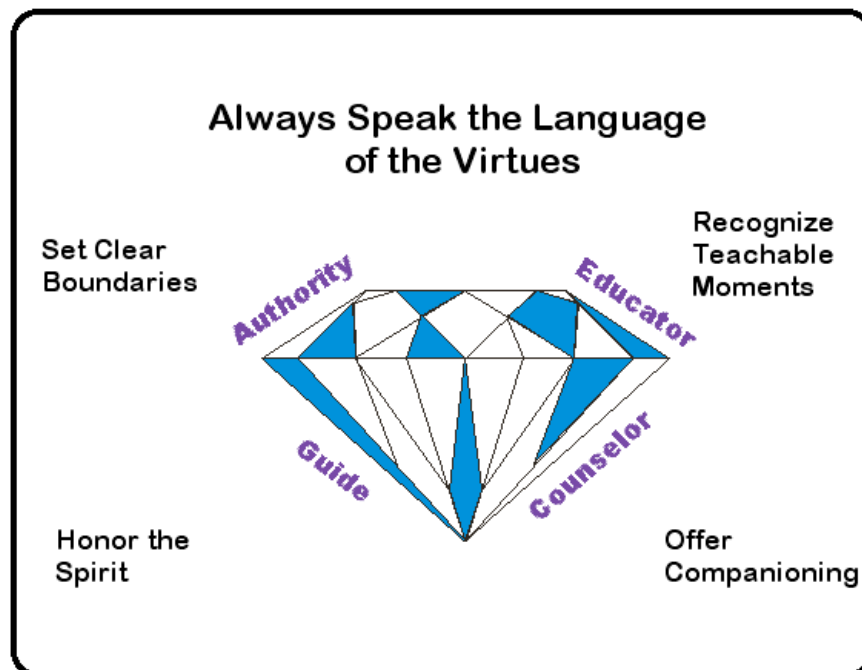




THE VIRTUES PROJECT™
Bringing Virtues to Life

A Lasting Legacy: Bringing Out the Best in Our Children and Ourselves



“If you are not a better person tomorrow than you are today, what need have you for a tomorrow?” – Rebbe Nachman of Breslov

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GEMS I WANT TO REMEMBER...



The Family Virtues Guide
“Parents are always saying children don’t come with a guide book. This is one.
This helps you get them on the right track for leading a good life.”
~Oprah



When You Thought I Wasn't Looking

Adapted from poem by Mary Rita Schilke Korzan

When you thought I wasn't looking,
You hung my first painting on the refrigerator
And I wanted to paint another.

When you thought I wasn't looking
You fed a stray cat
And I thought it was good to be kind to animals.

When you thought I wasn't looking
You baked a birthday cake just for me
And I knew that little things were special things.

When you thought I wasn't looking
You kissed me good-night
And I felt loved.

When you thought I wasn't looking
I saw tears come from your eyes
And I learned that sometimes things hurt—But that it's all right to cry.

When you thought I wasn't looking
You smiled
And it made me want to look that pretty too.

When you thought I wasn't looking
You cared
And I wanted to be everything I could be.

When you thought I wasn't looking—I looked . . .
And wanted to say thanks
For all those things you did
When you thought I wasn't looking.



Midot – The Gift of Character

By Maryana Harouni

Building self-esteem

im ein ani li mi li: "If I am not for myself, who will be for me?" - I have to learn how to take care of myself.

b'tzelem elohim: human beings are created in the image of God.

Identifying and enhancing personal strengths

yetzer hatov/yetzer hara: good and bad impulses - the importance of self-control.

bechirah chofsheet: freedom of choice - we are endowed with the ability to freely choose between good and evil.

achrayut: responsibility - from the Hebrew root *acher*, other; i.e. we must consider the needs of others and take responsibility for our choices.

Respecting self and others

achrayut (see above)

kvod ha'briyot: the dignity of all living things - we are enjoined to honor and respect all human beings. halbanat panim: public humiliation, literally, to cause someone's face to pale - in Jewish tradition, a behavior likened to murder!

Dealing with emotions

savlanut: patience - the ability to sometimes delay gratification for a greater good.

sheetuf b'tzaar: empathy, literally, to participate in another's difficulty.

gvurah: inner strength - in Pirkei Avot, heroism is defined as having the internal fortitude to control one's emotions, Avot, 4:1.

