

SPIRITUAL INVENTORY

by Rabbi Raymond Beyda

An important element of self-improvement is taking spiritual inventory on a regular basis. One must do a certified statement of their spiritual balance sheet, taking into account credits and debits. The greats of the Mussar movement suggest a daily accounting of one's behavior.

There is a danger, however, that one must be aware of and avoid. Complacency. When one evaluates one's spiritual level and sees that the days and months of study and personality improvement have produced an individual who is much better than one was 2 or 3 years before, then one feels a smug satisfaction and perhaps even a touch of "ga-a-vah"-- haughtiness. The feeling that one has done enough is a self defeating tactic of one's evil inclination who cannot stand all the progress one has made and will even praise one's progress in order to derail one's spiritual freight train speeding down the track to perfection.

Today when you feel good about your overall progress in Torah observance and personality improvement --stop. Your progress is certainly commendable but there is still a lot to be done. Kill that complacency before it grows too large to overcome. It only takes a minute but it will keep you growing until you reach the sky.

DID YOU KNOW THAT

One who drinks hot coffee or tea does not say a blessing of Boreh Nefashot afterwards even if one drank more than a revi-eet [approx 3 ounces] in the time it takes to drink a revi-eet of liquid, which is not hot. [Some Ashkenazim rule that if one sips a total of a revi-eet within 4 -7 minutes that one should say a blessing afterwards--see your Rav]. Those who say a blessing after drinking coffee or tea that has cooled off to the point where one can drink the required amount within the allotted time period have some opinions on which they may rely.

However, should one ask what to do before saying a blessing after drinking tea or coffee which has cooled off then they should be instructed not to say a berakha. The same rules apply to hot soup eaten with a spoon and very cold foods like ice cream

[Source Yalkut Yosef volume 3, Siman 207:4,5]

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