

ב"ה

והחי יתן אל לבו  
**TAKE to HEART**  
*Learning from Our Rebbetzin*

**Sixteen Stories of  
Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka נ"ע זי"ע  
with Suggested Lessons**

**Classroom Curriculum**

**– Teacher's Guide –**

V. 1.2  
ליל ט"ו שבט תשע"ט



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For a collection of Sources and to read further about the Rebbetzin and Chof Beis Shevat visit [chofbeisshevat.com](http://chofbeisshevat.com)

### Please note:

We hope that you will find these tools helpful in sharing the Rebbetzin with your students in a meaningful way that will increase in their excitement about Yiddishkeit and their *hiskashrus*.

If you have any questions or if there is any way we can help you prepare for this class please contact us.

*Your feedback is very important to us. Please take a few moments to share with us your feedback and constructive criticism, so that we can learn which aspects of the tools we are creating are working, what to improve, etc. etc.*

Please email us at [curriculum@jemedial.org](mailto:curriculum@jemedial.org)

Thank you very much, and *hatzlacha raba!*

**Jewish Educational Media**

# Letter to Educators

Dear Educator,

Chof Beis Shevat marks the *yahrzeit* of our Rebbetzin, who passed away in תשמ"ח - 1988, at 87 years old.

Belying her petite stature, the Rebbetzin was, by all accounts, a towering personality. Most *chasidim* never the *zchus* to know the Rebbetzin in person, and she did not appear in public. For the majority of *chasidim*, information about her – her personality, her partnership with the Rebbe, and her legendary sensitivity to others – was hard to come by.

But following the Rebbetzin's הסתלקות, the Rebbe spoke about the Rebbetzin many times.<sup>1</sup> It was clear to anyone who observed the Rebbe during this period that he was heartbroken over her loss. On one occasion, the Rebbe expressed himself, in simple words, that the Rebbetzin's loss left – לעולם חסר מאשה נעורים<sup>2</sup> – him with an irreplaceable void.

Time and again in the months after her passing, and many times in the years that followed, the Rebbe evoked the words והחיינו את אל לבו,<sup>3</sup> and spoke about learning from the Rebbetzin's life and following in her ways.

The Rebbe applies to the Rebbetzin many of the terms that are usually reserved for the Rebbeim themselves, for example – to name a few: גופא דילהון קדישא;<sup>4</sup> that she is even more alive now than before – יתיר מבחיויה;<sup>5</sup> how through observing her *yahrzeit* properly she evokes material and spiritual blessings for each of us,<sup>6</sup> even comparing her vital spiritual role as part of the נשיאות of the Rebbe to the role the Matriarchs of the Jewish people played in the service of our Patriarchs -- אבות.<sup>7</sup> (See Kuntres "Or V'chaom Hahishashrus-22 Shevat" for a compilation of some of these *Sichos*)

While JEM has produced a video of stories about the Rebbetzin – *The Rebbetzin*, as well as *Take to Heart*, which presents the events surrounding the Rebbetzin's *histalkus*, many educators have requested materials to bring the Rebbetzin to children in a simple, classroom format, on a child's level.

This curriculum is an attempt to fulfill Rebbe's instruction to learn from the Rebbetzin, and it focuses on that directive. It is by no means a comprehensive treatment of the Rebbetzin's life, and it does not capture her towering personality. We set out simply to present sixteen interactions with the Rebbetzin as shared by the individuals who experienced them, alongside the life-lessons that we might learn from them. It is our hope that this will enable every child to walk away with a tangible, practical lesson from the Rebbetzin's life. The suggested lessons are merely suggestions, and every person is invited to derive their own lessons.

A special thank you to Mrs. Devora Krasnianski who, through her expertise, helped develop this material into a classroom-friendly curriculum. Mendel Shemtov (ben R' Kasriel WB) served as the researcher and project manager. Rabbi Elkanah Shmotkin was the editor-in-chief.

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, conversation with Dov Hikind during *nichum aveilim* on Living Torah Disc 84, Program 333 Eye to Eye [chabad.org/1418737](http://chabad.org/1418737); 2 Adar 5748 (printed in *Kovetz Or V'chom Hahishashrus - 22 Shevat* p.9); *Sefer Hasichos* 5749 vol. 1 p. 234.

<sup>2</sup> Talmud Sanhedrin 22 1. Conversation with Rabbis Leib and and Yitzchak Meir Cywiak during *nichum avelim*. Living Torah 136, program 544, Eye to Eye [chabad.org/2823586](http://chabad.org/2823586); *Sefer Hasichos* 5749 vol. 1 p. 235. (A similar idea was mentioned by the Tzemach Tzedek, who stated after his Rebbetzin passed away, "עולמי חשך בעדי", "My world has been darkened..." *Sefer Hasichos, Kayitz Tof Shin*, p. 95.)

<sup>3</sup> *Koheles* 7:2. The Rebbe mentioned this idea in almost every *sicha* throughout the year of *aveilus*.

<sup>4</sup> *Sefer Hasichos* 5748 vol. 1 p. 274 & 277

<sup>5</sup> Conversation with Rabbis Leib and and Yitzchak Meir Cywiak during *nichum avelim* cited in fn. 2.

<sup>6</sup> See a lengthy explanation in *Sefer Hasichos* 5748 vol. p. 273, *Sefer Hasichos* 5749 vol. 1 p. 235.

<sup>7</sup> See *Sefer Hasichos* 5749 pp. 83-87 for a lengthy explanation of this idea.

The research for the project was based on the above-mentioned JEM films, and also utilized the articles published by [“A Chassidisher Derher” for Chof Beis Shevat over the years, the compilation of sichos “Or V’chom Hahiskashrus – 22 Shevat”](#), and Shmuel Lubetzky’s collection of stories.

Thank you to *Vaad Or V’chom Hahiskashrus* for shining a spotlight on this important date, which is so dear to the Rebbe personally. They deserve credit for inspiring us to this project.

We hope this tool will prove valuable to you, and look forward to your feedback and constructive criticism.

Hopefully this curriculum will help us achieve, in the Rebbe’s words:

להראות ש”זרעה בחיים” (אשר אז הרי “היא בחיים”), ע”י שלומדים מהנהגתה ומתנהגים ברוחה.. אשר כשהיתה כאן למטה עשתה עבודתה “כמצות רצונך”.. בעילוי אחר עילוי.. מתוך מסירות נפש.. ואז פועלים שהיא מבקשת ומתפללת בעולם האמת על כל המצטרך, בגשמיות וברוחניות, ואריכות ימים ושנים טובות, מתוך בריאות הנכונה, בבני חיי ומזוני ריחי ובכולם ריחי.<sup>8</sup>

To show that “her children are alive” (which causes “her to be alive”) through learning from her behavior and behaving in her spirit... When she was alive in this world, she served Hashem... reaching higher and higher... with self-sacrifice...

And through this, she will request and pray on our behalf, for all our material and spiritual needs – a long and healthy life; children, life and material sustenance, and all in a plentiful manner.

Wishing you much success

***Jewish Educational Media***

Shevat, 5778

P.s. If you would like to inquire about further resources or have any questions about this curriculum please contact Mendel Shemtov @ [curriculum@jemedial.org](mailto:curriculum@jemedial.org)

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<sup>8</sup> *Sefer Hasichos 5749* vol. 1, pp. 235-236.



# Lesson #1 – The Relevance of Chof Beis Shevat

Before we begin learning from the Rebbetzin by hearing stories about her life, lets take a few minutes to think about this day is important to us.

The PowerPoint (the slides are pictured here) will serve as a base for your conversation with your class, here, we have prepared some talking points that you can share with you class for each slide as well as before/after watching each video.

You many also want to read the letter to teachers at the beginning of this document and can read much more on chofbeishevat.com for many more resources.

This would be a great time to share personal reflections with your class



**What is an upcoming day that is very personally connected to the Rebbe and to each of us? כ"ב שבט**

**What happened on that day?** 30 years ago, in תשמ"ח–1988, our Rebbetzin, Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka passed away just before her 87<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**What happens on a *yahrzeit*?** Typically, a family marks a *yahrzeit* with many special *minhagim* such as *kaddish*, and the family will gather together and celebrate the person's life.

