

A Joke With A Lesson

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During Chol Hamoed, Shaya called the doctor in a panic. "Doctor, we have a MAJOR problem! The first few days I felt great, but now I forget dancing, I can't even get my foot into my shoe!"

"That makes no sense," the doctor said. "Those socks are paper thin!"

"ONE pair is paper thin!" Shaya yelled. "Try ELEVEN! Each day I added another..."

What's The Lesson? When we dance, we show that we're happy with the Torah and the mitzvos Hashem gave us. We dance and celebrate that we were chosen to be part of Hashem's holy nation!

Short Stories and Inspiration.

Someone came to R' David Trenk ztl and said, "Wow, you get all the troublemakers and send them out as superstars!"

R' Trenk said, "I got superstars and gave back superstars. What I did was not get in the way. No one else realized it then, but they were Stars all along!"

**You
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What's The Lesson? What a way to look at others! We need to realize that there are stars all around us! Even if they are very quiet, or even if they don't seem interested, they're stars; we just need to help them see it *themselves*, or we need to learn ourselves to look *deeper* and *better*!

This Connects To sukkos:

The *halacha* is that we must be able to see the stars through the schach of the Sukkah. Why? This is because Klal Yisrael are compared to the stars and we need to remind ourselves in our sukkah how great we are and to live up to our greatness; it should be used as inspiration! (Chasam Sofer) Stars look tiny, but are really very big; they could even be bigger than the planet Earth! So too, sometimes we may look at another Yid and think they aren't anything special, and look small or even tiny, but they are greater than they seem!

The Perfect Shidduch?

Someone once came to the Chofetz Chaim ztl to discuss a bachur who had been suggested for his daughter. His daughter had already been in shidduchim for a few years. The man said that the bachur was a good boy, but he wasn't exactly what he had always pictured as the "perfect" match for his daughter.

The Chofetz Chaim said, "A few weeks before Sukkos, a person may spend a long time searching for the PERFECT esrog. He may look at one after another, finding little things he doesn't like and putting each one back. "But when it's Erev Yom Tov and he STILL doesn't have an esrog, he realizes what really matters. He needs a kosher esrog, and of course, he would like it to be beautiful. But it doesn't have to be PERFECT!"

The Chofetz Chaim said, "The same is true with a shidduch. Since your daughter has already been in shidduchim for a few years, you and she should be prepared to consider a shidduch that is good for her, even if it's not exactly what you originally wanted."

What's The Lesson? Sometimes we can be so busy looking for EVERYTHING to be perfect that we may miss something really GOOD! This is what the Chofetz Chaim was teaching the father. Be careful not to get stuck on every little detail, and keep an open mind. Hashem may be sending you a wonderful shidduch. Don't be so quick to send it away!

This connects to Sukkos:

The esrog represents the heart. When it comes to shidduchim, one of the most important things to look for is a GOOD HEART. Let's take to heart the daas Torah of the Chofetz Chaim and be more open to good shidduchim that are being red for our children.

And when making such an important decision, whether you are thinking YES or NO, always ask daas Torah. You have to make sure to ask someone you trust, who knows you and understands the situation, and agrees that you are making the right decision. *May Hashem send everyone their right shidduch at the right time, and hopefully VERY soon!*

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This is not meant to rule practical *halachah*; rather, it's to show the sweetness of learning.

Based on R' Yitzchak Zilberstein's *seforim*

Q. Lost Souls!

Zalmon owned a restaurant and built a sukkah so his customers could sit down and enjoy their food on Sukkos.

There were other take-out stores next to Zalmon's store, and people who bought food from those other stores who didn't have sukkos began asking Zalmon. "Excuse me, can we eat in your sukkah?"

Zalmon was a happy Yid with a big, warm heart. "OF COURSE! Come in! It's a mitzvah to eat in a sukkah!" How could he possibly tell another Yid no?

Then more people came, and more. Zalmon kept smiling and welcoming them in. Soon Zalmon's sukkah became *"the place"* in the neighborhood to come sit and eat on Sukkos.

There was only one small problem: almost nobody sitting there had bought food from ZALMON! It reached the point where his sukkah was FULL, while many of his own customers had to stand and wait for a seat.

