



All of the service of Hashem is dependent upon the improvement of one's character traits.

Vilna Gaon - Even Shleima, Chapter 1

Ahavas Chesed Module Packet 2

הגיד לך אדם מה טוב ומה ה' דורש ממך כי אם עשות משפט ואהבת חסד ...

It has been told to you, O man, what is good, and what HaShem requires of you: Only to act justly, and to love kindness...

Micah, Chapter 6, Verse 8

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Use of Material

The material in this *ACTT Module Packet* is intended for the use of the ACTT organization’s members and any other individuals interested in creating and sustaining meaningful changes in their lives. If an organization is interested in using this material, the ACTT organization would appreciate your contacting us. Thank you.

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ACTT Ahavas Chesed Module – Packet 2

Goal of Ahavas Chesed 2 Module

To continue to develop an awareness and appreciation that grows into a love for performing acts of chesed (kindness) and doing them on a daily basis.

Module Duration

Ahavas Chesed will be covered in several parts. This is part 2 and will last for 9 weeks.

To Do List

- If you are not yet a member of the ACTT Organization, fill out a membership application and submit it – see Membership page of www.actt613.org or ACTT Welcome Kit
- Fill out the “ACTT *Ahavas Chesed 2* Commitment Form”, keep a copy for yourself and submit a copy to the organization – see Module page of www.actt613.org or this Module Packet’s Appendix
- On a daily basis:
 - Follow the Learning Schedule and record your *Ahavas Chesed* activity/action in your “ACTT *Ahavas Chesed 2* Activity Log” in this Module Packet’s Appendix – the *ACTT Activity/Action Ideas* has suggestions
 - Record your maintenance activity/action (from the *Judging Favorably*, *Kavanah During Davening*, and *Anger Management* modules) in your “ACTT *Ahavas Chesed 2* Activity Log” in this Module Packet’s Appendix –the *ACTT Activity/Action Ideas* has suggestions
- Participate in the chizuk activities, as desired:
 - ACTT *Ahavas Chesed 2* kick-off event and face-to-face discussion group meetings
 - ACTT online discussion group and e-mail list
 - Read inspirational material from sources recommended by the ACTT organization and also distributed by the ACTT organization
 - Recommend inspirational material to the ACTT membership and submit inspirational material to be distributed to all the ACTT members

***Ahavas Chesed* Resources**

The following are some resources for learning about *Ahavas Chesed*:

- Chofetz Chaim: Loving Kindness - Daily lessons in the power of giving” by Rabbi Fishel Schachter and Mrs. Chana Nestlebaum; Artscroll Mesorah; ISBN: 1-57819-746-5
- Kindness - Changing people's lives for the better by Rabbi Zelig Pliskin; ArtScroll / Shaar Press; ISBN: 1-57819-477-6
- “Tisha B’Av 2003: Shaping a World of Kindness” tape or CD with Rabbi Mattisyahu Salomon and Rabbi Yissocher Frand; Chofetz Chaim Heritage Foundation

- “Sefer Ahavas Chesed” tape or CD with Rabbi Fischel Schachter; Chofetz Chaim Heritage Foundation
- “A Kindness a Day Desk Calendar – 365 ways to make the world a better place” edited by Debbie Herman and Daniel Rothner - a project of Areyvut; Leviathan Press
- “A Tradition of Kindness” web site at: www.traditionofkindness.org

Chesed Explained

The following is reproduced with the permission of Feldheim Publishers, Jerusalem/New York, from pages 77 and 79-80 of Ahavath Chesed: The Love Of Kindness As Required By G-d by the Chafetz Chaim; English Translation by Leonard Oschry; Second Revised Edition; ISBN: 0-87306-167-5:

How greatly should one cling to the virtue of *chesed*! The extent of the required attachment is defined in the verse (Micah 6:8): “It has been told to you, O man, what is good and what G-d requires of you: Only to act justly and to love *chesed* (kindness)...” At first sight, it would seem that it should have been sufficient for Scripture either to read: “to act with justice and kindness” or else “to love justice and kindness.” Moreover, by using the expression, “It has been told to you ...” Scripture must have intended to convey an idea which man would be unable to discover on his own.