***So why is this day important to us?***



## 1. *The Rebbe's life = our lives*

**The Rebbe is a נשמה כללית, and whatever is important to him is important to every Jew, so this day is significant to the Rebbe's *chasidim* (men and women).**

*Chasidim* mark Rosh Chodeh Kislev, the day the Rebbe went home from 770 for the first time after his heart attack; Chof Ches Sivan, the day the Rebbe and Rebbetzin were saved from the Nazis; Hey Teves, the day the court ruled that the *seforim* belong to the Rebbe. In each case, the Rebbe acknowledged *chasidim's* celebrations, and (in some cases) thanked them for the celebration and their good wishes for the day.

True *hiskashrus* means we care about the Rebbe on a personal level. In fact, the part of Tanya that explains the connection between the Rebbe and *chasidim* after the Rebbe leaves this physical world, bases the connection

on the love the *chasid* has for the Rebbe and the Rebbe has for the *chasid*.<sup>9</sup> Part of loving a person includes caring for what they care about.

*So, on Chof Beis Shevat, when (as we will see) is a day that caused the Rebbe so much pain, it is only natural that we mark this day properly.*

*In the following two videos will get a small glimpse of what this day meant for the Rebbe*



**Video 1 – The Rebbetzin’s levaya. Reciting Kaddish (audio from davening in the Rebbe’s house)**

**Note: you need to click the play button**

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### Video in PowerPoint

While watching this video, you will notice the Rebbe crying while he recites *kaddish* after the Rebbetzin’s passing.



**Video 2 – Davening and Farbrengen in the Rebbe’s house.**

**Note: you need to click the play button**

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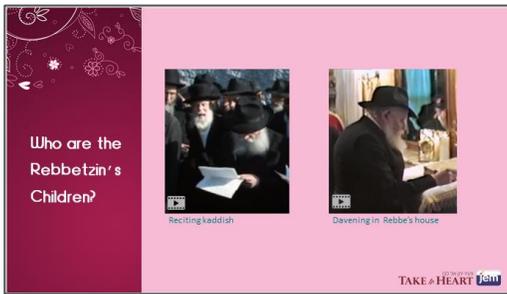
### Video in PowerPoint

This video is part of *minchah* just after the end of *shiva*, one week after the Rebbetzin passed away. Following Maariv the Rebbe asked that a *farbrengen* be held in the house that night.

Note: for 38 years your average *chasid* has never been in the Rebbe’s and Rebbetzin’s home, but here the Rebbe decided that he wanted every *chasid* to be part of remembering the Rebbetzin.

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<sup>9</sup> *Biur on Igeres HaKodesh 27.*



## 2. Who are the Rebbetzin's children?

On a number of occasions, the Rebbetzin expressed that the *chasidim* are her children, as the Rebbe himself did.<sup>10</sup>

As children, it is only fair and considerate for us to reciprocate the motherly love and devotion she displayed through the years, by marking her *yahrzeit* as a child does for a parent.

Rabbi Uri Holtzman relates: When I was a young boy, I would visit the Rebbetzin. I once asked the Rebbetzin, "Where are your children?"

My parents, who were there with me, were embarrassed about my question.

The Rebbetzin responded, "Did you see the people in 770?"

"Yes," came my reply.

The Rebbetzin looked at me and said, "All *chasidim* are the Rebbe's children."

After Chof Beis Shevat, *chasidim* witnessed the Rebbe's pain, and did whatever they could to ease it. The Rebbe, in turn, opened the home that he had shared with the Rebbetzin to the public for the first time, and thanked all those who came to comfort him.



This slide outlines a few important points about the Rebbetzin. You might use it as a visual to keep the discussion focused.

## 3. About the Rebbetzin

A few brief points about the Rebbetzin:

- She was the granddaughter and daughter of the *nasi hador*, and was raised by him, and taught to have *mesiras nefesh*.<sup>11</sup>
- In her youth, she was active in helping her father in many areas.<sup>12</sup> Writing to the Rebbe, the Friediker Rebbe referred to the Rebbetzin as "a precious pearl."<sup>13</sup>

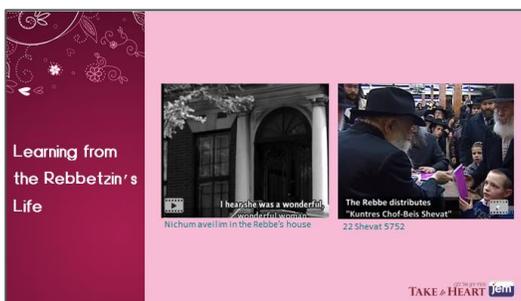
<sup>10</sup> *Toras Menachem Hisvaaduyos* vol. 4 p. 19

<sup>11</sup> The Rebbe mentioned this idea numerous times. See, for example, *Sefer Hasichos* 5749 vol. 1 p. 234.

<sup>12</sup> See, for example, *Early years* p. 221; [chabad.org/630431](http://chabad.org/630431).

<sup>13</sup> *Igros Kodosh Rayatz* vol. p. 34

- Most important to us, she was the wife of our Rebbe. She was instrumental in “convincing” the Rebbe to accept the *nesius*.<sup>14</sup>
- The Rebbetzin was a “spiritual partner” in everything the Rebbe did,<sup>15</sup> and in a physical sense enabled the Rebbe for 40 years to give us everything he did – his time, his energy, and his very self.
- She personified what it means to be a true *chasid* of the Rebbe.
- Although the Rebbetzin was very much private and “behind the scenes,” the way she conducted herself throughout her life can teach us many lessons in how we can behave.



#### 4. Learning from the Rebbetzin's Life

The Rebbe spoke with us about the Rebbetzin on many occasions and asked that we learn from her.

During the year after her passing, the Rebbe spoke repeatedly about the Rebbetzin, and taught us that the Rebbetzin's life continues through what we will do in her memory, and through us learning from her ways.

The Rebbe repeated again and again “והחי יתן אל ליבו – The living must take to heart.”<sup>16</sup> Aside from learning from the Rebbetzin's passing, the Rebbe said, we must learn from her *life*. And when we learn from the Rebbetzin, we *continue* her life. He requested that we mark her *yahrzeit* in specific ways,<sup>17</sup> and added that when we do, she will *daven* and evoke blessings for us On High.

On each *yahrzeit*, the Rebbe spoke about the Rebbetzin, her life and education, and ways to continue her legacy.

In the following two videos we will see:

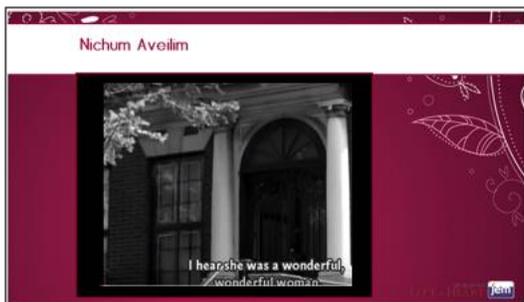
1. The Rebbe speak of the greatness of the Rebbetzin
2. The Rebbe's appreciation for those who names their children after the Rebbetzin and “raised them in her ways”

<sup>14</sup> *Yemei Bereishis* p. 310

<sup>15</sup> *Sefer Hasichos* 5749 vol. 1 pp. 83 - 85.

<sup>16</sup> *Koheles* 7:2

<sup>17</sup> See “lessons” section of this curriculum for a detailed list.



Video – Nichum Aveilim

**Note:** you need to click the play button.

### Video in PowerPoint:

*Explain to students what Nichum Aveilim is.* The Rebbe was visited by thousands of Jews during the week of Shiva -- in fact, by anyone who wanted. In addition, many dignitaries came and spoke with the Rebbe. Several of them can be seen here (audio with subtitles and photos): <https://goo.gl/zN41Cw>

**Mr. Dov Hikind, a New York State Assemblyman, about the Rebbetzin:** I hear the Rebbetzin was a wonderful woman."

**The Rebbe:** In my opinion, to say that the Rebbetzin was "a wonderful woman" is underestimated. In any case, Hashem [is the only one] who knows the full truth. If everyone will try his or her best to emulate her and to fulfill her wishes... this will be the best נחת for her *neshama*, and will also bring great benefit for those who are actually following in her ways.



Video – 22 Shevat 5752

**Note:** you need to click the play button.

### Video in PowerPoint

On the Rebbetzin's fourth Yahrzeit 770 was packed with thousands of *chasidim* who came to be with the Rebbe on this special day. For lack of space, many elder *chasidim* are standing behind the Rebbe on his *bima* (this is the only time such an arrangement was made).

In this *Sicha*, the Rebbe says (**part** of this appears in the video): Just like the Jews left Egypt in the merit of the righteous women, so too, now we will leave this *golus* in the merit of the women, and especially the Rebbetzin, whose influence continues even after her passing. Even more so because she merited to have many Jewish girls named after her. They were educated in her spirit, and they serve as a living example that just as her children are alive, so too, she is alive.

