



FROM THE DESK OF RABBI KALMAN BAUMANN

A Favorable Judgment

Dear Parents,

The current trends in child development continue to indicate that children are feeling independent at an earlier age, are less respectful of adults and in general seem quick to reject their parents' instructions and guidance. Children react with less obedience to authority than in earlier generations, but **don't be fooled into thinking they are not profoundly influenced by parents' values and attitudes.**

Drawing from the insights of the *The Alter of Slabodka*, the great giant of *Mussar*, Rabbi Yisroel Roll in his book "*Bring out the Best*" explains that one reason for *Tzora'as* - the leprosy-like affliction that comes upon the outer layer of the body of one who spoke *Lashon Hora*, is a *Mida-K'neged-Mida*; a measure-for-measure consequence. A person who speaks ill of another has decided, based upon superficial evidence that the person is unworthy of respect - therefore he, the speaker of *Lashon Hora* is afflicted superficially - with a skin disease. Someone who thinks more deeply and objectively analyzes another's behavior will have a greater likelihood of coming to a more favorable explanation for what that person did, than one who merely sees, does not stop to think or delve into reasons, but superficially jumps to a negative conclusion, and then proceeds to share that impression with others.

Each one of us has a unique approach and attitude when it comes to viewing the world around us and specifically judging the actions of others. We are constantly forming value judgments about others and their behavior. It forms a large part of who we are. **Whether we realize it or not - we are constantly judging others.**

Our children are not that independent that they don't absorb our attitudes, approach and worldview when it comes to judging others. We have such a profound influence on our child's developing view of people and the world around them. They may seem oblivious to our calls to dinner, homework and bedtime, but they are so very aware of who, what and how we judge and how we interpret what goes on around us. We owe it to them - and us, to go beyond the superficial, to find the inherent goodness that lies buried within every human being, and only then to proceed to judgment.

Our young ones are watching, and listening and forming their own judgments. Let's make sure that the courtroom of our mind is open, fair, favorable of others and a positive influence on our developing children.

May you have a deeply fulfilling *Shabbos*,



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