...As for the choice of words, “to act justly and *love chesed*,” rather than “to act with justice and *chesed*,” the prophet has thereby drawn our attention to a new and important lesson, to an area where almost everyone is at fault. Indeed, we all perform acts of kindness. But we are kind only under pressure. When a person in distress, needing our favor, turns to us once, and again a second time, we find it difficult to avoid him, so we extend help to him. Even then we act not at all willingly or kind-heartedly. So the prophet exhorts us: “What does G-d require of you: only to *love* kindness. You should not think that by your occasional acts of kindness you have discharged your duty completely.” Instead, one must possess a *love* for this mitzvah.

Obviously, a great difference lies between what a person does because of pressure and what he does out of love. We see how we, ourselves, act towards our children, in pursuit of food and clothing, in marriage, and in all that is motivated by love. Here every person ranges far beyond his duty. A father seeks to bring benefit to his son, even when the latter has not asked for it. He is happy and in good spirits when he does so. So, in this case, if a person really loves this trait of *chesed*, he will search for the ways and means to do good to his fellow man, and he will act generously. And as for the many aspects of this virtue (which we shall, please G-d, explain further on), he will seek to fulfill them all out of love and not through compulsion.

ACTT Module Packet Appendix



ACTT Commitment Form – Ahavas Chesed 2 Module

Remember, it is better to commit to less – you can always do more!

Please PRINT all information

This commitment does not constitute a vow; I am doing the following, bli neder

From ___/___/___ To ___/___/___

In memory of _____

As a zechus for:

a refuah shelaimah for _____

a shidduch for _____

parnassa for _____

other _____

- ___ *Ahavas Chesed act(s) daily in a 😊 mood*
(ACTT recommends 1-2 acts daily – the ACTT Activity/Action Ideas has suggestions)
- *Performing one or more of the following maintenance activities in a 😊 mood*
(ACTT recommends a total of 1-2 acts daily – the ACTT Activity/Action Ideas has suggestions)
 - ___ *Kavanah During Davening act(s)* *daily or* *weekly*
 - ___ *Judging Favorably act(s)* *daily or* *weekly*
 - ___ *Anger Management act(s)* *daily or* *weekly*
- *Learning ___ minutes daily from* (ACTT recommends 5 minutes daily):
 - The ACTT *Ahavas Chesed Learning Schedule Book* (see *ACTT Daily Activity Log*)
 - Kindness – Changing people’s lives for the better by Rabbi Zelig Pliskin
 - Other _____

Please PRINT all information

Name: _____ Date _____

Email address: _____ Tel. number _____

Address: _____

😊 *Be happy with your ability to Improve Yourself and Grow!* 😊

Please email form: commitment@actt613.org or mail: ACTT, 48 Edgemount Road, Edison, NJ 08817



ACTT Activity/Action Ideas

Acknowledgements:

- 1) Some Ideas for Acts of Chesed adapted from Areyvut's 2005 "A Kindness a Day Calendar: 365 Ways to Make a Difference", see website: www.areyvut.org
- 2) Some of the ideas for Judging Favorably were adapted from "The Other Side of the Story" by Yehudis Samet
- 3) Some of the ideas for Kavanah During Davening were adapted from Praying with Fire by Rabbi Heshy Kleinman
- 4) Ideas for Improving Anger Management were adapted from Anger The Inner Teacher @ www.aish.com/spirituality/growth/Anger_The_Inner_Teacher.asp

IDEAS FOR ACTS OF CHESED		
Offer to run an errand for a friend Cheerfully greet someone Bake an unexpected treat for a friend Remember someone's birthday Call someone going thru a difficult time Leave a friendly note for a family member Listen patiently to others Clean up after dinner without being asked Call someone who lives alone Greet everyone you see with a smile Introduce yourself to someone Apologize for something you've done Take out the garbage without being asked	Give someone an unexpected compliment Spend time with a child with a disability Help strangers in shul feel welcome Take an elderly person shopping Pay attention to what people are saying Spend quality time with family & friends Call or visit someone who is sick Cook a meal for a person in need Visit someone who may be lonely Call someone you haven't spoken to in a while Say thanks - no matter how small the deed Help a child with his / her homework Compliment someone who helps you	Give someone an encouraging note When asked to do something, respond right away in a cheerful and willing manner Drive someone to the doctor Help out family members even if you're busy Help someone find a job Buy a gift for a loved one for no reason Greet everyone with a pleasant "good morning" Write a letter to an elderly person Take a neighbor's garbage cans in from the curb Call someone who recently lost a loved one Congratulate siblings on recent accomplishments

