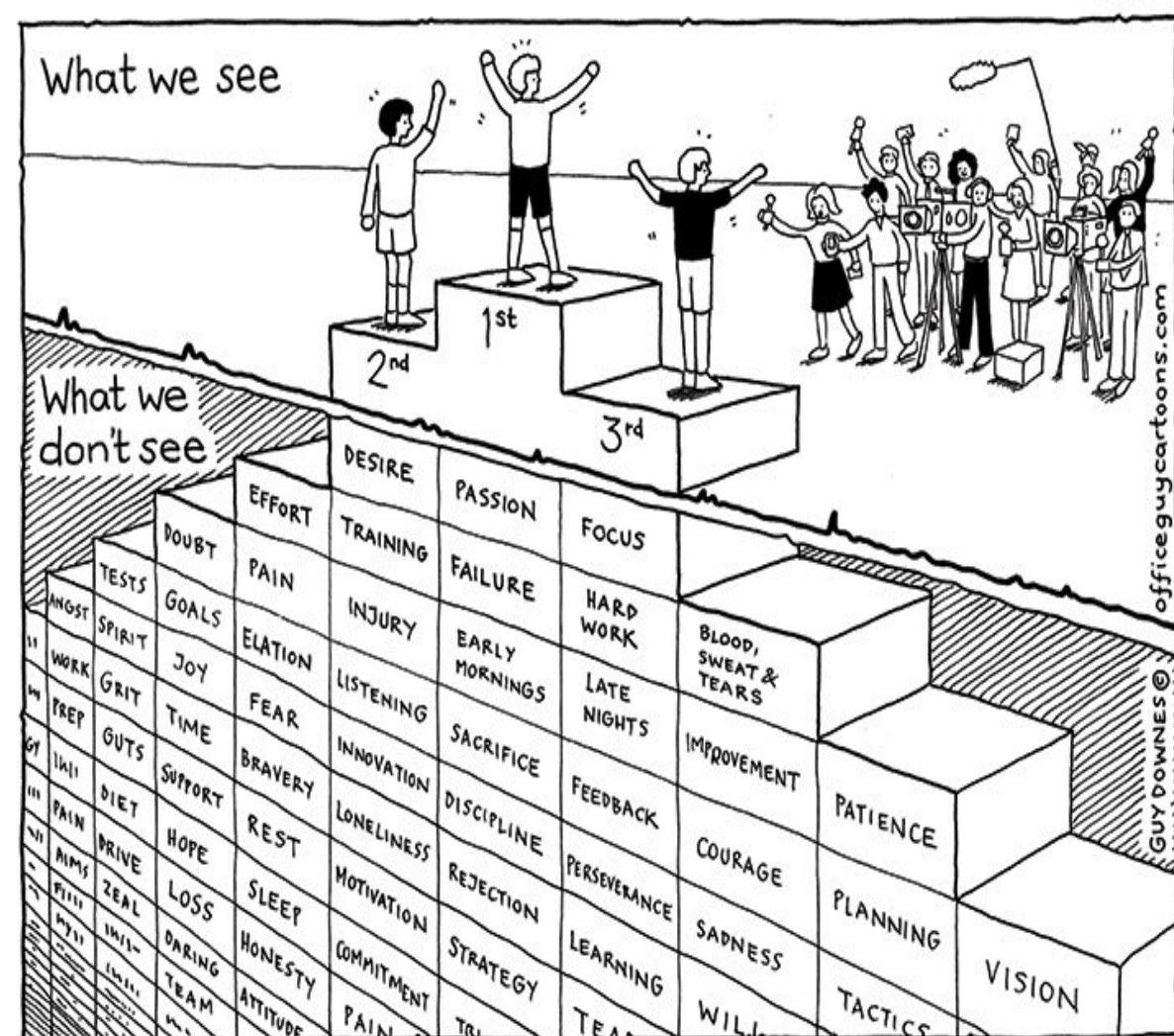


Please Note: As this is an international collaboration, we have chosen American spelling for English words and each author's own transliterations for Hebrew words.



*A man's job is not to be in complete control of all situations, but to be in complete control of himself in all situations.*

— SHRAGA SILVERSTEIN

## GEVURAH IN FOCUS

*Gevurah requires us to empower ourselves to overcome the obstacles that lie in front of us: Possessing discipline, self-control, adopting boundaries and limits so that we can live for the sake of our goals as Jews, to be a source of light and submit our egos and desires to G-d's Torah. This invites us to bring the element of logic and rationale to our behavior, develop strength to overcome personal obstacles, and restrain from being slaves to our lusts and desires.*

## Quotes to Inspire

BY REBBETZIN EVA CHAPPER

Borehamwood, United Synagogue, London, UK

“Who is the wise person? The one who foresees the consequences.”

– Talmud, Tamid, 32a

Sometimes, the amount of self-control it takes to not say what's on my mind is so immense, I need a nap afterward.

MOTIVATION GETS YOU GOING, BUT DISCIPLINE KEEPS YOU GROWING.

## ASK THE RABBI

Dear Rabbi,

*My neighbour's apple tree is growing over our fence. Am I allowed to eat the apples or is that stealing?*

