

Session Three: The Busy Generation

We're busier than we've ever been-but are we any happier? Our attention is always divided. We're the generation that has taken multi-tasking to the extreme. What does this mean for our *ruchnius* and our personal development? In this class, Rabbi Shafier ways in on some of the potential pitfalls of being part of 'the busy generation' and how we can refocus to live a life of purpose.

Session Three- The Busy Generation

ואולם הנה זאת באמת אחת מתחבולות היצר הרע

In truth, this is one of the cunning strategies of the evil inclination,

וערמתו להכביד עבודתו בתמידות על לבות בני האדם

to relentlessly burden people's hearts with his service

עד שלא ישאר להם ריוח להתבונן ולהסתכל באיזה דרך הם הולכים.

so as to leave them no room to reflect and consider which road they are taking.

כי יודע הוא שאלולי היו שמים לבם כמעט קט על דרכיהם

For he knows that if they were to put their ways to heart even the slightest bit,

ודאי שמיד היו מתחילים להנחם ממעשיהם

certainly they would immediately begin to feel regret for their deeds.

והיתה החרטה הולכת ומתגברת בהם עד שהיו עוזבים החטא לגמרי.

The remorse would go and intensify within them until they would abandon the sin completely.

The *Mesilas Yesharim* introduced us to the idea that the first step in growth is *zehirus*, what's

called mindfulness, watchfulness. But what does that mean? That means to be alert, to be aware

“*misbonen umefakeach*” become wise to contemplate on my actions, are they good for me, are they bad for me?

What we would consider the basic for any thinking human being but the reality is that it's something that requires constant *chizzuk*, constant focus on. And the *Mesilas Yesharim* also explained to us that there's a reason why it's not natural to the human as we discussed before, to allow for freewill, Hashem made it difficult for us to actually pay attention because if I were to pay attention, there are so many things that I wouldn't do because they are damaging to me and so many things I would do because clearly they're for my betterment and to allow for actual freewill where I choose and I make myself into who I am for eternity, Hashem made it very difficult for us to be alert, to be aware and we discussed that there are four real factors that directly affect that.

Number one, that I'm in this body and housed in this body, I don't feel things, I don't feel the holiness of *Shabbos*, I don't feel Hashem's presence, I'm deadened.

The second element that effects things in a very real way is rationalizations. I could rationalize away anything I do, so now if I want to do something, all of a sudden I have this huge, huge force that makes it permitted because it's not wrong. My *neshamah* would never let me do something wrong, my *neshamah* would never put up with that but now I make it right.

The third element that effects things in a very concrete way is emotions. Emotions color the way I think and they actually shape the way I view you, view situations and suddenly I become captured with the emotion and think differently and again it's difficult in the heat of the moment to be alert, to beware, to ask myself is this for my betterment, is this for my, am I going to be happy with the results of this.

And the fourth element we pointed out is that there's this entity called habits. Habits are rote, things that we do, things that we always the way I've been doing things, and if you don't analyze your habits, you're going to be in difficult straits.

But now the *Mesilas Yesharim* introduces us to another factor that also makes it difficult and he explains that *Yirmiyah* used to go on against his generation, he would go on saying what is wrong with you people? Why aren't you paying attention? And he would call them like "*sus shotef bumilchamah*" like a horse charging at war, you never think. You don't think should I do it, shouldn't I do it, and the *Mesilas Yesharim* explains what *Yirmiyah* was saying was had they thought they would have stopped. Had they thought they never would have done it, but because they were rushing like horse charging at war, they never stopped to contemplate, never stopped the thought and as a result they were doing things and they ended up in a very, very difficult place and explains the *Mesilas Yesharim* that this is one of the tricks of the *Yetzer Hara*, to constantly keep a person busy, "*luhachbid avadoso bitmidus al libos bnei adam*" to make the work heavy, constantly on a person's heart, "*ad shelo yishar revach luhisbonen*" until a person has no time to contemplate, and to look into what he's doing.

