

## Each of you shall not aggrieve his fellow, and you shall fear your G-d. (25:17)

The Torah admonishes us concerning *onaas devarim*, which means (in short) using speech that may be hurtful to – or might catalyze negative emotions in – the listener. Evoking memories of someone's negative, troubling past; attributing the onus of one's problems to his past sinful behavior; reminding a convert about his prior life as a gentile: these are examples of *onaas devarim*. Clearly, one who acts in such a manner is himself a sick person, and, as such, the prohibition may not deter him from acting inconsiderately of others. Sadly, the only fulfillment in this person's life is the pain he can engender in others.

We can identify another form of *onaah*: self-hurt. The *Peshischa*, *Horav Bunim*, *zl*, entered his *bais hamedrash* and observed a group of *chassidim* studying *chassidus* together. He asked them, "*Rabbosai*, who is a *chassid* (how do you define *chassid*)?" One of the *chassidim* piped up, 'One who acts *lifnim meshuras ha'din*, goes beyond the letter of the law (in *mitzvah* observance).' The *Rebbe* explained, "True, this was the response I sought. The Torah enjoins us not to aggrieve our fellow. That is the *din* – the letter of the law. *Lifnim meshuras ha'din*, a *chassid* is one who does not aggrieve himself."

We can cite numerous examples of people who aggrieve themselves, who live with negativity and depression. Emotional security is the product of self-acceptance: realizing who you are and what you are able to achieve. One should self-embrace and believe in himself, so that his self-esteem will not suffer. How often do we set goals for ourselves, and, at the first sign of difficulty, throw in the towel? Success is the result of perseverance and consistency. If one believes in himself, then no problem will deter him from achieving his goals. At the end of the day, the only form of security that one will enjoy is the one that he gives himself through courage, self-belief, determination and most importantly – faith and trust in Hashem.