Deborah

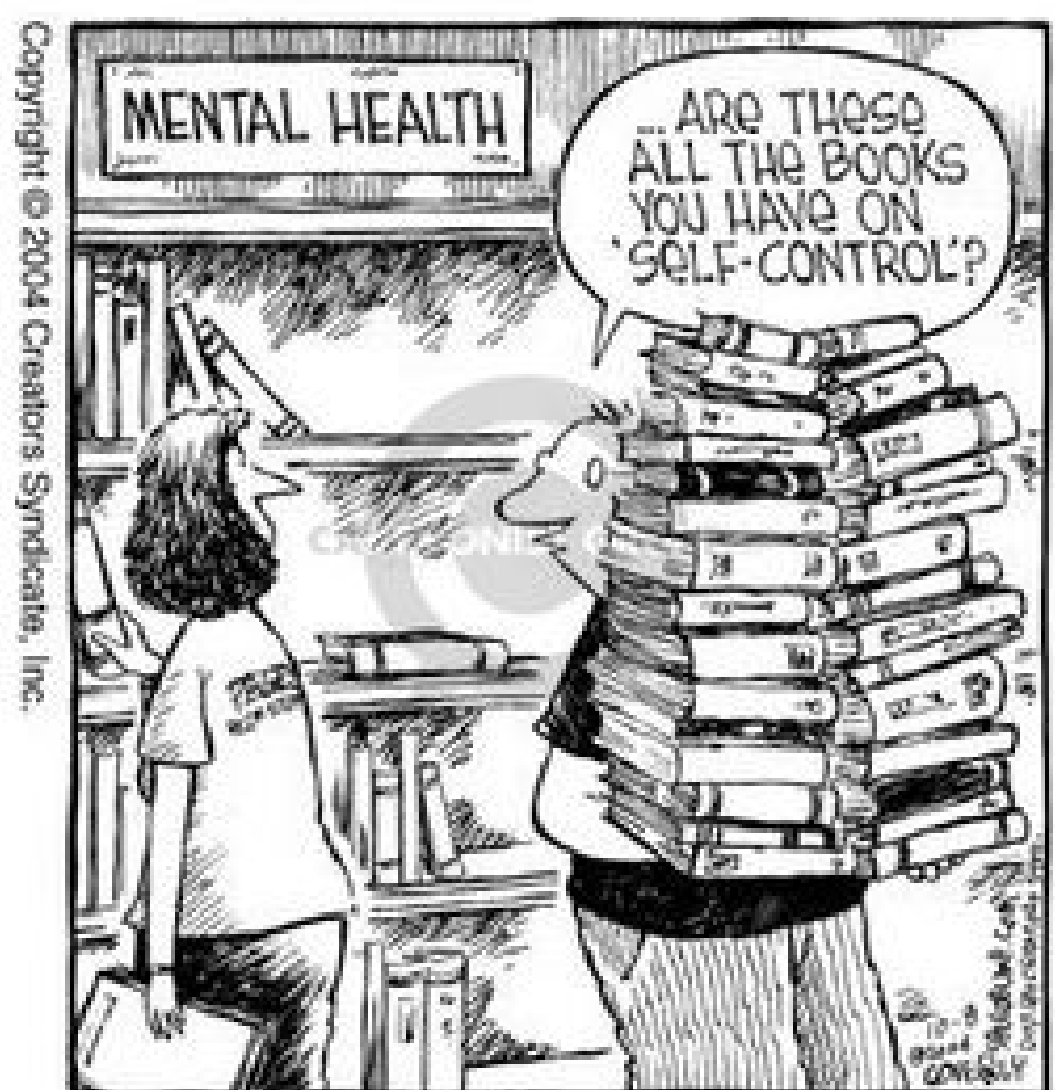
Dear Deborah,

Firstly, have you tried asking your friendly neighbor? Perhaps this is a good way to connect and share a cup of tea (and apple cake!) together!

If that doesn't work and you wish to understand the boundaries of property from a Jewish perspective, this issue is dealt with in the Talmud, Code of Jewish Law, and contemporary authorities. While there is some debate about ownership of the fruit, in the end it is determined solely by where the source emanates from the ground. Since the trunk emanates from your neighbor's property, even the apples on the branches that hang over on your side belong to the neighbor. Interestingly, if the branches are disturbing you, you are allowed to trim them.

Good luck with your neighbors and the fruitful engagements!

Rabbi Moshe Mayerfeld, Co-founder and Director of Kii, Young professional network in NYC [Kii-nyc.com](http://Kii-nyc.com)



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# SPIRIT OF INSPIRATION FROM ISRAEL

Rabbi Dov and Rebbetzin Freda Kaplan

## BAHAD 1 TRAINING BASE



When thinking of the value of gevurah, discipline, we thought of any one of many basic training bases in the IDF. Discipline is one of the most important parts of any military force. One of the first things taught to the new recruit in boot camp is discipline. However, gevurah is not only deference towards higher ranks. More important is the self-discipline developed in the soldier. Part of the process is to push the trainee to do more than he thinks he can.

We chose to highlight the Bahadř Officer’s Training School near Mitzpe Ramon. While military service in the IDF is generally compulsory, soldiers must volunteer to train as officers. In Israel it is seen as an honor and a privilege although it extends their term of service. The photo was taken in the base’s central square during a graduation ceremony of young cadets. The inscription on the wall is a quote from Gideon’s words to his warriors (Judges 7:17): “You shall observe me and do likewise.” In Bahadř it is a golden rule that officers are expected to lead by example.

To lead requires a higher level of self-control and practiced discipline. It takes gevurah.



*Discipline is the soul of an army. It makes small numbers formidable, procures success to the weak, and esteem to all.*

GEORGE WASHINGTON

## NAAMA: A WOMAN OF GEVURAH

By Rebbetzin Liat Mayerfeld, Co-founder and Director of Kii,  
Young professional network in NYC [Kii-nyc.com](http://Kii-nyc.com)

Easily seen as a mere tag-along, Naama is not mentioned in the Torah by name; rather we see her joining Noach in the ark as his wife. She is not even involved with him during the crucial part of the story, as we learn from Rashi that they were prohibited from marital relations the entire time they were in the ark. However, the Midrash singles her out for praise as one of the women referred to by the very first verse of Eishes Chayil, "her value is far greater than pearls."

She, apparently, earned her salvation in the ark through her own merit and not on the back of her husband’s. This was because she withstood the social pressure of the time in the same way as Noach did, even though it must have been extremely hard. She is also praised for her role in maintaining her home – in looking inwards to strengthen her Jewish haven in the midst of a crazy generation of people distant from G-d.

Noach seems to be criticized for his lack of outreach. How is it then a compliment for Naama to have looked inwards at such a time?! How are we to understand the positivity shown to Naama’s stand?

In desperate times, while Noach was perhaps criticised for his ineptitude in reaching out, it was Naama’s role to preserve the nucleus of the one family that would remain strong and repopulate the world.

At that time, Naama's responsibility was to insulate her family so they would stay strong and not be swept away by the immoral society around them. Naama had the inner fortitude to place clear boundaries and to keep herself and her family strong. As her name implies, she did this in a pleasant, positive way.

Strength is not measured in comparison to others but rather is a measure of one's own conviction. Moral courage is often

rarer than pearls because of the many pressures people feel that society puts on them. Naama was able to withstand all those pressures and also protect her family from the temptations and influences around them.

Naama's heroic discipline enabled her to create a complete separation between her family and the ills of society, shown by them entering the ark. Naama inspires us to have the moral courage to create boundaries against any negative societal influences.







