

## A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



## THE BAGEL TRUCK

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

Chaim lived in New York and owned a popular bagel store which offered delivery service. The delivery truck had the logo and name of his bagel store prominently displayed on every side of the truck.

Carlos, who was not Jewish, was in charge of deliveries. Since Carlos used the delivery truck most of the day, Chaim let Carlos use the truck for his personal use. Carlos would often take the truck home and would use it for



## BIT BY BIT

Excerpted from a talk by Rav Aaron Lopiansky

We have begun the mitzvah of counting the Omer in anticipation of Shavuot, on which we will receive the Torah. The function of this count is to prepare ourselves, to make ourselves worthy to become the carriers of HaShem's Torah. To be the carriers of the Word of HaShem throughout the world and throughout history we need to become people of exceptional qualities. The period of the Omer is designated for developing that change. The reason we count each day is because change requires continuous development.

The question is why we do not begin the count immediately upon our exodus. On the first day of Pesach we should start to count. Why wait until the second day?

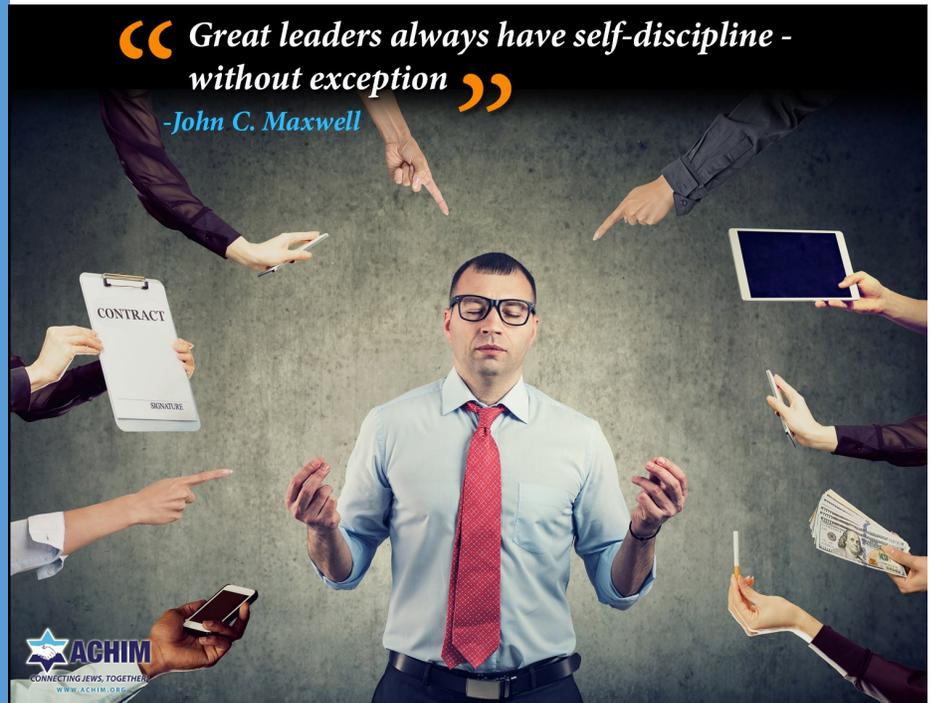
The extreme difficulty with generating change is that the human condition always goes back to what it is comfortable with. If we were to suddenly, under the influence of some inspiring event, make a major change, this change would quickly dissipate once the inspiration wears off. In no time at all we would be back to our old selves. This is very common with those who try leaving their addiction to smoking, eating and other forms of addictions. An inspiration can move them to throw away their cigarettes but after a week or two they will be back to where they were before.

small local errands not related to delivering bagels.

One year right before Pesach, as Chaim sold all of his chametz equipment for Pesach, he thought about the delivery truck. He wondered if it was ok for Carlos to drive the bagel delivery truck on Pesach. Even though the truck would be driving around with Carlos who was not Jewish, perhaps it would give the impression to the whole city that Chaim's bagel store was open for business on Pesach. Should Chaim tell Carlos not to use the truck for the duration of Pesach? Carlos would likely be disappointed, but perhaps that is what he needed to do.

Or perhaps it would be fine and everyone would assume that it must be the non Jewish driver who was driving around for personal use.

What do you think?



