

What if...?

What if I find too many things difficult to face? Is there an escape?

Yes. We can nullify ourselves.

Reb Noson writes: There are times when we are overwhelmed. I feel I cannot go any further. “I can’t take it any more!” “I just want to give up!” It happens. It happens all too often. What solutions are there for me to rise above the tidal waves that seem as if they will swallow me up?

Well, God wants us. He wants our service, our devotions. He wants our good deeds, our willingness to help others. We have a purpose in life. But He knows we can’t keep on going without a break. So, the way to overcome, is to take a break. Nullify ourselves! Forget everything! Bend our heads and say “My strength is limited, I have limitations, I cannot go on. Instead, “I give myself over to You, God, completely!” As if I can no longer function. (Which happens more often than we’d like!)

It is analogous to planting a seed in the ground. The seed is planted, it breaks apart and decomposes. But then it takes root and begins to sprout! From a small kernel come forth many bushels, from tiny acorns tall trees will grow. All it took was to place the seed in the ground, to nullify it. Then it becomes something great.

We too, by nullifying ourselves, giving ourselves over to God, can find protection from life’s tidal waves, and reemerge stronger and better for the experience.

(Based on *Likutey Halakhot, Ki’la’ey HaKerem* 2:1).

What if...?

What if my prayers aren’t heartfelt? What can I do about it?

I can strengthen my faith. Faith means I believe my prayers are important. I have faith, then, that I, too, are important in God’s eyes. I have meaning, I have purpose, I can contribute to the well-being of this world, my planet, my people, my neighborhood, my family, and so on.

Prayer means that I have faith there is a God, an All-Seeing God, an All-Knowing God. Otherwise, why would I pray to Him? Thus, prayer and faith are synonymous. Strengthening one strengthens the other.

And there is more. Because having faith entitles me to see miracles. I can see them every day. Because what am I praying for, if not to change my “natural order.” That which I already have, I have. My prayers are for those things that I need, that I want. If I pray for them, and believe in what I pray for, then I can see the answers to those prayers!

(Based on *Likutey Moharan* I, 7).

What if...?

What if I feel flustered and challenged, as if my heart can no longer bear the weight of my problems?

Rebbe Nachman teaches: When one’s heart is shattered by failure, that is, he feels humiliation and frustration at what is happening to him, he must “bind his heart to the point that is weighing on his heart at that moment” (*Likutey Moharan I*, 34). He explains:

Each person has three “points” that he must connect to each day.

- 1) A person must have a teacher that challenges and strengthens his intellect, so that he can see the beauty of each day. This imbues him with hope.
- 2) Every person must have a good friend (perhaps a *very* good friend) with whom he can converse or communicate each day, to lighten up the weight upon his heart and with whom he can express his difficulties.
- 3) Each person *must* speak to God every day. When a person learns to freely express his feelings before God, he releases the stress and pressures he feels weighing heavily on his heart. This gives you the ability to relieve your tensions and think properly. You can then more easily adjust your life to face the current pressures with clear thought.

What if...?

What if I want to *kvetch* (complain) and *krechtz* (sigh)?

Then go ahead. Take a deep breath, and let out your sigh.

Rebbe Nachman teaches that the human being was made alive with breath as in (Genesis 2:7) “He breathed into him the living breath.” This is what brought Adam to be alive.

And breathing is what brings every person to life!

When we sigh, when we take a very deep breath, it is as if we are breathing our last as in (Psalms 104:29), “You take their breath, they die...” We see this empirically, that very shortly before a person passes on, he seems to get stronger. Then he suddenly passes away. This is because God gathers unto Him the breath.

When a person manages this on his own, when he breathes deeply and gathers in his breath, then exhales with a deep sigh, he has “ended” his previous life and can now begin life *anew!* As in (Psalms 104:30), “You send Your breath and they are created, You renew the face of the earth” (i.e., man who is formed from earth).

So go ahead and sigh. Breathe deeply. And renew your life.

(based on *Likutey Moharan I*, 8:1-2).