But then the *Mesilas Yesharim* really explains what he's saying. He says if you study *chumash* that is exactly what Paroh was doing. Paroh said "*tichbad ha'avodah al ha'anashim*" remember Moshe Rabbeinu comes with Ahron and tells Paroh let the Jewish people go.

What's Paroh's reaction? His reaction isn't okay we'll take it easy, we'll make it easier on the slaves, quite the opposite, make the work more difficult. "*tichbad ha'avodah al ha'anashim*" why did he do that?

Explains the *Mesilas Yesharim*, “*haya msihtadel luhafriah libam*” he was trying to disrupt their heart “*mikol hisbonenus*” from any contemplation by keeping them constantly working, constantly busy, he was attempting to stop them from concentrating. Meaning it wasn’t just that he was plotting to keep them busy so that they won’t have time organize, they won’t have time to plan against him, far more egregious, he was trying to keep them so busy that they didn’t have time to think, they didn’t even have time to understand the pain that they were in.

Now that may sound strange to you, is it possible to be so busy that you can’t think, how long does it take to think, I’m a slave, Paroh’s working us hard and he makes it even more difficult we have to work even harder, obviously I’m aware, obviously I’m fully cognizant. And yet the Sforno explains to us that it was the *avodah kasha*, this extra work that actually prevented the Jewish people from believing Moshe, without this extra work, they would have believed, but this extra work made it more difficult.

And explains the *Mesilas Yesharim*, the reason is because if you don’t have bandwidth, if you don’t have the emotional relaxation, you’re not going to be able to process. And one of the basic things that any thinking human being must do, is introduce breaks into their day, into their weeks, into their months. The idea of going on a vacation, the idea of taking breaks is not a luxury for the super wealthy. It’s a technique that any effective human being implements.

Because when you take a break, whether it be an hour, whether it be a day, whether it be a week and you stop, there’s a different sort of relaxation, a different sort of perspective and you’re able to look back.

But when you're in the heat of the battle, when you're running, when you're doing, you don't have that *yishuva hadas*, you don't have that relaxed mindset and you're not able to analyze and you'll be very busy, very busy but doing what?

And again, explains the *Mesilas Yesharim* that this is another entity that makes our job far more worse, that we're constantly assailed and the *yetzer hara* constantly tries to keep us busy but why? Because if I'm busy doing, but if I'm busy doing that's great you're doing *mitzvahs*. Wrong, if you're busy doing, you don't have time to do that key element that any human being must do, to think, what am I busy doing? What am I involved in? Are these actions for my betterment or for my detriment? Am I happy with the results? Am I going to be pleased two years from now, five years from now, ten years from now?

And I believe what the *Mesilas Yesharim* is introducing to us here is a concept that's so applicable in our days that it's very, very hard to even discuss it. Now let me explain what I mean:

I remember as a little boy, my father *alav hashalom* took my brother and myself to visit Tante Paula. Tante Paula was my great aunt and she was at that point she was already in the nursing home and she wasn't fully lucid and I remember very clearly, we got in the elevator, the doors opened up on the floor, we got out and there we saw Tante Paula, she was smoking, in those days you could smoke indoors, she was wearing a housecoat and she said "Oh Eddie, oh I'm so glad to see you, and you brought the boys, oh what a pleasure to see you but I have no time to talk I am so busy that I have no time to talk". And she ran off to the nurses and she said "Oh I'm so glad to see you but I have no time to see you".

She runs to some of the other people going by, “Oh I am glad to see you but I have no time to talk” and a few minutes later she comes back and she says “Oh you brought the boys, I’m so glad to see you I wish I had time to talk but I don’t”.

At the time I didn’t recognize it but Tante Paula had dementia. She had been a very successful woman, she owned her own business and the idea of being busy apparently was in her blood but now she was no longer in the state of mind of really being balanced and this is what she spent her time doing.