The way to successfully make change is to take inspiration when it occurs and begin a path of slow gradual change. If the change is gradual then with each negligible change, we create a new standard. Since the change is negligible we will not reject it. It will be hard to make that change but we will succeed because it is negligible. Once that change is set we can move on to the next negligible change and let that change set it. Over time we will discover the tremendous change that has transpired.

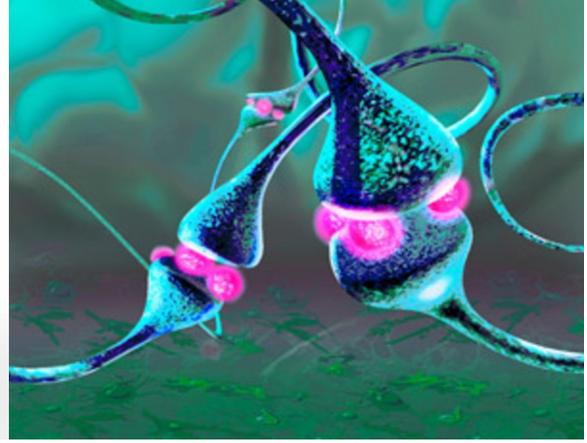
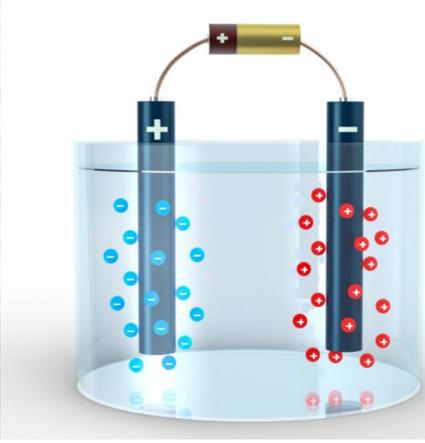
In recognition of this human condition, HaShem gave us a super inspiration that launched us into committing ourselves to change. This is what happened on the first day of Pesach. After that, we need to begin the hard work of gradual change. The hard work of committing to a slow consistent ongoing bit-by-bit change begins on that second day.

The counting of the Omer was that slow change that endures 49 days. The first day does not get counted because that was a gift from HaShem which launched us into change. Once that passes the hard work of consistent change begins.

May HaShem grant us the tenacity necessary to succeed in this great quest. All we need to accomplish is one small negligible change.

Have a wonderful Yom Tov and Shabbos.

**Paysach Diskind**



# SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

## POWERED BY ELECTROLYTES

Last week we learned that tears are salty because they contain electrolytes which contain sodium.

Let's look at electrolytes (pictured top right) a bit deeper. What exactly do they do? We will learn that Hashem gave these tiny particles critical powers that keep us alive.

"Electrolyte" is the umbrella term for particles that carry a positive or negative electric charge.

Electrolytes can be found in blood, sweat and urine.

When minerals such as Sodium, Potassium, Chloride, Calcium, Magnesium, Phosphate, and Bicarbonate dissolve in a fluid, they form electrolytes. These are positive or negative ions used in metabolic processes. The key principle that electrolytes rely on is that certain chemical elements can naturally hold a positive or a negative electrical charge. When those elements are dissolved in a liquid, that liquid can then conduct electricity.

How exactly does this work? An example of this is salt water, which conducts electricity easily. Salt consists of sodium (positively charged) and chlorine (negatively charged), and when combined, their charges balance each other out. Atoms with an electrical charge are called ions (positive ions are called cations, while negative ions are called anions).

Dissolving salt in water splits the sodium and chlorine atoms apart, which means they go back to being positively and negatively charged. Electricity jumps between the sodium and chlorine ions — not the water molecules — because they have opposite electrical charges. Similar principles are what gives a battery, like we use in a flashlight, its electrical charge.

How are electrolytes used in our body? They are required for at least four important bodily processes, including proper nerve function, proper muscle function, keeping you hydrated, and maintaining the proper acid-base balance.

Let's look at these jobs specifically.

