׂרְשָׁיו וְלֹא יִרָאֶה {יִרָאֶה} כִּי  
יָבֵא חֹם וְהָיָה עֲלֵהוּ רַעֲנָן וּבִשְׁנַת בְּצֻרָת לֹא יִדָּאָג וְלֹא יִמָּשׂ מַעֲשׂוֹת פְּרִי:

Cursed is the person who trusts solely in people and makes his flesh his source of strength and turns away from God. He will be like a tree in the desert and will not see when good comes. He will inhabit the parched places of the desert, a salty, uninhabited land. Blessed is the person who trusts in God, and whose hope God is. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, and that spreads out its roots by the river, and shall



not see when the heat comes, but its leaf shall be green; and shall not be anxious in the year of drought, nor shall it cease from yielding fruit. (Jeremiah 17:17-18)

Water is the source of well-being. A tree with its roots by the water is always connected to this source or life and vitality. Bad things may happen like a drought or heat, but because of this connection to its source of life the tree keeps creating and producing fruit. This is how Jeremiah describes a person who has *Bitachon*. Having *Bitachon* doesn't mean bad things won't happen. There will be famine and drought. The person with *Bitachon* will not get confused by suffering but will be able to stay life-affirming and generative for themselves and others.

Spend some time unpacking Jeremiah's rich metaphors. Specifically:

*How does this metaphor of a tree by water compare with our first metaphor of the spring and cistern?*

*In what ways do these metaphors relate to how you think about trust in your own life?*

*Both the metaphors seem to have to do with rejuvenation and renewal. What are your sources of renewal and do these relate to trust in any way?*

***Bitachon as a Perspective of Confidence – Duties of the Heart, R. Bahya Ibn Pequda (11<sup>th</sup> century, Spain)***

Rabbi Zvi Miller, the translator of Rabbi Yisrael Salanter's Ohr Yisrael (19<sup>th</sup> century, Europe), claims that *Tikkun Middot* helps us build "bullet-proof" self-esteem. In Modern Hebrew "*Bitachon Atzmi*" is the term for self-confidence. This makes sense given our last series of texts. If you are connected to your source of inner-renewal and vitality you will feel confident in the face of challenges.

This type of confidence was so important to Rabbi Yosef Yuzel Horowitz, the founder of the Novardak school of Mussar (19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century, Lithuania), that he would give his students drastic challenges so they could grow in *Bitachon*. One student was afraid of the dark. Rabbi Yosef Yuzel instructed him to spend the night in the cemetery saying psalms. Another student was afraid of being humiliated. To him, the rabbi gave the challenge of going into a bakery and asking for nails and into a hardware store and asking for bread. The point of both these challenges was to condition the students to have *Bitachon* and realize that nothing harmful would happen to them if they faced their fears. The students of Novardak went on to found over 100 *yeshivot* throughout Eastern Europe, withstanding tremendous opposition and threats from Russian authorities.

The very first practice in the *Shulchan Aruch*, the 16<sup>th</sup> century code of Jewish law, is to cultivate the holy boldness needed to live as a committed Jew. To live according to a set of principles that are at times countercultural takes an inner conviction and confidence.

*In what kinds of situations do you find yourself most timid? In which are you most confident? Where are you on a timidity-confidence continuum and what is one thing you could do to become more confident?*

*What would you have to face if you were going to be less timid with your congregation, family, or colleagues?*



## Learn the Sources – *Bitachon/Trust*

Bitachon may be one of the most difficult Middot to acquire. The Hebrew root for Bitachon is .נ.ט.ב. (B.T.Ch.) which means to be at ease, to trust and to be confident. In modern Hebrew the word Bitachon also means security and thus the Misrad HaBitachon is the Defense Ministry and Bituach Leumi is the National Insurance system. In classic Jewish literature the ultimate source of this sense of security is God.

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### **Bitachon and Making a Living, the Manna Test - Exodus 16:4-20**

Just days after the Israelites crossed the Reed Sea accompanied by ample Divine pyrotechnics God gives them a test to see if they internalized the faith they professed at the sea.

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל מֹשֶׁה הֲנִי מִמָּטִיר לָכֶם לֶחֶם מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיֵּצֵא הָעָם וּלְקַטּוֹ  
דָּבָר יוֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ לְמַעַן אֲנִסְנוּ הַיֵּלֶךְ בְּתוֹרָתִי אִם לֹא:

Then said God to Moshe, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain portion every day, that I may test them, whether they will follow my Torah, or no....

