

Additional Resources for  
*Changing the World from the Inside Out*  
by Rabbi David Jaffe

PRACTICE: **Anavah/Humility**

***Jewish Wisdom about Humility***

*Everyday Holiness*, Dr. Alan Morinis, Chapter 7

*Mussar for Moderns*, R. Elyakim Krumbein, lessons 4-5 at this link:

<https://www.etzion.org.il/en/topics/mussar-moderns>

***Focus phrases***

Choose a phrase to repeat out loud for a minute or two each morning. You can adapt the phrases to your own language. Write the phrase on an index card and put it somewhere you will see it each morning. Some people tape the card to their car dashboard or computer.

“Hineini”

“The world was created for me” and “I am dust and ashes”

“No more than my space, no less than my place” – Dr. Alan Morinis

“And lo, the Lord passed by. There was a great and mighty wind, splitting mountains and shattering rocks by the power of the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind – an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake – fire; but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire – a still, small voice.” (I Kings 19:11-12, JPS translation)

## ***Guided Meditation***

This is best done with a group or at least a partner. Have one person read the meditation while the others follow the instructions read by the leader.

Find a comfortable place to sit or lie down.

Feel the weight of your body against the chair or ground.

Rest your hands on your lap or at your sides.

Gently let your eyelids close.

Take three deep breaths, inhaling through your nose and exhaling through your mouth.

Think of a time you really felt called to give of yourself.

This can be from childhood, or at work, community activities or in your family, political or spiritual life.

Remember the moment of the call.

Where were you?

If there was no specific moment but the call developed over time, what do you remember from that period of life?

What were the words of the call? If there were no words, what did it sound like?

How did it feel in your body?

In what ways did you or did you not say Hineini/Here I am in response to the call?

What did you need to put aside in your life or in your personality to respond to the call?

How did your life change as a result of your response?

Allow time for quiet journaling or reflection about what came up during the meditation.

## ***Visualization***

This exercise can be done individually or with a group. If a group, choose one person to read the description once through.

Call up an image of wheel with spokes.

This can be a bicycle wheel or a wooden wagon wheel or whatever wheel you can picture.

The important thing is that it has visible spokes that attach to the center and reach the outer edge of the wheel.

Imagine the wheel traveling along a dirt path.

Zoom in on how the rubber or wood travels over the dirt path, bouncing slightly and crushing granules of dirt underneath.

Put the image in slow motion and pay attention to the exact point that the front edge of the wheel comes around and makes contact with the ground.

The granular nature of the dirt path is the contour of reality as it contacts your life, represented by the wheel.

Imagine the wheel turning, some spokes not reaching the rim and others extending beyond the rim and some just reaching the rim.

As each point of the wheel comes in contact with the dirt path the spoke at that point extends to reach the rim or retracts to the edge of the rim so the wheel continues to turn.

The spokes are your traits, some in small measure, others large, and each grows or limits depending on the needs of reality.

What would it mean for you to have this level of flexibility with your soul traits and with taking and giving space as needed. What would you need to decide, change or give up?

## ***Contemplation***

This exercise can be done individually or with a group. If a group, choose one person to read the description once through.

Think of your strongest, most defining trait.

This could be kindness, discipline, courage, loyalty, faith, patience, or any one of the many soul traits.

Think about how you use this trait to help a social change effort or some community initiative.

Think about the need to use the opposite trait in the same social change or community effort.

How much would you need to contract yourself to give up your strong trait in this moment?

## ***Kabbalot***

The kabbalot are designed to do individually. If you are using this book with a group give people a few minutes to choose a kabbalah and close the session with people sharing which kabbalah they are going to practice until the next meeting.

Choose one time each day to notice how much space you are taking. This can be at a meeting, at home, with friends, etc. Are you taking too much space, too little space or just the right amount. Try out different settings for the kabbalah to get a sense of how your anavah/humility is influenced by different circumstances.

Choose a meeting or time of day that you will take up more or less space than is comfortable to you. This could mean that you will be the first to speak in a meeting, or that you will not speak until everyone else has a turn. Your kabbalah could be being sillier and louder than usual with a group of people each day.

Commit to saying "Hineini" and stepping up at least once each day.

## ***Cheshbon HaNefesh***

Set aside five to ten minutes at some point in the day to either journal or do the hitbodedut practice answering these questions.

What is a choice point you experienced today that challenged your sense of how much space to take or your ability to say Hineini?

What is a good point about yourself or someone else regarding Anavah/Humility?

How is your level of Anavah/Humility aligned with what you think God or the universe is asking of you right now?

How is your level of Anavah/Humility expressing your deep Ratzon/Desire?

How does the space you, or others, take impact the effectiveness of your change efforts?

## ***Sichat Chaverim Chevruta***

1. Trade turns listening to each other for 2 minutes talking about a good point from the day and anything else the speaker wants to get off his or her chest

2. Journal quietly for five minutes about the Cheshbon Hanefesh questions

3. Trade turns listening to each other for 10 minutes talk about the experience with the focus phrase, kabbalot and Cheshbon Hanefesh. Then discuss any insights or challenges with Anavah/Humility that came up during the week. End with a commitment for practice for the next week.