And I believe if you look at people in our day and age, they all have what I call Tante Paula syndrome. Busy, you’re doing, you’re busy, you’re doing, I have no time, no time, no time. What are you so busy doing? What are you accomplishing already? Would you map out for me, could you give me a clear goal, oriented plan for what you’re involved in?

I’m just, I’m too busy, I got so many things to do. And if you would like to see a generation that’s gripped, by ineffectiveness, it’s this generation because when you’re so busy well guess what? You’re not effective, you’re busy.

But if you’re busy, the brain is shut off. As we discussed, there is intelligence and functional intelligence but if you’re running and you’re doing and you’re running and you’re doing and you don’t step away and you don’t take time to contemplate and you don’t analyze your actions, gee golly what are you, I don’t know what you’re doing, but you don’t know either.

And when you’re busy doing and doing and doing, the key element called functional intelligence isn’t there and this is something that I think you see in our time to an extent that’s hard to imagine. I want to read something to you:

External stresses have become so great that even strong families are falling apart, the hecticness, instability and inconsistency of daily family life are rampant in all segments of our society including the well-educated and well to-do, the status of American children in families is as desperate as ever.

Those words are not current words they were said in 1993. We're now post modernity, we're now so far down that garden path that that's an understatement. But I want you to know that it was a slow progression to get here.

In 1965, there was the American use of time project and this what they discovered:

Twenty five percent of people, twenty five percent of Americans said they felt hurried. Okay, significant, but only twenty five percent. By 1975, twenty eight percent of people felt hurried. Generally, hurried. By 85, it was thirty two percent of people felt hurried all the time. By 1992 thirty eight of percent of people felt hurried all the time.

I don't know if you could even ask that question in our day and age because everyone is just constantly running and doing and busy and I've never seen such hecticness, such utter chaos.

And just to put things into perspective, let's look back a little bit in history, one of the works that has become a center force in history in medieval times is the Annals of Wales. It was written originally in Latin and it's a chronicle covering some five hundred, odd years, medieval times and it's very clearly laid out the events that happened.

And it reads as something like this:

Five hundred and seventy gilders, the wisest of Britain dies. Five seventy three, the Battle of Aldiford between the sons of Alferd, of Seldio and the battle of Windon, Wirling went mad. Five

seventy four, the sleep death of Burn De Nibrud. Five eighty sons of Elford died. And you see every year or two significant things. Interesting enough for the years six sixty seven and six sixty eight are blank in some editions, the words are penned in, nothing happened.

Because in those days events happened once a year, once every two years, major news occurred on occasions. If you look at the world Almanac for two thousand eighteen, it's a thousand pages, every day you look at the headlines, this is happening, that's happening, the speed of change is frightening.

Life a hundred and fifty years ago in the United States of America was stable and calm. There was no electricity, no telephone, no cars, no planes, people worked, came home at night and it was quiet, there was peace.

But them's not the days any longer. I remember as a boy, very clearly, my father was a *balabos*, my father went to work and he came home. Every night he came home, by five thirty or so we sat down as a family. As a family means the family, the whole family sat down to eat dinner and then everyone did what they did. We went to do homework, my brother and I, my parents whatever they did, my father was, my parents were there in the house, people had time, people were successful, people were available.

But that's not the world we live in. the world we live in is so hurried, so fast paced and I'll give you one interesting illustration. When I was a boy, I remember watching TV. I went to *Yeshivah* and there was a hiatus, about twenty years when I stopped watching TV and then afterwards when I was a *Rebbi* I would occasionally watch different things, look at things, but it was as an anthropologist kind of like trying to study, trying to see but I want to share with you the change was incredible.

But I don't mean in terms of promiscuity, I mean the speed, the intensity. When I was a boy growing up there was a Honeymoon, there was Leaver to Beaver, maybe don't do it but you go on Utube you can see all the old sitcoms. It was slow paced, very deliberate, things occurred with a certain consistency.

