

*Discover  
The Meaning Of  
Your Life*

5 steps to a meaningful life

Based on the Wisdom of  
Kabbalah/Chassidus

# The world has three stages:

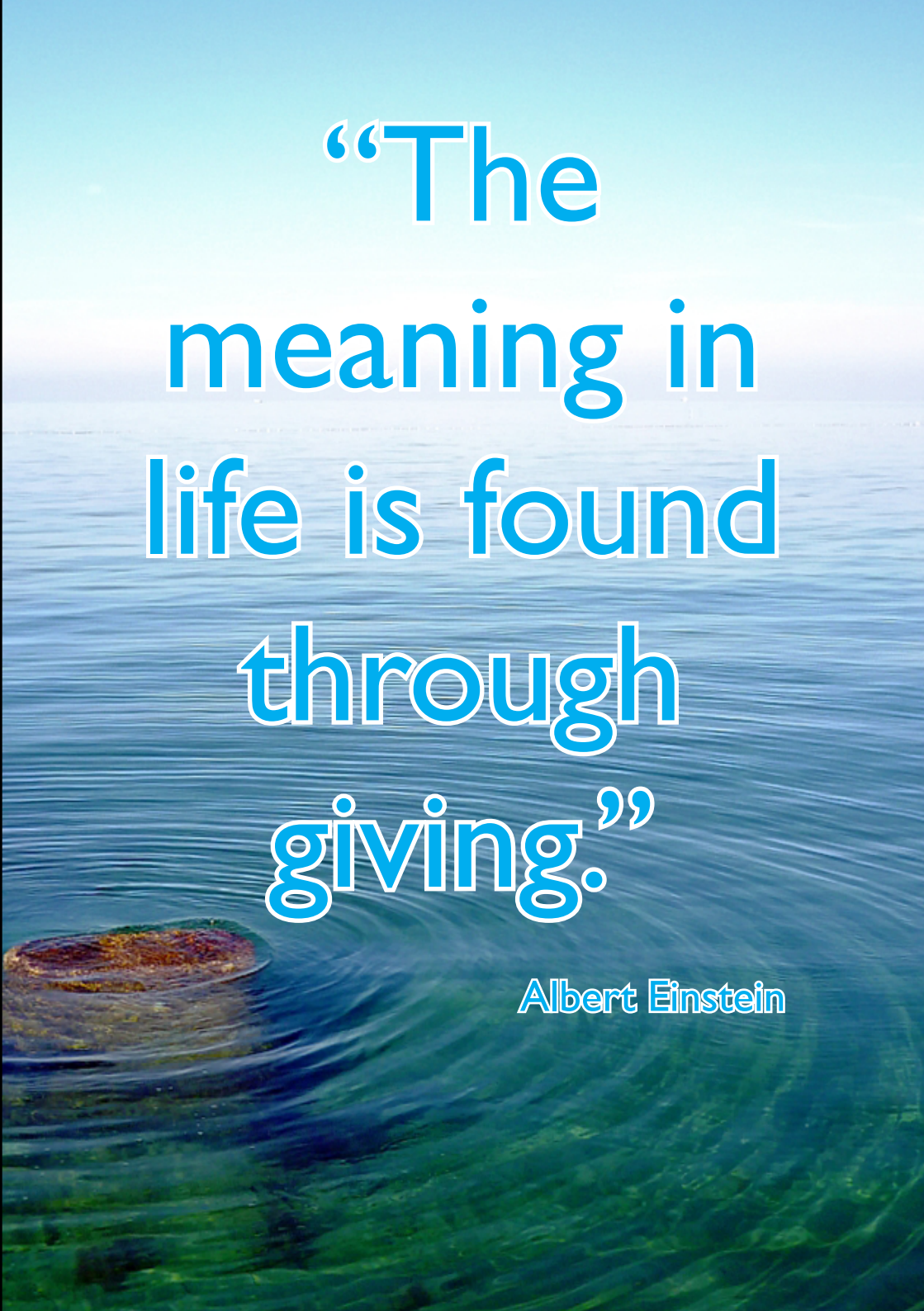
G-d's intent, which is for you to choose Him, so you can rise above your selfish side and activate a selfless side!

Hence, there is a. G-d's desire b. The creation of you (and obviously the world you live in) and c. The messianic era when we all choose to overcome our selfish instincts!



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The Lubavitcher Rebbe, the foremost Jewish leader of our century (voted "Jew of The Century" in all Jewish newspaper and magazine polls at the turn of the century) prophetically, and based on the reality around us, has declared, that we have already begun the messianic stage; for never before, have more people courageously embraced G-d, despite the ridicule of many; courageously embraced ideals, despite ridicule; courageously embraced the Jewish people and Israel, despite the terrorism of those who jealously seek its and their destruction.



