



Young Israel of Bal Harbour

The Dose

Thursday, May 26, 2016, Iyyar 18, 5776

Sponsored by: Susan and Aaron Weinberg

in honor of our Rav, Rabbi Moshe Gruenstein for his teaching and spiritual leadership.

The Sefer Hachinuch writes in mitzvah 338, “it is forbidden to oppress a Jew with words.” This means that one may not speak any words to a Jew which will distress him and cause him pain when he is powerless. He adds that this applies when speaking to children as well. The Talmud warns that a person should be especially wary of verbally abusing his wife. Since her tears come easily, punishment for hurting her comes swiftly. It is ironic that there are people who pride themselves on being “gentleman” in their relationships with friends and strangers alike, yet their manner of speech and conduct with their immediate family leaves much to be desired. The Torah requires a person to deal pleasantly with all people. Nevertheless, there is a basic rule in all matters of chessed, the closer the relative, the greater the obligation is to be nice to them. Therefore, it is difficult to understand how people are kind, considerate and generous with total strangers but behave very differently with their own family. To the secular world violence means shooting or stabbing somebody. To Jews a person can commit violence with his tongue. As the verse says, (Mishlei 12:18), “There is one who speaks harshly like the piercing of a sword.” Verbal abuse can cause more pain than physical abuse and often leaves lifelong scars. Speaking nicely to someone is not just good manners or proper etiquette, it’s an absolute Torah obligation. It’s not always easy but it’s well worth the effort.

Wishing you an inspiring day!

Rabbi Moshe Gruenstein