זֶה הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר צָוָה יְהוָה לְקַטּוֹ מִמֶּנּוּ אִישׁ לְפִי אָכְלוּ עֹמֵר לַגִּלְגָּלֶת מִסֵּפֶר  
נִפְשֵׁיכֶם אִישׁ לְאִשׁוֹ בְּאֶהְלוֹ תִקְחוּ:  
וַיַּעֲשׂוּ כֵן בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּלְקְטוּ הַמִּרְבָּה וְהַמְמַעֵיט:  
וַיִּמְדּוּ בְּעֹמֶר וְלֹא הָעֵדִיף הַמִּרְבָּה וְהַמְמַעֵיט לֹא הִחְסִיר אִישׁ לְפִי אָכְלוּ לְקַטּוֹ:  
וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֲלֵהֶם אִישׁ אֶל יוֹתֵר מִמֶּנּוּ עַד בֶּקֶר:  
וְלֹא שָׁמְעוּ אֶל מֹשֶׁה וַיּוֹתְרוּ אֲנָשִׁים מִמֶּנּוּ עַד בֶּקֶר וַיִּרְם תּוֹלְעִים וַיִּבְאֵשׁ וַיִּקְצַף  
עֲלֵהֶם מֹשֶׁה:



And Moshe said to them...This is the thing which God has commanded, Gather of it every man according to his eating, an *omer* for every man, according to the number of your persons shall you take it, every man for them who are in his tent. And the children of Israel did so, and gathered, some more, some less. And when they did measured it with an *omer*, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack ... Moshe said, Let no man leave of it till the morning. But they hearkened not to Moshe; but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms, and stank... (Exodus 16:4, 16-20)

In the Manna test people needed to work for their food. This requirement echoes the curse given to Adam in the Garden of Eden:

(יז) וּלְאָדָם אָמַר כִּי שָׁמַעְתָּ לְקוֹל אֲשֶׁרְךָ וַתֹּאכַל מִן הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִיךָ לֵאמֹר  
 לֹא תֹאכַל מִמֶּנּוּ אַרְוֶהָ הָאָדָמָה בְּעִבּוֹרְךָ בְּעֶצְבוֹן תֹּאכְלֶנָּה כָּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ...  
 (יט) בְּזַעַת אַפֶּיךָ תֹּאכַל לֶחֶם עַד שׁוֹבֵךְ אֶל הָאָדָמָה כִּי מִמְּנָה לְקַחְתָּ כִּי עֹפֶר  
 אֶתָּה וְאֶל עֹפֶר תִּשׁוּב:

Cursed be the ground because of you; by toil shall you eat of it...By the sweat of your brow shall you get bread to eat... (Genesis 3:17-19)

Once we need to work for our living, how can we avoid the trap pointed to in the following verse from Deuteronomy 8:17:

וְאָמַרְתָּ בְּלִבְבְּךָ כַּחַי וְעַצְמִי יָדֵי עֲשָׂה לִי אֶת הַחֵיל הַזֶּה:

My own power and the might of my own hand have won this wealth for me.”  
 (Deuteronomy 8:17)

The 11<sup>th</sup> century Mussar classic Duties of the Heart by Rabbi Bahya Ibn Pequda describes this challenge in the following terms:

...Since Divine wisdom demands the trial of the soul with service of Hashem or rebellion, Hashem tries the soul with what will reveal its choice in the matter, namely, with the need and want for that which is external to it – food, drink, clothing, shelter, and sexual relations. Hashem commanded human beings to seek and obtain these requirements through the available means, in specific ways, and at certain times (meaning we need to work to attain livelihood-ed.).

What the Creator decrees a person should attain of them, the person realizes and attains through ample means which are provided. What the Creator does not decree should be attained of them, the person does not attain, and the means are withheld (this is when we need to have trust and not think everything is in our control-ed.). The person’s service or transgression is demonstrated through his or her intent on – and choice of- one to the exclusion of the other (meaning whether one will serve Hashem or rebel-ed.)...



