

Two Keys To Overcoming Anger

written by Chaya Rivka Zwolinski

March 4, 2014



The Rebbe told his followers how he had worked on overcoming his negative traits.

When he was young he had a hot temper, and became angry at the “slightest provocation.”

But he yearned to be a good and kind person, as God also desires each of us to be.

“So the Rebbe began working on his temper, until he overcame it completely. He rejected anger completely, pushing himself to the opposite extreme. In the place of anger, he had absolute patience and tolerance.

“The Rebbe thus reached a stage where nothing bothered him at all. He was so serene that nothing at all could annoy him.”

No matter how someone provoked him or how much negativity they threw at him, he had developed himself so much that he could tolerate it all without any hatred whatsoever.

“He would love his opponents, not bearing any ill feelings toward them at all.”

Rebbe Nachman of Breslov was renowned for his holy calmness,

which was part and parcel of his great humility.

Humility is the first key to overcoming anger.

Humility is not low self-esteem. Humility does not preclude recognizing your good points (in fact, a truly humble person must have balanced self-awareness.)

A person with humility is one who recognizes that everything she has and everything she achieves is sourced in the Creator and Sustainer. She isn't angry when things don't go her way. She doesn't blame others for the challenges she faces, even when it seems like they are "out to get her", because she knows that everything, even problems, come from God.

She knows that the God can be found in even the most [unlikely, troublesome, places](#).

This leads to the second key to overcoming anger: Emuna (Faith)

When you have emuna you understand that everything comes from God, even the annoying, scary, or painful situation you presently find yourself in. And not only does it come from God, but God has given you this challenge, obstacle, or problem because it will help you grow spiritually—it is a gift of the deepest love.

Anger is a house of cards that can't remain standing in the face of genuine humility and deep emuna.

It's one thing to read these words—and another to live them. The teachings of Rebbe Nachman must be learned and reviewed and prayed and meditated about if we want change. And it takes time.

Reading about the Rebbe's life is also a lifelong lesson. The Rebbe is a guide to pnimiyus, the inner dimension of Torah, soul, and life.

*This post quotes from and is based on teachings from [Rabbi Nachman's Wisdom](#).