

# ...EVEN ONE'S ENEMIES

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**Do not judge your friend until you reach his level...  
How? This concept might appear a bit difficult to accept...**

Do not judge your friend until you reach his level (*Avot* 2:5).

Judging others favorably applies not only to sinners, but even to our enemies who would harm us. In most cases, enmity between two people stems from petty jealousy. Either I am jealous of my friend, because he has more or has accomplished more than I have, or else he is envious of what I have or of what I have achieved. We are not equals in the area where the jealousy exists. If we were, there would be no reason for envy. Either I have to raise myself to his position or, if he is on a lower level than I am, I have to elevate him and make him my equal. How? Easily, I judge him favorably. Then, when

there are no longer differences between us, there will be no room for jealousies and nothing to fight about (*Likutey Moharan* I, 136).

*Either I have to raise myself to his position or, if he is on a lower level than I am, I have to elevate him and make him my equal. How?*

At first glance, this concept might appear a bit difficult to accept. It cannot be denied that jealousy is a very destructive emotion which can have far-reaching effects. Envy is the mother of strife. Conversely, judging a person favorably can bring about harmony.

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*n favorably can bring about harmony...*

By always looking for the good points in others, by judging them to be righteous and focusing on their virtues, we can eliminate the cycle of enmity and strife. If, instead of stubbornly clinging to our own comfortable positions and being possessively protective of our things and our achievements, we would give the other guy the benefit of the doubt, we could fashion a much better and more peaceful life, for ourselves and our families.

(taken from the book: [Crossing the Narrow Bridge: A Practical Guide to Rebbe Nachman's Teachings](#), chapter 3: The Good Points; pp. 38-39).