Following the *sicha* the Rebbe handed out *Kuntres "Chof Beis Shevat"* filled with *sichos* about the role of the Jewish woman. Over the course of several hours, the Rebbe handed over 10,000 *kuntreisim*. This was largest *chaluka* ever.

It should be noted that the second annual International Conference of Shluchos was in progress at that time.

## Learning from Our Rebbetzin:

### **Sixteen Stories of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka נ"ע זי"ע**

*This segment is the crux of this curriculum in which we tell 16 stories of the Rebbetzin and try to learn from them for our life.*

*The stories are available as 5.5x8.5 cards (see Story Cards). You can have the students read the stories aloud from their cards, or you can tell the story yourself. The accompanying PowerPoint also has the full text of the stories as well as some pictures*

*Note: Each story in the PPT has three slides – a cover image and two slides of the story text. (Two stories have a fourth slide with a related picture.) .*

***This Teacher's Guide includes accompanying information for the teacher to fill in some background context before the story is read, talking points for life-lessons to learn from each story, and more.***

The stories are of Three categories:

1. Her Character 2. Rebbe's *Chasid* 3. Dedication to Rebbe's *Inyanim*.

*This will give you the opportunity to have many discussions with your students.*

***The summary sheet is where they write their thoughts about each story and they can take it home with them.***

***Here are our best ideas of how to make this an engaging class***

***Obviously, You know your class best and will be able to judge how many of the stories to tell and all other details.***

1. Give each student (or group of 2 students) a story/anecdote card. Give them a few minutes to read the story to themselves and to jot down a life lesson about the Rebbetzin's way of being. (It is important that they write it down, not just think about it.)
2. Distribute the **Summary Worksheet**. (Includes an image to depict each story, and room for students to jot down a few words about the story's lesson.)
3. Pull up the picture of a story (the first slide of each story) and share the background context.
4. The student who has the matching story card reads the story aloud (as the student reads put the slide with the text of the story on the screen so all students can follow along.
5. Lead a class discussion about the story and the life lesson we can learn from it.
6. On their **Summary Worksheets**, students can fill in a few words per story.
7. After reading the first section of stories (1-5) about the Rebbetzin's character, stop and wrap up that section.

8. Continue with the next 2 sections (6-11 and 12-16).
9. **The PowerPoint includes a more entertaining way to do this but also more complex.**

Slide #?? Has a table with 16 numbers, you can click on each one and it will reveal the picture of the story and then go to the story.

After you read and discuss that story, on each slide there is a purple icon as such which will take you back to the table slide.



You can then choose another story.

This will make it more interesting as the students can chose which story and they can see their progress.

Again, these are just suggestions, there are so any other ways this material can be used.

Hatzlocho Rabo!

# Learning from the Rebbetzin

On her first *yahrzeit*, the Rebbe also spoke about learning from the Rebbetzin.

בא יעדערן זאל זיין דער "והחי יתן אל לבו", און באווייזן אז "זרעה בחיים" (וואס דעמולט איז "היא בחיים"), דורך זיך אפ לערנען פון איר הנהגה און זיך אויפפירען ברוחה כו', מתוך מסירות נפש. (כ"ב שבט תשמ"ט)

Everyone should practice “the living should take to heart” and show that “her children are alive,” through which “she lives on,” by learning from her example and conducting ourselves in her spirit, with *mesiras nefesh*.

The Rebbe asked us to “learn from her example and conduct ourselves in her spirit.” We’ll explore just a few stories and anecdotes from the Rebbetzin’s life. In order to **learn from the Rebbetzin’s example**, let’s explore a few short stories about her, and see what we can learn and emulate.

# Section 1 - The Rebbetzin's Character

## 1. Dreidel with Candies

As told by Mrs. Louise Hager

### Background

Mrs. Hager's father, Mr. Weingarten, was a businessman in London. He'd been very ill, and the doctors were suggested a new and complicated type of treatment. Through connections with Chabad *chasidim*, he had a *yechidus* with the Rebbe. No one knows exactly what the Rebbe said to him during that meeting. On the strength of the *brachos* and encouragement the Rebbe gave him on that day, BH, he fully recovered. Filled with gratitude, he returned from London six months later to thank the Rebbe in person. Travel across the ocean at that time (about תשכ"ג - 1963) was expensive and difficult.

Unfortunately, most people did not inform the Rebbe when their hardship was over. So when the Rebbetzin heard that he had come from London to personally thank the Rebbe, she was very touched. Intrigued, she wanted to meet him. This was the start of a deep and loving friendship between the Rebbetzin and the family.

## Dreidel with Candies



My son, an active six-year-old, went to visit the Rebbetzin with his father on Chanukah.

The Rebbetzin knew he was coming, and wanted to ensure that he had something to do during the visit. So, she had bought a large dreidel filled with candy for him. A lot of those mini candies.

She didn't just give it to him. She played dreidel with him, taking turns as they spun the dreidel across the table. Nun, Shin, Hey, Gimel.

The Rebbetzin had this wonderful twinkle in her eye as they played together. It seemed like they both had a wonderful time playing dreidel together.

### Suggested Lesson

The Rebbetzin understood that a young boy might be bored during an adult visit. So in advance, she made sure that he would have something to do that would make him happy. She was **attentive** to the needs of every individual; she knew just what would be appropriate to each person.

A similar story of the Rebbetzin really understanding the needs of the particular guest, told by Rabbi Shmuel Lew:

I once visited the Rebbetzin together with my children and my in-laws; my sons Yossi and Mendy were then about six years old. As children often are, they were restless, and began running around the room; they were swinging on door knobs, and all sorts of other childish things.

I began to get very uncomfortable. In addition to everything they were already doing, I had another major fear: On a table in the corner of the room there was a pile of *sefarim*,

and they were full of bookmarks in different places. I had a terrible fear that they would start pulling out the Rebbe's bookmarks, and I began to feel very anxious. While I didn't clearly say what I was worried about, I mentioned to the Rebbetzin that perhaps I should take my children home. What she said was very interesting. She didn't encourage me to keep them there, because in that case I would remain very uncomfortable. Neither did she make me feel unwanted. She told me: "ווי אייך איז באקוועם — however you are most comfortable."

Here too, we see the Rebbetzin's sensitivity to children and their father in what was for them a very uncomfortable situation. Notice also, the Rebbetzin's choice of words אייך. In Yiddish, there are two ways to say you; דו or אייך, אייך being the more respectful term, and the Rebbetzin would address helpers in her house, delivery people and even children with this title.

## 2. Optimism in the Face of Illness

As told by Mrs. Louise Hager

## 2. Optimism in the Face of Illness

My mother became very ill with a rare form of יענע מחלה, which is a terrible illness that often ends a person's life. We were all very worried about what would happen. We weren't quite sure what medical steps to take, and there weren't many good options given to us by the doctors. It made us all very anxious.

During that time, I came to New York and visited the Rebbetzin, and we spoke about my mother's condition and what we should do. The situation was really terrible. But when I discussed it with the Rebbetzin, she was so optimistic and positive. I was surprised to see that before we even came, she had already done research into this particular illness. She told me about different types of treatments and medicines that are available.

This was in the time before the internet where such information can be found at home from the computer, so this was serious and difficult research work. I really don't know where and how she got all that information for us.

In addition to the medical insights, she spoke about how important it was for us - and for our mother - that we all think positive, and keep a positive attitude.

We left New York totally different than the way we came. We felt ready to tackle the challenge ahead of us.

(It was a long and difficult journey, and my mother did survive her illness, thank G-d.)



### Suggested Lesson

The Rebbetzin understood the pain and confusion of the family, that they felt overwhelmed with the situation, and with the decisions of how to treat their mother who had suddenly been diagnosed with such a scary disease. Often some of the best help in such situations is to reduce their anxiety and gain some peace of mind so one can think clearly. The Rebbetzin gathered the information for them.

In addition, she was very positive, and that helped them be more positive too. The Rebbetzin epitomized "טראכט גוט וועט זיין גוט" - Think good and it will be good."

### 3. The Bochurim from Satmar

As told by Mrs. Leah Kahan

#### Background

Mrs. Leah Kahan is a relative of the Rebbetzin and would visit her often.

In the 1970s and 80s, many Satmar Chasidim were very opposed to Lubavitch, to the extent that it was dangerous for a Satmar *chasid* to be caught coming to the Rebbe's *farbrengen* or learning Tanya. (Thank G-d, today, this animosity has largely died away, and increasing numbers of Satmar Chasidim learn Chasidus, visit the Ohel, and frequent and support Chabad Houses when they travel around the world on business.)