IDEAS FOR JUDGING FAVORABLY	
Don't jump to conclusions Judge your neighbor's actions favorably "Judge your fellow man fairly" (Leviticus 19:15) Look for possible explanation in another's behavior Give your friend the benefit of the doubt Look for the good in others "Judge all people to the side of merit" (Ethics of the Fathers 1:6) Realize that your friend did not see you carrying packages when he/she passed by	Remember, it could be a miscommunication... Are we missing any facts? Look for people's strengths Remember, things are not always what they seem! Try to explain... not complain about other people's actions Focus on solutions - not recriminations Remember the excuses one makes for oneself - apply these excuses to the one who wronged you



ACTT Activity/Action Ideas (continued)

IDEAS FOR IMPROVING KAVANAH DURING DAVENING

Meditate for 5 minutes before davening
 Write translations to difficult words in your siddur
 Think about all Hashem has given you
 Say the words, “ I am standing before Hashem” out loud
 Remember that Kavanah During Davening is a Halachik requirement of prayer
 Pronounce each word slowly and clearly
 Use a siddur, even for Tefillos I know by heart
 Establish a specific place for davening
 Concentrate for 3 seconds on each word of a specific tefillah

Learn the meanings of words you do not know
 Select one prayer a week to say with more kavanah
 Write down your favorite phrases from davening and focus on them when you daven
 Arrive before the minyan begins to daven and be ready when they start
 When davening at home, remove distractions from around you
 Select one word a day to say with more kavanah
 Select one phrase a day to say with more kavanah
 Before you start to daven, review what Hashem has given you in the last 24 hours

IDEAS FOR IMPROVING ANGER MANAGEMENT

In the past, when you have been able to overcome anger quickly, how did you do it?
 Learn from people who are able to remain calm in situations that get you angry
 Learn from people who are able to let go of their anger easily
 Give anger a chance to subside before speaking by counting from 1 to 10, 1 to 20, etc.
 When you notice that you are feeling angry, breathe slowly and deeply, exhale slowly
 When you are about to get angry because of something that someone did to you, focus on some good quality of that person

Use physical exercise to release anger: take a brisk walk, run, dance, jump rope, etc.
 Meditate on: “Ein od milvado - There is nothing else besides G-d”
 When you get angry, look at yourself in a mirror to see and hear yourself as others see and hear you when you are angry
 Write down all your angry thoughts in a letter addressed to the person you are angry at, but do not send it
 When you are about to get angry, ask yourself, “How important is this in my life?”



ACTT Daily Activity Log – Ahavas Chesed 2 Module

Abbreviations: 1) LK = Chofetz Chaim: Loving Kindness – Daily Lessons in the Power of Giving by Rabbi Fishel Schachter and Mrs. Chana Nestlebaum;
 2) AC = *Ahavas Chesed*; 3) JF = *Judging Favorably*; 4) KDD = *Kavanah During Davening*; 5) AM = *Anger Management for Positive Results*

		Learned (√)		Activity/Action	
Date	√	Book	Day	√	Notes (description of activity/action, comments, etc.)
EXAMPLE DAILY ENTRY – current module’s activity/action and up to 2 maintenance activities/actions					
Day	m/d/07	√	LK	x	√
					AC: Responded right away in a cheerful and willing manner when someone asked me to do something
					√ JF: Did not jump to conclusions; and/or KDD: Meditated for 5 minutes before davening;
					√ and/or AM: Focused on some good quality of a person who did something to me that started to get me angry
Note: This is a continuation of the <i>Ahavas Chesed</i> module and starts with Day 61 of the <u>Chofetz Chaim: Loving Kindness</u> text					
Sun	01/14/07		LK	61	
Mon	01/15/07		LK	62	
Tue	01/16/07		LK	63	
Wed	01/17/07		LK	64	
Thu	01/18/07		LK	65	
Fri	01/19/07		LK	66	
Sat	01/20/07		LK	67	
Sun	01/21/07		LK	68	