Some who wanted to buy from him saw the packed sukkah and simply LEFT! Zalmon looked around: food from the store next door, food from across the street, food from who knows where. His sukkah was doing GREAT! His restaurant... not as much.

There was another side pulling at his heart. Many of the people asking to use his sukkah were Yidden who were not yet religious and were happy to have the chance to eat in a sukkah. If Zalmon said, "Sorry, this sukkah is for my customers first," they might simply eat outside and not do the mitzvah of sukkah at all!

Zalmon was stuck. "What am I supposed to do?" He wondered. "Run a restaurant or a FREE SUKKAH PROGRAM?"

Who To Ask?

Of course to R' Yitzchak Zilberstein Shlita!

A. Who makes Torah Learning so sweet & geshmak!!!

1) If Zalmon knows for sure that these Yidden won't eat in a sukkah if he doesn't let them in, he is obligated to let them in because of the mitzvah of *tzedakah*, of giving charity.

2) The Bior Halacha says that if a Yid doesn't have money to buy tefillin, then every Yid has the mitzvah and obligation to buy them for him because of the obligation of *tzedakah*.

If a person must give *tzedakah* for someone's physical needs, then of course he should give for someone's spiritual needs. Zalmon isn't giving away money with his sukkah's, he's only losing profit. He should let them in as a form of giving *tzedakah*.

3) Tosafos says that if a person sees someone doing a sin and doesn't protest, it's as if he did the sin! In our case, if people came over to Zalmon and said they wanted to eat in the sukkah, and he didn't let them in, their sin would be on his account.

In short: Zalmon should let them eat in his sukkah.

Behind The Scenes Of This Question:

At one point, Zalmon saw one of the not yet religious people eating a pork sandwich in his sukkah! He went over to him and said, "Please don't eat a non kosher sandwich in my sukkah."

The person replied, "Judge others favorably. I was for years in freezing Russia, where they didn't let us eat kosher; this is what I got used to eating. Why shouldn't I at least eat it in the sukkah?"

R' Zilberstein ruled that he should not let him eat it in the sukkah.

Especially pork, pig meat, according to *halacha* it is compared to a restroom; a pig is always in filth, and it may not always even be permitted to daven next to it. It is considered a filthy animal. All non kosher and spiritually bad things should not be brought into the sukkah; they cause the kedushah to leave the sukkah.

How A Gadol Thinks!

R' Chaim Kanievsky ztl went with his son-in-law to look for a lulav. They went into a store and looked through different ones; after looking at a third lulav, he bought it and left the store.

Later, the store owner met Rabbi Chaim's son-in-law and said: "Wow, Rabbi Chaim has such good mazel that he finds one that he likes so quickly, in less than ten minutes; it takes me hours to find a good one."

The son-in-law answered, "Let me share a secret with you.

It actually takes R' Chaim a very long time because he carefully considers all the halachic questions and wants only the best.

However, he also knows that if he came to your store and left without buying anything, people might think there aren't any good-quality lulavim here, and you could lose money.

So whenever he checks out a store, he makes sure to buy at least one!"

What's The Lesson?

1) Look at the beauty of our gedolim! They are always thinking of others!

2) We need to learn not to judge others so quickly.

This connects to Sukkos:

They ask, Why is Sukkos called 'Zman Simchoseinu', the time of our joy?

They say a half-joking, half-serious reason as follows:

Some people think everyone else's family is perfect and only their family isn't.

But then comes sukkahs, and you sit in your sukkah and start to hear the neighbors.

One family had a small argument; another is yelling 'shhh', while another is yelling 'nuuu!' and a third is singing completely off tune.

Suddenly, you realize it's not just your family! Every family has its moments, its mistakes, and its noise. It's okay.

When you realize no one is perfect and no family is perfect, one can be happy without having any FOMO (fear of missing out) that there is such a thing as a perfect family...

This is called 'Zman Simchoseinu'! We learn to stop looking at and judging others and to enjoy what we have and who we are!

Wishing everyone a simchas Yom Tov!

Simchas Torah!

We Need To Learn How To Dance!

During WWII, right before Shemini Aizeres, the Klausenberger Rebbe ztl decided that he would not let the horrible Nazis take away his Shemini Aizeres and Simchas Torah.

He decided to ask the doctor to say that he was very sick and couldn't go to work, and somehow he managed to get the sick note.