### 3. The Bochurim from Satmar

In the early 5740s – 1980s, a prominent Satmar Rosh Yeshiva and several Satmar *bachurim* began learning Tanya and Chabad Chasidus and attending the Rebbe's *farbrengens*. All of this was done in complete secrecy, and slowly but surely, they became ever-more attracted to the Rebbe and Chasidus Chabad. After several years, they decided they wanted to stop hiding their "secret," and to become Lubavitcher on the outside as well.

When this became public, the Satmar community turned against these *bachurim* and all of Lubavitch, creating much trouble to the *bachurim*, their teachers and to Lubavitch as a whole. (In the end, everything was worked out, BH). The parents of these *bachurim* were also very much against their sons learning Chabad Chasidus.

My husband was involved with these *bachurim*, and I spoke with Rebbetzin about this. She had so many questions about the welfare of these young *bachurim*, but even how their parents and the *yeshivos* were faring in the wake of the controversy:

- How were the parents of the *bachurim* taking this change in their children?
- Are the families suffering because their children became close to Lubavitch?
- Are the children remaining respectful to the parents? Will they still be in contact?
- How are the *yeshivos* that these *bachurim* belong to handling it?
- How are the *bachurim* adjusting to this major change in their lives?
- If they are being shunned by their community, how will these *bachurim* get married?



#### Suggested Lesson

The Rebbetzin knew what was happening in Lubavitch, and she knew about this, as well.

Although this was part of a much larger battle being waged by one group against the other, the Rebbetzin focused on **the few lonely individuals at the center of this**. She thought about the great personal sacrifice they were making to learn more Chasidus and to become Lubavitcher *chasidim*. She was concerned about how they were being cut off from their families and the community they grew up in.

She went further; **she thought of the next level too** – of their future and their relationship with their parents.

But much more – she also cared about the Satmar *yeshivas* and leadership – the very ones who were causing so much of the pain for Lubavitch, in general, and for those *bochurim*.

During this painful period, the Rebbe and Rebbetzin were deeply concerned about the situation and for the people involved, and for the fallout within Satmar. Interestingly, there's a very similar story of the Rebbe in this regard, in which we see the Rebbe's focus on the needs of the individuals, rather than getting caught up in the "larger disagreement," as most people would:

One prominent Satmar family, the Vechters, had become close to Lubavitch. Mrs. Vechter was the principal of a large girls' school.

It was the middle of the school year, but things were becoming dangerous for them due to their connection to Chabad, and they had to drop everything, immediately leave the Williamsburg community and move to Eretz Yisrael.

The Rebbe was told of their plans and of the urgent need for them to leave immediately. The Rebbe sent a message back to Mrs. Vechter: She should leave detailed notes about each student, and how to address her challenges. The Rebbe wanted to make sure that the departure of the principal in middle of the year wouldn't negatively impact their learning and growth.

The Rebbe realized that Mrs. Vechter knew of the individual needs of many of her students, and of their specific scholastic and emotional needs. If she suddenly disappears one day, these girls would be left without the special attention and help that she had been providing!

In midst of this conflict, when this family would be leaving their community because of their connection to Lubavitch, what was the Rebbe thinking about? The children in *that* community!

BH, these *bochurim* are all married and have Lubavitch families. Several are on *shlichus* today.

## 4. The Spilled Punch

As told by Rabbi Shmuel Lew

### Background

Rabbi Shmuel Lew is the son-in-law of Mr. Zalmon Jaffe. Mr. Jaffe was involved in the Lubavitcher community in Manchester England. In תשח"י - 1958 he began coming to the Rebbe often. He became a *chasid* of the Rebbe and had a special love for the Rebbe. In return, the Rebbe was tremendously *mekarev* him.

When his daughter was engaged to Rabbi Shmuel Lew, he asked the Rebbe if he can invite the Rebbetzin, the Rebbe replied that she would not attend but she would appreciate an invitation. He asked the Rebbe if they could meet her, and with that started a very close connection between the Jaffe family and the Rebbetzin, General note: The Rebbetzin was an elegant hostess, and hosted people, (as well as comported herself and dressed) in an extremely regal manner.

## 4. The Spilled Punch



When I was a young *choson*, I had the *zchus* to visit the Rebbetzin at her home, together with my *kallah* and her parents.

The dining room table was set beautifully, and the Rebbetzin had prepared punch for us in long crystal glasses with glass straws. The Rebbetzin invited me to pour glasses of punch for our entire group. And so, I did. At one point, my hand pushed against the glass and it tipped over. I watched in horror as the punch spread across the Rebbetzin's beautiful white tablecloth. You can only imagine how I felt!

The Rebbetzin, seeing my predicament, exclaimed: "*A siman bracha!* – It's a sign of blessing!"

Afterwards, my father-in-law said that the Rebbetzin looked so delighted by my spill, that he was tempted to spill another glass.

### Suggested Lesson

The Rebbetzin was sensitive to the young nervous *choson*. She was only concerned about how he would feel, and the spill on the tablecloth was not important to her at all. She was ever-sensitive to the person who was with her – to their emotions, fears, and needs. She actually made an awkward moment into something positive, even funny. The mess isn't important; the person's feelings and memories of the moment are so much more important.

## 5. Respecting with Time and Money

As told by Rabbi Mendel Notik

### Background

When Mendel Notik came to NY from France as a *bachur* in the early 5730s – 1970s, he was asked to start helping in the Rebbe and Rebbetzin's home. Although at first he was hesitant, he took the job. In the beginning she insisted that he did not want to get paid. The Rebbetzin told him that money would be set aside for him and he could take it when he wished. For two years from תשל"ז – תשל"ט – 1977 – 1979 he assisted the Rebbetzin.

## 5. Respecting with Time and Money



One of my many jobs was to go to shop at the various stores in Crown Heights. On occasion I'd take care of paying the Rebbetzin's accounts at the stores.

When I would come to the Rebbetzin's house, the cash would be laid out on the table together with the bills, ready for me to take. Before I would take the money, the Rebbetzin would always insist that I count the money again.

The Rebbetzin explained, "In my father's (the Frierdiker Rebbe's) home I was taught that געלט האט ליב א חשבון, און מיט יענעם'ס געלט דארף מען זיך זיכער היטן" – Money loves careful accounting, and with someone else's money, one must be extra careful."

If she even thought she was going to get delayed, she would call and say, "Oh, I am so sorry" – apologizing profusely – "I've gotten a little delayed" or "I got a very important phone call" – from England or Israel – "It's going to take me another ten minutes to get there..." Other people's time is serious, it's valuable.

To put it in context, we need to understand: I was a fifteen, sixteen, seventeen-year-old, youngster in Yeshiva; and notwithstanding that, she was very careful and very proper and appropriate.

### Suggested Lesson

The Rebbetzin would make orders at various stores in Crown Heights for items to be delivered, introducing herself on the phone simply as "Mrs. Schneerson from President Street." Mr. Notik was a young *bachur* who was selected to help the Rebbetzin with her errands and other things. He has many stories about those times.

He spoke of the Rebbetzin's respect for time – her own, and other peoples'. If she would be even just a few minutes late, she would call ahead, explain and apologize. Mendel Notik concludes: "She was super-punctual, she was super-accurate with time and very clear in instructions, and in her entire being."

## Section wrap up –The Rebbetzin’s Character – Stories 1-5

1. Together, look at the images of the stories shared in this segment and discuss the various character strengths learned from those stories. You might write the key words on the board or on large pieces of paper.

This is just one aspect of who the Rebbetzin was. These stories reflect her character, her *midos*.

2. Bring these stories out to wider reflections of who she was, not to the specifics of those stories.
  - Her love and concern for each person individually, and deep dedication for the welfare of each one on their level.
  - Her meticulousness and attention to detail.
  - Her positive outlook no matter the situation, while being practical to address real issues in real ways.

3. How might we emulate the Rebbetzin

What might be some ways that we can emulate the Rebbetzin’s way of being? Think of one way that you might emulate the Rebbetzin’s way of being? Think of a scenario that typically happens in your life and how you might conduct yourself in the Rebbetzin’s way.

Students should write down their ideas. Give them two minutes of absolute silence for all students to think and write down an idea. Then allow several students to share their ideas.