*Where are you on the continuum of trust and control?*

*In what ways do try to control things too much? What is the impact on yourself and others?  
In what ways do you take too much credit for your successes or failures?*

*Are there any areas of your life where you think you have too much trust and could use taking more initiative?*

### **Bitachon as a Source of Renewal and Life – Jeremiah 2:13**

כִּי שְׁתִּים רְעוֹת עָשָׂה עַמִּי אֶתִּי עֲזָבוּ מִקּוֹר מַיִם חַיִּים לְחַצְב לָהֶם בְּאֵרוֹת  
בְּאֵרוֹת נְשֻׁבָּרִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִכְלוּ הַמַּיִם:

Two evils have My people committed: they have forsaken Me, a freshwater spring (*Makor Mayyim Hayyim*), to hew themselves cisterns (*borot*), cracked cisterns that can hold no water. (Jeremiah 2:13)

A freshwater spring's water flows out of its source, whereas the water in a cistern is collected from somewhere else. It is separated from its source. Jeremiah relates Trust to water in another famous passage:

ה) כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה אֱרֹר הַגֶּבֶר אֲשֶׁר יִבְטַח בְּאָדָם וְשָׁם בֶּשֶׂר זָרְעוּ וּמִן יְהוָה יִסוֹר  
לְבוֹ:  
ו) וְהָיָה כְּעֵרְעֵר בְּעֵרְבָה וְלֹא יִרְאֶה כִּי יָבֹא טוֹב וְשָׁכֵן חֲרָרִים בַּמִּדְבָּר אֲרָץ  
מִלְחָה וְלֹא תִשָּׁב:  
ז) בְּרוּךְ הַגֶּבֶר אֲשֶׁר יִבְטַח בִּיהוָה וְהָיָה יְהוָה מִבְּטָחוֹ:  
ח) וְהָיָה כְּעֵץ שְׂתוּל עַל מַיִם וְעַל יוֹבֵל יִשְׁלַח שָׁרְשָׁיו וְלֹא יִרָא \{יִרְאֶה\} כִּי  
יָבֵא חֹם וְהָיָה עָלָיו רֵעָן וּבִשְׁנַת בְּצָרָת לֹא יִדָּאָג וְלֹא יִמֵּשׁ מִעֲשׂוֹת פְּרִי:

Cursed is the person who trusts solely in people and makes his flesh his source of strength and turns away from God. He will be like a tree in the desert and will not see when good comes. He will inhabit the parched places of the desert, a salty, uninhabited land. Blessed is the person who trusts in God, and whose hope God is. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, and that spreads out its roots by the river, and shall not see when the heat comes, but its leaf shall be green; and shall not be anxious in the year of drought, nor shall it cease from yielding fruit. (Jeremiah 17:17-18)

Spend some time unpacking Jeremiah's rich metaphors. Specifically:

*How does this metaphor of a tree by water compare with our first metaphor of the spring and cistern?*

*In what ways do these metaphors relate to how you think about trust in your own life?*

*Both the metaphors seem to have to do with rejuvenation and renewal. What are your sources of renewal and do these relate to trust in any way?*



***Bitachon* as a Perspective of Confidence – Duties of the Heart, R. Bahya Ibn Pequda (11<sup>th</sup> century, Spain)**

The following source from *Duties of the Heart* explains how *Bitachon* helps one live a life of conviction and principle. The *middah* of *Bitachon* helps us do what we know is right because we don't base our self-worth or sense of security on whether we are liked by others. This can be a valuable soul trait for combatting injustice.

Another advantage of this trust is that it has the following effect: One who trusts in God will not submit to another; she will not set her hopes on any person or put her trust in human beings. She will not be subservient to them in order to win their favor, nor will she flatter them. She will not agree with them in what is not the service of God. Their ways will not frighten her, and she will not be afraid to oppose them. She will divest herself of the finery of their favors and free herself from the burden of expressing gratitude to them and the obligation of repaying them. When reproving them, she will not shrink from offending them; if she humiliates them, she will not be timid before them or adorn what is false. As the prophet said:

וְאֵדָנִי יְהוָה יַעֲזֹר לִי עַל כֵּן לֹא נִכְלַמְתִּי עַל כֵּן שִׁמְתִּי פָנַי כַּחֲלָמִישׁ וְאֵדַע  
כִּי לֹא אֶבוֹשׁ:

But God, Hashem, helps me; therefore, I was not humiliated; therefore, I have set my face like a flint, and I know that I will not be timid." (Isaiah 50:7)

*In what kinds of situations do you get the most timid?*

*When do you have the most confidence?*

*Where are you on a timidity-confidence continuum and what is one thing you could do to become more confident? If you think you are overly confident, what is one thing you could do to have a more balanced sense of confidence?*

*What would you have to face if you were going to be less timid with your congregation, family, or colleagues?*



## For Further Study – *Bitachon/Trust*

**Source 1:** *Bitachon* in Relationships, *Duties of the Heart*, the Gate of Trust, Rabbi Bahya Ibn Pequda (d. 11<sup>th</sup> century, Spain)

This source discusses people helping each other. It is broken up into three sections with reflection questions after each section. In preparation for the text, think of examples from your own life of when you needed someone to do something for you, or you were asked to do something. These examples can be with people from work, family, or other relationships.

