

Out To The Field – Poison Ivy

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Continued from last week [here](#):

[Likutey Moharan I:282](#) – Week 5

Ok, when is this *Azamra* lesson going to start kicking in already? I have been trying to apply the Rebbe's words for weeks now and haven't really seen any tangible improvement. In fact, things have seemed to get worse! After getting poison ivy, my youngest child has been in misery with night after night of restless sleep despite taking medicine and

applications of skin cream.

Trying to find the *nekudos tovos* (good points) in a person who is screaming and acting out towards others is tremendously difficult. Nevertheless, I recalled the Rebbe's words in this lesson to judge each person favorably and reminded myself that if my body was terribly itchy and I had painful rashes I too would not be such a pleasant human being. I reminded myself that all of things that trouble me about my youngest child's behavior (even when not plagued by poison ivy) do not negate the *nekudos tovos*.

Returning to focus once again on my own display of [chutzpah](#) towards Hashem instead of my child's chutzpah towards me, I had a long conversation with my *chavrusa* about my proclivity to rush through my daily learning. Too often when I was learning one *sefer*, I was already thinking about the next *sefer*; not focusing on the fact that I already had a connection to Hashem. Through talking about this with with my *chavrusa*, I realized that what I was doing could be analogous to calling someone on the phone and then saying "Please hang up now so I can immediately call you back again."

My *chavrusa* admitted that he had also once suffered from this until he spent time in *hisbodedus* and came to the conclusion that the feeling of pressure that he was putting on himself to complete a set amount of learning each day was nothing more than *atzvus* (depression); something the Rebbe warned strongly against. In order to start learning *b'simcha* (with joy), he began to approach each day's learning without the expectation that he needed to learn a set amount, rather only with the focus that he enjoyed the connection he had to Hashem through learning.

This advice was exactly what I needed. I started proceeding in a similar fashion and noticed that not only did I enjoy my learning more, but also that my youngest child's behavior began to improve as well. With each passing day, I also began

to identify even more *nekudos tovos* in my youngest child.

I began to wonder if I was on to something. Next week, I will tell you how things proceeded.