Later that day, someone close to the Rebbe heard some terrible news. He was forced to swear that he wouldn't tell anyone: The Nazis were going to make a selection, and anyone who was weak or sick would be sent immediately to the crematorium, where they gassed and killed Yidden in Dachau.

He rushed to the doctor and pleaded, "I beg you, please, I can't tell you what or why, but if you want to save the Rebbe's life, take back that sick note and order the Rebbe that he must go to work on Shemini Aizeres." And the doctor listened.

When the Rebbe found out that his note was taken back, he was very upset with the doctor and was very upset with him.

But only after Shemini Aizeres did the Rebbe realize what had happened. Anyone considered weak or sick had been sent away!

The Rebbe tried hard to apologize to the doctor and to thank him.

But on the actual day of Shemini Aizeres, the Rebbe still refused to go to work. No matter what they would do to him, he was not giving up his Shemini Aizeres.

When the Nazis lined everyone up that morning, they noticed that the Rebbe was not with them. They found him davening inside. They got very angry and dragged him outside and began smashing the Rebbe in the head with their guns, again and again, until blood was gushing from his head.

By the time they were finished, he was barely alive. Everyone thought they would never see the Rebbe again, that this might be the end of the Klausenberger Rebbe.

He was taken to the doctor, who tried to help him.

Later, when the Yidden came back from the day's backbreaking labor, they couldn't believe their eyes.

There was the Rebbe, alive, holding a page of Mishnayos that he had somehow saved from the Nazis. Not only was the Rebbe ALIVE, but he was holding that precious page of Mishnayos close to his chest with such love, as if it was a Sefer Torah.

The Rebbe started dancing, yes, dancing after everything he had just gone through; the Rebbe was DANCING around a small wooden chair as if it was a bimah! His eyes closed, in a different world!

What's The Lesson?

The Nazis could take away everything, his wife, his kids, his people his community. But there was ONE thing they could NEVER take away from him: HIS TORAH AND HIS LOVE FOR HASHEM!

This Connects To Simchas Torah

On Simchas Torah, we dance and thank Hashem for the past year of learning and growing, but it isn't only about the past; the main point is to celebrate the future.

We are celebrating the zechus of having a new year ahead of us, in which we can learn, hope for a better future, and think about what we can accomplish. Nobody knows our potential or how much we can grow this coming year. The possibilities are endless! So we can dance endlessly for this new opportunity! (Based On Chiddushel HaRim)

Perhaps it's also a prayer: "Hashem, help me enjoy learning." It's not a prayer from our mouths, but a prayer with our whole body!

Proud To Be A Yidi!

R' Yaakov Moshe Kulefsky ztl was a great talmid chacham who later became the Rosh Yeshiva of Ner Yisroel.

But back in 1941, when America entered World War II, everyone above 18 was drafted into the army. Many bachurim got a special exemption because they were learning in yeshiva.

For whatever reason, while Rabbi Yaakov Moshe Kulefsky was still learning in Torah Vodaath as a bachur, he got a letter saying he wasn't seriously learning and that he was being drafted into the army.

It's a long story, with many different ways how he passed the many tests he faced and continued learning Torah and keeping Yiddishkeit while serving in the army.

At times, he could get away for Shabbos, and he returned to yeshiva, making the most of his time and grabbing every minute of learning! Still, he always had to wear his army uniform. That was the rule. Even when he was off, he had to wear it. When he returned to yeshiva, he even gave a chaburah/shlur while dressed in his army uniform!

R' Yitzchak Shiner ztl, who later became Rosh Yeshiva of Kamnitz, said that he saw Reb Shraga Feivel Mendlowitz ztl, the menahel of Torah Vodaath, watching the young Yaakov Moshe Kulefsky give a chaburah while wearing his army uniform.

Reb Shraga Feivel looked at this special bachur and said, "I want to be next to THAT bachur in Olam Habai!"

What's The Lesson? A soldier always wears his uniform and is usually PROUD to wear it.

Many times, especially when traveling, some may feel uncomfortable looking like a frum Yid. Maybe put on a cap or dress differently because they want to "blend in."

We Yidden are also soldiers in Hashem's army! We should never be embarrassed of our "uniform" or try to hide who we are. We should be PROUD to be Yidden!

