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Dear Editor,

Dear Editor,

This is addressed to both neighborhood walkers and drivers of all ages:

Keep your head out of your phone when on the streets! The traffic volume is increasing as the neighborhood population increases. Broadway and West Broadway, the two main thoroughfares in the Five Towns, are choked with traffic at all hours of the day, but especially early morning and mid-afternoon – early evening. Both roads are narrow, and West Broadway is notorious for non-perpendicular crossings and poor nighttime lighting. When I drive, I am astounded to see how many kids are scootering, biking, and walking with earbuds in their ears or their heads staring at their phones. I almost drove into one of these kids the other day. I honked my horn at another to stay on the sidewalk as I had the green light. The girl had her buds on and didn't hear a thing and crossed on the red light.

I plead with parents to teach their children not to use their phones while walking to/from school. Kids need to focus on the traffic and be fully aware of their surroundings. If their children won't heed this advice, confiscate the phone. It really is that important, and it should not require this letter for anyone to understand this.

If you are a driver, likewise, store the phone in your glove box, or better in a coat pocket where the coat is in a back seat or the trunk where you can't even be tempted to reach it. Focus fully on safely driving the car. Most phone calls can wait even two hours until you finish driving. If you really do need to check more often, go to a safe side street or parking lot, turn off the engine (yes! Turn it off! You wouldn't

believe how many people accidentally hit the gear and sent the car moving!) and check your phone that way.

The Five Towns Central chat posts at least one neighborhood accident daily. This is astounding. I wouldn't be surprised if a significant percentage of them were caused by distracted drivers or pedestrians. Be smarter than your smartphone. Do your part to always be aware of street traffic and walk and drive safely. Let's make the Five Towns one of the safer neighborhoods in the world.

Daniel Feldman

Dear Editor,

In recent parshios, we have encountered two kingly figures, Yosef, who "ruled" over his desires, and Yehudah, who "ruled" over his ego by way of admitting mistakes. Being fit for the throne comes by way of defeating desire and reaching a level of humility to be able to admit mistakes.

This focus on controlling human desires and pride is emphasized by Dovid, the king and Messianic precursor.

As poet extraordinaire and man of emotion, he beseeches G-d in Psalms 51, numerically equivalent to the word "na," please in Hebrew.

In precise language, he asks G-d to "create" for him a pure heart. Create, *bara*, of course leads us to Bereishis, the creation of the world, a bastion of creativity. One of the most creative entities is the yetzer hara of which G-d says in creation that it is "*tov meod* – very good."

How can the angel that exists to destroy us on a moment-to-moment basis be very good? The answer is that the yetzer hara works for G-d with the import-

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Readers Poll

Do you prefer to write lists with pen/paper or to write them electronically?

67%
Pen/Paper

33%
Electronically



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ant mission of discovering how faithful we are to our Creator as opposed to our desires. When the evil inclination will be slayed at the end of time, it makes those who chose good to see how far they came and how deserving they are.

We thought we knew the end in this week's parsha when Yaakov wanted to reveal the end of time. Where did this enthusiasm to express from his mouth (*peh*, the number of pesukim in the parsha) come from? He lived a hard life. Everything changed though when he came to Mitzrayim. There was now peace among his children, and he felt the end was a given. However, though he defined the essence of the brothers at this time which would seem to portend a smooth ending, there was no guarantee that they would enact the mussar given and fix themselves.

The last piece left is fixing ourselves where we naturally stumble. The yetzer hara is faithful to its mission, to deflate us and make us believe that we can't fix our bad traits, especially in the areas that often need fixing, such as in the realms of desire, jealousy, ego, anger and brazenness.

Dovid finishes Psalms 51 with the notion that in the Third Temple we will be bereft of sin and sacrifice to G-d in purity. Reaching purity requires a renewal of the heart to combat an enemy that is equally as creative in fulfilling its mission: to see how faithful we really are to G-d.

Steven Genack

Dear Editor,

Thank you for publishing the excellent letters about the importance of supporting the candidacy of Mazi Pilip. The issues at stake are numerous and important. We hosted her for a speech at the Jewish Center of Roslyn about six months ago. I hope she will be able to come again before the election.

Really, every shul in the district should have her come to speak and should run a voter registration drive. We should all encourage and remind all shul members to vote and to get their neighbors to vote.

Sincerely,

Eli Reit

A teacher at Jewish Center of Roslyn

Dear Editor,

In 2023, just like in past 24 years, Senator Chuck Schumer has taken pride in visiting all 62 counties in New York State. He just visited Hudson, New York, in Columbia County to complete his tour. These annual visits provide him with a better understanding of the needs for residents of each county. When was the last time he visited our southern border? He could view firsthand our ongoing invasion of illegal immigrants. When will he visit the famous Manhattan Hotel Roosevelt or Brooklyn Floyd Bennet Field (in his home borough of Kings County) migrant shelters? For the third year in a row, illegal migration will exceed 2 million. Schumer could also learn from border agents about their fight to stem the smuggling of fentanyl. This drug is killing over 100,000 Americans every year. When will Schumer travel to El Paso, Texas, and observe this crisis firsthand? Perhaps it will convince him to stop holding up fully funding completion for construction of a border wall to protect our sovereignty as a nation.

Sincerely,

Larry Penner

Dear Editor,

I could not stop thinking about Etti Siegel's wise words in last week's column (although every week she shares wise words!).

Etti wrote about how when we try to empathize, we are sometimes feeling our own past experiences instead of fully trying to understand the other person's experience. How true that is, and how unbelievable that I never realized that beforehand.

To truly be empathetic, we need to remove our own *negius* and focus completely on the other person. Etti's column refers to parenting. I think this is a great concept that can be utilized when it comes to all relationships.

A Reader

Make your voice heard!

Be part of TJH's weekly poll.

Email the editor to be included in the weekly poll at
Editor@FiveTownsJewishHome.com