

Appendix IV: The Process: Considering Six Aspects of Our Lives

I strongly believe that by carefully addressing six aspects of our lives, we can transform ourselves and, with Hashem's help, hope to live long, happy, and fulfilling lives, serving Hashem. This transformation is a process, and requires discipline, dedication, and diligence, much as a student of martial arts devotes to the mastering of his art form.

Here, therefore, are the six aspects involved in the process of transformation:

1. We need to consider how we should eat. This involves a number of criteria: what we eat and what we should avoid. What should be the proportion and percentages of different foods we eat? How, when, and how much we should eat? How we should prepare ourselves to eat, and what should we be doing and thinking of while eating and afterward? These questions will specifically be addressed in Appendix V.
2. We need to consider our fluid intake, as dehydration is a major root cause of many imbalances and illnesses. From my experience, nearly every patient I see is dehydrated! We need to consider what we drink and what we need to avoid, which drinks have diuretic properties and which actually cause us to become more depleted of fluids. How much should we drink? When should we drink and when shouldn't we? Should we avoid drinking from certain containers? How can we know if we are becoming dehydrated, and can drinking too much actually be harmful to our health?
3. We all breathe oxygen in order to live, but is the way we breathe actually harming our health? Amazingly, the majority of toxicity from air pollution is self-induced! Almost everyone I know, with the exception of singers and runners, inhale shallowly, breathing through their mouths, rarely exhaling properly. How can we expect to feel good if we don't train ourselves to breathe out the poisonous carbon dioxide (Co₂) that accumulates within? Ever consider that all carbonated drinks get their effervescence from the added Co₂? Ever wonder why some people sigh so frequently? *Rabbi Nachman's Wisdom* (235) says the following: "The Rebbe once spoke to a man who was very far from Hashem. He told the man that he could help himself by sighing and groaning. The Rebbe then revealed a lesson on the verse, 'There is an emptiness to what is done on the earth' (*Kohelet* 8:14). The Hebrew word for emptiness is "*hevel*," which also means a breath or exhalation. When you sigh or groan with desire to return to Hashem, this "*hevel*" breaks the "*chevel*" [the word for rope], of spiritual impurity that binds you and holds you back. You can then be bound up with that which is holy."
4. Nothing allows us to regenerate better than healthy, adequate sleep. But do we use sleep to actually connect ourselves with Hashem, giving our souls to Him for safekeeping and using it as an opportunity to regenerate our bodies, or do we allow ourselves to fall asleep like exhausted animals. How much do we need? When is the optimal time to sleep? What activities should we be

engaged in before going to sleep? How does the food we eat affect our sleep? Does it matter if our sleep is broken, as long as we get enough total sleep? Does medicated sleep benefit us if we have difficulty falling or staying asleep? What should our environment be like when we sleep? Is it beneficial to fall asleep in front of some electronic medium such as a TV, to listen to a tape, or to hear soft music when we want to fall asleep? How should we feel on waking?

5. As we've said before, pain is often the result of stagnation or lack of movement or motion. When we pray monthly the blessing for the upcoming New Moon, we pray that we should have a "life of strong and free muscles and bones." Implicit in this idea is the importance of proper exercise. But what do we mean by "proper" exercise? Does this mean cardiovascular aerobic exercise? Should it be in a gym? Just how much and when should be exercise? Can someone exercise too much?

6. Finally, besides what we eat, drink, breath, rest, and exercise, what are we doing to nurture our souls, our spirits? Is all stress bad? What is considered as good stimulation? What specific activities should we be engaged in to nurture our souls? Is there such a thing as too much nurturing? There is an interesting halacha that one is not allowed to engage in regular Torah learning on Tisha B'Av, because, as the Gemara (*Ta'anit* 30a) tells us, Torah learning represents the highest state of happiness, as it gladdens the heart (see *Tehillim* 19:9).