...When the need arises to ask for something from someone..., she should rely on God for it, and regard the people as the means of securing it, just as one tills the soil and sows it as a means to her livelihood. If God wishes to support her from it, the crops grow, thrive and flourish, and no thanks are due the land for this, only the Creator. If God does not wish to support her from it, the land yields no produce, or it yields produce which suffers damage, and the land is not to blame...

If it is carried out by one of them, she should thank the Creator who fulfilled her wishes, and also thank the one through whom it was carried out for his goodwill, and for being the agent of the Creator's aid...

If her request is not carried out for her by any of them, she should not blame them or attribute to them negligence, but she should thank God for having chosen what was for her good. She should also thank them, in accordance with what she knows of their efforts to fulfill her request, even though it was not carried out as she – and they- had wished.

She should also conduct herself this way in her relations with intimates and friends, business associates, employees and partners.

Like the other sources we've seen from *Duties of the Heart*, R. Bahya describes a level of *Bitachon* that is most likely unfamiliar to many of us moderns. Try to stretch and imagine what impact this type of *Bitachon* might have on your relationships.

### Questions:

- What impact do think this approach would have on interpersonal relationships? Why?
- What do you think this approach does to personal responsibility and accountability?

### Duties of the Heart (cont.)

Similarly, when asked by someone... [to do] something, he should try to do it with all his heart and focus his mind on carrying it out, provided that he is able and that the one who asked him is worthy of the effort. Then he should put his trust in God for its accomplishment.

The above section seems to describe the balance of Hishtadlut (effort) and Bitachon. Why do you think it matters if the person is "worthy of the effort?"





### Duties of the Heart (cont.)

If God brings it about through his agency, and uses him as the instrument for benefiting his fellowman, he should offer thanks for this privilege. But if, after going through much trouble and effort, he is prevented from doing so and is unable to fulfill his neighbor's request, he should not blame himself, and should inform his friend that he tried his best.

#### Questions:

- How close or far are you from this type of attitude in your own life?
- How do you think this approach would enhance or detract from your spiritual and ethical growth?

**Source 2:** *Bitachon*, Birth and Creativity, Advice, Rebbe Nachman of Breslov (d. 1810, Ukraine)

בטחוני הדור הם בחינת כלי ההולדה. כי כל ההולדות וכל ההשפעות נמשכין על ידי בטחון. וזה זוכין על ידי ששומעין ספורי מעשיות מצדיקים אמתיים שיש להם כח לעורר מהשנה על ידי ספורי מעשיות שלהם, שעל ידי זה יוצא הדבור בכח גדול. שאותן שהיו בבחינת שנה שהיו כאלמים ממש ולא היו יכולים לדבר כלל שום דבור שבקדושה, נתעוררין עכשו משנתם ומתחילים לדבר בכח גדול, ועל ידי הדבור נתחזק הבטחון ועל ידי זה נפקדין העקריות וזוכין ליראה.

The trustful ones of the generation reflect aspects of reproduction. For all birth, and all spiritual influences are drawn into the world through *Bitachon*. This [birth] is merited by hearing stories told by the truly righteous who have the ability to awaken others from sleep through their stories. Through this awakening, full-throated speech emerges. For, those who were asleep were like mutes and could not speak any words of holiness. Once they awaken they begin to speak with much strength. Through this speech *Bitachon* is strengthened, which leads to birth and awe.

In this cryptic passage Rebbe Nachman describes a circular process in which those with *Bitachon* can awaken others from spiritual sleep, empowering them to speak words of holiness. In turn, these words of holiness strengthen the *Bitachon* of themselves and others and lead to more creativity (birth) and awe.

#### Questions:

- In your own experience, how is *Bitachon* related to birth or creativity?
- What is like for you to experience spiritual sleepiness and how have you been awoken in the past?
- In your experience what is the relationship between speech, particularly holy speech, and *Bitachon*?