“The  
meaning in  
life is found  
through  
giving.”

Albert Einstein

# Dedication

## Dedicated To All Seekers Of Truth

Dear Reader,

May The Creator and Master of you and I, assist you in realizing, that the wisdom that transformed my life from darkness to light, from aimlessness to meaning, from feeling that the universe is a “dog-eat-dog world” to understanding, that life is both a process of discovery, and purposeful acts of love – Transform Your Life!

“Nothing is harder than personal transformation, which is why nothing can be more meaningful!”

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Meaningful Books

Jerusalem



## Thank You

My first acknowledgment – the source of gratitude – for to be grateful, we must recognize where our blessings/beneficence has come from, is of course, to our loving Father-in-Heaven, who in His unlimited kindness has ordained that I should be worthy, or perhaps better said, fortunate, to have studied - and thus be able to share, Kabbalah's transformative wisdom with you.

Thank you to my many good friends who generously donated towards the printing of this book.

Special appreciation goes to my dear revered Father, whose encouragement and constant editing and critique of my writing is invaluable. And to my equally dear revered Mother, for the final proofread. As I like to say, being a Rabbi is “the family business,” that never made anything, but holy debt. 😊

Last but not least, to Tyrell Gobel, whose graphics and design turned a black and white book into a kaleidoscope of color, allowing the dictum that “the Messianic teachings will be visual” to actualize.

## Introduction

### The Beginning Of The Messianic Light - Chassidus

In truth, there is but a path, in which the unlimited infinite nature of the Divine, collides into our limited defined natural order!

In my own desperate search for the meaning of existence, traversing the many doctrines, philosophies, religious ideals, I was amazed to discover, in my own backyard, a treasure buried for millennia, taught only to the great initiated saints but recently revealed through the Chassidic masters.

A light both illuminating and cozy, both inspiring and deep, heralding in the: “New Torah Teachings of The Messiah” which flowed through the undiluted souls of the Chassidic Rebbes/Masters.

If your soul’s thirst can be quenched, if your parched head can be satiated, if your heart’s ache can be soothed, well worth my humble attempt to distill this dazzling array of precious gems into modern bite-size wisdom.

***If all the heavens were parchment and all the grass were quills, if all the oceans were ink, still the wisdom of Kabbalah could never be transcribed.***

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# Chapter 1

## ***What is Meaning?***

We need to firstly define what meaning is.

If we look in the Oxford dictionary under meaning we find:

1. What is meant,
2. Significance,
3. Importance.

A look under meaningful is able to reveal even less:

1. Full of meaning,
2. Logic, able to be interpreted.

A look under meaningless seems to do the trick for me, “Having no meaning or significance.”

It seems that to explain meaning the word meaning is used. That doesn't really help us, for we want to know what meaning is!

If you don't have a clearly defined idea of what meaning is you need not worry for even the great psychologist Freud had great difficulty in describing meaning.

As all feelings it is practically impossible to describe. Think about loneliness, happiness, anger, pride. Try to describe these in words. The best we can do is describe behaviors that are produced by these feelings which we recognize as having their genesis (their beginning) in these feelings. Take this sentence for example, “After he insulted me I whacked his hand.” This is an obvious behavior that has its origin in anger.

“I felt so happy when my friends returned, we immediately shmoozed about their trip overseas.” Loneliness is the cause of happiness in this case. When the friends returned the feelings of loneliness subsided and an important human need was fulfilled. How about this?

“Whenever I make the high jump, the claps from the audience sounds like music to my ears.” Obviously someone’s joy is caused by the audience’s recognition of his achievements.



**People rarely express their emotions in words, certainly men don't.**

Hallmark Cards makes many millions of dollars by expressing emotions in a picture or a few choice words and then a person happily purchases the card and signs their name.

Women are naturally better at language than men, this gives them an innate ability to express emotions better than men for they are better communicators in general, but when we ask for, “How do you define meaning in life?” many women are at a loss as well.

Meaning in life is neither an emotion nor a feeling rather it is a perception. A person perceives that their life is meaningful or not.

Some perceptions are made via the senses like “is it light outside,” or “how loud is that guys stereo!” or

“this flower smells great!” or “this feels hot!” or “this tastes terrible!” while other perceptions are made via the intellect, like two plus two equals four, or, “When I say to people that they stink they begin to hate me.”



**The intellect can also conceive of new ideas, as well as judge old ideas by objective standards.**

Essentially this is the job of a Judge. They look at a behavior and they decide if this behavior is criminal, based on an objective standard of what is legally considered criminal.