# THE LOST ART OF YITZHAK

By Rabbi Daniel Fine, Assistant  
Rabbi at Stanmore & Canons  
Park Synagogue, London, UK

Ask a Jewish children to list the achievements or experiences of Avraham, and before they will probably talk about discovering HaShem or the ten tests. Ask them about Yakov and they will tell you about the ladder, about the travails with Esav, or about living with Lavan or, later, the Yosef episode. Ask them what Yitzchak did and you are likely to experience a pause for thought, then contemplation, and then the ‘Akeidah?’

You see, of the three Avos, Avraham and Yakov stand out, but Yitzchak remains relatively anonymous. The one parsha in which he has the leading role, Toldos is more about Yitzchak’s children than Yitzchak himself. In fact, the word Toldos actually means generations or progeny. The word Toldos, means generations/progeny. The Chumash speaks about Yitzchak re-digging the wells his father dug. His crowning achievement was the Akeidah, which was his father’s test, technically speaking, not his own. Yitzchak seems to be the obscure Av. How and why is that so?

## *Humbly standing in the background: A lesson of discipline taught by Yitzchak*

If we had time, we would launch into a discussion about the energies of chesed, gevurah and tiferet - the energies which the Avos embodied. Instead, we will home in on Yitzchak. Yitzchak’s role was that of the facilitator or consolidator. He was to take everything that Avraham his father had achieved and solidify it, then subsequently allow the next generation to develop it further. Avraham’s role was of beginnings – an initial burst of energy – but Yitzchak’s was to consolidate, to direct that energy and define it. While Avraham travels, Yitzchak remains in the holy confines of the Land of Israel. His job is to be born holy and remain holy, as Rashi and Rav Hutner explain: to consolidate, not to innovate. The things we find Yitzchak doing on the pages of Chumash are things which echo Avraham: Yitzchak re-digs the wells of his father, and Yitzchak facilitates Avraham’s mission at the Akeidah. (Note that, even in the Akeidah, it was Avraham who would be active and Yitzchak who would lie down still and passive – as indicative of their qualities of the moving, energy-providing, initiator versus the still consolidator).

Nowadays, being a Yitzchak is a bit of a lost art. It is not fashionable to humbly stand in the background facilitating others’ missions and progress. Even those who were previously passive or less in the limelight have now tended to thrust themselves forward into the spotlights: For example, news interviews are sometimes as much about the interviewer as the interviewee. Few people want to be (or remain) the assistant manager – it is about grabbing the headlines as the manager. Yet the humble role of the facilitator is so important: to be able to step out of the limelight, to be able to resist yearning for stardom and instead focus on the mission at hand, or better still, on other people’s missions – is a crucial thing.

As we go through life, we often like to draw attention to ourselves and, like that, other people recognize our achievements. Success is a good thing, and we should feel good about our successes. But equally, we should realize that the Yitzchak role is a precious one – to be able to achieve whilst outside of the limelight, and to take others’ projects, qualities and strengths and develop them further in a humble and genuine way.



## COLOR OF GEVRUAH

*Gevurah is red and  
violets are blue  
Discipline is strength  
that fortifies you*

Color poems based on the writings of Rabbi Moshe Kordovero



## FRUIT OF THE MIDDAH

*We are currently  
counting 49 days from the  
time of the Omer offering  
of barley, brought the  
day after the (first) seder,  
to the time of the wheat  
offering on Shavuot. It  
takes real discipline and  
inner strength to  
transform our animalistic  
selves, represented by  
barley, the food of  
animals, to our refined  
human selves, represented  
by the wheat offering, in  
just 7 weeks.*



# BUSINESS INSIDER

*Never Stop Learning because Life Never Stops Teaching*

*Helena Sharpstone, Co-Director at Sharpstone Skinner, a learning and development consultancy specializing in coaching and facilitation for leadership and team excellence. [www.sharpstoneskinner.co.uk](http://www.sharpstoneskinner.co.uk)*

We know from recent research into motivation that we have a strong drive towards mastery. We want our work to allow us to master things, be it a new skill, a way of operating, a piece of knowledge, or a better attitude. No one wants to stand still. Sometimes we think we do. We tell ourselves we'll tread water for a bit, enjoy the comfort of knowing what we're doing and, as the quote suggests – being the best at something. It doesn't last long. Humans live to learn, we want to grow and get better, and sometimes that means not being the smartest. It means being a beginner again. Employers are starting to realize that, if they don't offer staff opportunities to master new skills and experiences, people will move on to somewhere that does. So ask yourself, "When was the last time I did something for the first time?" and "What opportunities am I offering my team to master something new or build on something to a greater level of mastery?"

## CHICKENS: A LESSON OF CLARITY

*By Elana Mizrahi*

I remember like it was like yesterday. Eight years ago I spent 24 hours with two chickens. Live chickens. You know, the ones that have feathers and squawk. You might be asking yourself, "So what's the big deal?" Well, first of all, I don't live on a farm. I don't even live in a house. I live in an apartment, in the middle of the city, without a yard, balcony or patio. You get the point. Twenty-four hours of two chickens in my apartment.

My one-year-old was petrified. My four-year-old was intrigued. My seven-year-old had a blast, but he wouldn't touch the chickens. They ran around my apartment for over an hour, making a mess, until I finally was able to catch them and put them back in their box.

Are you laughing yet? I wasn't. Especially when it took me three hours of mopping to clean up the mess. But now that they are gone, I have to admit it was hysterically funny. How did I get two live chickens in my home? They arrived due to a lack of clarity, a lack of boundaries, and a lack of clear goals.

My eldest told me he wanted chickens. I told him I loved the idea. I myself would like a chicken. I would also like a goat. What could be better than fresh organic eggs and milk? I spoke in a language of dreams and wishful thinking. He spoke in a language of doing: wishing and wanting are not words of fantasy, they are words of reality. Every day he mentioned that he wanted to buy chickens. "Sure, sure," I kept telling him. I was very unclear. I didn't realize how determined he was—and really, part of me wanted a chicken. I myself lacked clarity. "There is a boy who lives two blocks from us who sells chickens." "Really?" "His name is Zvi. I'm going to buy one." "Really?"

Uncertainty. Lack of clarity. Lack of clear goals. I didn't talk about responsibility or go into details about what you need to take care of a chicken. I didn't mention that just because we want something, it doesn't mean that we can have it or that it's even good for us. I learned that, if you lack clarity, if you are vague about something, you leave open a door that is called confusion and that confusion almost always leads to...a mess! And so, my son came home with two little chickens. I couldn't believe it!

I realized this chicken mess only happened because of a lack of clarity. G-d created a beautiful world to know and explore, and He created the Torah to give us boundaries and to give us clarity. With clarity one feels security.