## **Bitachon/Trust Practices**

### **Torah Learning**

Source material not used in the *va'ad*

Everyday Holiness, "Trust"

### **Focus Phrase**

Write a phrase on an index card and repeat it for several minutes at the beginning of your day to focus your attention on this middah throughout the day. These phrases can come from our reading or you can make them up. Below is one suggestion:

בְּרוּךְ הַגִּבּוֹר אֲשֶׁר יִבְטַח בִּיהוָה וְהָיָה יְהוָה מְבֹטָחוֹ:  
וְהָיָה כְּעֵץ שֶׁתּוֹלַע עַל מַיִם וְעַל יוֹבֵל יִשְׁלַח שָׁרְשָׁיו וְלֹא יִרָאֵהוּ {יִרָאֵהוּ} כִּי יָבֵא  
חֶם וְהָיָה עָלָיו רֵעָן וּבִשְׁנַת בְּצֻרָתוֹ לֹא יִדָּאָג וְלֹא יִמָּישׁ מִמַּעֲשׂוֹת פְּרִי:

Blessed is the person who trusts in the God, and whose hope God is. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, and that spreads out its roots by the river, and shall not see when the heat comes, but its leaf shall be green; and shall not be anxious in the year of drought, nor shall it cease from yielding fruit. (Jeremiah 17:7-8)

### **Kabbalat (Choose one):**

- Choose one effort you are making during the day. Assess whether you are approaching this effort out of trust or despair.
- Choose a short period during the day (10 minutes to 1 hour) in which you hold fast to a perspective of *Bitachon*. Notice what feelings and thoughts come up. If this is easy for you, expand the amount of time.
- At one point each day – it could be a moment of decision or a moment when you need to confront something – act as if you trust in God.
- Choose one effort you make each day - this can be writing a sermon, creating a program, helping a family member, etc. and notice how God or other factors were involved in your success with this effort.

### **Cheshbon HaNefesh (journaling or Hitbodedut)**

Keep a daily record of insights and experiences you have with *Bitachon* practice. You can respond to the following prompt if useful:

- What are some things that give you a sense of renewal and rejuvenation?
- What enabled you to stay connected to that which gives you renewal; what made it difficult to keep this connection?
- What fears or worries do you need to let go of to be more free?

### **Sichat Chaverim Chevruta**

Set up a 30 minute period of time to meet with your partner at least once between meetings.



Fill in dates for your practice period in the top row. Check each day you do the practice. This form can be printed on card stock paper and folded over into a tent to put on a desktop or dresser for easy viewing.

Phrase															
Kabbalah															
Cheshbon															
Chevruta															

Phrase															
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### Bitachon/Trust Practices

**Focus Phrase:**

בְּרוּךְ הַגִּבֹּר אֲשֶׁר יִבְטַח בַּיהוָה וְהָיָה יְהוָה מִבְּטָחוֹ:  
 וְהָיָה כְּעֵץ שֶׁתּוֹלַע עַל מַיִם וְעַל יוֹבֵל יִשְׁלַח שָׁרְשָׁיו וְלֹא יִרָאֶה {יִרְאָה} כִּי יָבֵא  
 חֹם וְהָיָה עָלָיו רֵעָן וּבִשְׁנַת בַּצָּרֶת לֹא יִדָּאָג וְלֹא יִמָּישׁ מַעֲשׂוֹת פְּרִי:

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**Kabbalat**

- Choose one effort you are making during the day. Assess whether you are approaching this effort out of trust or despair.
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- At one point each day – it could be a moment of decision or a moment when you need to confront something – act as if you trust in God.
- Choose one effort you make each day - this can be writing a sermon, creating a program, helping a family member, etc. and notice how God or other factors were involved in your success with this effort.

**Cheshbon HaNefesh (Journaling or Hitbodedut) – 3-7 times/week**

**Sichat Chaverim Chevruta – Weekly**



## **Bitachon – A Mindfulness Perspective**

### **Rabbi Sheila Peltz Weinberg**

Take a seat.

Allow your spine to be erect like the trunk of a tree.

Rest your tongue on the roof of your mouth and press up to lift your tree trunk toward heaven.

Relax your tongue and feel the lift upwards in your spine.

Now allow your hips to be heavy and relaxed.

Allow them to spread gently on your seat.

Imagine your roots are reaching down and out, into a clear and fresh river, a deep source of endless water – a source that is ever-present, ever-giving. Pause.

Notice your breath at the area of your heart.

Breathing from the heart, slowly say the following phrases silently to yourself.

MAY I FEEL SAFE

MAY I FEEL CONTENT

MAY I FEEL AT EASE

Use a full cycle of breath for each phrase.

Realize you are simply practicing offering this wish for this moment.

While saying each phrase, allow yourself to feel the bodily sensation expressing the experience of the words.

Imagine your body filled with the qualities that you are putting into words.

This is an intention, which may or may not be realized but plants seeds for these qualities associated with *Bitachon*.

MAY I FEEL SAFE

MAY I FEEL CONTENT

MAY I FEEL AT EASE

Continue for as long as you like repeating these phrases.

You may wish to change the pronoun to "you" or "he/she" and exchange a beloved friend, teacher, mentor for yourself in the blessing.