These are all very important questions, questions that we should all be asking ourselves. As I tell each of my new patients, I consider myself to be a detective, a tour guide, and a translator, deciphering and attempting to put order and meaning into the chaos that so many of us default to. Many of us just keep going until illness or pain stops us cold! But by carefully considering these six areas of our lives, we can really begin to learn who we are, how we can best put ourselves in balance and, most importantly, what Hashem wants us to make out of our lives.

Appendix V: Empowering Ourselves with Conscious Eating

The wisest of all men, King Shlomo, tells us in *Kohelet* (4:12) that “A rope with three strands will not quickly come undone,” that though a single string can easily be pulled apart and two threads twisted together with greater difficulty can also be undone, a rope that has three intertwined strands will always hold up under stress. From this we can learn that for anything to be sustained and accepted, it needs to be established, strengthened, then reinforced.

In developing nutritional guidelines for my patients, I have used this idea of the three-stranded rope: integrating together the latest research information from biomedical nutrition; the brilliant categorization and observational analysis of Chinese medicine; and the wholistic, multifaceted, and Divinely given wisdom of the Torah to develop a diet that promotes healthy digestion, absorption, and elimination, makes one feel good, reduces cravings, and brings one gradually and gently to a weight that looks good and feels good. I want to add, parenthetically, that losing weight should not specifically be our goal, but rather losing fat. Programs that emphasize weight loss generally cause patients to lose water weight, muscles mass, and electrolytes (minerals that control water balance), and can create serious health problems including kidney failure.

The great seventh-century CE Chinese physician and philosopher, Sun Si Miao wrote that the physician should “first treat with food and with modification of lifestyle. If this does not work then he should use acupuncture and herbs. Those who are ignorant about food cannot hope to survive.” This concept, that there is a vital connection between food and health is also espoused by the Rambam, who prescribes balanced foods based upon their qualitative energetic properties, the parts of the body that they affect, and their flavors and temperatures.

Furthermore, the Torah views eating as a spiritual activity, not only affecting our bodies, but also impacting our emotions, thoughts, and souls. The latest biomedical research constantly reaffirms the role that food plays in affecting our moods, clarity of our thinking, and ability to concentrate. The Rambam (*Mishneh Torah*, Characteristic 3:2–3) tells us that Man’s ultimate purpose should be “to direct his heart to know G-d. Yet,” he continues, “it is impossible, for one to connect to Hashem if one is hungry, sick, or in pain! In the following chapter he gives us clear guidelines as to how, what, and when the Jew should eat. These ideas, then, contribute greatly to how we should begin to think about food, in the process of developing greater sensitivity.

Before we actually go into specifics of what each meal should look like, first, let’s consider certain important rules:

1. Warm your body up for 15 minutes before eating each meal by walking or exercising, and make sure to breathe deeply, exhaling slowly.
2. For an average, basically healthy person, **each meal** should contain a balance of 40% protein,

40% carbohydrates, and 20% fats. By protein I mean free range-eggs (which should be poached or soft- or hard-boiled only), fish, chicken, other poultry, and on rare occasion, perhaps once a week, meat (preferably organic or free-range, if available). Also some legumes such as peas, garbanzo beans, peanuts, and soy are good sources of protein. (Note: I do not recommend soy products UNLESS they are fermented. For example, miso and tempeh, and even then, only if one is certain that he is not sensitive to it, as soy is highly reactive. By carbohydrates I mean cooked vegetables, (the only exception being celery, parsley, cilantro, as well as sprouted grains, beans, and seeds, which may be eaten raw), whole grains, and either a white organic aromatic rice like basmati or jasmine, white quinoa, or kasha (buckwheat). Also, with carbohydrates, be careful to limit those with high glycemic loads (carrots, potatoes, corn, rice, and grains) to one per meal. By fats, I mean avocados, oily nuts and nut butters (like macadamias, cashews, and almonds), sesame tahini, olives, and coconuts. If one has health or weight issues, I would recommend a diet that is higher in protein and lower in carbohydrates, significantly decreasing grains — similar to the Paleo-diet.

