

# Open Letter to My Inner Self

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Good afternoon,

Hope your day is going well.

I wanted to share some thoughts with you that I believe may be beneficial. As we've discussed many times, there comes a point when we need to roll up our sleeves, stop seeing ourselves as victims, and simply take action to move forward.

We all have our struggles. No one comes from a perfectly functional family, nor does anyone have a completely problem-free life. However, our ability to persevere through challenges is rooted in the values that shape our character. Strengthening resilience and solidifying self-respect are essential in navigating life's difficulties.

## **The Reality of Life**

No person, no family, and no life are perfect. True joy comes from making positive choices and embracing the journey, despite the inevitable challenges. Struggles and sadness are part of this process. Life was never meant to be easy—it was meant to be demanding, requiring effort and perseverance. Hashem designed the world in such a way that through struggles, we find our success.

## **What We Cannot Change:**

- **We cannot change** the past (though through Teshuva, we can transform its impact).
- **We cannot change** the present reality as it is.
- **We cannot change** other people.

## **What We Can Change:**

- **Ourselves** – including the beliefs and behaviors that hold us back.
- **The way we function** by breaking free from self-abuse and dysfunction.
- **Our future** by taking action today to build a better, stronger, and healthier life.

Every ounce of energy spent focusing on what we cannot change takes away from what we can change. Each of us carries a personal story - a painful past marked by the wrongdoings of others. These feelings of hurt are valid, but we have two choices:

1. Remain in a victim mindset, dwelling on past pain.
2. Take a deep breath, accept that those experiences do not define our future, and recognize that Hashem is guiding us according to His exact plan.

## **Hashem's Plan**

Hashem has changed our landscape. It's as if He's telling us: *"I know you wanted to shine in a certain way, but I need something different from you now. It's not about you—it's about Me. And this is the way I need you to serve Me."* True light comes from facing the very challenges placed in our path.

While other people's actions may be painful, nothing can take away our free choice. We are not responsible for the obstacles in our path, nor for others' poor choices. However, we are fully responsible for how we respond.

### **Personal Responsibility**

If my behavior depends on yours and yours depends on mine, then we are mere victims of circumstance—never in control, never truly free.

#### **The Reality Is:**

- I am responsible for my behavior.
- You are responsible for yours.

Each of us has the opportunity to take ownership and improve. Even when others trigger our weaknesses, our responses remain our own choice.

A Chasid once told his Rebbe, *"In my מצב, my actions are understandable."* The Rebbe replied, *"A Yid is never in a מצב; A Yid מצב דער מאכט דער."*

This means we cannot change feelings simply by wishing them away, but we can shape our reality by taking action and creating positive circumstances.

### **Taking Ownership for Inner Peace**

Stop playing the victim. Stop trying to change things that are beyond our control. Instead, focus on what we *can* change—even if it's less than we wish. Only by accepting responsibility for our free choice can we truly achieve inner peace. It's not about the circumstances but about how we respond to them.

### **Final Thoughts**

To conclude, I ask you: What do you want to leave behind? What do you want to be remembered for?

Focusing on regrets does not lead to a meaningful legacy. Regret drains self-respect and clouds our sense of purpose.

Let go of weaknesses, forgive your mistakes, forgive those who have wronged you, cherish those who love you, and appreciate the small joys in life.

### **A Short Exercise:**

Take a deep breath and remind yourself, *“I am okay as I am, where I am. By accepting myself, I am acknowledging Hashem’s presence in my life.”*

This simple shift in mindset will empower you to take responsibility for your actions, saving you unnecessary stress, energy, and time spent seeking external solutions.

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**Overview:** The letter emphasizes personal responsibility, resilience, and the importance of focusing on what we can change in life.

### **Reality of Life**

- Life is inherently challenging and not meant to be easy.
- True joy comes from making positive choices despite struggles.
- Everyone faces difficulties; no one has a perfect life.

### **What We Cannot Change**

- We cannot change the past, but we can transform its impact through Teshuva.
- Present reality is fixed and cannot be altered.
- Other people's actions are beyond our control.

### **What We Can Change**

- We can change ourselves, including limiting beliefs and behaviors.
- We can break free from self-abuse and dysfunction.
- Our future can be shaped by today's actions.

### **Hashem's Plan**

- Life's challenges are part of a divine plan for personal growth.
- True light and success come from facing challenges.
- We are responsible for our responses to others' actions.

### **Personal Responsibility**

- Each individual is responsible for their own behavior.
- Our responses to triggers are our own choices.
- We must take ownership of our actions to improve.

### **Taking Ownership for Inner Peace**

- Stop playing the victim and focus on what can be changed.

- Accepting responsibility leads to inner peace.
- It's about how we respond to circumstances, not the circumstances themselves.

### **Final Thoughts**

- Reflect on what legacy you want to leave behind.
- Let go of regrets and forgive yourself and others.
- Appreciate small joys and cherish relationships.

### **Short Exercise**

- Take a deep breath and affirm self-acceptance.
- Acknowledge Hashem's presence in your life.
- This mindset shift empowers personal responsibility and reduces stress.

Kol Tov, and safe journey!

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