Twenty years later it's going, moving, doing, okay, okay, aaah I won't drink Pepsi, just tone down the intensity. The commercials are so, they're electric and it's moving and cutting and going and doing. I do videos now, I told my video editor when we first began the animated projects, I told him I want something on the screen moving every three seconds. There can't be three seconds that something doesn't come on the screen, a picture, word, something, because I knew the attention span of my audience, three seconds, and they're gone.

But why? Because we're living in times that are very, very different. In 1968, the presidential candidates were given forty two point three seconds on National TV, that was the segment that was shown, forty two seconds. By 1998, it was nine point eight seconds and now it's all sound bytes, a byte, and it's sound bytes, they talk in sound bytes, they think in sound bytes, you hear them in sound bytes.

The Lincoln Douglas debate and this is so comical, president Lincoln then senator running for president is having a debate. The debate was scheduled and it was in the fields and you could see the people in their chairs lined up and according to the stories, there are two versions, according to one version, each speaker spoke for three hours. That means Spencer spoke for three hours, sorry Douglas spoke for three hours, Lincoln spoke for three hours and people sat there, six hours. Because it takes a while to present your policies, it takes a while to present what you're going to do, what you're worldview is and people wanted to know and people sat there.

You do not have three hours in a presidential debate. When you have seventeen candidates on the stage, and it's sound byte to sound byte to sound byte, we're cultured in moving and doing and busy and this concept called *yishuv hadas*, just being present, being able to concentrate, being able to look and think about my day, about me, being able to deal with people, is no longer present.

Paroh was brilliant, make them work harder, not because they won't be able to plot, much more devious, because they won't have the bandwidth, they will not be able to even think about their plight. The emotional havoc if you just push them and push them and push them, they'll no longer be able to think and if you're no longer able to think, well guess what? You're not a functional human being.

And I'd like to share with you something very interesting:

If you ask a psychologist, certainly if you go to a AA meeting, if you ask for a definition of addiction, what's the definition of addiction, so number one your life is unmanageable. Number two need for increasing dosages and number three difficulty in separating. Those are the three signs of addiction.

Well, I'd like to ask you if we don't see these in our day and age. I was in the playground and I saw a young father, and the little *pitzele*, he wasn't two years old, on the floor in the playground playing, looking up to his father, looking for approval but he wasn't catching his father's eye. What important thing was his father doing? Learning *mishnayos*, *chazaring shas*? No, on his smartphone, on some app, who knows what, wasting his life.

But if you'd like to see a human being addicted, just look at our current time. You see the busy generation and the business that we're involved in, does not even begin to take into account what has happened since the iPhone, since the Android has become part of our lives.

You see, it used to be twenty years ago, I believe that we were the ADD generation, we were trained in moving and doing, distractibility, impulsibility, just being hyperactive. That's no longer even a description, we're so passed that, and the amount of business both in personal life, at work and yes we have many great time saving functions and features and the computer's a tremendous boon to productivity, but we end up taking on so much more and we end up being so much busier, and what happens is the brain stops being able to focus and the brain stops being able to think.

And if you're not sure that I'm right, do a time study. Most major corporations recognize now that email is one of the most damaging parts of many workers' days. Because you get into an email, respond to this and jump to that, and jump to that and before you know it the day's gone but what did you accomplish? And before you know it your time has been swallowed up and I think if you study what happens in our time, I think you see something that's so profound, the iPhone didn't exist ten years ago. The iPhone first came out let's call it 2007 but no one had them and all of a sudden people started slowly getting them, slowly getting, slowly getting them and before you know it, in a heartbeat not only does everyone have one, they're glued to it.