A person who does not judge themselves favorably is someone who decides in a sense that their behavior is criminal or not right.

Many people have many resolutions that they would take if they could keep them; all of these people thus

perceive that they should be changing their behavior and feel bad when they are not. How many smokers wish they had stopped smoking already, just as people with many different sorts of bad habits and other mental or emotional ailments.



**Behavior can be changed, it is the desire not to change behavior that gets in the way of changing.**

For example, let's say I need to study for an exam in university, this means I need to do some boring reading which

I don't want to do, particularly because a favorite show of mine is on tonight. I can now choose my behavior; it will take self-control to study for the exam.

Many people lack this kind of self-control. They basically live their lives in what can be best described

as crises control. They are controlling their crises. Only a crisis gets them to respond, and do things that they don't want to do.

Crisis control people will find it difficult to achieve meaning in life for they will consistently be perceiving themselves as not doing that which they themselves think they should do.

It is not a very good feeling to look at oneself and decide that "I could have done more" or "I should be doing more but I am not because I can't control myself."

Although this is not a good feeling, many people don't realize that they have the power to change their behavior. They believe that they are stuck and they need to fulfill their emotional passions.

For this reason, we will discuss briefly how man is able to control their passions which will help some people in their mission towards achieving meaning in their life. Like I mentioned, for many people this is necessary, as it is impossible to achieve meaning if a person cannot control their behavior.

## Chapter 2



**The surest way for a person to be unhappy in life is to do every desire that comes their way – i.e. into their mind.**

People are naturally endowed with various different abilities of self-control, this ranges from lots of it to none of it. There is no one who is perfectly able to control their urges and desires; it is difficult for everyone, the only question is how difficult.

There is a theory that children who are labeled attention deficit disorder are normal children, only they have a lesser ability to control their desires. Let's face it, no child likes to be studying math at 2:00 pm. It has no relevance to their lives, certainly not at their tender age. The difference between the ADD child and the "normal" child is, that the normal child controls their urge to talk in class, while the

ADD has less self-control. In a way this theory is true, for a person can see that an ADD child is remorseful but they can't seem to stop their behavior.



**It is as if they're saying,  
"I understand your feeling, but this is my limit."**

"Normal children" are just better at limiting / controlling their behavior. Some children even at a very tender age are excellent at limiting their behavior for a better goal.

A fascinating study is reported in Daniel Goleman's book "Emotional Intelligence" where he describes how kindergarten children were given an option of one marshmallow now or two marshmallows in ten minutes.

Only very few children could wait the ten minutes for the next marshmallow. Most children lacked the

self-control to wait, so they opted for one now. Most importantly, these children were tracked throughout their school career and unsurprisingly they were better in every social and academic field than their peers.



**In almost every academic or social setting self-control is necessary for success.**

You need to study, which takes self-control, you need to be patient, which takes self-control and the list goes on and on.

Why is there this dichotomy between the desires and self-control. The answer is found in the very structure of the human.

Imagine an animal for a moment. They have no self-control issues, for they have no perception of

self. All they know is that, “I want something and I will do what it takes to get it.” They can be trained to do tricks but that means they know that in order to get what they want they need to sit or stand.

Essentially what they want dominates their behavior and they learn how to get what they want. Sometimes they might need to do a trick for their food but they have no choice in the matter. If they were given the choice, they would take the food without the trick.

A human has a very strong perception of self, which gets stronger as they grow from infancy to adulthood. A little child is not very different from an animal in its lack of perception of self.

Once this perception develops, a new human emerges and that is what we will call the human ideal.

That ideal is the human, as the human wants to be. Most often a little child wants to be like a parent, that’s why girls play with dolls and boys dream of being fireman and policeman which are important jobs to them, as symbolized by the flashing lights

and the ability to go through red lights. (This desire for importance can sometimes be negative such as a desire for fame at all cost to oneself and others.



**It can also be very positive, as a desire to make a meaningful difference in other's lives.**

This is when a person truly leaves a legacy for they are forever remembered favorably by the people they helped.)

## Chapter 3

The important thing to remember when one is searching for meaning, is to understand the principals of the price one pays for meaning.

Like all good things in life, meaning in life comes at a very high price. The price is making time and

spending your resources for helping others. Although this may seem like a small price, it is actually quite difficult, for the reason, that when someone needs something, they feel the need, but when someone needs to give something, then they need to create the understanding of how the other person feels in order to understand the need.



**It is impossible to feel an emotion that is not felt by oneself internally.**

One can never imagine how a blind person feels, [chas veshalom] one can never imagine how an autistic child feels, one can never imagine what it is like to have much more or much less than one has, or ever has had.