## Section 2 - The Rebbetzin's Dedication to Rebbe's *Inyanim*

### 6. Go for it!

As told by Mrs. Louise Hager

### 6. Go for it!



The Rebbe had been encouraging both men and women to be more involved in *mitzvoyim*. I had a dilemma: As a *chasid*, I really wanted to do the Rebbe's work. At the same time, I am very shy and felt uncomfortable approaching people whom I had never met, and asking them whether they were Jewish. I was feeling very conflicted about this.

I shared this with the Rebbetzin. She understood me, who I am, and my dilemma. She would say, "There will be a time..." She never made me feel inadequate for not being able to do the more public *mitzvoyim*. At the same time, she always encouraged me to push myself a little bit more. She did it very subtly; I didn't realize this at the time. But looking back, I can see how she was doing it – with little hints and little tips.

"I'm sure you can do this," she would say. "Go for it, try it!"

Today, as the chairman of the Chai Cancer Care where we provide many services to Jewish families with an ill family member, I have found many ways to promote various *mitzvoyim*. I have become more vocal, and I am involved in sharing about Yiddishkeit with my colleagues and clients. In the back of my mind, I hear the Rebbetzin encouraging me, "I'm sure you can do this. Go for it, try it!"

#### Suggested Lesson

The Rebbetzin, of course, wanted *chasidim* to go on *mitzvoyim*, but she also really "got" who Mrs. Hager was – that **she really did want to be more involved in *mitzvoyim* and that she needed the right encouragement** and inspiration to pull herself beyond her comfort zone.

So, the Rebbetzin encouraged her, in small steps, to move forward, to try, to "go for it." It doesn't have start with speaking before large audiences or standing at a street corner. Just one conversation at a time, one colleague, one client, one person. And with confidence from that encounter, she kept moving on to something more challenging.

## 7. A Promise Kept

As told by Dr. Alan Newmark

### Background

Dr. Alan Newmark is a podiatrist, a foot doctor, in Brooklyn. He was asked to treat “Mrs. Schneerson from President Street.” At his first visits, he did not know who the Rebbetzin was. She served him juice and cake and she was very kind and caring, and had conversations about a number of things.

## 7. A Promise Kept

I was asked to treat “Mrs. Schneerson from President Street.” At my first visits, I did not know who the Rebbetzin was.

After a couple of visits, several people told me: “Do you know who that is?! That’s the Lubavitcher Rebbetzin whom you are treating!” The next time I went to her house, I told her “Had I known who you were, I would have worn a *yarmulke*!” She replied, “You wear a *yarmulke* for you, not for me.” And I thought, “Well maybe someday I will, maybe.”

At one point, the Rebbetzin asked me if I was married. I was not, and I also told her that I don’t really date Jewish girls. She said “Take your time, take your time. But promise me that you’ll marry a nice Jewish girl,” and I gave her my promise. “All will be well,” she said. That was my first *bracha* from the Rebbetzin.

Years passed. In תשנ"ט - 1999 (about 11 years after the Rebbetzin passed away), I was 44 years old and, though I had been searching for many years, I still hadn’t found a wife. I remembered that the Rebbetzin was the one who convinced me that I must marry a Jew. “I must visit my friend who promised to help me when I need help,” I said to myself. I visited the Rebbetzin’s resting place and, standing there, I said “Mrs. Schneerson... I need to get married, I want to settle down. You promised me that this would work out.”

Two months later, I met my wife. A wonderful Jewish woman. I looked up to Mrs. Schneerson and said, “Thank you.” Together we have a wonderful observant family. We are blessed to have four children, who give us much *yiddishe nachas*.



### Suggested Lesson

This person was a simple young foot doctor, who was coming to the Rebbetzin’s house to do his job. But the Rebbetzin treated him like an equal, served him food, and discussed with him his life and troubles, as she seemed to do with every person with whom she came into contact.

When Dr. Newmark first began treating the Rebbetzin, he was not yet *frum*. He didn’t wear a *yarmulke*, and was not ready to marry a Jew. The Rebbetzin was very gentle with him, but she was firm when she spoke about Yiddishkeit. “You wear a *yarmulke* for you.” “Promise me you’ll marry a nice Jewish girl... all will be well.”

The Rebbetzin really understood who she was talking to, and addressed them in the way that they could really receive what she was saying - באופן המתקבל - The Rebbe once guided that **“we don’t answer questions; we answer people,”** meaning that we have to really get to know the person and what his circumstances and concerns are and talk to those, not necessarily to the question or comment that they originally present. The Rebbetzin epitomized this idea; she always addressed the person– who the person was – when talking to them.

The Rebbetzin also gave him a *bracha* which was fulfilled not long after Dr. Newmark visited her resting place.

**NOTE:** This story has a fourth slide – an image of the Newmark family.

## 8. Concern for the New Shluchim

As told by Mrs. Bassi Azimov A"H – Shliach to Paris, France

### Background

Mrs. Bassi Azimov was a Shlucha in Paris France for many years, beginning in תשכ"ח - 5728.

Mrs. Azimov knew the Rebbetzin from when Mrs. Azimov's mother passed away in תשכ"ה – 1965 and she moved to New York with her father. She would visit the Rebbetzin often, and the Rebbetzin cared for her from then on, including during her preparation for her wedding. When she moved on *shlichus* to France she remained in touch with the Rebbetzin, who was involved in Mrs. Azimov's medical challenges. She would visit the Rebbetzin many times when she was in New York.

In the 5730s - 1970s, several Shluchim couples moved out to different areas in France. Many of these couples didn't speak French or know much about French culture. They were eager to be the Rebbe's Shluchim and bring Torah and *mitzvos* to these cities in France, and were willing to work hard to make it happen.

## 8. Concern for the New Shluchim



In תשל"ח – 1978 was visiting the Rebbetzin one time, when The Rebbetzin began asking me all about how the new Shluchim families were doing. She was concerned – it was a new language and a new way of living. In some of the cities, there was no *chinuch* for the children; they had to learn at home, from their parents.

The young couples would be far from their families. Flights to the United States were expensive. Even phone calls were very expensive – several dollars per minute. So, people spoke for only a short amount of time. The children wouldn't see their grandparents, or even speak to them, often.

The Rebbetzin was concerned for them. I tried to calm her by saying that this is the *chinuch* these young Shluchim received – to go on *shlichus* and spread Yiddishkeit. The Rebbetzin responded that although it may be easy for *me*, it is not necessarily so for all of the other Shluchim, and she continued to express her concern for them.

### Suggested Lesson

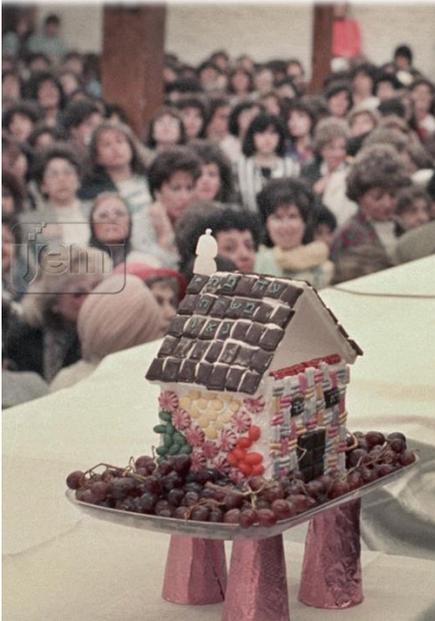
While the Rebbetzin knew that there was much work that Chabad had to do for the Jews in France, she was still concerned for the Shluchim and their families. Moving to a new country, with a new culture, so far from home is difficult. She was concerned about their day to day, about how the children would grow up, and about their *chinuch*; about every detail. **She was proud of them, and at the same time very concerned for them.**

In addition, she was explaining a lesson in empathy. **Just because something is not difficult for you, that doesn't mean it's easy for the other person.**

## 9. Gift from the Shluchos

As told by Mrs. Leah Kahan

# 9. Gift from the Shluchos



The Rebbetzin would speak about the day-to-day dedication and *mesiras nefesh* of the Shluchim. She often mentioned that the Shluchim couples had left the warmth and comfort of a *yiddishe* environment and had travelled to far off places where kosher meat and *chalav yisrael* was not attainable. They even had to bake their own bread.

And she added, “און זיי טוען דאס אזוי שיין און אזוי בכבוד – and they do it so beautifully and so respectably.”

Once when I visited the Rebbetzin, she showed me a beautiful handmade gift on the table. “Look, Leah, what the Shluchim sent me,” she said. “Look what the Shluchim sent me. They are so busy. And yet they had time to think about me.” And she shared a few words about the type of lives that the Shluchim lead.