The average adult sends sixty texts on a typical day, that's not even a smartphone, just a dumb phone that texts. Teenagers on average send four thousand texts a day. Four thousand texts a sorry four thousand texts a month. Now four thousand texts a month, let's do the math. There are thirty days in a month, about a hundred and twenty five texts a day, let's say they are up for

twelve hours, we're talking ten texts an hour, that means back and forth and back and forth and back and forth but the ability to concentrate, the ability to be in the moment, is almost non-existent.

And if you really want to understand what I'm saying, I'll make it very, very simple. Two hours a day is a very important block of time, if you dedicate two hours a day to an activity, you can accomplish a world. If you decide you want to learn a new language, you want to learn French, German, Spanish, whatever, two hours a day of focused study for two years, and you'll be reasonably conversant in that new language.

You want to learn how to play an instrument, a guitar, piano, two hours a day, take lessons, practice, two hours a day, for two years and you'll be playing reasonably well. You want to learn a new hobby, two hours a day, two years and you'll be very well along the way in the path because two hours a day is a significant block of time.

So here's the question, how much time does the average adult in the United States of America, spend on their smartphone and the answer is not two hours, it's four to five hours a day and here's the question, what have you gotten back from that? You just invested a huge block of time, you just gave over a huge segment of your life, what did you get back? Well you got to go on Facebook. And you got to see that before he went to the gym he ate oatmeal with raisins, oh that's very, my life is now enriched because now I know your diet, and now I know you're.

If you think about the stupidity and the nonsense and don't tell me the news because you could stay very, very informed if you spend twenty minutes a day reading what's going on. The amount of time that people spend on the news and the business of the world is frightening.

And the effect of it is very difficult to imagine, it's very difficult to even begin to discuss it because you see on a regular basis people are glued to the palm of their hand. My son told me about an app, it's a very important app, this app allows you, it takes your camera phone and turns it on so that when you're walking in the street and you're on a app, maybe it's Facebook, maybe it's Twitter, you could see the sidewalk, so you don't trip. So now you could stay glued to the palm of your hand all day, every day.

And do you know that in the United States of America the average person struggles to go more than ten minute without checking their phone? Watch people in public, watch them try not to touch their phone for more than ten minutes.

As a matter of fact there are studies done that the average American touches their phone at least once every twelve minutes but the longest time that a person can go without touching their phone is four hours. But by four hours the need becomes so overwhelming that they can't even do it, and you're watching people who regularly feel anxiety, separation from the phone is sixty percent of people reported experiencing stress if their phone is off or out of reach and of course if you're younger it's even more, Millennials ??? (25:36) supposedly check their phones a hundred and fifty times a day, seventy nine percent keep their phone nearby when they sleep and half check their phone in the middle of the night.

And if you think about the fact that almost twenty five percent of US adults say they're almost constantly online, constantly monitoring email, constantly there. In the eighteen to twenty nine year old group, it's thirty nine percent, almost forty percent are constantly online and it doesn't get better.

But here's the most frightening thing, I want to share with you a quote and then I'm going to say who said the quote. "Sometimes I find myself battling with this obsession that I have to check my smartphone constantly, and reply to chats and unconsciously I'm ignoring my child, such obsessions make me fearful the kind of message I'm sending to my child I wonder if I as an adult cannot resist technology such as smartphone, tablets, or television, even for a short time what am I giving the message to my child? I had become an addict."

Here's another one: I've forgotten how to focus, without my phone I suddenly couldn't watch an entire TV show uninterrupted. I couldn't have long undistracted conversations with my spouse. Everything changed, but here's the problem these are mothers, young mothers describing their addiction, their life had become unmanageable, they constantly needed more, and they felt great anxiety upon separation.

Kate Davis can spend no longer than ten minutes helping her son Mirvis with his homework before her eyes start flicking lovingly towards the sideboard where her smartphone is. I'm on my phone almost the whole time when I'm with them, says Kate who runs her own business.