So, back to our chickens: they were returned. My son was disappointed at first, but I allowed him to go to Zvi's to help care for the baby chicks. He was thrilled, as was I. All thanks to some clear boundaries.

*Elana Mizrahi is a trauma therapist, doula, and reflexologist, who mentors women at all stages of life. She lives with her husband and children in Jerusalem.*

[www.elanamizrahi.com](http://www.elanamizrahi.com)



# HEALTHY DISCIPLINE

By Rebbetzin Rachel Yaghobian

As a health coach, I often find the parallels between healthy life habits and Torah ideology so refreshing. In guiding others, and myself, into building these healthy habits, there are some which stand out, some which so clearly reflect the Torah ideology. Let's explore some of the healthy habits for life.

"Eat within the first hour of the morning." This can be a parallel to say Modeh Ani upon awaking and daven within the first hour. Include an emotionally and physically healthy beginning to jump-start your day.

"Eat small meals, and drink water throughout your day-every 2-3 hours." Water does equate to Torah and does wonders for our overall health. Throughout the day, we have small opportunities to do mitzvot, as well as learn little bits of Torah.

"Each time you make a good decision, you strengthen your resolve to make better future choices." Just like the first time to turn down an unhealthy food choice may be challenging, and the following time it gets a bit easier, so too with a new mitzvah or commitment we take on. The more we do it, the easier it gets, the stronger the "mitzvah muscle" becomes.

"Small success steps every day, add up to a lot over an extended amount of time." Just like with good nutrition and physical

activity, making a small good choice every meal, and doing a bit of exercise every day add up to a considerable change over time. So too, learning a halacha, Jewish law, every day, or engaging in any type of small yet consistent learning will yield tremendous results in self-growth over time.

Teamwork helps build healthy habits. Get on a health journey with a buddy and a coach." Just like it's easier to diet and exercise with a group of supportive friends or at least one or two committed buddies, so too, having a supportive community and environment for Torah growth is imperative. Surround yourself with positive people who also want to work on self-growth and learning. Just like it's so helpful to have a good coach to succeed in your physical journey, so too, it is crucial to have a good rav to help succeed in the spiritual journey of life.

So whatever your health journey is- weight loss, physical movement, improved nutrition, more hydration, stress reduction, or quality sleep- the healthy habits you build will not only aid you in your physical well-being, they will also help you in your spiritual growth as a true eved, servant of Hashem.

May we all merit to take good care of both our bodies and our souls, in order to be able to serve Hashem with energy, *simcha*, and serenity.

Rachel Yaghobian is the Rebbetzin of Cong. Torah Vachessed in Houston Texas. She also manages the shul's mikvah, and is a kalla teacher, doula and bodekes. In addition, Rachel is a health coach.

[www.rachelthedoula.com](http://www.rachelthedoula.com)

[www.healthyhabitswithrachel.optavia.com](http://www.healthyhabitswithrachel.optavia.com)