**Nervous System Function:** Your brain sends electrical signals through your nerve cells to communicate with the cells throughout your body. These signals are called nervous impulses, and they are generated by changes to the electrical charge of the nerve cell membrane. How does this electrical charge change? This is where electrolytes come in. The changes occur due to the movement of the electrolyte sodium across the nerve cell membrane. When the electrolyte sodium moves, it sets off a chain reaction moving more sodium ions (and the change in charge) along the length of the nerve cell. To say it simply, electrolytes act similar to a battery and help produce electrical charges in your body. Just like electricity uses ions to travel from place to place in salt water, your body uses ions to transport chemical compounds in and out of cells.

**Muscle Function:** Electrolytes containing calcium are also needed to allow muscles to contract and move. Electrolytes allow muscle fibers to slide together and move over each other as the muscle short-

ens and contracts. Electrolytes containing magnesium are also required in this process so that the muscle fibers can slide outward and muscles can relax after contraction. (Parenthetically, it is interesting that the saltwater that we use with karpas, that represents the tears of the Jewish people, in an indirect way represents the substances needed to control the muscles of the hard working Jewish slaves, as well as the nerve endings of the pain wracked Jewish slaves.)

**Proper Hydration:** Water must be kept in the right amounts both inside and outside each cell in your body. Cells cannot have too little water or too much water. If it is too full, the cell can burst. If they have too little water and are dehydrated, they will shrivel up. What is the regulator to make sure the cells have the proper balance? That is where electrolytes come in. Electrolytes help maintain the proper fluid balance through osmosis. Osmosis is a process where water moves through the wall of a cell membrane from a dilute solution (more water and fewer electrolytes) toward a more concentrated solution (less water and more electrolytes).

**Maintain proper pH Levels:** To stay healthy, your body needs to regulate its internal pH. pH is a measure of how acidic or alkaline a solution is. In your body, it is regulated by chemical buffers, or weak acids and bases, which help minimize changes in your internal environment. To illustrate, your blood pH is regulated to stay at a pH of around 7.35 to 7.45. If it deviates from this, your body cannot function properly and you become unwell. Having the right balance of electrolytes is fundamental to maintaining your blood pH level.

How do we get electrolytes? Your body gets electrolytes or their components from what you eat and drink. Your kidneys filter excess electrolytes out of your body and into urine. You also lose electrolytes when you sweat. Electrolyte levels must stay within a fairly small range, or serious problems may arise.

Do we have to take supplements to increase our electrolytes? When you sweat, you lose both water and electrolytes, especially sodium and chloride. As a result, long periods of exercise or activity, particularly in the heat, can cause significant electrolyte loss. It's estimated that sweat contains about 40–60 ml of sodium per liter on average. But the actual amount of electrolytes lost through sweat can vary from person to person. In the US, the maximum recommended intake for sodium is 2,300 mg per day — which is equivalent to 6 grams or 1 teaspoon of table salt. Since around 90% of American adults consume way more than this amount, most people don't need to replace sodium lost from sweat.

However, certain populations, such as endurance athletes who are exercising for more than two hours or those who exercise in extreme heat, may want to consider drinking electrolyte-enriched sports drinks to replace their losses. For everyone else, getting the normal amount of sodium from foods and drinking water to remain hydrated is enough.

## THE GIFT TO THE REBBETZIN

Approximately 15 years before Rebbetzin Batsheva Kanievsky's passing, a frequent guest at the Kanievsky home purchased an expensive necklace and gave it to Rav Chaim to give it to the Rebbetzin as a gift before Yom Tov.

R' Chaim gave the necklace to his Rebbetzin and told her that she deserved it for all the sacrifices she had made for his learning. But the Rebbetzin responded that she already received many gifts. "The gifts you give me that I truly enjoy are the siyumim that you make all year round. Especially the Siyum HaTorah that you make on Erev Pesach. Please give the necklace to someone else."

She remained steadfast in her refusal to accept the gift, and R' Chaim finally gave the necklace to one of his daughters.

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### THE ANSWER

Regarding the question last week about the matzah in the washing machine, Rav Zilberstien wrote that it would be permitted for a Jewish adult to open the washing machine directly. This is because a kli shemelachto li'isur in this case is permitted even though they can use other matzah for the afikoman. This is because they want to use this specific matzah.

This week's TableTalk is dedicated by Lev and Sara Nemirovsky in memory of their parents  
Moisey Nemirovsky and Tsilya Dudnik  
Leib and Beyla Kushnir

משה בן לייב צילא בת מאטיל  
לייב בן יחזקאל ביילא בת יוסף

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