But you have to understand what these women are saying. What they're saying is they can't be mothers. They're so addicted, so involved that they can't do that which they so value, that which they so want to do. But if you don't yet hear what I'm saying, just listen to this:

St Joseph in primary school in Middleburrow has a sign, a very large sign, over three entrances to the school, the sign reads 'greet your child with a smile, not a mobile'. It's a private school and the problem is that the mothers would come to pick up their little children, primary school, grade school, pick them up and see the phone and not see the child, oh hi, you alright?

Now if you're wondering, does that affect the child? So here's the study by AVG technologies, they surveyed more than six thousand children, globally, ages six to thirteen, Brazil, Australia, Canada, the survey discovered that thirty two percent of children felt unimportant when their mums and dads were distracted by their phones. The kids said that they had to compete with technology for their parent's attention.

Fifty four percent think that their parents spend too much time on the phone, fifty two percent of mums and dads, agree with their children, worried that they were setting a bad example for their kids. But when you hear kids respond, when you hear kids say I'm sad, mad, angry and lonely. One four year old called his dad's smartphone a 'stupid phone'. Why? Because it steals dad's attention. And when you read stat after stat, of children describing their angst because their parents don't even see them, you realize we got a problem and we have a problem globally, we have a problem in society, and it affects us as much as it affects everyone else.

And if you're not sure that I'm right, if you have a smartphone, put an app on your smartphone called 'checkie' there are a number of them for the iphone, for the android, it counts how many time you check your phone during the day, and I guarantee you're going to see some numbers that are frightening.

I once spoke about this topic and a fellow came over to me afterwards and he said, here I have 'checkie' on my phone I got it down to two hundred times a day because it had been at three hundred times a day. But do you understand what we're saying here? If you're checking your phone two hundred times a day, you're not present, ever. You're not there. And if you would like to see the greatest *magefah*, the greatest destructive force, it's mindboggling, it's intense and it destroys any *simchas hachaim*, it destroys intelligent living, it destroys families.

I had a couple having very serious issues, *shalom bayis* problem and I finally convinced them to go on a date and I finally convinced her to leave her smartphone home, but they go out. I asked the husband afterwards how did it go? Nah not so good. Why? Well she was constantly texting. What do you mean, she said she'd leave the smartphone, yeah but she took a blackberry. She had an old blackberry that somehow could still get online because she couldn't be without it.

And when you watch people who have sacrificed their lives, and you ask them for what? The answer is I don't have an answer. And I believe that this is a plague that affects our generation. Never in the course of history has there been this much business, doing and happening but that's just speaking about real obligations that we have.

I believe a regular housewife today requires the type of time management skills that a middle level manager of a major corporation required back in the sixties. A Mom has so many different issues and things that she has to be involved in that she really must manage her time very well.

But that's not including that little device. In theory, a mother possibly could balance all the various responsibilities and somehow retain a sense of semblance, of normalcy, of happiness, of balance. But put that device into her hand and it's toast.

But again, I'm not discussing the sites and what you'll see and what the society's going to teach you, I'm discussing the fragmented attention, I'm discussing the fact that you're here, you're there and I have a new term, I have a new term, I don't think we should call them smartphones, I think we should call them attention-deficit-habitation-device. Habituation is a psychological term, you habituate someone, you will get them accustomed to, attention deficit, habituation device, it trains you in ADD.

I was a high school *Rebbi* for fifteen years and I know that paying attention is very difficult and it took me a lot of strength, a lot of energy, first to train myself and then to train the young men who I worked with, to actually pay attention, to follow this *cheshbon*. This was the question, this is the answer, does it answer.

But I'd like to share with you, if you're training yourself in distractibility, if you're training yourself to go here and there, your ability to think isn't there. Paroh would fall on his face in humble submission and he would say the words I was no one, and nothing, I never had what you guys have. I tried to keep the Jews busy and I thought I succeeded by distracting them, you guys have so out trumped me, I'm nobody.

