

Stop the Pressure

Lifetakes / Issue 388

“Send Ora’s Soul Mate” left me feeling really uncomfortable. While it’s sweet to think that everyone in her family is so concerned about Ora finding her *shidduch hagun*, the article rings of borderline obsession. If this isn’t pressure on Ora, I can’t imagine what is. It’s hard enough to go through the process of *shidduchim*, she doesn’t need her family so blatantly rubbing her singleness in her face.

When it’s her siblings’ turns to start dating, no question they’ll feel the pressure too — they’ll already know the giant burden they’re placing on their family. For goodness’ sake, Mom is already cutting back on buying boots for her daughter because she’s saving for Ora’s *sheva brachos* outfits! All this, and how old can Ora possibly be, anyway? Her next oldest sibling seems to be only 17 years old.

To me, this sounds like more fuel added to the *nisayon* of *shidduchim*, and it’s being applied at such a young age! Let’s let up on the pressure to find the proper *zivug*. Perhaps once everyone relaxes, Ora will feel more at ease and the *menuchas hanefesh* of the family could be the *zechus* that will bring her *bashert*.

Rachel
Queens, NY

Touching Devotion

Lifetakes / Issue 388

Last week’s Lifetakes made me chuckle out loud — I love how this entire family is pitching in to help their sister find her soul mate, and the original methods they employ in doing so! The light touches of humor throughout made it a great read.

It was also nice to see how devoted these siblings are to each other — they genuinely care about their older sister and are willing to do what they can for her, even if it means rising early to daven at a *kever* or gracefully enduring an embarrassing situation. I hope Ora finds her *bashert* soon!

C.G.
Yerushalayim



Proud Last Customer

Kitchen Encounters / Issue 388

I was beyond excited to see Devorah Altman featured in your *FF* this week. I was a coworker of hers and always admired the commitment she had to aliyah. Her success there is something to be proud of.

I have the distinction of being her last customer in the US. She made my husband, an avid biker, a cake in the shape of a bike for his birthday. And yep, it tasted as good as it looked.

Chaia

Not Confused, But Struggling

inbox / Issue 387

A recent letter from “a mother and grandmother of many” criticized a woman who wanted more help from her husband before Pesach (AdviceLine Issue 385).

The letter was patronizing and insensitive. The woman didn’t expect her husband to run the house, as mentioned in the letter, just to help out in a desperate situation. The three professionals understood her need for help and did not criticize her for it.

Rabbi Henoch Plotnik (Guestlines Issue 505) writes “in bygone days the husband provided while the wife stayed home and raised the family, things are different today. Economic realities must be dealt with. As many wives take responsibilities that the *kesubah* assigns to their husbands, husbands often accept responsibilities that had once been the domain of the wife, so that gender roles, once clearly defined, are now blurred.” This is certainly not the ideal situation, but it’s the reality.

I don’t believe we have a generation of very confused young women who have an unclear understanding of what their role is, but a new generation of very hard working young women (my daughters and daughters-in-law included) who are struggling to survive in very challenging times. They need our support and our praise!

A Working Mother and Grandmother of Many

Mental Illness Isn’t Bad Middos

Inbox / Issue 385

Dear Someone Cares,

The bottom line of your letter: Patients of depression and bipolar disorder have to do appropriate *middos* work besides taking medication.

I agree that working on *middos* has a positive influence, as it has on healthy people as well. Yet I know a lot of *chashuveh* Yidden, *talmidei chachamim* (and I even heard about a *gadol* from a previous generation), who suffer from severe depression. Do you really want to tell me that they all have bad *middos*?

And what about the upside of bipolar disorder? When I have to fight with myself not to scream on the street, not to do other funny things in public, is that because of my bad *middos*?

Is postpartum depression also a lack of good *middos*?

Ridiculous.

It hurts that even people who *do* have experience with patients of depression and bipolar don’t have a clue what they are going through.

Refuah sheleimah to all in need,
Sufferer, Who Tries Hard on Middos