## THE POWER OF "NO"

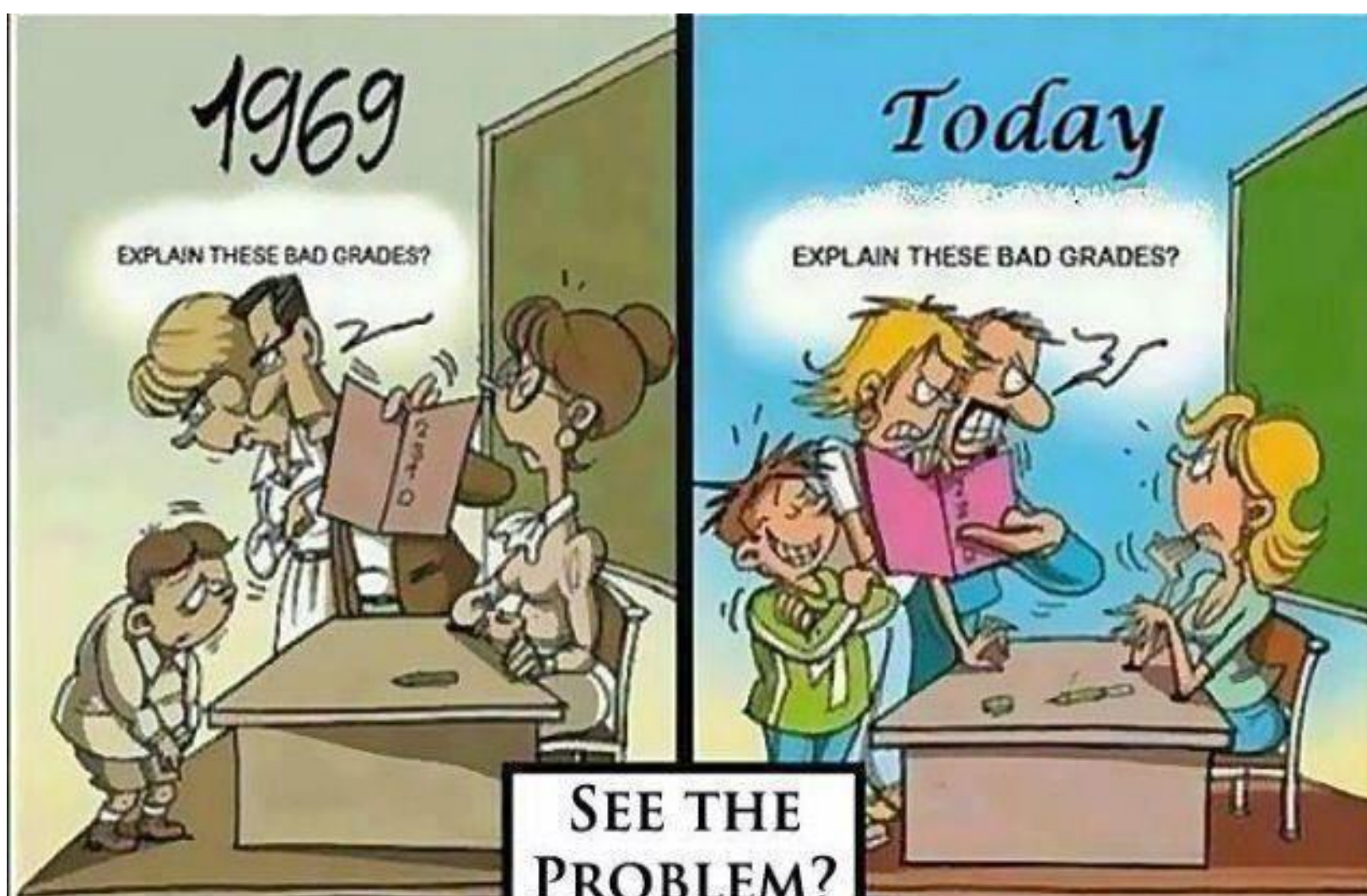
By Rebbetzin Chana Hughes

No. It's a small word but it's one of the hardest. Often people are scared to say no because it seems mean or cruel. The recent pandemic has taught us a lot about this word. Before Covid-19, who would have thought that we could say no to shaking people's hands or to standing too close in a queue? Who would have thought that nations could close their borders? In a liberal and open society, who would have thought that the word no could save lives? Of course, the boundaries of the Coronavirus pandemic were unwanted and tragic. But perhaps the experience has taught us the importance of boundaries. My teacher, Rabbi Mordechai Miller ztz"l, used to say: every meaningful 'yes' is also a 'no'. For example, saying 'yes' to marrying one person is saying 'no' to having an intimate relationship with anyone else. This is the case with every choice.

Some time ago we had a guest staying with us over Shabbos who wasn't Jewish. Out of respect, she didn't use her phone all day. She saw the time for motzei Shabbos on the calendar was 4.43pm. She was baffled. "You mean at 4.42pm you cannot use your phone but at 4.43pm you can?" We smiled together. Yes, it sounds weird to those who aren't used to it. But to us it highlights the value of clear, distinct and exact boundaries. Our spiritual demands on Shabbos are very different to those during the week. We celebrate this transition with the blessing of havdalla, which means to distinguish, to create a boundary. Although unfashionable nowadays, boundaries are essential. They enable growth, meaning, exclusivity and ultimately holiness in relationships with G-d and with each other. May we all have the gevurah-the strength - to make the right boundaries firmly and without shame.

May those boundaries enhance our relationships and develop our self-growth so that we become truly enlightened this sefiras ha'omer.

Chana Hughes is the Rebbetzin of Radlett Synagogue, London, UK. She is a graduate of the Bradfield program and a systemic family therapist working with young people, couples and families and a school's well-being consultant.  
[c.Hughes.therapy@gmail.com](mailto:c.Hughes.therapy@gmail.com)





# ASK THE REBBETZIN

Tanya Garber, Rebbetzin of Shenley United Synagogue, London, UK & specialist radiographer for Royal Free NHS

Dear Rebbetzin,

*I love my husband and children dearly and they know I would do anything for them. That is the problem. I often find myself feeling taken for granted and running out of time to do the things I need to take care of myself.*

*Can you please help me?*

**Frustrated**

Dear Frustrated,

You are feeling what so many mothers before you have felt! The conflict between loving, giving and feeling depleted by all that giving.

Love can be a boundary-less thing and it needs to be tempered and directed properly or it loses its effectiveness. If kindness (chesed) is the ultimate in human expression and love, then discipline (gevurah) is the means through which we contain and protect our love! We do this through healthy distance and respect for boundaries. Boundaries help us to respect our own needs. And, they demonstrate to our loved ones that it is perfectly legitimate for each member of the family to have needs and to take care of them. It is only from a place of self-care and self-worth that we are able to truly care for others.

Practicing self-care is challenging when we are pulled in all directions, especially during Covid, and it can be easy to lose yourself. We must remember that this pandemic is a marathon, not a sprint and we need to pace ourselves so that we can take care of ourselves as well as those around us.

The airplane analogy is a reminder of putting on your own mask before helping

others. If you waited until the last minute to fit your mask, then you would rapidly lose consciousness and be of little help to anyone else. When we continuously put others' needs before our own, emotional exhaustion and compassion fatigue are an inevitable consequence.

There are the physical aspects of eating, sleeping and exercising well, but we shouldn't overlook the mental health aspects too which include relaxation, mindfulness and cultivating hobbies.

The best gift you can give to others is taking care of yourself. Remember, you can't pour from an empty cup. Make it a priority to check your reserves and fill yourself up!

**EXERCISES:**

- 1. Develop awareness of what is stressful and where boundaries are lacking.*
- 2. Let your family know that you are working on strengthening yourself and engage their support.*
- 3. Recognize that only you can set limits to stop you feeling depleted.*
- 4. Learn to express yourself if you need space. Saying no takes practice.*
- 5. Do something every day just for you!*

When we nurture ourselves, the ripples extend outwards! Hopefully, with practice, both you and your family can feel cared for.

Respectfully,

Rebbetzin Tanya



APRIL 8

THIS THURSDAY

YOM HASHOAH

IN MEMORY OF 6 MILLION JEWS

OF WHICH EVERY PERSON HAS A NAME

Yom HaShoah is a vital day in the Jewish calendar, providing us with a focal point for our remembrance. We cannot bring the dead back to life, but we can bring their memory back to life and ensure they are not forgotten. We can undertake in our lives to do what they were so cruelly prevented from doing in theirs.

RABBI LORD JONATHAN SACKS ZT"L



# QUESTIONS TO PONDER

*Mrs. Joanna Hamilton, Raanana, Israel, Podcast Influencer*  
*womenwellnesswisdom.co.uk*  
*Instagram: @women\_wellness\_wisdom*

*Sometimes one needs to show restraint and to apply discipline to our daily tasks. As we learn in Pirkei Avos, who is the one who is truly strong? The person who can control their desires. We have 7 days to balance strength and discipline. Some ideas to focus on gevurah:*

1. *What kind of disciplinarian are you? How do you use discipline? Do others experience your discipline as too much or just right? What needs to change?*
2. *Listen to yourself. Do you speak in a respectful way to your family? To friends? To work colleagues? Note down how you talk.*
3. *Are you judgmental? How can you restrain yourself from being judgmental?*
4. *Do you have unhealthy addictions or thoughts about yourself that you need to break free from?*
5. *When you don't get what you want, how do you react?*
6. *Do you appreciate yourself for being restrained when you act in an appropriate way?*
7. *Look back at the past 7 days. What has changed about your techniques? How do you feel?*



## YOM HASHOAH: WE REMEMBER

*By Rebbetzin Chamie Haber, Bnai Israel Congregation, Norfolk, Virginia.*  
*Chamie is a marriage educator and dating, marriage and parenting coach.*

I'm sitting in the waiting room while Akiva (my five-year old) is working with his occupational therapist. I'm so, so tired and I find myself nodding off. I must have fallen asleep because, the next thing I know, Akiva and his therapist are standing in front of me. "Ima, Ima, look what I made!" Akiva shoves his picture in my face and I recoil in horror.