But there is no Paroh forcing us to do it. There is no taskmaster, there is no one whipping us, we do it to ourselves, and the ability to shut your phone off, to say two hours a day my phone will be off and that's it, is a tremendous *brachah*.

My wife used to say, park the car, shut the phone off, leave it in the glove box. And such a concept as strange as it may sound is very healthy. In Dodge City there was a rule, you left your gun before you walked into the saloon. Before you walked into the saloon, you checked your gun because people would go into the saloon and get drunk and get into gunfights so there was a rule in Dodge City, you could not carry your gun into the saloon, you had to park your gun at the front, couldn't bring it in.

I think such a rule would be a very wise rule, don't bring your phone into the house. But how am I going to? How? My job, my I kind of believe that somehow life will continue even if you don't respond to that email, even if you don't respond to that text. But my, my friends are going, yeah you're going to buy your freedom. You're going to buy your salvation, your ability to have *yishuv*

hadas, to be balanced, to be focused, to be with your children, to be with your spouse, to be with life, how could you even discuss thinking about life if you're training your brain constantly to be distracted?

And you can't.

And there's only one thing that's even more frightening than this, if your children play video games and when I was a young man, video games were pretty innocent, but there are video games now where you hook up online with other players and a very talented *mechanech* told me recently that it's a *magefah*.

He spoke to a child, gradeschool age and he asked him so how much Fortnite did you play last night, a video game and the child said not much, only two hours. The *mechanech* said only two hours? What did you do the rest of the time? Well I watched videos of other players so I could learn tips.

We're talking about hour after hour after hour and if you speak to fifth graders, sixth graders, and you're talking to them and you almost see their brain going, because they're playing that video game in their brain. No one understands they're being trained in the inability to concentrate and the greatest cost of that is you as a functional human being with functional intelligence will not be.

I think what the *Mesilas Yesharim* is sharing with us is a tremendous lesson, *Yirmiyah* said to his generation, you're not thinking, you don't ask yourselves should I do it, should I not do it, like a "*Sus shoteh bumilchamah*" like a horse charging into war, ready, fire, aim. But that's not very intelligent, you're supposed to be thinking, you're supposed to be analyzing. You're supposed to look at your actions and your ways and improve them.

We're on the planet to grow and to accomplish but if your brain is shutoff, there's no accomplishments, but more than anything you're sure not enjoying life. Tante Paula was at a stage of life where *nebbach*, unfortunately things weren't functioning as they should have been. But when you live in a time where everybody seems to have Tante Paula syndrome, and that's just based on real responsibilities, it's time to say something's amiss, and you have to figure out how to free yourself from these shackles, how to free yourself from this enslavement.

The cell phone is called a cell phone because it's a jail cell, but it doesn't have to be. That button on the side that says 'off' and it really does work. I know a lot of people don't really believe me, but if you hold the button long enough, it actually shuts off and if you shut the phone off for two hours, for four hours, certainly when you're with your children, certainly when you're with your spouse, certainly when you're learning, you'll find so much more comfort, so much more balance, so much more harmony and you'll be much more effective as a human being.

The speed with which things change is incredible, and it's important to look back on previous times and it could be that maybe it's worth paying attention to the Honeymooners or Leaver to Beaver to see what life used to be like in the United States of America in the 1950s a couple got married and they were stapled, they had one point five kids, moved down to a house in the suburbs with a white picket fence but the father went to work during the day, came home at night and was there at night. Family time was family time, people had a certain balance but that's gone and it's our obligation to gain it back because if you're running and doing and running and doing but you don't know what you're a chicken without a head.

And you're sure not paying attention. And if the first four problems as the *Mesilas Yesharim* told us, block us from paying attention, the fifth might be far worse that we're just so busy, too busy

to think and the only way to cure this is to stop, break off time where I'm not busy, go for long walks where I think without technology and learn to train yourself to think, to grow and then you're able to shape you're life as Hashem wants you, you enjoy your world here and you gain your world to come.