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spoke to each other and had social connections, you're just one of the lucky ones. There were just as many lonely people back then. You just didn't know them, because they had no way of reaching out.

Nathan M. Berman

Frum Jewish Journal

Let me start by suggesting changing the name of the FJJ to FRUM JEWISH JOURNAL, or some other acronym that describes better the widespread distribution of this paper. We are like one big family, which is the essence of Purim - *achdus*.

This is in response to the letter titled "The Cell Phone Conundrum" (March 7). The undersigned writes that not answering a phone call and sending it to voicemail is "Sodom"! With all due respect, we became servants to our phones, and to call someone a Sodomite because he sends a call to his voicemail is a bit farfetched. Is there any obligation to answer a call just because the caller can't wait or feels lonely? What did people do before there were telephones? What if they walked to the person's house and he was not home? Or maybe he was taking a nap?

And today, when the phone is in your pocket, what if the person being called is in the middle of learning with his *chavrusa*? Or at work when he is not allowed to use his phone for socializing? Or many other situations. Just because someone needs to talk to someone he is under no moral obligation to take the call. By the way, other means of communication like texting, mail, WhatsApp etc... are a completely different subject relating to the social interaction between people.

I heard a story about two people who were having a conversation, when one's phone rang but he ignored the ring. The other person motioned that it's OK to take the call. The response he got shocked him and should be a lesson: Now I'm talking to you, when I talk to someone, my phone does not exist!

Zeev Wagner

Plantings

My late relative, Rav Avraham Genechovsky *zt"l*, provided me with the following phenomenal *drash* relating to Purim. The *Gemara* (*Taanis* 29a) states, "*Mishenichnas Adar Marbim Bisimcha* - when Adar arrives, one should rejoice." Rav Avraham related this to another *Gemara* (*Beitzah* 15b) that says,

"One who plants a tree called 'Adar' is guaranteed that his property will endure." Therefore, as Adar is symbolic of happiness, we may say that one who "plants" happiness into his heart will endure.

I heard a topically related thought from Rabbi Kornfeld *shlita*, *rosh kollel* of *Kollel Iyun Hadaf* in Israel. The *Gemara* says, "A pumpkin is only shown in a dream to one who fears Heaven with all his might" (*Berachos* 56b). He explained the meaning of this passage in profound fashion. The characteristic of a pumpkin is that the more it grows the deeper it sinks into the ground. So too, the true sign of one who fears G-d is that as he grows and becomes greater, he sinks lower into the ground, ensconced in humility.

In summation, planting happiness within and falling in humility as you grow could be the right plan to prosper.

SG

Play Impressions

Having just returned from the Machon High School production, I feel the need to take pen in hand and express my reaction while it is still fresh in my mind.

The awesome talent of the girls, the timeliness of the message and the tremendous skill of Miss Begun were inspiring. But truthfully what really impressed me the most was the obvious happiness of the girls. I sat near another mother who told me how hard the girls worked, yet she never heard a complaint or even a groan.

In our times, the inner conflicts of our teenagers, which this play so poignantly presented, could easily cause confusion, worry and even anger. That the girls were able to work together in a healthy and happy atmosphere, bears witness to the atmosphere fostered in Machon. The girls, the parents and the school deserve our applause.

A Parent

Kudos to Mr. Mendy Kolko

I just came back from watching the championship game, where both teams gave it their all and played very well. In this day and age, when there are so many "unhealthy" things for children to be busy with, Mr. Mendy Kolko's leagues offer children a healthy outlet and excitement that they look forward to the entire week! Thank you!!

A Grateful Grandparent

Cigarettes, Senator Schumer and Governor Cuomo

As someone opposed to cigarettes in our community especially amongst young people, I am praising two politicians I very often disagree with, Chuck Schumer and Andrew Cuomo. Senator Schmuier today expressed opposition to young people being encouraged to use e cigarettes. Governor Cuomo worked to raise the age one may buy cigarettes from age eighteen to age twenty one. Although I praise Governor Cuomo for that, I would praise him more if he raised the age from age eighteen to one hundred twenty one!

Avrohom Ashenberg

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR 

Email letters to editor@thefjj.com

DEADLINE: Monday pre-publication

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