This Connects To Chol Hamoad:

On Chol Hamoad, many of us travel to many places. Wherever we go, people see us and know that we are Yidden. We have an amazing opportunity to show them how a Yid acts and make a beautiful Kiddush Hashem!

There are so many ways to do this: kids behaving nicely and listening to their parents, cleaning up after ourselves, not cutting into lines, greeting others with a smile, or holding the door open for another person (and YES, this includes another Yid too!).

Every little act can show the world who we are: Klal Yisroel, a nation that cares about others and does what is right.

Wherever we go, let's make people say, "WOW! LOOK HOW A YID ACTS!" THAT is a beautiful Kiddush Hashem!



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How Can I say No?

Yanky was sadly not going on the "path of life" and completely left Yiddishkeit. His parents were very sad about it, especially when he let them know he was going to get married to a non-Jewish woman.

The father called the son and said, "It's one Shabbos before you'll be getting married. Can you please come home so we can spend some time with you and the family?"

At first, he didn't want to hear about it, but then he felt bad and agreed on the condition that he didn't have to keep any mitzvos there.

No problem, the father said. All Shabbos, the father and mother bit their lips and didn't say a word, even though he didn't keep Shabbos publicly. On motze Shabbos, the father mentioned he was going to visit R' Aharon Leib Shteinman ztl and asked if he wanted to come. Surprisingly, he said yes.

R' Shteinman realized right away that Yanky was struggling. "I am not frum," Yanky said. R' Shteinman asked, "Do you keep any mitzvos," and Yanky said, "No, I don't keep any mitzvos."

R' Shteinman thought, then asked, "Tell me, did you ever feel bad or regret about how you are living your life as not frum?"

"Yes," Yanky said, "Like, four times."

"Wow," R' Shteinman said, "four times you had thoughts of teshuvah! Of which Chazal say, 'a person who does teshuvah is in a place where tzadikim can't stand.' You are amazing. I'm jealous of you and your reward!"

This hit Yanky and woke him up; he realized he wasn't gone and over, and he had hope. He felt appreciated, and this ended up making him not want to marry the non-Jewish woman and become frum.

At a much later time, Yanky's father asked him, "Why did you agree to go to R' Shteinman on that Motze Shabbos?"

Yanky said, "I'll tell you. Because 20 years earlier, R' Shteinman came to yeshiva and tested us; he asked everyone a question, but I didn't know the answer. So, R' Shteinman asked me a second, easier question, and I still didn't know it. This happened four times, and I didn't know any of the answers."

After the test, all the boys went to get a chocolate, but when I came to get one, R' Shteinman smiled and said, "You know, you tried so hard four times; you will get four pieces of chocolate for trying."

He made me feel so good, even though I didn't know any of the answers. He made me feel important. How can I say no when asked to go meet such a great person?

What's The Lesson? 1) Yiddishkeit is about trying; Hashem wants the heart! He felt appreciated, and this ended up making him not want to marry the non-Jewish woman and become frum.

This Connects To "AFTER YOM KIPPUR":

Some feel like they didn't really do teshuvah on Yom Kippur, but realize how dear even one thought of teshuvah is; see how R' Shteinman realized how special it is! Who didn't have at least one thought of regret on Yom Kippur?

How To Look At Money!

One day, a talmid called R' Aharon Kotler zt"l and said he wanted to leave the country.

R' Aharon replied, "Let me give you some money so you can give it to tzedakah, charity. Like this, you'll be going on a mitzvah mission, and it will give you extra protection."

Later that day, in his office, the secretary said someone was on the phone. He thought it was a business contact from New Jersey named Kotler and said he would call back later. But the secretary said the person sounded very urgent, so he answered the call.

"Hello, its Aharon Kotler," said the voice. It was his rosh yeshiva, R' Aharon!

R' Aharon apologized and said, "I wanted to give money for tzedakah as a mitzvah for protection, but now I realize that since you are going for parnassah, to make money for your family, this is already a mitzvah! You can serve Hashem with the money and take care of your family at the same time!"

What's The Lesson? This isn't only true when it comes to making money. Hashem sends us all to places, and we are sent on a mission.

Each person was sent to a different family, city, yeshiva, or school. If we realize that we are sent on a mission to serve Hashem wherever we are and help others come closer to Him, we will live a life of constant performance of mitzvos.