And then she continued, “And why to me? Who am I?”

I responded, “Rebbetzin, don’t you know how much you mean to the Shluchim?” The Rebbetzin looked at me with some sort of a smile, but she was also not very pleased with me at that moment, and told me an expression in Russian that (sort of) means: “You don’t give them enough credit. You really don’t understand the hardships that the Shluchim go through. If you would understand, then you would know that they have no time to waste on me.”

### Suggested Lesson

The Rebbetzin wanted Mrs. Kahan to understand how hard the Shluchim work. She was **proud of the Shluchim’s determination** to carry out the Rebbe’s work, but at the same time, she was **concerned about how hard it was for them**. In those days, just getting kosher food was difficult; some *Shluchos* made their own cheese from milk from the farm. She knew all this.

She was **in awe of their *mesiras nefesh* for the Rebbe’s work** and for bringing Yiddishkeit to all far-flung places of the world.

This connection was manifest very clearly on the night of Chof Beis Shevat, when, very shortly after the Rebbetzin’s passing, the Rebbe instructed “מען זאל מודיע זיין די שלוהים – the Shluchim should be informed”

In his *sicha* to the Kinus Hashluchos in תשנ"א - 5751, the Rebbe tells the Shluchos that they are Shluchos of all Jewish women, then adding in a special footnote, “and especially of the wives of *tzaddikim*, the *nesi’im* of the Jewish people.” The Rebbe is stating that they are Shluchim and Shluchos of the Rebbetzin, as well!

# 10. Mitzvah Tanks in Eretz Yisrael

As told by Mrs. Louise Hager

## Background

The Rebbe invented the idea of people going to every single place where Jews might be, and bringing the joy of Yiddishkeit to them.

The Rebbe had a special love for the soldiers who were protecting the Yidden in Eretz Yisrael, and always saw to it that the *chasidim* bring them as much Yiddishkeit and *simcha* as possible. Lubavitcher *chasidim* would travel throughout Eretz Yisrael before and during every Yom Tov, bringing the soldiers the joy and the *mitzvos* of that Yom Tov. So on Sukos, Chanukah, Purim, Pesach and other times it was very common to see *chasidim* in army bases all over Israel, even in the most dangerous areas, celebrating with the soldiers.

# 10. Mitzvah Tanks in Eretz Yisrael



I visited and spoke with the Rebbetzin often. Every time I came or spoke with her, she was quick to tell me of what the Rebbe had been doing, about the new projects and the latest *mitvza*. She spoke of Tzivos Hashem, *Mitzvah Neshek*, and the many others. She spoke of the work of the *chasidim* in Eretz Yisrael and the work they are doing with the soldiers there.

Once when I was there, she asked somebody to bring in a film of the Mitzvah Tanks in Eretz Yisroel when they went out to the soldiers, to the far-flung areas. She was so excited to show it to me. She was so impressed with the *chasidim*, their dancing and singing with the soldiers, and distributing some good food to the soldiers on those lonely bases.

She had been so, so impressed with this film, and she wanted me to share the *nachas* of seeing what the Rebbe had done.

In the years when the Rebbe had just started Tzivos Hashem she said to me, "I know how it's working here in America, but how have the children reacted in London?"

Of course, I was able to tell her of the great excitement and how keen the kids were to go up in rank and what was happening.

And her eyes just shone. And this huge smile came on her face, and she said, it was almost shyly: "My husband had a good idea, didn't he?"

## Suggested Lesson

Mrs. Hager continues: "It was just wonderful to hear how much *nachas* she felt, how much she shared the Rebbe's life. I don't think many people realize just how much she shared his life, and how important she was to him."

The **Rebbetzin took such pride in the Rebbe's life mission** of bringing Yiddishkeit to every Jew, no matter where they could be found. She was proud of his initiatives and programs.

She got *personal nachas* to see the Rebbe's ideas being implemented and enhancing Yiddishkeit. She loved hearing that the children were enjoying to be involved in Tzivos Hashem. She loved hearing about the work and success of the Shluchim. She loved hearing about the work being done with the soldiers in Eretz Yisrael. She was excited to be able to *show* the Rebbe's work being carried out by the *chasidim*.

## 11. Working Together

As told by Rabbi Asher Zeilingold

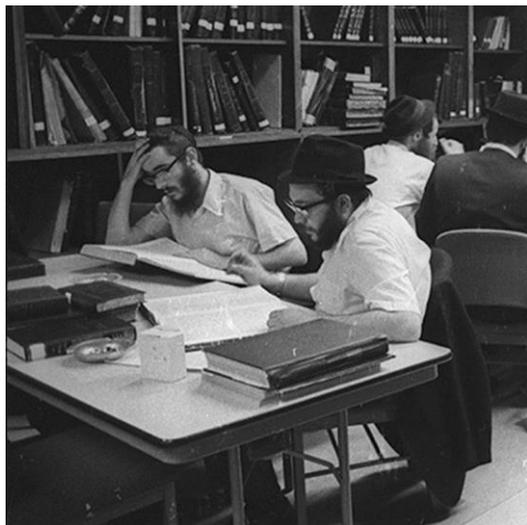
### Background

From the stories told here and many others it is clear the Rebbetzin was very involved in all areas in Lubavitch and that the Rebbe discussed a tremendous amount with her. She once said, "Before my husband launches a new *mivtzah* he spends an incredible amount of time thinking through every possibility and aspect of it, to ensure it is the right thing."

The Rebbe and Rebbetzin would not spend a lot of time together, however the Rebbe would make sure to set aside time every day spend with the Rebbetzin. He once told Dr. Weiss that he has tea with the Rebbetzin every single day. (Needless to say, we have no idea what they would discuss.)

Rabbi Asher Zeilengold is a *rov* in Minneapolis, MN.

## 11. Working Together



On Pesach in the 5720s – 5760s, the Rebbe would hold the *seder* in the apartment of the Friediker Rebbe in 770.

I was one of a group of *bachurim* that would walk behind the Rebbe to escort him home at night, so he shouldn't walk home alone. Yom Tov, however, was the one time that the Rebbe and the Rebbetzin would walk home together from 770.

After the *seder*, the Rebbe and Rebbetzin were walking down Union Street toward Kingston Avenue. They stopped in front of the building that would later become the Kollel (on Union street, two houses away from Kingston).

They stood in front of the building for about fifteen minutes, talking animatedly and pointing at the building, as if they were planning how the space might be used, and what construction would be needed to make it into a good space for the Kollel men. Perhaps to move a wall here, and remove another one from there. Make a room here, and add some shelving there.

## Suggested Lesson

Because she really lived out of the public eye, most *chasidim* didn't see much of what the Rebbetzin was involved in. **But the Rebbetzin was the Rebbe's partner in life.** There are many accounts of the Rebbe relating to people things he heard from the Rebbetzin, and of the Rebbetzin mentioning things she had discussed with the Rebbe.

## Section wrap up – The Rebbetzin's Dedication to Rebbe's *Inyanim* – Stories 6 - 11

1. Together, look at the images of the stories in this segment and discuss the various angles of being committed to the Rebbe's *inyanim* from those stories. You might write their words on the board or on large pieces of paper.

The Rebbetzin was the epitome of being committed to the Rebbe's work, in her capacity. Being committed means different things – there is a role for everyone.

- **Taking pride** in the overall mission (spreading Yiddishkeit), and to the specific initiatives (*mitzoyim*, Tzivos Hashem, mitzvah tanks, Shluchim, new Chabad Houses)
- **Understanding and appreciating the efforts** and sacrifices of every individual working for the mission (Shluchim moving to far-flung places, people who are working beyond their own comfort zones)
- **Supporting, inspiring and encouraging** the “foot soldiers” – emotionally, financially.
- **Actively being involved** in the work according to our strengths and limitations.

What might be some ways that we can **emulate the Rebbetzin's way of being**, especially in regards to **being committed to the Rebbe's *inyanim***? Think of one way that you might emulate the Rebbetzin's way of being. Think of a **scenario** that you can be more involved in the Rebbe's *inyanim*.

2. Students should write down their ideas. Give them 2 minutes of absolute silence for all students to think and write down an idea. Then allow several students to share their ideas.

## Section 3 – *Chasid* of the Rebbe

### 12. The Overturned Becher

As told by Rabbi Menachem Junik

#### Background

The Junik family had a close connection with the Rebbetzin. Reb Berel Junik a"h, (the father of Rabbi Menachem Junik) escaped from Russia together with the Rebbe's mother, Rebbetzin Chana. When he arrived in New York four years later, in תש"ו - 1950 he merited to build a deep connection with the Rebbe and Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, and he would often visit Rebbetzin Chana.