3. Try to integrate some kind of naturally fermented food with each meal (making sure that they do not contain sugar or preservatives!), like sauerkraut, cured olives, pickles, miso (but don't cook miso, as it will kill the good bacteria it contains. Instead, add miso to foods after cooking), cultured coconut milk, or potentially (if there aren't any issues such as allergies, poor digestion, candida, or other fungal infections) fermented raw goat milk or cheese.

4. Try to determine if you are allergic to any of the foods mentioned or recommended. The most reactive foods are dairy, sugar, wheat, corn, nuts (but especially peanuts), soy, eggs, the nightshade family (potatoes, peppers, tomatoes, eggplant, and tobacco), and flax. Be suspicious of any of them if you have any allergic symptoms. See my website (www.TraditionalJewishMedicine.net) for symptoms of food sensitivity and how to test yourself to determine sensitivities. Also consider salicylate sensitivity if you find yourself highly sensitive or reactive to your diet. Read about it at www.feingold.org.

5. Even if you are not allergic to them, avoid dairy, raw vegetables (see above exceptions), cold drinks; cold foods; sugar; corn syrup; cocoa and chocolate; artificial sweeteners, colorings, and flavorings; and coffee; alcohol; fried, greasy, and spicy foods, ESPECIALLY at night.

6. Eat breakfast like a prince (or princess), lunch like a king (or queen), and dinner like a prisoner, making the evening meal the smallest of the day and making sure to maintaining the proper balance of foods. If you are eating after 7 p.m., try to only eat liquid and pureed foods.

7. NEVER eat fruit or melon with any other type of food, and never eat fruit or other sweet foods at night. Fruits to especially avoid, unless you have a strong digestive tract, include oranges, apricots, peaches, and nectarines. Melons are particularly cold energetically and should never be eaten in the winter, when cold, or even with other fruits.

8. Make sure to drink at least 4–6 glasses of water daily, even if you're not thirsty. With meals

drink very little, only enough to wash your meal down, and squeeze the juice from a ¼ of a lemon into the water you drink, whenever you can. Never drink straight fruit juice, without diluting it with at least 1/3 water, and never gulp down your water. Sip it slowly, as drinking a large amount of water at one time can damage the digestive tract and make you more vulnerable to dysbiosis, dampness, and fungal infections.

9. Never multitask when eating. Chew your food well and eat slowly. Never eat when stressed or emotional. Be happy, and consider that you are engaged in a holy activity. Have in mind that you are distributing all the nutrition in the food to where it is needed in your body, as you eat, eating with awareness. Never walk around while eating. If you are healthy, eat until you are ¾ full and then STOP! If you are not that healthy, consider stopping when you are half full. If you eat slowly and are not multitasking, it will be easy for you to determine when you are approaching satiation.

10. Wait after eating a meal at least three hours before going to sleep.

11. If you've eaten a big meal, wait at least 15 minutes after eating before walking, and at least a half hour before exercising.

12. Never eat if you have to use the restroom, and never delay eliminating for any reason!

13. Eat warming foods (both energetically and temperature-wise) in the winter and cooling foods in the summer.

14. Make sure to eat three meals every day. If you are not hungry or don't have a good appetite, 20 minutes before each meal, try taking one to two tubes of Po Chai (a Chinese medicine that will stimulate appetite and is readily available), or else have a cup of ginger/tangerine peel tea, prepared by adding three thin slices of ginger root and the peel from a half a tangerine, dried in the oven until it's crisp, to a cup of water and bringing it to a boil. Cook it for 10 minutes.

15. Avoid eating cold desserts at the end of meals as they prevent heavy meals from being digested. Especially avoid cold fruit.

16. If you tend to feel tired, gassy, burpy, or generally uncomfortable after meals, try using grapefruit seed extract, hydrochloric acid and/or digestive enzymes, such as Bromelain (an extract from pineapple) after meals. Hydrochloric acid is specifically necessary to digest protein and grapefruit seed extract is helpful for those who have a tendency to have gas or fungal infections.