This Connects To Sukkos:

Wherever you are for Sukkos, it's all from Hashem, for reasons only he knows.

Maybe you wanted to be somewhere else, like Eretz Yisroel, Florida, or a fancy hotel, but maybe it's a test to accept that where you are is good.

Look around and try to make someone happy with a smile or a kind word, whether it's a family member or a neighbor.

When you make others happy, it will bring you uplifting joy too. Maybe that's why you are next to this person!

A Geshmaka Question & Readers Answers

A Geshmaka Sukkos Question:

Sukkos is called *Zman Simchasenu*, the time of our joy. Why is Sukkos specifically such a happy time?

Last week's Geshmake Question: Chazal say (Yoma 86b) that if one does teshuvah out of love of Hashem, all his sins turn into mitzvos. Question: That is amazing! But why is that?

S. R. Answers:

Shmuel Chaim Taibushkin Answers: His sin led him to do teshuvah and grow closer to Hashem. By learning from his mistakes, he becomes a better person, making the sin part of his journey, feeling bad about it is the biggest Kiddush Hashem!

Text your answer to (347) 669 0369 or by email to torahsweetener@gmail.com

Thank You For Trying!

There was a bachur in the Philadelphia Yeshiva who brought the Rosh Yeshiva, Rabbi Shmuel Kamenetsky Shita, breakfast every day.

One day, the usual bachur wasn't there. Simcha noticed this and went over to the Rosh Yeshiva, asking if he could get him breakfast. After hearing what R' Shmuel wants, he went to get it for him.

But as Simcha started getting R' Shmuel's breakfast ready, another bachur, who had also noticed he needed breakfast, went and gave it to the Rosh Yeshiva.

Simcha felt terrible; he wanted to bring the Rosh Yeshiva breakfast, but it wasn't meant to be. Simcha went to eat his breakfast and soon forgot about this whole thing. That night, Simcha passed by R' Shmuel, and the Rosh Yeshiva smiled and said, "Thank you for trying."

Simcha wasn't sure what he meant and asked, "For what?"

"By Breakfast," R' Shmuel said simply.

Simcha couldn't believe that R' Shmuel remembered.

What's The Lesson? R' Shmuel Shita who wasn't young then; he spoke to tens, maybe hundreds of people daily, and was a leader in Klal Yisroel, involved in many community issues.

Yet he still remembered to thank Simcha for something small he had tried to do. That's what being a true leader and gadol means!

What a lesson of appreciating what someone does for you, or even just tries.

This Connects To Sukkos:

On Sukkos, we have what is called *Simchas Beis Hasho'eiva*, a special celebration that took place in the Beis Hamikdash in honor of the mitzvah of drawing water for the *Nisuch HaMayim*.

They were not celebrating the mitzvah itself, which they would do in the morning. Instead, they celebrated and prepared for the mitzvah they would do the next day.

Question: Why choose to celebrate the preparation for the mitzvah?

Answer: Because preparing shows that one wants to do the mitzvah; it shows the love of Hashem; it shows our inner heart!

Perhaps that's why Chassidim say that "preparing for a mitzvah can be greater than the actual mitzvah." As chazal say, "Hashem wants the heart," and preparing shows that we are really interested and that one wants to do the mitzvah.

On Simchas Beis Hasho'eiva, it's a celebration of wanting, desiring, and coming close to Hashem! As R' Shmuel Kamenetsky showed and thanked the bachur for trying and for wanting to help. We must appreciate our efforts to become better, because even the desire to improve is something holy, as it shows that we really love Hashem!

Guess what?

A whole new year is coming!

Grab the zechus and help us print weekly by sponsoring a week for \$400

Two weeks ago, I also asked who could help sponsor, and a few nice people have already reached out! It means so much to me, as it shows real support and really helps me continue each week! THANK YOU AND LOOKING FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU!

SWEETER THAN HONEY! Is distributed in Borough Park, Flatbush, Staten Island, Monsey, Lakewood, Baltimore, Five times, Chicago and even some places in England and Eretz Yisroel! What a zechus!!!

Don't Get Depressed - Please!

A very poor man once found a diamond. He brought it to a diamond dealer.

The dealer told him that he would have to travel by boat to the big city, because only there would people understand its true value and pay him a lot of money for it.

The man went to the boat, but he didn't even have enough money to buy a ticket.

