

# Borrow The Happiness!

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Happiness gives us the strength and vitality to grow spiritually.

Rebbe Nachman is well-known for his statement, “It’s a great mitzvah to be happy always!”

Happiness figures prominently in many of the Rebbe’s lessons because the more joy a person feels, the more empowered he is to work on coming closer to God. If he lacks joy, he won’t have the strength and vitality he needs to grow spiritually.

Someone once asked Reb Noson how he could be happy when he had so many problems and difficulties. Reb Noson answered, “Borrow the happiness!” (*Siach Sarfey Kodesh* 1, 736). When it comes to money, we rarely hesitate to borrow against future earnings. Well, sadness makes a person feel he’s missing something. The thing to do, as Reb Noson advises, is to borrow from whatever

you can think of that makes you happy. Besides, there's a big difference between owing money and owing happiness. When money is paid back, it hurts a little. But with happiness, when we pay it back, we have happiness again. Forcing joy and happiness actually pays fantastic dividends!

Rebbe Nachman's daughter, Sarah, had a terrible toothache. When she shared her pain with her father, he said, "You should feel joyous."

"Even though it hurts me?" she asked.

"Act as if you are happy," he advised. "There will come a time when you will feel so happy because of this that you will dance. When this happens, you will be healed."

She listened to his advice and worked on feeling happy despite her pain. Eventually she mustered enough joy and closed her window shades so passersby would not see her, and danced. And she was healed, exactly as the Rebbe had predicted (ibid., I, 347-348).

Reb Avraham Chazan, a Breslov leader in Uman and Israel in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, commented, "If Rebbe Nachman taught that it's a great mitzvah to be happy always, then we must believe that there is what to be happy about!"