It is a Jewish star. A six-pointed star. With the word "Jude" in the center. He had cut it out and colored it mostly yellow! Akiva is innocently waiting for my usual exclamation of pride and I just can't smile. I am frozen in my chair and tears are stinging my eyes. Michelle, his therapist looks at me and asks, "Are you ok?" She clearly has no idea what I'm going through.

I just sit there in a trance for what seems like a long time and then I quietly ask Michelle, "Do you know what this is?" I'm shocked that a 25-year-old educated woman doesn't know about Hitler's yellow stars. I explain to her that the Nazis required all Jews to wear this star so that they could be easily identified, persecuted and eventually murdered. I tell her that I'm a grandchild of Holocaust survivors, and I'm pretty certain that some of my relatives wore these exact stars as they were rounded up and led to their deaths. Now we are both crying.

Michelle explains that she wanted Akiva to work on cutting diagonal lines and she thought a Jewish star would be perfect for this little Jewish boy. She googled "Jewish star" and he chose this one. Once it was printed, he cut it out and chose to color it yellow. By now, I've collected myself enough to reassure this poor woman that she did nothing wrong and that I'm not upset with her. Akiva, thankfully oblivious, is still holding his artwork and Michelle offers to take it from him. "No," I say. "He's proud of his work and we'll take it home." But I still can't bring myself to touch the yellow star.

It takes a few more minutes, but finally I am ready to leave. Michelle and I exchange a tight hug and wish each other a good week. I gingerly take the offending star from Akiva, holding it with two fingers as I would a wet rag. I'm all shaky, but I'm determined to do right by my son and keep his picture. I'm surprised by the viscosity of my reaction. I wouldn't have thought this would affect me so deeply. But it's just too much for me. As we leave the building, I spot a garbage can and lose my resolve. I toss the star inside and, finally, I can breathe again.

Gevurah is the trait that means so much more than strength. Gevurah describes a deep inner strength that we achieve by doing what is right in the face of great odds. At this moment, I didn't feel strong. I felt beaten. And yet, what could be more of a show of strength than the fact that I exist and I'm raising my children to be proud, observant Jews. They wanted to kill my grandmother, but thank G-d she survived. She is almost 100 years old and has over 100 great-grandchildren! One of them needs occupational therapy and practices his diagonal cutting by cutting out a Jewish star. Hitler wanted those stars to be a sign of shame, but my son knows to be proud of his identity and his heritage. And THAT, I tell myself, is gevurah!



# JUST SAY 'NO'!

*Rabbi Nick Kett, Community Rabbi, Bushey Synagogue, London, UK*

If the days and weeks of the sefirat ha'omer are intrinsically linked to the seven middot through which Hashem guides the world, then it pays to understand what they are about.

The first week is connected to the middah of chesed. Avraham Avinu embodied chesed. It is insufficient to just translate chesed as loving-kindness; it is broader than that. At its essence, chesed represents the tendency to go beyond our boundaries. This can manifest positively and negatively. Avraham channelled chesed in a positive direction through his hospitality, his kindness, and his altruism. He readily went beyond his limits for others. The negative side to chesed, such as stealing, trespassing, and forbidden relationships, are all seen in the life of Yishmael, who embodied this negative dimension.

The second week, and our focus, is the middah of gevurah. Gevurah is the middah that is associated with the life and personality of Yitzchak. At its essence, Yitzchak's gevurah is the direct contrast to Avraham's chesed. Gevurah represents the tendency to remain inside boundaries.

The Mishnah in Pirkei Avot (4:1) famously seeks the definition of a gibor. We often translate gibor and gevurah as strength. Again, this is insufficient to understand its true implications. All creatures are 'strong' enough to support their own weight. Several animals are significantly stronger than humans. Therefore, the Mishnah tries to identify a type of strength that makes humans unique.

The answer presented in the Mishnah is that gevurah is shown when a person is able to hold back and overcome a negative urge or temptation. Gevurah, therefore, is better understood as self-discipline or self-restraint. To say "no" is an act of gevurah and is unique to humans.

When a person nullifies their own inclinations for the sake of HaShem, they are exhibiting the middah of gevurah. We even have a term for a person who foregoes the entirety of their being for the sake of HaShem: mesirat nefesh – the concept of being willing to forfeit their very life for G-d. It is no coincidence that the individual in our history who personifies this complete mesirat nefesh is Yitzchak who was willing to forfeit one's life at the akeidah.

Yitzchak's actions pave the way for all future acts of gevurah throughout history. We are all equipped with the inner strength to hold back and refuse to indulge in things that are not suitable for us. Our own introspection could yield countless different areas that we may wish to explore. It may be temptations in the food we eat, the people we surround ourselves with, the programs, movies and books that we expose ourselves to, the hesitance to participate in Jewish practice and ritual, or any other area of life. The omer is a wonderful opportunity to examine any area that we wish to exercise our gevurah muscles and just say "NO." The best way to do this is to select easy wins at first, and to build from there. In time, we will see a vast improvement.

# GEVURAH: PHYSICAL STRENGTH OR CONTROL?

*Rabbi Daniel Lieberman, Perth Hebrew Congregation, Perth Western Australia*

Gevurah is a weird concept.

We are constantly bombarded with the idea of strength and our need to both gain and maintain it whether physically or psychologically to the point where the very mention of the idea becomes wearing. We teach it repeatedly to our kids: be strong, stand up for what you believe in, and conquer every challenge that you encounter. But is that really what gevurah is?

The Torah in Bereishit 10:8, when describing Nimrod seems to suggest exactly that: physical might and the manipulation of your environment is gevurah. But that can't be the extent of it. There has to be something more.

We read every morning in Psukei D'zimrah from Divrei Hayamim aleph 29:12 that Hashem has in His hand both Koach and gevurah -strength and might. So in what way does koach differ from gevurah?

The answer can be found in Pirkei Avot when the Mishna describes the attributes of different age brackets. When you reach 30, you attain koach but gevurah isn't attained until the ripe old age of 80. So gevurah cannot be referring to actual physical strength.

Gevurah, therefore, is something different. Gevurah is all about control. Anybody can go to a gym, lift weights, and become strong. Anyone can go to university and gain knowledge and manipulate their environment but someone with experience can know when and how to be in control. It is this attribute which elevates mere koach into gevurah.

