

**The
Great Gift
of a
Smile**

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## **Preface**

We are all receiving gifts from Hashem all the time. Life itself is one huge, incredible gift composed of countless relatively smaller tremendous gifts! When we smile we feel good (try it now)!

Hashem wants us to also share our joy with others.

There is a unique explanation of Avos 2:8,  
“If you have studied much Torah, don’t keep all that goodness to yourself. You were created to also share your goodness with others”!

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Consider that everyone you meet has a desperate need to receive a pleasant, encouraging smile from you. That is why Avos 1:15 teaches the mitzvah to greet and accept every person with a thoughtful, pleasant face!

That is also why Avos D'Rebbe Noson says a smile is the greatest gift in the world!

1. **Great Joy**

There is also great joy that is derived from a friendly, pleasant face. That is why Avos Chapter 3 also teaches, "Greet and accept every person with joy!"

Why does it say 'every person?' Because some people have exceptions. We need to include all family members, the people you meet daily and those you meet once in a while. Smile in Shul, in Yeshiva, in stores, on walks... you can boost someone's mood and make their day.

Every person has some form of greatness which makes their smile unique, with caring and consideration for others.

You can intensify the quantity and quality of your smile so that you will change more lives and enhance the whole world with the power of the ripple effect.

You can smile at others every single day with the tremendous power of kindness. You can fulfill the message of, "This is what you were created for," which includes 'to share your smile.'

2. The Goal

The goal of a smile should be to bring light, healing and hope to all those who struggle with challenges. Everyone needs encouragement and guidance at whatever level they are, to provide them with tools to help them survive and thrive as they go on in life.

Some people feel lonely all the time, living in a form of solitude, disconnected from others. There is a verse in Mishlei 19:3 that wakes us up to realize that the way to address this great challenge is our face.

“A person’s foolishness can mess up his way, but he is upset at Hashem.” We can use our training ourselves to utilize our warm smile to connect with others and to develop friendships that will enhance our lives and save us from loneliness and despair.

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Hashem says, “Why don’t you use the smile I gave you?”

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3. **'Your' Smile**

You have been created with the ability to smile in a way that can accomplish missions that no one else but you can achieve! Every Jew should open up a 'Smile Gemach' with their face to help others and change the world.

All people have some challenges to help them grow. Each person's challenges are unique, thus their smile has a special flavor that can touch many people just right.

Your smile can boost many others. You can ease people's pain and discomfort and illuminate their path with a smile on your face, and some gentle words of encouragement.

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"What does Hashem require of me most?"

We should be asking ourselves this question every day.

#### 4. **Great Challenges**

“The greater the difficulties, the greater the rewards,” Avos 5:23.

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It may be harder to smile after many challenges, which makes the mitzvah so much greater. Every person has their time to shine. We need to brace ourselves to lift others up into the light with our smile, and we will merit great Heavenly assistance.

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One of the great lessons of a smile is that a person has the amazing ability to renew and transform all of his facial features by choosing to smile. It is as if a flash of illumination lights up the darkness – a new face has arrived! It is a new way of looking at the world and the situation we face daily. A new approach that can reveal a new horizon in life.

## **5. Behind the Smile**

Sometimes a smile may be a false front. Maybe it is insincere, not backed by concern, caring and desire to help.

That is why Avos 1:15 has a preface before teaching us the mitzvah to smile –

“Say less and do more.”

Become a sincere ‘doer’, then greet everyone with a sincere smile!

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When you strive to do with Hashem’s help, He responds.

We need to ‘zoom’ in to focus on what we can do to help others. When we engage in serious efforts and prayers, we can merit a great amount of Heavenly assistance.

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We need to pray to Hashem to send us the right ideas to help ourselves and others.

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A true smile is a change of outlook, a focus on the positive which can cause great results.

6. **Mission to Accomplish**

Every Jew in every situation has a mission to accomplish for Hashem. This is part of the mitzvah we all have to 'choose life.'

You can help yourself better than anyone else can help you (see Avos 1:15).

Action speaks louder than words, much louder. Thus, when the Mishna says, "Do a lot," right before "smile," we learn that we should express our smile with our actions. That is the 'body language' form of smiling that is most vital. Let's demonstrate that our whole attitude is changed in a positive way by how we act towards others, including how we smile.

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We need to learn to hear and understand the different forms of language people use.

## **7. When It's Difficult**

There are people we may find very difficult to smile to. In that case, we need to focus on the Talmudic teaching -

"There are times when we can acquire eternal rewards in one moment."

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There is another Gemara that we should also keep in mind, Chulin 89a, "Hashem saves the whole world for the sake of one person."

Who?

One who keeps his mouth closed to avoid arguments.

[He may just smile.]

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When we smile at someone, we should also realize that we are serving as a messenger from Hashem to cheer up another person with your bright sunshine. What a privilege!

## 8. Save from 100

Sanhedrin 7a teaches: "How fortunate is one who listens and ignores, he will be saved from 100 troubles."

Hashem sends us tests and messages every day. When we judge other people favorably and put ourselves in their place, we can learn to accept responsibility for ourselves to learn to improve and change.

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"Choose life," the Torah teaches us. Choosing to smile is a form of choosing to brighten up another person's life, thus gaining a measure-for-measure gift of life from Hashem.

Thus when we smile with warm passion, it is our future that is at stake... we are earning the right to live.

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We need to focus with all of our heart to greet and accept others with a smile and Hashem will help us succeed!

## 9. Who am I?

There is one Gemara, Sanhedrin 37a, that we should be saying daily that challenges us to have an excited new frame-of-mind attitude every day →

“One is obligated to say – Hashem made the whole world because of me!”

One of the aspects of this teaching is the smile you get to share every day!

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Life becomes what you make of it when you smile.

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Just as you are the center of Hashem's universe, the person you are meeting *is* also, and he deserves your best smile as well.

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1- We need to grow with the realization that Hashem created us and made us great.

2- We need to glow with optimism that our smile changes the world.

10. **"I Love You"**

What is the underlying message of a smile?

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