Over the years, the Rebbe gave a number of tasks to Reb Berel. Being the *chasid* that he was, he kept everything very quiet and meanwhile did all he could to be of assistance to the Rebbe and Rebbetzin. When his children grew up, they too took a part in assisting the Rebbe and the Rebbetzin. They were *zoche* to visit with the Rebbetzin through the years.

## 12. The Overturned Becher



On the night of Simchas Torah תשמ"ו - 1945, the Rebbe held an extraordinarily lively *farbrengen* before *hakafos*. After the first *sicha*, the Rebbe stood up at his place and danced to the *nigun* vigorously.

Later in the *farbrengen*, the Rebbe finished the wine in his *becher* and then turned it over, and instructed everyone else to do the same. The Rebbe waved the *becher* from side to side during the singing, and afterwards he explained the source for his actions according to *nigleh*, comparing this to the upside-down cups on the *menorah* in the Beis Hamikdash.

Later that evening, I came to the Rebbetzin, who was staying at the library, and told her about the *farbrengen*. I described to the Rebbetzin how the Rebbe had turned over his *becher* and had told everyone to do the same.

As she was listening to me, I noticed that the Rebbetzin had taken a small bottle of liqueur that was standing on the table and turned it over. She did it in a way that was almost entirely unnoticeable.

#### Suggested Lesson

The Rebbetzin was a **real *chasid* of the Rebbe**. The Rebbe had asked that everyone turn over their becher, and she did so too, as soon as she heard about this directive.

As somebody who was on such a high level herself, and who had grown up in the home of the Frierdiker Rebbe and was the Rebbe's partner in life, the Rebbetzin could have easily seen the Rebbe's gesture and instruction as something for the *bachurim* in 770 to do, but not for her! Instead, she saw the Rebbe's action as something that she, too, should do, like every "simple" *chasid*.

## 13. Shielding the Rebbe

As told by Rabbi Zalman Gurary

### Background

Rabbi Zalman Gurary was a *chasid* who had a close connection with the Rebbe's family from Europe. In addition to being involved in many areas of Lubavitch, sponsoring many *seforim* and being involved in many *shlichusen* for the Rebbe, he knew the Rebbetzin, and was involved in her medical treatment.

## 13. Shielding the Rebbe



Reb Zalman once took the Rebbetzin to see an eye specialist. At the end of the examination, the doctor explained that there are two different options for treating her eyes, and she should choose which treatment to have.

In the car ride home, Reb Zalman mentioned that the Rebbetzin would surely ask the Rebbe which treatment to undertake. Reb Zalman knew that thousands of Jews around the world request the Rebbe's advice on such matters, and surely the Rebbetzin would do the same. The Rebbetzin replied that she would absolutely not do. She did not want to give the Rebbe any *agmas nefesh* (pain), and therefore, she said, Reb Zalman should advise her instead on the methods of treatment.

Reb Zalman didn't know what to do, as the Rebbetzin wanted his help in making her decision! Finally, he wrote the entire story to the Rebbe, asking him what he should advise the Rebbetzin. In the answer, the Rebbe directed him regarding the treatment, and then added that he should not tell the Rebbetzin that he had told the Rebbe about her medical problem, because it make *her* unhappy to know that the Rebbe knew of her problem!

### Suggested Lesson

There are many similar stories of how the Rebbe and the Rebbetzin each went to extreme lengths to shield the other from knowing that they were in any type of pain, etc.

The Rebbetzin knew how busy the Rebbe was. She knew how late he came home every night. **She saw how people brought their problems and questions to the Rebbe, and how the Rebbe took their problems so personally.** She didn't want to add any more stress to the Rebbe. She wanted him to be able to continue his work without concern for her health.

But, on the other hand, we also know that she *did* ask the Rebbe for *brachos* for other people, or many occasions! For that she was willing to trouble the Rebbe. She put the *chasidim's* needs before her own.

# 14. Clarity During Crisis

As told by Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky

## Background

On Shemini Atzeres תשל"ח - 1977, during Hakofos in the big Shul of 770, the Rebbe suffered a massive heart attack. Several doctors examined the Rebbe and declared that he must go to a hospital. The Rebbe however, said that he wanted to stay in 770. Most of the doctors, fearing the outcome of treating such an important patient outside of a hospital, simply left. Early the next morning, the Rebbe suffered a second stronger heart attack (it is during this second heart attack that our story takes place).

Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky was a secretary of the Rebbe, and was involved in many areas of the Rebbe's work. Following the heart attack, he was involved with the Rebbe's medical care, and eventually was the one to recruited Dr. Weiss to join the medical team.

**NOTE:** This story has a 4<sup>th</sup> slide – an image of Rabbi Krinsky and Dr. Weiss.

## 14. Clarity During Crisis

It was five-thirty in the morning on Shemini Atzeres תשל"ח – 1977 The Rebbe's heartbeat was faltering; he was going through a second massive heart attack. It was a clear situation of *pikuach nefesh*, danger to the Rebbe's life. The Rebbe had made it very clear earlier that night that he wished to remain in 770, despite the insistence of all the doctors who were present that he must be taken to the hospital immediately. The hospital had equipment, medicine and cardiologists (doctors who specialize in hearts), and nurses on staff.

As we were discussing the terrible emergency that was going on, the Rebbetzin came down from the second floor. The doctors told her they had decided that there was no time to waste; the Rebbe's life was in danger! They must take the Rebbe to Mt. Sinai hospital immediately.

Very calmly, the Rebbetzin asked, "And what does my husband say about this?" The doctors explained that the Rebbe clearly does not want to go to a hospital; he had said earlier that he wanted to be treated in 770. The few of us who were standing there waited for the Rebbetzin's response. As the Rebbe's wife, the ultimate decision was hers.

Without hesitation, she said, "Throughout all the years that I know my husband, there was never a moment during which he was not in total control of himself. I cannot allow you to take him against his will."

It was an incredibly scary moment. Only later that day did Dr. Ira Weiss joined the team and the Rebbe was treated in his room at 770, and BH, the Rebbe made a full recovery.



## Suggested Lesson

Several cardiologists who had seen the Rebbe and they all had the same conclusion, that the Rebbe must be treated in a hospital. At this point, no doctor was willing to take the responsibility to treat the Rebbe at 770!

To have the courage and the *emunah* in the Rebbe to make such a decision, against the overwhelming opinion of all the doctors and knowing that there isn't a doctor who is even ready to treat the Rebbe, when his life was in danger can only be attributed to her **strong recognition and extreme bitul to the Rebbe**. You have to realize – it wasn't only a *chasid* saying that we must do what the Rebbe wants. By telling them not to take the Rebbe to the hospital, she was taking the entire responsibility for his fate on her own shoulders!

# 15. The Rebbe Belongs to Chasidim

As told by Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky

## Background

In the summer of תשמ"ה – 1985 a relative of the Rebbe had stolen hundreds of *sefarim* from the Friediker Rebbe's library. When this was discovered he refused to go to a Din Torah and a court case ensued over who the library belongs to: The Friediker Rebbe as a private person – and by inheritance, to his children and grandchildren – or to the Chabad-Lubavitch movement and the *chasidim*.

This matter pained the Rebbe tremendously and he spent many hours explaining that a Rebbe's identity is fully spiritual, and therefore he and his belongings – especially the *sefarim* – are fully devoted to, and belong to, his *chasidim*. So, in essence, this case was challenging what a Rebbe means.

During the preparation for the court case many people were deposed, including the Rebbetzin.

## 15. The Rebbe Belongs to Chasidim



In Kislev of תשמ"ו – 1985, we were preparing for three months on the paperwork, documents and depositions needed for the federal trial. Concerned about the stress associated with giving a deposition, I asked the Rebbe if we should try to avoid subjecting the Rebbetzin to having to go through one. Sitting through a deposition is not a pleasant task, especially for an elderly person. But the Rebbe answered that I should not worry about how she would do, she will come through with flying colors.

Her deposition took place in her home, at her dining room table, surrounded by our lawyers, the opponents and their lawyers, and a whole team of assistants. Depositions are generally very confrontational, as the attorneys try to confuse the witness. Throughout the entire proceedings, however, the Rebbetzin remained regal and thoroughly composed. The Rebbetzin was extremely precise and concise in her answers, never uttering an extra word.