ACTT Daily Activity Log (continued) – Ahavas Chesed 2 Module

		Learned (√)		Activity/Action	
Date	√	Book	Day	√	Notes (description of activity/action, comments, etc.)
Mon	01/22/07	LK	69		
Tue	01/23/07	LK	70		
Wed	01/24/07	LK	71		
Thu	01/25/07	LK	72		
Fri	01/26/07	LK	73		
Sat	01/27/07	LK	74		
Sun	01/28/07	LK	75		
Mon	01/29/07	LK	76		
Tue	01/30/07	LK	77		
Wed	01/31/07	LK	78		
Thu	02/01/07	LK	79		



ACTT Daily Activity Log (continued) – Ahavas Chesed 2 Module

		Learned (√)		Activity/Action		
Date		√	Book	Day	√	Notes (description of activity/action, comments, etc.)
Fri	02/02/07		LK	80		
Sat	02/03/07		LK	81		
Sun	02/04/07		LK	82		
Mon	02/05/07		LK	83		
Tue	02/06/07		LK	84		
Wed	02/07/07		LK	85		
Thu	02/08/07		LK	86		
Fri	02/09/07		LK	87		
Sat	02/10/07		LK	88		
Sun	02/11/07		LK	89		
Mon	02/12/07		LK	90		



ACTT Daily Activity Log (continued) – Ahavas Chesed 2 Module

		Learned (√)		Activity/Action	
Date	√	Book	Day	√	Notes (description of activity/action, comments, etc.)
Tue	02/13/07	LK	91		
Wed	02/14/07	LK	92		
Thu	02/15/07	LK	93		
Fri	02/16/07	LK	94		
Sat	02/17/07	LK	95		
Sun	02/18/07	LK	96		
Mon	02/19/07	LK	97		
Tue	02/20/07	LK	98		
Wed	02/21/07	LK	99		
Thu	02/22/07	LK	100		
Fri	02/23/07	LK	101		



ACTT Daily Activity Log (continued) – Ahavas Chesed 2 Module

		Learned (√)		Activity/Action		
Date		√	Book	Day	√	Notes (description of activity/action, comments, etc.)
Sat	02/24/07		LK	102		
Sun	02/25/07		LK	103		
Mon	02/26/07		LK	104		
Tue	02/27/07		LK	105		
Wed	02/28/07		LK	106		
Thu	03/01/07		LK	107		
Fri	03/02/07		LK	108		
Sat	03/03/07		LK	109		
Sun	03/04/07		LK	110		
Mon	03/05/07		LK	111		
Tue	03/06/07		LK	112		



ACTT Daily Activity Log (continued) – Ahavas Chesed 2 Module

		Learned (√)		Activity/Action	
Date	√	Book	Day	√	Notes (description of activity/action, comments, etc.)
Wed	03/07/07	LK	113		
Thu	03/08/07	LK	114		
Fri	03/09/07	LK	115		
Sat	03/10/07	LK	116		
Sun	03/11/07	LK	117		
Mon	03/12/07	LK	118		
Tue	03/13/07	LK	119		
Wed	03/14/07	LK	120		
Thu	03/15/07	LK	121		
Fri	03/16/07	LK	122		
Sat	03/17/07	LK	123		

Glossary

Ahavas Chesed	.....loving kindness
B'li Neder	.....without making a formal commitment
Bitachon	.....trust in Hashem
Chesed	.....kindness
Chizuk	.....moral support
Davening	.....praying
Hakaras HaTov	.....gratitude
Kavanah	.....concentration
Klal Yisrael	.....the Jewish people
Lashon Hara	.....evil tongue (speech) that denotes gossip and defamation
Midah	.....character trait
Midos	.....character traits
Mussar	.....ethical teaching
Neshamah	.....soul
Nisayon	.....a test
Parnasa	.....livelihood
Refuah Shleimah	.....a complete recovery from an illness
Sefer	.....a book
Shidduch	.....a match of two eligible and marriageable Jewish singles
Shiurim	.....classes
Shmiras HaLashon	.....guarding one's tongue
Siddur	.....prayer book
Talmidim	.....students
Tefillah	.....prayer
Tefillos	.....prayers
Teshuva	.....repentance
Zechus	.....merit