

DAILY NEEDS

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Rebbe Nachman teaches: Show great compassion for your body. Help it delight in all the spiritual insights and perceptions which the soul perceives. Your soul is always seeing and comprehending very exalted things. But the body knows nothing of this. Have compassion for the flesh of your body. Purify it. Then the soul will be able to inform it of all that she is always seeing and comprehending (*Likutey Moharan* I, 22:5).

Rebbe Nachman teaches: Show great compassion for your body.

Our physical needs are many. We all have to eat and sleep, take care of our health and make sure we have what to wear. At least half the hours of most people's lives are spent catering to these needs – sometimes more (cf. *Shabbat* 88b). Now, if we compartmentalize and separate these physical needs from our spiritual ones, we might conclude that half our lives

concentrate on things other than serving God. The time we spend sleeping, eating, working...what value does it have for our souls? However, there is another way to look at it.

Noam HaElyon (Upper Delight) is the source of everything pleasing and enjoyable in this world. Whatever feelings of delight and pleasure we experience stem from this quality of God. This is even true of the pleasure associated with the physical necessities of this world, such as eating, sleeping, etc. As long as we perform them in holiness, we draw from *Noam HaElyon*. However, when we give in to our physical appetites and seek to gratify them, our desires descend to the level of lust. In that case, we are no longer attached to Upper Delight, but to the bittersweet delights and pleasures of this world. To atone for this loss of *Noam HaElyon*, we fulfill the five afflictions of Yom Kippur. We fast and limit our physical pleasures to remind ourselves of the need to avoid deriving our pleasures from this world. Yet, even this is not perfection and completeness. After all, we must sustain ourselves with food and care for our physical needs. On the other hand, perfection and completeness can be learned from the holiday of Sukkot.

On Sukkot, we spend seven days in the *sukkah*, eating, drinking and sleeping. In doing this, we bring all our pleasures into holiness; reminding ourselves that food and all of our desires have their source in Upper Delight. This is perfection and completion with regard to the physical necessities of this world: learning to appreciate the pleasure and delight they afford, but recognizing that their source, *Noam HaElyon*, stems from God Himself (*Likutey Halakhot, Minchah* 6:8,9).

taken from the book [Crossing the Narrow Bridge](#) chapter 12 – Daily Needs