Communicating with others

emet: in Jewish tradition, truth is a primary value that should inform all interpersonal relationships.

shmirat halashon: guarding one's speech - thinking before talking and taking responsibility for one's words.

lshon harah: gossip, literally, evil speech - in Jewish tradition, the communication of gossip should be avoided at all cost!

lashon tov: literally, good speech - Jewish tradition places very strong emphasis on proper speech. Jewish law considers the *kashrut* of what comes out of our mouths - words - at least as important as the *kashrut* of what goes into them." (The Jewish Parents' Almanac, p.107)

Acting with consideration for self and others

im ein ani li mi li (see above)

v'avavta l'reacha kamocho: "love your friend/neighbor as you love yourself," i.e., extend to your fellow human being the same courtesy and acceptance you would want for yourself.

Sharing feelings constructively



kavod: honor, i.e., all people deserve to be dealt with in an honorable fashion - even if we are sharing difficult feelings.

ho'cheach tocheeach: rebuke one who has harmed you or hurt your feelings - one is not to harbor negative feelings against another, but should try to find a straight-forward way to share the difficult feelings - hopefully without exaggeration or the creation of resentment.

sovlanut: tolerance - the recognition of human diversity and the need to deal with each person as an individual.

teshuvah: returning/turning - usually translated as repentance, i.e., recognizing and acknowledging a wrong, righting the wrong, and given the opportunity, not repeating it.

Learning from and teaching others

talmud Torah: all of Jewish education is *talmud Torah* - one of the most important goals of Jewish education is to inspire the pursuit of life long Jewish learning.

talmid chacham: a scholar - literally, the student of one who has wisdom; i.e., a true scholar is always, first and foremost, a student.

la'asok b'divrei Torah: the *bracha* one says before the study of *Torah* - literally, to involve oneself in words of *Torah*, i.e., "The goal of learning in Judaism is not merely to understand the ideas and concepts of the *Torah*. The purpose of learning is both to teach others and to use the learning to affect Jewish behavior." (Encyclopedia of Moral and Ethical Issues, p.142)

aseh l'cha rav ukneh l'cha chaver: find for yourself both a suitable teacher and a compatible study partner, *Avot*, 1:6; in Jewish life, teaching and learning are part of a continuum.

Making, keeping, and ending friendships

kneh l'cha chaver: "buy" yourself a friend; i.e., true friendship grows out of the give and take of relationship, shared experiences, mutual support, and open communication - we "buy" friendship by offering ourselves in exchange; friendship based on proximity or interest in a particular activity will wither away unless it is nurtured by a desire to share life on a deeper level of intimacy and understanding.

kavod: see above - an enduring friendship must always be based on mutual respect.

emunah: faith/trust - an important element in any relationship, an absolute must in a friendship.

Sharing time, friends, and possessions

hakarat hatov: seeing the good in people; giving people the benefit of the doubt.

arevut: a pledge or a deposit - *arevut* encourages commitments of mutual aid and devotion between friends and amongst friends.

hakem takim imo: "you shall lift it together with him...", i.e., sharing the burdens of life is an important aspect of friendship.

Handling problems with others

savlanut (patience) and *sovlanut* (tolerance) - two important qualities in handling problems

bakesh shalom v'rodfehu: "seek peace and pursue it" - taking a positive approach and looking for mutually acceptable solutions to problems.





Virtues: The Gifts of Character

Assertiveness
Caring
Cleanliness
Commitment
Compassion
Confidence
Consideration
Cooperation
Courage
Courtesy
Creativity
Detachment
Determination
Diligence
Enthusiasm
Excellence
Flexibility
Forgiveness
Friendliness
Generosity
Gentleness
Helpfulness
Honesty
Honor
Humility
Idealism

Integrity
Joyfulness
Justice
Kindness
Love
Loyalty
Moderation
Modesty
Orderliness
Patience
Peacefulness
Perseverance
Purposefulness
Reliability
Respect
Responsibility
Self-Discipline
Service
Tact
Thankfulness
Tolerance
Trust
Trustworthiness
Understanding
Truthfulness

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The Virtues Project™



Bringing Virtues to Life

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MIDOT: THE GIFTS OF CHARACTER