17. Do not nap mid-afternoon if you have trouble sleeping at night, but remember that a 15-minute power nap in the daytime is equivalent to an hour at night.

18. Eat at regular intervals so you don't get too hungry or compromised.

19. If you are taking Chinese herbal medicines, take them either 30 minutes before and 60 minutes after meals to promote proper digestion and utilization. Absorption will be compromised if taken with food.

Eating through the Day

Upon waking, have a glass of energetic water: place a half-cup water in the fridge overnight, and bring a second half-cup of water to a boil. Mix the two halves together, or have the squeezed lemon juice cure found in Chapter 6.

If you are thirsty or weak, and don't have any problems with blood sugar, consider having a fruit such as a pear, kiwi, or 4-5 non-sorbate pitted prunes that have been soaked overnight (don't drink the water that the dried prunes soaked in, as it is loaded with sugar). If you are not feeling weak or thirsty, skip this.

Even a better alternative to have after your energetic water or lemon cure is a cup of green smoothie. Use a Vitamix or other high-powered blender and blend the following ingredients (feel free to play with the amounts, and even the ingredients): 4 cups of water, one large banana, one large pear, ½ cup liquid coconut oil, 6 strawberries, a dash of cayenne pepper, 2–3 tablespoons of hemp hearts, a dash of pure stevia powder, ½ cup of goji berries (presoaked), and 4 cups of packed organic green leafy vegetables.

Also, spread throughout the day, have six teaspoons of fresh wheatgrass juice (mixed with fresh pineapple juice as the wheatgrass juice tends to be rather strong). The wheatgrass juice and pineapple can be added to the smoothie as well.

Breakfast: Have a whole-grain cracker or bread (remember wheat and some other grains, soy, and corn tends to be very allergic, so be mindful of how you feel and make sure that it doesn't contain sugar). Watch out for reactions such as gas, belching, or bloating, which may be signs of allergy, and if so, consider a different kind of whole-grain cracker such as rye, spelt, or kamut. Eat with it some kind of spread, such as almond butter, hummus, techina, guacamole, eggplant, etc. As each meal should have protein, for breakfast a good choice might be free-range eggs, either poached, soft- or hard-boiled (don't eat scrambled eggs, omelets, or eggs fried in oil), fish, or even chicken, if you like it. Remember, breakfast should be nourishing but not too big. After your meal, before you set out on your day, have a relaxing cup of a warming tea. I like to mix 1 teabag of chamomile with 2 bags of Ruby Red Rooibos Chai (available from Trader Joe's).

Lunch (largest meal): cooked vegetables or perhaps a hearty vegetable soup; chicken, turkey, or fish; ½ avocado; and a grain such as white organic basmati rice, quinoa, or kasha. A cup of unsweetened cultured coconut milk for dessert.

Dinner: Again, cooked vegetables or soup, fish, ½ avocado, again a grain, and a cup of

unsweetened cultured coconut milk for dessert. If it's after 7 p.m., puree it all together.

Unless eaten for religious reasons such as on Shabbat, bread should only be eaten once a day, at breakfast. I would not recommend "Ezekiel Bread" because among other things, it contains soy. The healthiest bread is the simplest, and I would recommend that if you can buy, or better yet, make fresh plain sourdough bread, without sugar, yeast, or eggs, you should be able to feel much less gassy or bloated. Sourdough is far superior to yeast, as it improves digestion and actually can help blood-sugar problems. If you still have issues with bloating, consider using a simple and non-reactive unleavened bread such as spelt matza as an alternative.

Make sure to season foods well with aromatic spices such as turmeric, cardamon, cumin, curry, cilantro, tarragon, basil, oregano, parsley, sage, rosemary, thyme, marjoram, lavender, and a little sea salt, garlic, onion, or ginger if you like them. A very nice herb blend that is available at health food stores called "Herbes de Province."

