

1. Dreidel with Candies

As told by Mrs. Louise Hager



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.

והחיותו אל לבו
TAKE to HEART 

2. Optimism in the Face of Illness

As told by Mrs. Louise Hager



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.)

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3. The Bachurim from Satmar

ב"ה

As told by Mrs. Leah Kahan



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- 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?

4. The Spilled Punch

ב"ה

As told by Rabbi Shmuel Lew



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!"

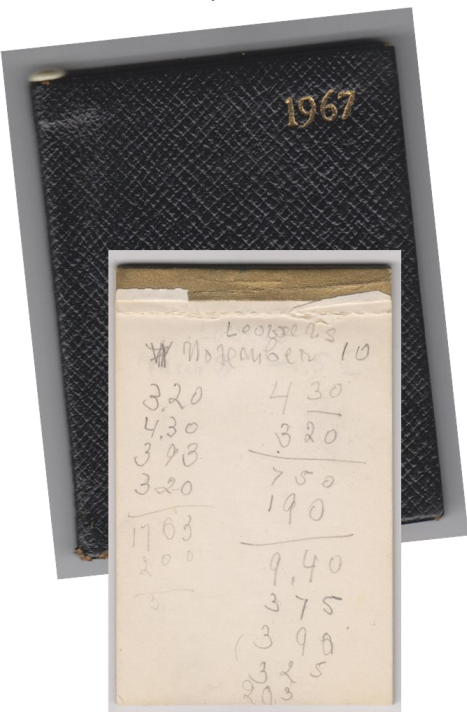
Afterwards, my father-in-law said that the Rebbetzin looked so delighted by my spill, that he was tempted to spill another glass.

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5. Respecting with Time and Money

ב"ה

As told by Rabbi Mendel Notik



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 Frieddiker 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.

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6. Go for it!

ב"ה

As told by Mrs. Louise Hager



The Rebbe had been encouraging both men and women to be more involved in *mitvtzoyim*. 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 *mitvtzoim*. 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 *mitvtzoyim*. 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!"

והחיותו אל לבו
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As told by Dr. Alan Newmark



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*.

8. Concern for the New Shluchim

As told by Mrs. Bassie Azimov



In תשל"ח - 1978 I 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.

9. A gift from the Shluchos

ב"ה

As told by Mrs. Leah Kahan



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 — שײן און אזוי בכבוד” — and they do it so beautifully and so respectfully.”

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.”

והחיות אל לב
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10. Mitzvah Tanks in Eretz Yisrael

ב"ה

As told by Mrs. Louise Hager



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, Mivtza 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?”

והחיות אל לב
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11. Working Together

ב"ה

As told by Rabbi Asher Zeilengold



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

I was one of a group of bochurim 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.

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12. The Overturned Becher

ב"ה

As told by Rabbi Menachem Junik



On the night of Simchas Torah תשמ"ו — 1985, he Rebbe held an extraordinarily lively farbrengen before hakofos. 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.

והחיותו אל לבו
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13. Shielding the Rebbe

ב"ה

As told by Rabbi Zalman Gurary



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!

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14. Clarity During Crisis

ב"ה

As told by Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky



It was five-thirty in the morning on Shemini Atzeres תשל"ז — 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."

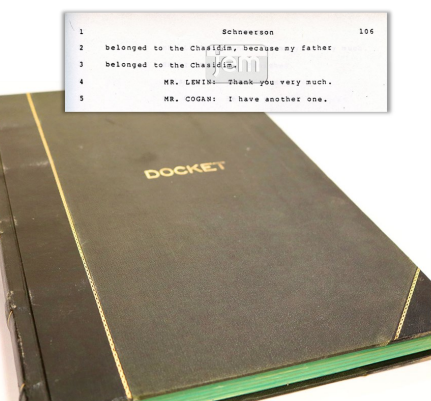
It was an incredibly scary moment. Only later that day did Dr. Ira Weiss joined the team and the Rebbe was treated in his room at 770, and BH, the Rebbe made a full recovery.

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15. The Rebbe Belongs to Chasidim

ב"ה

As told by Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky



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!"

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16. Yechidus

ב"ה

As told by Mrs. Esther Sternberg



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.

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