Ahavat Tzion	Love of Israel	אהבת ציון
Anavah	Humility	ענוה
Dan L'Chaf Zechut	Give the Benefit of the Doubt	דן לכף זכות
Emet	Truthfulness	אמת
Erech Apayim	Slow to Anger	ארך אפיים
Hachnasat Orchim	Hospitality	הכנסת אורחים
Herut	Freedom	חרות
Hessed	Kindness	חסד
Hohma	Wisdom	חכמה
Kavod	Respect	כבוד
Klal Israel	Jewish Community	כלל ישראל
Lo Levayesh	Not Embarrassing	לא לבייש
Melachah	Work/Industriousness	מלאכה
Miyut Sichah	Minimizing Small Talk	מעוט שיחה
Nedivut	Generosity	גדיבות
Neemanut	Loyalty	נאמנות
Ometz Lev	Courage	אומץ לב
Pikuach Nefesh	Saving a Life	פקוח נפש
Rodef Shalom	Seeking Peace	רודף שלום
Sameach B'Chelko	Gratitude	שמח בחלקו
Sever Panim Yafot	A Pleasant Demeanor	סבר פנים יפות
Shmirat HaGuf	Taking Care of Your Body	שמירת הגוף
Simchah	Joy and Happiness	שמחה
Shalom	Peace	שלום
Talmud Torah	Studying Judaism	תלמוד תורה
Tikkun Olam	Repairing the World	תקון עולם
Tikvah	Hope	תקווה
Tzedakah	Helping Others	צדקה
Tzedek	Justice	צדק
Zikaron	Remembering	זכרו



MIDOT: THE GIFTS OF CHARACTER

Acceptance	Fidelity	Passion
Accountability	Flexibility	Patience
Appreciation	Forbearance	Peacefulness
Assertiveness	Forgiveness	Perceptiveness
Awe	Fortitude	Perseverance
Beauty	Friendliness	Prayerfulness
Caring	Generosity	Purity
Certitude	Gentleness	Purposefulness
Charity	Grace	Reliability
Cheerfulness	Gratitude	Resilience
Cleanliness	Helpfulness	Respect
Commitment	Honesty	Responsibility
Compassion	Honor	Reverence
Confidence	Hope	Righteousness
Consideration	Humanity	Sacrifice
Contentment	Humility	Self-discipline
Cooperation	Idealism	Serenity
Courage	Independence	Service
Courtesy	Initiative	Simplicity
Creativity	Integrity	Sincerity
Decisiveness	Joyfulness	Steadfastness
Detachment	Justice	Strength
Determination	Kindness	Tact
Devotion	Love	Thankfulness
Dignity	Loyalty	Thoughtfulness
Diligence	Mercy	Tolerance
Discernment	Mindfulness	Trust
Empathy	Moderation	Trustworthiness
Endurance	Modesty	Truthfulness
Enthusiasm	Nobility	Understanding
Excellence	Openness	Unity
Fairness	Optimism	Wisdom
Faith	Orderliness	Wonder
Faithfulness		Zeal



INTERACTIVE INTERVIEW



Directions: Choose a partner and take turns interviewing one another. Do not write or take notes. Just be present and listen.

1. Name someone you admire. This person may be a figure in history or a person in your life. What is the core midah this person practices? What attracts you to this midah?
2. Name one of your own strength midot, one that is strong and well-developed in you. Say a few words about how you live it.
3. Name a midah you would like to grow, one that is underdeveloped in you. Say a few words about how it is needed in your life.
4. What is one of the biggest challenges in your life right now? What midah would help you meet that challenge?
5. What are your hopes for the semester?
6. What is a source of joy in your life at this time?
7. Midot Acknowledgment: Interviewer, please give your partner a midot acknowledgment by telling them a midah you notice in them and specifically how you see it.

“I want to acknowledge you for the midah of _____ and the way you show it is _____.”

Taken from The Virtues Project Educator's Guide page 43.



THE FIVE STRATEGIES

The Five Strategies of The Virtues Project inspire individuals to live more authentic, joyful lives, families to raise children of compassion and integrity, educators to create safe, caring and high performing learning communities, and leaders to inspire excellence and ethics in the workplace.



1. Speak the Language of Midot

Language has the power to inspire or to discourage. Using midot to acknowledge, guide, correct and thank awakens the best within us.

What are your strength midot? What are your growth midot?



2. Recognize Teachable Moments

Recognizing the midot needed in daily challenges helps us to become lifelong learners open to the lessons of character.