Different kinds of vinegars can be used based upon your constitution: If you tend to be irritable, and your digestion is weak, consider seasoning with apple cider vinegar, which strengthens the digestive tract and liver. Sweet rice vinegar also strengthens the digestion. Wine vinegar strengthens the lungs, and Japanese umeboshi plum vinegar, which is available in health stores, strengthens the kidneys (it has a pleasant and distinct salty-sour flavor, and is a great salt substitute). I would not recommend regular white or balsamic vinegar.

Mid-afternoon or evening snacks: Even though I said not to eat raw vegetables, an exception is celery, which you can have as a snack with peanut, almond, or other nut butter; ½ avocado; a handful of nuts if you feel good when eating them; a whole-grain cracker with a spread; and/or a cup of one of the herb teas that are recommended. Also, sprouted grains, beans, and seeds are a nourishing and invigorating snack. Remember not to eat fruit mid-afternoon unless you will be eating your supper within an hour thereafter, and never eat fruit in the evening.

Other specific foods to include:

If you are blood vacuous or have a tendency toward anemia: chicken liver, tahini, beets, yams, celery, parsley, cilantro, canned tuna and sardines in water, and, of course, wheatgrass juice, the highest food form of chlorophyll (which is an analog for hemoglobin).

If you are yin vacuous and tend to be dry, hot, and burned out: gooey foods such as cooked vegetables (again, yams are particularly good), almond and other pure nut butters, avocados, legumes like garbanzo beans, rice, string beans, kasha, etc.

Many people are iodine deficient, which affects the thyroid, the adrenals, and fibrocystic breasts. One of the best ways to make sure to get adequate iodine is by adding seaweed (I recommend Wakame and Kombu, as they contain good amounts of iodine) to your cooked vegetables or

making soup with it.

Good teas: Rooibos, black cumin seed, chamomile, ginger, and green tea (except in the winter, and unless you tend to feel cold, have cold feet or knees, or are yang vacuous). Try to avoid teas that have added “natural flavorings” as they tend to contain MSG.

Experiment with different grains, as many of them tend to be allergic. Try to keep it simple: one grain at a time (for example, white organic basmati rice, kasha, barley, spelt, oats, kamut, millet, sesame, amaranth, white quinoa, and teff) and see how you feel.

Instead of vegetable or canola oil, use cold- or expeller-pressed olive oil, sesame oil, almond oil, walnut oil, coconut oil, or sunflower oil, and don't fry with them on a hot flame. Make sure to refrigerate all oils except olive or coconut oil. Avoid using margarine, spreads, or butter.

About Sweeteners:

Avoid sugar, all chemical artificial sweeteners (for example, aspartame, saccharine, sucralose, and Splenda) and ANY corn syrup or sweetener. Options to consider are pure stevia (the best two products I've found are Kal brand raw stevia powder and NOW Foods BetterStevia powder); raw, unpasteurized organic honey; blackstrap molasses; xylitol; coconut sugar; sucanat; or fruit juice. Syrups, such as rice syrup, barley malt syrup, date syrup, agave, or maple syrup, even if raw, are just too concentrated to healthily process and should be completely avoided by those with blood sugar problems.

All sugar alcohols, such as xylitol, mannitol, sorbitol, erythritol, and maltitol can cause diarrhea, but of them xylitol — besides tasting just like sugar — has the benefit of preventing tooth decay.

Avoid preparing or storing foods in plastic wrap or soft plastic containers whenever possible. Don't warm up foods in a microwave oven.

A main goal in each of the areas of growth should always be to gain a greater awareness of ourselves. Two important clues should guide us in this pursuit: one, how we feel, and two, what our tongue looks like. If we make changes in our life, and we don't feel good, although it is entirely possible that we are having a Hexheimer's reaction or healing crisis, we can't assume that for sure. When in doubt, if you don't feel good after making changes, contact your physician or someone knowledgeable about diet. Second, look at your tongue: ideally, it should be neither pale, nor red, nor purple, but rather be pink, with a thin white coating throughout. It should be neither excessively moist, nor dry, it should have neither cracks nor be swollen, it should be neither long nor short, it should be balanced and not veer to one side, and not quiver. Study your tongue, and if you notice any of the above signs, monitor them as you change the way you eat. Hopefully as you feel better, your tongue will reflect your positive changes. May eating always be looked at as a gift, as a holy yet thoroughly enjoyable activity, and never as burden or necessary evil.