However, he went the captain, showed him the diamond, and said, "When I sell this diamond, I will become rich, and I'll pay you much more than the cost of the ticket!"

The captain agreed to help him. They became good friends, and every day the captain would come to visit him and ask to see the diamond, saying, "Wow, it's so beautiful!"

One day, the man was very tired and fell asleep at the table after eating. When he woke up, he PANICKED! Someone had cleared his table! He ran to the waiter and asked if he had cleaned it.

The waiter said "Yes," and the man cried, "Where is the tablecloth?! Where is everything that was on the table? I left something I need there!"

The waiter said, "Sorry, I picked up the tablecloth and shook it off into the sea."

The man almost fainted. His diamond! His entire future! GONE! He felt like falling apart. But then he remembered that the captain would soon come for his daily visit. If he found out that the man lost the diamond, he might throw him into the water too! When the captain came, the man forced himself to stay calm and act happy, just as he always did.

When the captain asked to see the diamond, the man said, "I've decided not to show it anymore. I'm concerned that it should stay as safe as possible from human hands. Sorry."

The captain said, "I understand, but is it in a safe place that no one can get to it?"

"Oh yes, for sure!" the man replied.

The man had to stay strong and not let the situation break him. If the captain discovered the truth, it could be the end for him!

When the boat finally reached land, just before the man left the ship, the captain came to him, looked at him seriously, and said, "I've brought along some items that can be sold for good money, but I don't have permission to bring them in myself. The items themselves are legal, but you know what I mean. As a passenger, you can put them in your suitcase. Sell them, and afterward we'll split the profits."

The man agreed, sold the items for a lot of money, and when he returned to the boat, he heard that the captain had a heart attack. The money now stayed with the poor man, and suddenly, he was RICH!

[This story is based on Rabbi Nachman of Breslov, zt"l, whose *yahrzeit* is on Sukkos.)

What's the lesson? What would have happened if, when he lost the diamond, he had given up? The story could have ended right there! Only because he stayed strong and kept going, the next part of his story was able to happen!

In life, let us take this story to heart and remember, especially when we have difficult moments and things don't work out the way we planned: DON'T GIVE UP! We don't know what Hashem has planned next. Keep going and LET YOUR STORY CONTINUE!

This Connects To Sukkos:

Understanding Pain, Sadness, and Happiness

Sukkos is *Zman SimchasEinu*, the time of our happiness.

We need to make sure we understand. What is happiness?

Real Happiness is only when one is growing. Sadness is when one knows they can grow but isn't.

Life can have painful situations and challenges, but that doesn't mean life is sad; it means that life can be painful. We must remember this, especially when times are hard and life is full of pain. When we strengthen ourselves to grow, and even grow from the painful situations, that is when we will have the most happiness! (Based on the *Piaseczno Rebbe* Hy"d)

For Those Who Have

ADHD!

Ari was young and full of energy. He was a real handful in class and made it hard for his rabbi to teach.

One day, his mother took him to the doctor and found out he had ADHD, meaning simply too much energy to sit still all the time. After that, she started taking him to therapy every week.

Ari hated being taken out in the middle of school, but he had to because of his ADHD. His mother would give him treats and take him out to eat, so he should want to come along.

One week, they went to eat at a dairy restaurant. Suddenly, R' Ronnie Greenwald, who was known for believing in every person who walked in, and asked Ari why he wasn't in school.

Ari said Because I have ADHD.

Ronnie smiled and said "Really? Me too! Let me tell you something, you are going in the right direction. One day, all that energy will help you do great things for Klal Yisroel!"

And Ronnie took out a business card that said "Ronnie Greenwald, who has ADD, ADHD, and OCD."

Ari's face lit up. "You have no idea what you just did for me!" he said.

What's The Lesson?

R' Mellich Biderman Shlita once jokingly said that if he were to grow up in today's generation, they would say he has ADHD and too much energy.

Meaning, having a lot of energy is not a bad thing. It just has to be used in the right way.

This connects to Sukkos:

We take raw ingredients from the ground and turn them into something very holy, the sukkah.

We can do the same with ourselves! We can take our raw strengths and use them for the good.

Anger can be turned into passion for truth, to help protect others from bad people. Someone who loves to talk can use it to help those who feel lonely. ADHD can be used for good.

Everything can be used for good.