Marriage and the Second Law of Thermodynamics

Recently, thank God, I set up one of the spaces in my house to use as an office. Now I have more comfort for studying, writing, reading, making photocopies, checking my email, etc. But inevitably, every two or three days of use, my office turns into chaos: books piled up on the desk, papers everywhere, snacks that I sometimes bring from the kitchen, etc. At least once a week, I have to intervene and dedicate time to put things back in order.

What happens with my office has a name: entropy. If we want to be more academic, my office suffers from the second law of thermodynamics, which states the inevitability of a closed system transitioning from order to chaos. Nothing goes from chaos to order by itself, without the intervention of an external factor. See Note below *

Physics and Marriage

The second law of thermodynamics also applies to marriage. In a romantic relationship, entropy manifests as emotional disorder and distance that can grow between two people if neither takes action to prevent it. In other words: if a couple feels like they're growing apart, it's normal, especially when neither actively does anything to prevent it. If marriage is left to manage itself, by inertia, it's practically impossible to avoid chaos and centrifugal forces that gradually separate spouses.

A Couple of Tips to Prevent Entropy in Marriage

FOR MEN

1. One of the most important gestures a wife needs from her husband is to feel valued. For him to pay attention to

what she does in the house, for him or for the children, and let her know. A woman who doesn't feel appreciated by her husband can enter a cycle of emotional entropy. The Torah portion of this week, Ki Tavo, teaches us that it's essential to express our appreciation and thankfulness "with words" – not just in our hearts – for what God does for us. The Jewish farmer must bring the first fruits of his harvest to the Beit Hamikdash and there perform a whole ceremony of verbal gratitude, not silently. And why should this ritual of gratitude be performed? Actually, God doesn't need it! Many Sages explain that verbal gratitude helps to value, and thus a positive cycle is created: gratitude leads to valuing and valuing leads to gratitude. If we apply this to our wives, there won't be room for emotional entropy.
2. Dedicating time to the wife is actually a Mitzvah (religious obligation) of the Torah, derived from the commandment of "'Onatah", which literally means "her times" and indicates that the Jewish husband must dedicate intimate time with his wife. Intimacy, especially emotional intimacy, is an imperative need for any wife and a prerequisite for her to feel "attracted" to her husband. For a woman, "love" means sharing time together. The husband must allocate time to his wife each day or week: taking walks together, going out to eat together, or even not doing anything specific, but being "together". This is absolutely essential to prevent entropy.

FOR WIVES

1. Many wives believe that by criticizing their husbands, they are doing them a favor. They think that it's a virtue to point out their mistakes in what he does, says, and thinks. They might say to themselves, "If I don't show my husband what he's doing wrong, who will do it for him?" However, constant criticism, even when

coming from a well-intentioned place (“I want to help my husband”), doesn’t help. In reality, it only serves to increase the level of entropy and distance in the marriage. The best (and only) strategy a wife can adopt to help her husband is positive reinforcement of her spouse’s actions: praising and rewarding him when he does something right. This approach is similar to that of a pet trainer, who never criticizes, yells at, or punishes the animals being trained, but instead focuses on rewarding and reinforcing appropriate behaviors. And this method works perfectly with husbands too!

2. It’s very important for both the husband and wife to understand that happiness is not just a “mood”, but a choice. The Torah teaches this repeatedly, for example, when it commands us to “be” happy during our holidays or to “make others happy”. This “active” happiness can start by forcing myself to smile or put on a cheerful face when I’m with my loved ones. Remember that a good employee, a secretary, a flight attendant on an airplane, or a teacher who wants to keep their job, have to put on their best face around others. Incredibly, when you make an effort to project happiness, you start to feel happier. If a wife adopts a positive attitude and projects happiness, she becomes a true emotional magnet for her husband, who will feel much more drawn to spend additional time with her and seek activities to do together. A wife who radiates happiness is irresistible to any husband.

SHABBAT SHALOM

- By the way, for me, entropy is the best evidence that the world was created by God and didn’t arise on its own, since assuming a universe that arose and developed from the original chaos of the Big Bang without the intervention of a Creator would go completely against this fundamental physical law. They should teach this in

all schools!

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