#

The Best Advice I Ever Got



# **A. Giving Advice**

**#1**

**Pirkei Avos 1:6**

*… acquire for yourself a friend ...*

**Rabbeinu Yonah, ca. 1200–1263**

*One needs to have a good friend for three reasons … (3) regarding advice … to help him with everything.*

**Questions:**

**(a) How do you feel when someone asks you for advice?**

**(b) Do you always give advice when asked for one?**

**(c) Should one give advice when not asked for it?**

**#2**

**Rabbi Dan Roth**

*When the Sages speak about giving advice, they are not referring to the relaying of technical information from one person to another, such as offering your opinion on what should be worn to a particular event or suggesting where to find good travel deals. Rather, what the Sages are referring to is the ability to help people resolve life issues and overcome personal challenges.*

**Questions:**

**(a) Can anyone give this kind of advice or do you need to possess a certain ability in order to give advice effectively?**

**(b) What is a prerequisite for giving advice?**

**#3**

King Shlomo (Solomon) asked G-d for *“a listening heart”* (I Melachim (Kings) 3:9).

He wanted to be able to guide those who sought his counsel in the best manner possible.

One usually associates listening with the ears or the head, not with heart.

**Question: What did King Solomon mean by this request?**

**#4**

**Mishlei 20:5**

*Counsel is like deep water in the heart of man, but the wise man will draw it out.*

**Question: King Solomon (Shlomo) compares the process of offering advice to the process of drawing water from the depths of a well.**

**What are we supposed to learn from this comparison?**

**#5**

**Kallah Rabasi 5**

Be careful to give a good advice.

**Torah, Vayikra 19:14**

*You shall not curse the deaf nor place a stumbling block before the blind; you shall fear your God - I am your Lord.*

**Toras Kohanim Kedoshim 19**

*This is a reference to offering bad advice: If somebody consults with you, you must offer him the best possible advice.*

**Rambam, Sefer Ha-Mitzvot, Negative Commandment 299***It warns against any of us leading anyone else to stumble when we offer advice. Meaning, if someone asks you for advice in some matter… the prohibition is issued against tricking him and leading him to stumble. You should rather lead him straight to the matter as you feel is good and correct, and this is what is meant when He said, `You shall not place a stumbling block before the blind’…*

**Question: What should you do if the right advice to give someone would actually be harmful to *you*?**

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# **B. Asking for Advice**

**#6**

**Pirkei Avos 2:7**

*… the more advice the more understanding ...*

**Questions:**

**(a) What was best piece of advice you received from someone?**

**(b) When should you ask for advice? When should you not ask for advice and act on your own?**

**(c) When people (especially men) get lost, they don’t like to ask for directions. Many don’t like asking for help, advice generally. What could be the reason for that?**

**(d) When is it hard and when is it easy to ask for advice?**

**(e) How do you feel when someone gives you unsolicited advice?**

**(f) How do you push yourself to ask for advice when you don’t really want to but need it?**

**#7**

**Mishlei 11:14**

*Salvation comes from the counsel of many.*

**Question: Why do you need to consult with multiple people?**

**#8**

**Ruach Chaim (Rabbi Chaim Volozhiner), 1749-1821**

*You should seek advice but then do what you think is best.*

**Questions:**

**(a) Why bother asking for advice?**

**(b) Wouldn't the person who you ask for advice feel like you wasted his time, or that you don't take him seriously?**

**#9**

**Zohar, Yisro 82b (Kabbalah)**

*Torah is a Book of Advice.*

**Question: Why does the Zohar call the Torah a Book of Advice? Doesn’t that make it sound like the contents are optional? And isn’t it more? History, Law, etc?**

**#10 Question: What's your takeaway from today's discussion?**