What lessons are you learning at this time in your life?



3. Set Clear Boundaries

Boundaries based on respect and restorative justice create a climate of peace, cooperation and safety in our homes, schools and communities.

What boundaries do you have? What boundaries do you need?



4. Honor the Spirit

We sustain our vision and purpose by integrating midot into our activities, surroundings, celebrations and the arts.

How do you honor your personal spirit and the spirit of your group?



5. Offer Companionship

Being deeply present and listening with compassionate curiosity guides others to find clarity and to create their own solutions.

How well do you listen to others, to yourself? What really needs to be heard?



HOW TO SPEAK THE LANGUAGE OF MIDOT



THERE ARE USUALLY THREE ELEMENTS OF A MIDOT STATEMENT:

- 1) an opening phrase 2) a midah 3) how the midah is being shown or needs to be shown.

---TO ACKNOWLEDGE AND THANK---

When you see someone demonstrating a midah, especially a growth midah.

I acknowledge your	<i>determination</i>	in completing this huge task.
It was	<i>generous</i>	of you to share your lunch with your friend.
I honor your	<i>responsibility</i>	doing your chores everyday.
You demonstrated great	<i>courage</i>	telling me how you really feel.
Thank you for your	<i>flexibility</i>	meeting with me after school hours.

---TO GUIDE---

When you are inviting someone to call on a midah.

Please be	<i>diligent</i>	completing your homework carefully.
We need to be	<i>respectful</i>	when listening to what each person says.
Who will be	<i>helpful</i>	and empty the dishwasher?
I encourage you to be	<i>honest</i>	and tell me what is on your mind.
I would appreciate everyone's	<i>patience</i>	as we work out all of the details.

---TO CORRECT---

After there has been a mistaken behavior and you are bringing someone back to a midah.

Please be	<i>trustworthy</i>	and come home on time.
We need everyone to	<i>cooperate</i>	and fully participate.
What would help you be	<i>purposeful</i>	and complete this task?
There needs to be	<i>justice</i>	What would be fair to both of you?
Please be	<i>orderly</i>	and put things back after using them.

Write your own midot statement below. Check to see that it has all 3 elements.



WHO IS USING THEIR MIDOT TODAY?



A Midot Scavenger Hunt

Directions: *In the next 3 minutes, find people who fit the following descriptions & give them a midot acknowledgment. Replace “Someone who” with a stem that is authentic for you & then read the rest of the sentence. (You may have to change the verb tenses.)*

I see you...”

You...”

I want to acknowledge for...

1. Someone who showed caring by hugging someone today.
2. Someone who used determination by traveling over 30 miles to get to work.
3. Someone who used courtesy by holding the door open for someone else.
4. Someone who used joyfulness by singing in the shower or the car.
5. Someone who used humility by making an apology this past week.
6. Someone who practices unity by having friends of a variety of cultural, racial and religious backgrounds.
7. Someone who used generosity by making a donation of time or money to a worthwhile cause this past week.
8. Someone who used cleanliness by taking out the garbage.
9. Someone who used enthusiasm by being very excited about coming to this workshop today.
10. Someone who has been using excellence by speaking the language of the midot today.
11. Someone who used orderliness by straightening their desk or other personal belongings this week.
12. Someone who used detachment by not taking something personally.



RECOGNIZE TEACHABLE MOMENTS



“In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated and a child (person) humanized or de-humanized.” *Haim Ginott*

Turn stumbling blocks into stepping stones, by taking personal responsibility to clear up mistakes, by being open to learning from challenges and by replacing shaming with naming midot.

ACT with TACT is very useful in giving feedback to children and adults, in addressing goals or behaviors. It is a tool used by managers to give performance feedback to employees. In doing this, you are making a “positivity sandwich”. You are using the power of Midot Language.

Always remember that humility is the goal, not humiliation.

What gift of character are we really calling children to when we say...

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| 1. Stop yelling and get yourself together. | A. courtesy |
| 2. You are so selfish, you need to share with your sister. | B. orderliness |
| 3. Who left all these papers all over the place? | C. generosity |
| 4. Stop talking with food in your mouth. | D. peacefulness |

RENAMING AND REFRAMING

1. Think of someone whose behavior challenges you. _____
2. Rename their basic character trait as a midah: _____
e.g. stubbornness = determination TRAIT TO MIDAH
talking back = honesty
3. Identify the midah you want to encourage them to practice. _____
4. Put it in a positive sentence.