HaShem, like the perfect artist He is, in His creating of the world, knew when to stop. He knew when to end the creation, and control things, which gave us the beautiful gift of Shabbat. This is the example that we have to follow in order to be able to exercise this control and utilize our experience in our daily lives. Gevurah is knowing and respecting your own limits, understanding your environment, controlling yourself, and taking the time to enjoy it.

In the words of Rabbi Dr. Twerski zt'l in his autobiography, gevurah: "Koach is sprinting up two flights of stairs. Gevurah is being pushed in a wheelchair and greeting everyone cheerfully."





# EXCLUSIVE

## On a lighter note



### PARENTS

There's a new way to get your kids to do as they're told, make them clean their room, encourages them to help with chores around the house and prevents them from constantly answering you back

It's called "changing the WiFi Password!"

DAVESWORDSOFWISDOM.COM

Knock, Knock!  
Who's there?  
Control Freak.  
Con...  
OK, now you say, "Control Freak who?"

Through a lot of pain and discipline, I managed to lose 6 kilograms. Still miss my left arm though.

If laziness were an olympic discipline, I'd want to finish 4th so I wouldn't have to climb the podium!

## Etgar Challenge 2: Gevurah

### Quiz

1. According to Pirkei Avot, the reward of a mitzvah is...

a. Financial success

b. Received in the world to come

c. Never revealed

d. The chance to do another mitzvah
2. When does Shabbat end according to the Talmud?

a. When 3 stars are visible in the sky.

b. One seasonal hour after sunset.

c. Six seasonal hours after midday.

d. Midnight
3. According to Pirkei Avot "Who is mighty?":

a. A person who can lift 10 others.

b. A person who can wield Goliath's sword.

c. A person whom the people fear.

d. A person who can control their inclinations.
4. I saved the Jewish People when I saved a single baby and brought him up as my son. Who am I?

a. Potiphara

b. Batya

c. Miriam

d. Ruth



ETGAR

www.etgar.co.uk

### Hebrew Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, column and 3x2 box contains the 6 letters from א to ו exactly once

	א	ב	ג		
		ד		ב	
	ב		ד	ה	
					ו
ב					
ד	ו	ה		ג	ב

### Hero of the week: Sarah Aaronsohn

Sarah Aaronsohn (1890-1917) grew up in Zichron Yaakov, which her parent's joined after immigrating to Palestine in 1882. With her sister and brothers, Sarah created the Nili spy organisation to spy on the Ottomans for the British. Nili grew into one of the biggest spy networks in the Middle East. Sarah was caught by the Ottomans and she died in 1917, age 27.



Illustrations: Miki Shaw

Etgar aims to inspire a love of Jewish learning through an inter-school competition for 10 year olds.

Answers: Quiz: 1d, 2a, 3d, 4b



# RECIPES OF THE MIDDAH

By *Rabbanit Debbie Werther, Chaplain, Denver, CO & Rabbanit Nechama Cummings, Norfolk, VA*

Avraham told Eliezer, his most trusted servant, that he should go find a wife for Yitzchak. Eliezer had an age-appropriate daughter for Yitzchak, but she was not suitable. She descended, as did Eliezer, from Canaan and was not allowed to marry Avraham's descendants. The Torah uses the word "vayomer - and he said." This word is used often in the Torah but here it is noticeably different because of the trop (incantation mark) above the word. The trop indicated here is called a shalsholes and is used only four times in the Torah. Each time it indicates a deep inner struggle. Eliezer struggled internally with Avraham's dictate to him. Eliezer was asked to go find a wife for Yitzchok. Eliezer went to find a wife for Yitzchak even though he had a daughter he would have loved to have marry Yitzchak. Eliezer struggled, but he honored Avraham and went and conducted a litmus test by which he would know he found one worthy to marry the son of Avraham Avinu.

Pulling together the ingredients of the lamb curry and na'an can be a struggle, but the results are so worth it.

## NA'AN

3 cups lukewarm water  
1 ½ Tablespoons active dry yeast (1 ½ packets)  
1 ½ Tablespoons Kosher salt  
6 ½ scant cups unsifted unbleached flour

## INSTRUCTIONS

Mixing and storing the dough:

In a microwave-safe bowl or measuring cup, heat the three cups of water for 1 minute and 20 seconds. Mix in the yeast and salt. Mix together until combined. Put all this in a 5-quart bowl with loose fitting lid. Let rise for 2 hours on counter or in fridge overnight. Punch down. Let rise 45 minutes more. Cut into orange size slices and roll flat, about ½ " thick. Throw into a hot pan for about five minutes on each side. Bake in oven at 350 degrees for 10 minutes or until the dough is golden brown all around.



## LAMB CURRY

1-2 lb lamb cubes  
4 cloves chopped garlic  
1" fresh ginger, chopped  
¼ cup oil  
¾ cup water  
½ cup lemon juice  
¼ teaspoon kosher salt  
1 pinch black pepper  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
1 14 oz can diced tomatoes  
1 ½ teaspoons curry  
3 carrots, peeled and sliced thinly  
1 zucchini, diced

## INSTRUCTIONS

Saute together garlic, ginger, carrots, zucchini. Add canned tomatoes (with liquid). Add lamb cubes and spices. Bring to boil then simmer for 1 ½ hours. The longer you simmer, the better it'll be (just make sure the liquid doesn't boil out).

## DATE AND PISTACHIO BLISS BALLS

*Ilana Epstein, Rebbetzin, Western Marble Arch,  
Founder & Director of Ta'am*

@judaismonaplate

www.wearetaam.com

300g (1 ¾ cups, about 14) Medjool dates, pitted  
200g (1 ½ cups) raw cashews  
20g (3 tablespoons) cocoa powder  
½ teaspoon salt  
60g (3 tablespoons) honey  
50g (½ cup) shelled raw pistachios  
150g dark chocolate, melted  
35g shelled raw pistachios, roughly chopped

Place dates, cashews, cocoa, salt, and honey, and pistachios in the bowl of a food processor fitted with the blade attachment. Process until you have a smooth thick paste. Line a large tray with non-stick baking paper. Roll one half tablespoon-sized portions of the mixture into balls. Using a fork, dip one bliss ball into the melted chocolate allowing excess to drip off. Place on a tray and sprinkle with pistachios. Repeat with remaining bliss balls. Refrigerate for 20 minutes until set. Store in an airtight container for up to 2 weeks.