The opposing attorneys became very frustrated at not being able to intimidate this witness. In the end, they threw down their pencils in frustration. At the end of the deposition, one of the lawyers asked bluntly, "Mrs. Schneerson, in your opinion, who did the books in the library belong to, your father or the community?" The Rebbetzin answered, that the *seforim* belong to the *chasidim*, because "my father, and everything he had belonged to the *chasidim*." In the end, the Rebbetzin's deposition was, in fact, a very critical factor in the victory of the case.

When the Rebbe heard about this, he said, "I said she would come through with flying colors." During the trial, the judge asked to watch a video of a portion of the Rebbetzin's deposition. Although during the trial he never expressed what he was thinking, after watching the Rebbetzin's testimony, he said: "remarkable!"

## Suggested Lesson

More than once, the Rebbe mentioned the importance of the Rebbetzin's comment in the case. The Rebbetzin truly felt this way. **As a daughter of a Rebbe, as a granddaughter of a Rebbe, as the wife of the Rebbe, she had experienced this as the way the Rebbeim lived** and saw their role as a *neshama klolis*. Everything they did, said, and breathed - was always for the Chasidim.

And in her role as the wife of the Rebbe, she also dedicated her life to the Rebbe and the *chasidim*. She gave the Rebbe to the *chasidim*.

The Rebbe later said that the Rebbetzin's testimony was pivotal to the successful verdict in the court case.

# 16. Yechidus

As told by Mrs. Esther Sternberg

## Background

In the years after תשמ"א - 1981 following important days on the Jewish and *chasidische* calendar such as after Tishrei, Shavuos, Yud Shevat, etc., the Rebbe would hold a general *yechidus*. First, for all the guests, then for the *chasanim* and *kalos*, all bar and bas mitzvah boys and girls, and finally for the *bochurim*.

The *yechidus* following Yud Shevat of תשמ"ח - 1988 was postponed for many days -- each day for another reason. And it was already the twentieth day of שבט, and the guests that usually have a *yechidus*; they didn't have it yet. So that night was going to be the *yechidus*.

Mrs. Sternberg is the daughter of Rabbi Zalman Gurary and heads the International Mitzvah Neshek Campaign. She also assisted her father in his involvement with the Rebbetzin.

# 16. Yechidus



On Chof Shevat, Monday, תשמ"ח - 1988 the Rebbetzin had a medical issue, and the doctor wanted her to go to the hospital for some tests. The Rebbetzin replied emphatically that she would not going to the hospital that day.

And then she added: "You may not tell my husband anything about this today. Because there is supposed to be *yechidus* for the guests who came for Yud Shevat, and if I go to the hospital, my husband will cancel the *yechidus*. Many *chasidim* are waiting for this *yechidus*."

I can assure you that she didn't know any of the people that she had a personal reason that these people have to have a *yechidus*. She knew the *chasidim* are waiting, and how could she take the Rebbe away from them when they're waiting for *yechidus*. She knew that if the Rebbe would know she's not well, he'd cancel the *yechidus*, and what a disappointment it would be for them. So she gave up being treated that whole day.

## Suggested Lesson

Many people speak of the personal sacrifice that the Rebbetzin made to enable the Rebbe to always be available for the needs of klal Yisroel. This particular story of her *mesiras nefesh* for *chassidim*, just before her *histalkus*, personifies her entire life as our Rebbetzin.

The next night, Tuesday night, the Rebbetzin passed away. We know everything is from Hashem, but she gave up a whole day, at 87 years of age, being treated for something that the doctor felt she should be in the hospital for, only because there are *chasidim* who are waiting to have their *yechidus*.

## Section wrap up – *Chasid* of the Rebbe – Stories 12-16

1. Together, look at the images of the stories shared in this segment and discuss the various angles of being the Rebbe's *chasid* learned from those stories. You might write their words on the board or on large pieces of paper.
2. How might we emulate the Rebbetzin?

What might be some ways that we can **emulate the Rebbetzin's way of being**, especially in regards to **being a *chasid* of the Rebbe**? Think of one way that you might further strengthen your connection to the Rebbe, and your devotion following to his teachings and guidance?

Students should write down their ideas. Give them 2 minutes of absolute silence for all students to think and write down an idea. Then allow several students to share their ideas.

## Unit wrap up – *Hachlata* –

- Students should choose one or more ways that they would like to emulate the Rebbetzin (an *hachlata*) and put in an envelope to be opened on Rebbetzin's birthday. The teacher collects the sealed envelopes and redistributes on specific date.
- Might be cool for the kids to write on carbon paper - so they keep a copy and a copy goes in the envelope. Some modern kids have never used carbon paper.

# Practical Suggestions for Chof Beis Shevat



You might use this slide as a visual about the many points below.

- During *shiva* the Rebbe founded *Keren Hachomesh*. It is a fund devoted to women's causes (such as girl's educational institutions), and the Rebbe spoke about it at length on the last day of *shiva*. On Chof Beis Shevat in the years that followed, the Rebbe also requested that *tzedaka* be given in the amount of 470, the numerical value of the Rebbetzin's name.<sup>18</sup>  
**Practical suggestion: Give *tzedaka* in amounts of 470, especially to *Keren Hachomesh*.**
- On the Rebbetzin's first *yahrzeit*, the Rebbe requested that people set times for *shiurei Torah*, and set up new public *shiurim*, and to strengthen existing ones -- and to set them up in a particular time and place.<sup>19</sup>  
**Practical suggestion: Set up a new Torah *shiur*.**
- On Chof Beis Shevat, the Rebbe suggested that we influence other people, especially in the three special *mitzvos* of women.<sup>20</sup>  
**Practical suggestion: Influence a Jewish woman or girl to light Shabbos candles, and/or keep Kosher.**
- The Rebbe said that when organizations are made in her memory it connects the Rebbetzin with the building. Do you know of an organization or building with the Rebbetzin's name?<sup>21</sup>  
**Practical suggestion: Visit an organization named after the Rebbetzin, and find a way to help that organization.**

<sup>18</sup> *Sefer Hasichos* 5750 vol. 1 p. 298

<sup>19</sup> *Sefer Hasichos* 5749 vol. 1 p. 236

<sup>20</sup> *Sefer Hasichos* 5750 vol. 1 p. 297

<sup>21</sup> *Sefer Hasichos* 5749 vol. 1 p. 236

- On Rebbetzin's birthday, the 25th of Adar, one month after the Rebbetzin's passing, the Rebbe began a new project in her memory and *l'iluy nishmasa*: That every individual mark their birthday with a series of special directives.

**Practical suggestion: Celebrate your Jewish birthday with the Rebbe's special directives for birthdays.**

- On many occasions in *sichos* and one-on-one conversations, the Rebbe requested that we learn from the Rebbetzin and follow in her ways. For example, during *nichum aveilim*, the Rebbe told Mr. Dov Hikind: "If everyone will try his or her best to emulate her and to fulfill her wishes, then this will be the best *nachas* for the [Rebbetzin's] *neshama*, and will also bring great benefit for all who follow in her ways."

The Rebbe said that when a girl is named after the Rebbetzin and raised in her spirit, this is the most real example of "her children are alive."<sup>22</sup> Do you have sisters, classmates named after the Rebbetzin? When we each learn from the Rebbetzin and carry on her life, as a child of the Rebbetzin, we each are a living proof that "her children are alive."

**Practical suggestion: Make a *hachlata* based on the lessons we learned from the Rebbetzin's life.**

- Many *chasidim* observe the *minhagei yahrzeit* for the Rebbetzin, including: Learning *mishnayos* with the letters of her name and lighting a *yahrzeit* candle, and conducting a *farbrengen* about ways to learn from her.

**Practical suggestion: Take a few minutes during supper on 22 Shevat to talk about the Rebbetzin, light a *yahrzeit* candle and learn Mishnayos.**

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<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*

**מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות  
לכ"ק אדמו"ר זצוקללה"ה נבג"מ זי"ע**

**ולזכרון  
הרבנית הצדקנית מרת חיה מושקא נ"ע זי"ע שניאורסאהן  
מליובאוויטש**

**לרגל יום ההסתלקות-הילולא כ"ב שבט**

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**לזכות הרה"ת יוסף יצחק בן שרה וזוגתו צלחה חנה בת רבקה גיטל וב"ב שיחיו  
לאורך ימים ושנים טובות ובריאות מתוך אושר, שמחה והרחבה בגו"ר  
ולהצלחה רבה בעבודתם הק'**

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**ולזכות  
החתן הרה"ת ר' לוי  
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