“Son, I hear your determination to get your way.
What will help you to be flexible and play with another toy for now?”



SET CLEAR BOUNDARIES BASED ON RESTORATIVE JUSTICE



THE PROCESS OF RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

In the ideal process of restorative justice, individuals:

- Take *responsibility* for what they do in order to...
- Make *restitution*, which results in...
- *Reconciliation*, which is to make friends again, which...
- *Restores* the relationship and restores the offender to the community.

Forgiveness alone is not enough. Justice requires there be some amends, an action or gesture to fix the problem, with the offender taking responsibility instead of merely being punished. In the ideal situation there is also reconciliation restoring of friendship and contentment on all sides with the outcomes.

FOUR STEPS TO RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

1. Ask all involved what happened. Use how and what questions, not why.
2. Ask what midah was missing to create the conflict.
3. Ask what it would look like if they had used the missing midah.
4. Ask how they can make an amends.

USE PEACE TALKS IN YOUR HOME & WORKPLACE FOR RESOLVING CONFLICT



PEACE TALK STEPS

1. Take turns **Truthfully** telling your experience of what happened. אמת
2. Listen **Respectfully** to the other person's point of view. כבוד
3. Share how you **Honestly** felt. יושר
4. **Creatively** find a midah you each need. יצירתיות
5. Use **Justice** and **Forgiveness** to decide what amends need to be made. סליחה
6. Practice **Commitment** to decide how to do it differently next time. מסירות



TEN GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE GROUNDRULES



1. Be Moderate: Only have 4 or 5 rules.
2. Be Specific: Focus on the behaviors specific to your situation.
3. Be Positive: Base rules on midot and word them positively when you can.
4. Establish specific, relevant consequences for bottom line behaviors
5. Make consequences Educative, not Punitive: Give an opportunity to make reparation.
6. Be Consistent: Be trustworthy ~ keep your boundaries.
7. Communicate Rules Clearly: Use visuals. Humor helps.
8. Be sure everyone understands the midah involved when receiving consequences.
9. Make Ground Rules Non-Negotiable: Be sure that you can live with the rules and then keep them.
10. Be Assertive: Make your expectations clear.

OUR FAMILY PROMISE

We are peaceful with our words and our actions. שלום

We are orderly and put things back where they belong. נקייון

We are respectful of people and things. כבוד

We are loving and show kindness to one another. אהבה

Create Your Own Personal, Family or Team Promise



HONOR THE SPIRIT OF AN INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP



The A.R.T. of Boundaries

Assertiveness

Do what is right for you

Respect

Be deeply present without
advising

interrupting

criticizing

teasing

rescuing

Trust

Be worthy of trust

What we say here stays here

Midot Pick Directions

1. Choose a partner
2. First person reads their card aloud
3. Next they share how it resonates with them
4. Second person listens in complete and respectful silence
5. At the end the listener acknowledges a midah they have recognized
6. Repeat for other partner

Example: *"I heard your compassion when you shared about the pain your families go through."*

WAYS TO HONOR THE SPIRIT

- Midot Sharing Circles
- Celebrations
- Traditions
- Reflective Time
- Moments with Nature
- Service Learning
- The Arts
- Midot Picks

List ways you honor your spirit:



LISTEN

by Dr. Ralph Roughton



When I ask you
To listen
And you start
Giving advice,
You have not done what I asked.

When I ask you
To listen
And you begin
To tell me why I shouldn't feel the way I do,
You are trampling on my feelings.

When I ask you
To listen
And you feel
You have to do something to solve my problem,
You have failed me,
Strange as that may seem.

Listen.
All I asked you to do
Was listen,
Not talk,
Or do.
Just hear me.

I can do for myself:
I'm not helpless
Perhaps discouraged or faltering,
But not helpless.

When you do something for me
That I need to do for myself,
You contribute to my fear and weakness.

But, when you accept as a fact
That I feel what I feel,
No matter how irrational,
Then I can stop trying to convince you
And get on with understanding
What's behind that irrational feeling.