# Spiritual Spirits

## THE QUARENTINI

By Maddy & Alex Drucker. To see more Torah-infused Tipples you can follow our journey on Instagram @Spiritual.Spirits or on facebook @SpiritualSpirits613

For me, gevurah, was the real theme of last year. As Coronavirus overtook the world and our individual lives, we were asked to do things – to limit ourselves, our actions, our daily routine, our needs and our whims – for a greater good, that may have been hard to see.

That is the true strength of gevurah. Knowing when to control our natural impulses in the name of a Higher power, a greater good or the needs of others. Follow the rules, even when they challenge us, even when we cannot understand them, for they are there to protect our own best interests and those of others. From the parah adumah, the red heifer, to the prohibition not to mix meat and milk – not all mitzvot are obvious or logical, but we believe in their divinity and therefore their power. Doesn't that sound a little bit like the Corona guidelines?

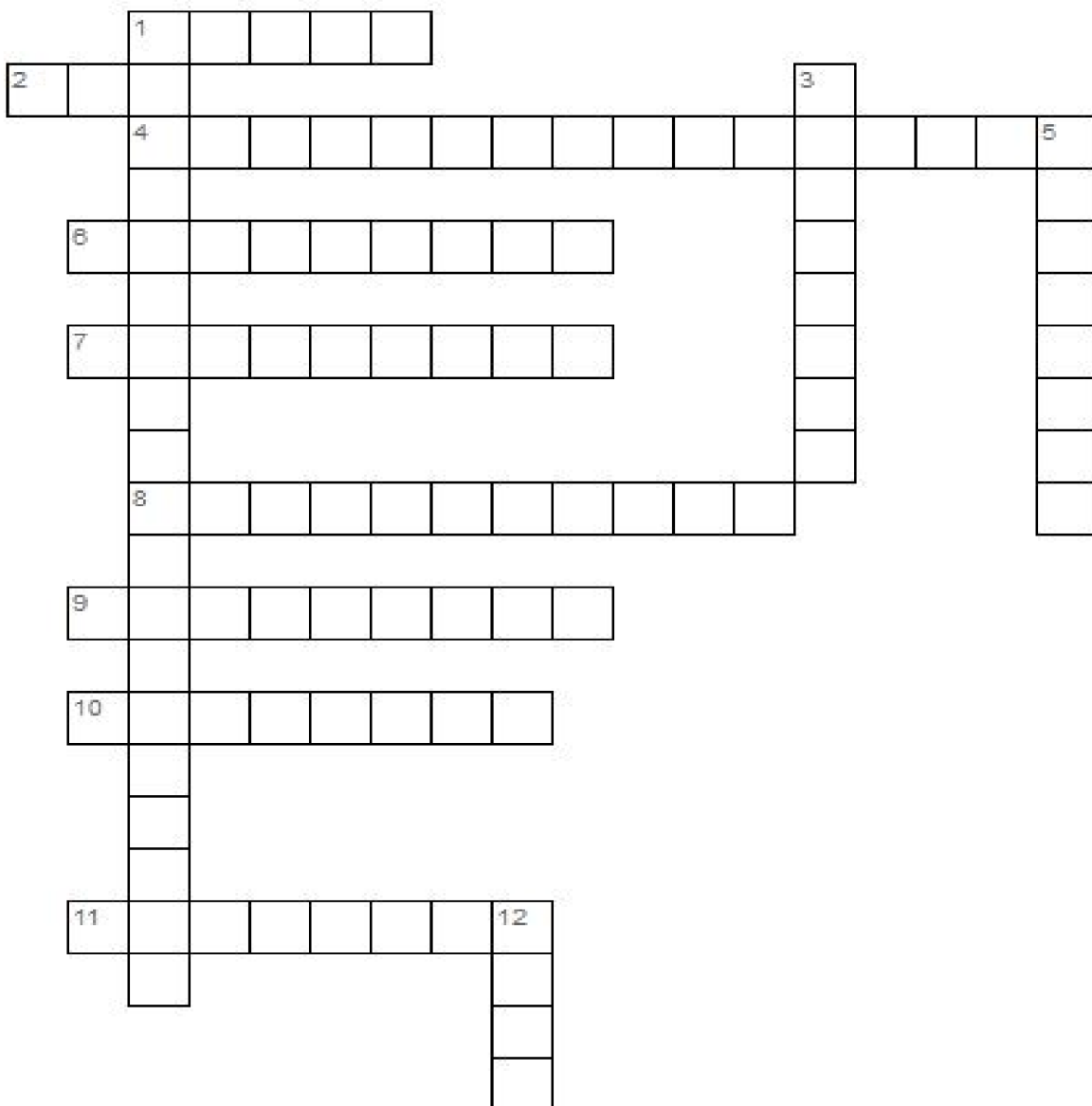
To that end; to represent this trait, the trait of strength from discipline and self-control, we offer you – The Quarentini! It is a Lemon and Honey Martini with extra vitamin C to boost and STRENGTHEN the immune system.



**3 oz vodka (or gin)**  
**2 oz fresh-squeezed lemon juice**  
**2 tablespoons honey**  
**2 tablespoons water**

*In a microwave-safe bowl, microwave honey and water for 60 seconds and stir to combine. Allow to cool for a few minutes. Add 2 cups ice to a cocktail shaker. Add vodka, lemon juice and honey mixture to a martini shaker.*

*Whisk to combine. Then add ice to top.  
 Shake, and then strain into a chilled martini glass.  
 Garnish with a lemon twist if desired.*



## GEVURAH CROSSWORD

### ACROSS

1. Another word for both ability and might (5)
2. A feeling of reverential respect mixed with fear or wonder (3)
4. Things which one is required to do as part of a job or role (16)
6. To impose a restriction or limitation (9)
7. A common English translation for the Hebrew word 'korban' (9)
8. The process of becoming stronger and more confident, especially in controlling one's life and claiming one's rights (11)
9. A force or influence that stops or holds back (9)
10. Another word for border of frontier (8)
11. Referring to inner or private (8)

### DOWN

1. The building of a person's capabilities and potential (19)
3. Avraham's son (10)
5. The capacity of an object or substance to withstand great force or pressure (8)
12. Opposite of right (4)

Down  
 1. Personal Development 3. Yitchezak 5. Strength 12. Left  
 Across  
 1. Power 2. Awe 4. Responsibility 6. Constraint 7. Sacrifice 8. Empowerment 9. Restriction 10. Boundary 11. Internal



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