B'tayavon! (Bon appetite!)

Appendix VI: Resetting Ourselves When We Get Stuck

One of the fascinating parallels between Classical Chinese Medicine, going back at least over 2,000 years to the time of the Huang Di Nei Jing (the Yellow Emperor's Inner Classic), and Traditional Jewish Medicine is the importance that both traditions give to emotions. With specificity, by treating organ or channel imbalances, a skilled practitioner is able to help balance and resolve severe emotional problems as well, whether depression, anger, mania, worrying, over-thinking, fear, or fright. However, often when we are confronted with the unexpected, we just don't have the tools, or the presence of mind, to do anything constructive, and we get stuck, despite our best intentions.

Getting unstuck requires a sensitivity and a realization that we are in a bad place and are disconnected from what really matters: ourselves, our environment, and our Maker. The Torah teaches us that this requires us to listen to the female (structured) aspect of our psyches, and by setting boundaries for ourselves, we are able to conquer these destructive emotions. As the Mishna asks, "Who is the strong person [*gibor*, meaning the one who masters the trait of *Gevura* or boundaries]? The one who conquers his inclinations."

But, again, this is easier said than done, particularly in the heat of the battle. For as our Sages tell us, "When you go out to war against your enemy ..." The enemy that the Torah is speaking of is that force which drives us to disconnect from Hashem.

I want to suggest, therefore, that there are six basic things that we can do when we realize that we are stuck, to reset and reconnect ourselves to the Life Force to whom we all depend:

1. **Blink.** Blinking resets our nervous system by helping to stimulate our parasympathetic nervous system (the "rest and digest" part of the autonomic nervous system). It provides moisture to the eyes, and will usually stimulate #2:
2. **Sigh.** Rebbe Nachman teaches that there is no activity more important that we can engage in than *hitbodedut*, and an essential component to successful *hitbodedut* is "*krechtzing*," or unloading a deep sigh. For as Rebbe Nachman teaches in *Likutei Moharan* I:109, "**When you sigh and groan over your unfulfilled yearning for holiness, it causes you to be attached to the *ruach* (life force) of holiness. This is because sighing is drawing breath — which is life itself!**"
3. **Smile.** Smiling brings about some amazing biochemical changes, such as lowering blood pressure, strengthening the immune system, releasing endorphins (the body's natural pain killers) and serotonin (the feel-good neurotransmitter), and, of course, making us feel happier (even a fake smile!)
4. **Drink water.** Our bodies, as is well known, are over two-thirds water, but what is not as well

known, is how delicate our fluid distribution system is (which the Chinese call the San Jiao or Triple Burner) and how easy it is to become dehydrated. From my experience, I have found without exception, that those who allow their emotions to get the best of them ALL become dehydrated. Furthermore, dehydration creates a more acid pH, which causes our bodies to break down and become sick.

5. **Power nap.** Nothing exhausts us more than losing control of our emotions. But there's a wonderful antidote for exhaustion: the powernap! The trick is not to sleep for more than 15 minutes to a half hour, for amazingly, each 15 minutes that we sleep during the day, is worth an hour at night! But always remember to gratefully give over your soul for safekeeping to Hashem, even for 15 minutes.

6. **Hope.** The Midrash (*Bereishit Rabba* 98:20) teaches us, "Rabbi Yitzchok said, 'Anything is possible with hope! Suffering can be released with hope! Sanctifying the Name of Hashem can be achieved through hope! The merit of our forefathers can be tapped to reach Hashem with hope! The spiritual pleasure of the World to Come can be achieved with hope! ... Undeserved grace is granted by Hashem with hope! [And] one is granted forgiveness by Hashem with hope!'"

May all of our actions cause our friends and our Most Beloved Friend to smile.