**The Psychology of Envy**

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**Pirkei Avos 4:28**

*Rabbi Elazar HaKappar says: Envy, desire, and honor remove a person from the world.*

**Pirkei Avos 2:16**

*Rabbi Joshua would say: An evil eye, the evil inclination, and the hatred of one's fellows, drive a person from the world.*

**Mishlei (14:30)**

*Envy is the rotting of bones.*

**Orchos Tzaddikim, on Envy**

*The desire to obtain other people’s good for ourselves is an inescapable drive in man.*

**Mesillas Yesharim, chap. 11**

*There will come a day when people will no longer be envious of one another, and when it will no longer be necessary to hide one's good fortune from others to prevent envy.*

**Psychology Today, Richard Smith, Ph.D.**

*Ask ten different people and you might get ten different views on how the emotions of envy and jealousy are distinct.*

*It turns out that psychologists agree on a fairly straightforward distinction.*

***Envy****occurs when we lack a desired attribute enjoyed by another.*

***Jealousy****occurs when something we already possess (usually a special relationship) is threatened by a third person*

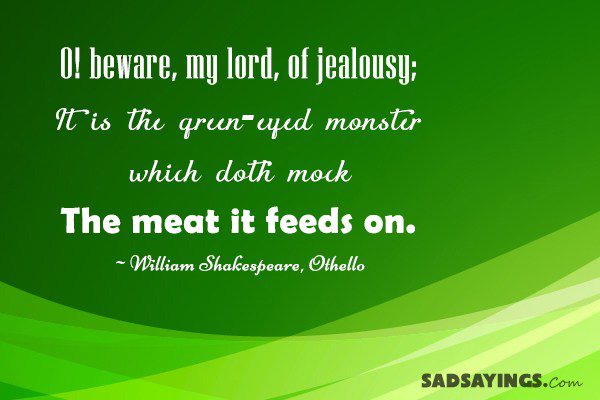
*And so****envy is a two-person situation****whereas****jealousy is a three-person situation****. Envy is a reaction to lacking something. Jealousy is a reaction to the threat of losing something (usually someone).*

Despite the above, common practice today is to use the words *envy* and *jealousy* interchangeably.

**#1 Question: What is the main reason a person becomes envious?**

**#2 Question: What are some negative outcomes of envy?**





**#3**

**Mishlei (14:30)**

*Envy is the rotting of bones.*

**Question: What is the message here?**

**#4   (a)**

**Pirkei Avos 4:28**

*Rabbi Elazar HaKappar says: Envy, desire, and honor remove a person from the world.*

**Explain!**

**(b)**

**Pirkei Avos 2:16**

*Rabbi Joshua would say: An evil eye, the evil inclination, and the hatred of one's fellows, drive a person from the world.*

*world.*

**Explain!**

**(c) Question: Are these two Mishanyos (a) & (b) connected?**

**#5 Question: Can envy be beneficial?**

**#6 Question: What are possible ways to avoid envy?**



**#7**

Envy strikes hardest when a person who is undergoing difficulties sees other people who appear to be having it easy in the very area in which he is challenged.

**Bereishis, Chapter 4**

*(1) Now the man knew his wife Eve, and she conceived and bore Cain, and she said, "I have acquired a man with Hashem." (2) And additionally she bore his brother Abel, and Abel was a shepherd, and Cain was a tiller of the ground. (3) 3 After a period of time, Cain brought an offering to Hashem of the fruit of the ground.*

**Rashi: *Of the fruit of the ground:****of the most inferior.*

*(4) And as for Abel he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and from their choicest. Hashem turned to Abel and to his offering.*

**Rashi: *and Hashem turned:****Fire descended and consumed his offering.*

*(5) But to Cain and to his offering He did not turn. This annoyed Cain exceedingly, and his countenance fell. (6) And Hashem said to Cain, "Why are you annoyed, and why has your countenance fallen? (7) Is it not so that if you work to improve, you will become uplifted? If you do not improve, however, at the entrance, sin is lying, and to you is its longing, but you can rule over it." (8) Cain spoke with his brother Abel. And it happened when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.*

**Question: What is the advice the God gives to Cain in dealing with envy?**

**#8 Question: How do you apply the ideas you discussed today in your life?**