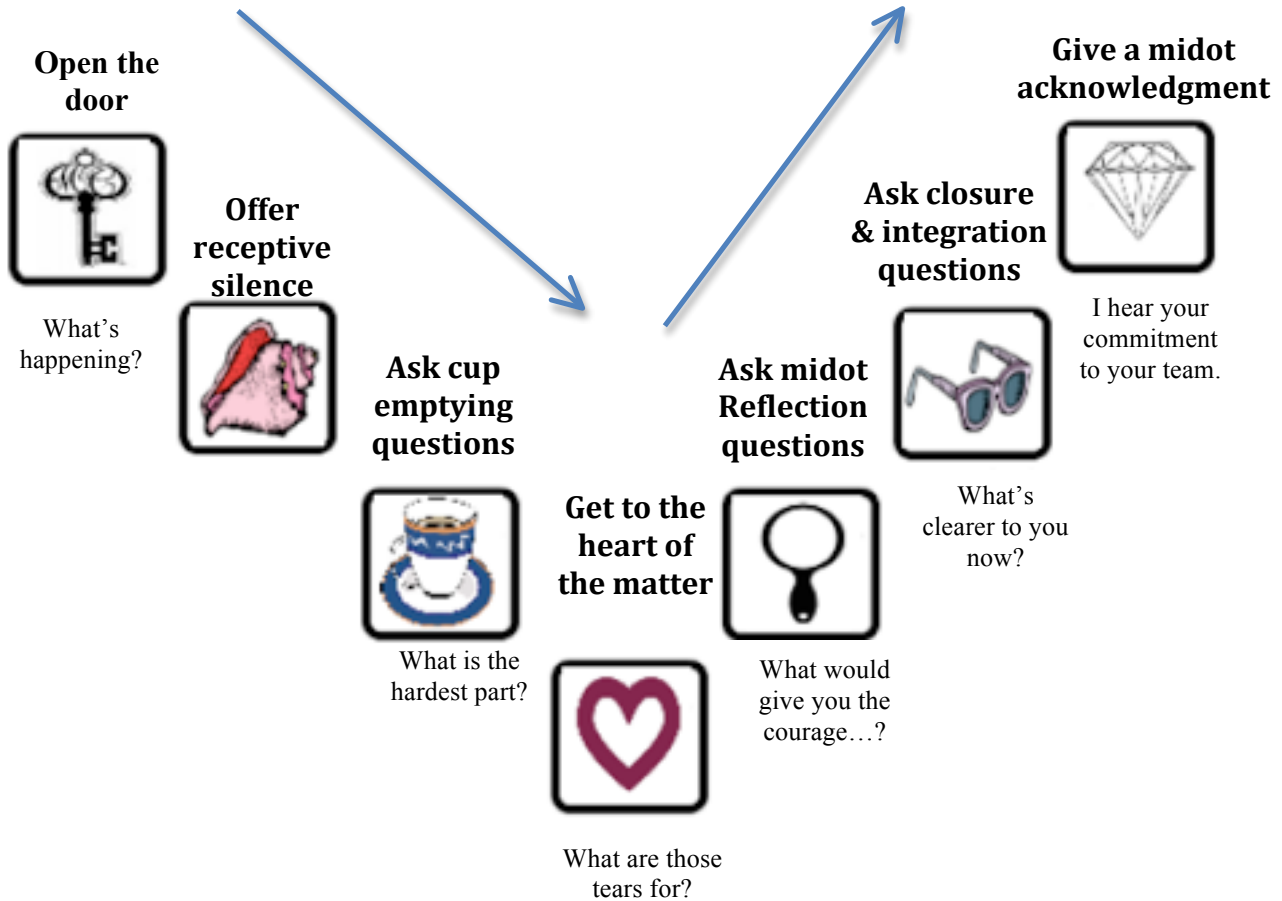
And, when that is clear,
The answers will be obvious,
And I won't need any Advice.



THE COMPANIONING PROCESS

FOLLOW

LEAD



Use the Midot of Compassion and Detachment When Companioning

Compassion is understanding & caring when someone is hurt or troubled, even if you don't know them. It is wanting to help, even if all you can do is listen and say kind words. You forgive mistakes. You are a friend when someone needs a friend.

Detachment is experiencing your feelings without allowing your feelings to control you. Instead of just reacting, with detachment you are free to choose how you will act. You use thinking and feeling together, so you can make smart choices.



A GIFT I AM TAKING



A COMMITMENT I AM MAKING