Only a person who has been in a similar situation can possibly feel the same way and understand how the other is feeling. This is why the 12 step program

in a group, has tremendous success, for a sufferer meets other sufferers who know what it is like to suffer.

Great Rabbis were most often great counselors to people. A rule among the most professional and caring of these Great Rabbis was that they needed to identify with the problem the sufferer had.

No matter what the problem was, they made sure to find within themselves something similar to that problem and only then did they allow themselves to counsel the people who came to them.

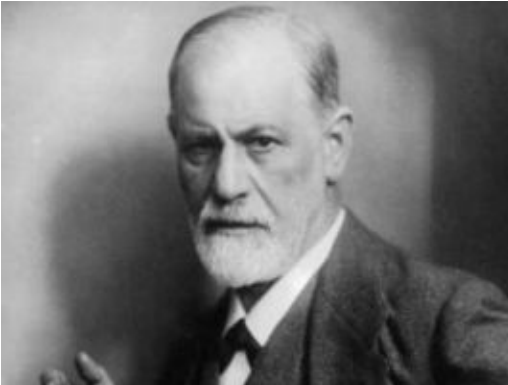
This is the logic behind the Biblical instruction to



**“Love your neighbor as oneself.”**

Seemingly this is asking a lot of an individual. But in order to do kindness to another in their time of

need, you must picture yourself in their situation and imagine the pain they are feeling, only then will you realize and feel the need to do something about it.



**Freud explained that people do not exaggerate their needs.**

This means, if a person feels that they are under intense pressure, it makes no difference if they are under a “paper clip” or “under a ton of bricks” the perception can be the same for different people.

People normally associate what others are feeling with how they would feel in a similar situation. There are two problems that people have when they are trying to identify with another’s problems: the first one is that they do not properly understand the situation because they are not feeling it directly.

This means that they can only compare it to how they would react in a similar situation. Because they were never in the situation they don't actually know how they would react and therefore they do not know how difficult it is for the other person.

The second problem is that people are want to look down at others and decide that the other person should be far stronger.

Of course (chas vshalom) if they were in that situation they would be very sad and want pity rather than a lecture of how to be strong but when they see another in a situation of need, all people usually think, is, "Be strong and heal yourself." (Men in particular have this problem and women seem to be able to understand another person's pain better.)

For these two reasons it is an absolute necessity to try to listen objectively, and trust what the other person is saying. If the person says something is "very difficult for me" think about what was very difficult for you and compare the level of difficulty the person is describing to that same very level of difficulty you had.



**Don't think, "How would I be in this situation" because you are not in that situation so you don't know.**

Rather think, that what the person is saying is true. And the reality is, that it is how they are feeling, so disregard the stimulus and compare how they are feeling to a similar level of anxiety or pain that you have once felt. If you can't do this, you will not see the necessity, urgency, or difficulty the person is facing, for you will have no means of understanding it.

## **Chapter 4**

This chapter will summarize the main ideas of the previous chapter and will guide you on a step-by-step process to achieving meaning in life. I will warn you however, that there is a tremendous gap between knowing the steps and knowing how to dance.

It is fairly easy to read the steps, it is more difficult to do them, and it is far more difficult to do them gracefully. For this reason do not expect to learn the steps and then succeed.

This will only cause you grief later, just as if you were to learn how to dance from a book and then expect to gracefully waltz on the dance floor. It will take patience and practice. Knowing that this and only this will be of lasting importance and will fill your life with meaning and purpose, should help you take the difficult practical trials, into a graceful life, full of happiness and meaning.



**Step 1.**  
**Identify who you  
can help in your  
life.**

First imagine that you are a child and remember that desire to receive love and affection from your

parents. Now ask yourself, who looks at me like a parent? Perhaps it is a spouse, perhaps you have children, maybe you are an employer so you have employees who see you as such. How about if your job is of tremendous importance to others like a doctor or a plumber in a time of crises.

Who looks to you for help and assistance? Now you know who you can help. Forget about saving the world, or even saving your country, or even your city, or even your own community organization, think only about those people, “What can I do to them that I would have enjoyed if my parents had done for me when I was in need of assistance?”

The key is to try to imagine their need and compare it to a serious need of your own. Don't compare the situation but compare the need. I am sure there were times that you felt hopeless, in need of encouragement, someone to give you advice that would work and similar situations. Compare the intensity of need with the intensity of need that you have had and then you have accomplished step one.

You know who you can help.



## Step 2.

### Define a strategy.

There is no use knowing a need without a solution. Define a strategy. This may be very easy or very difficult. If it is in your area of expertise, you may very simply be able to help the person, for example, if you are a doctor and you have someone in need, if you know that illness, it can be very easy and almost automatic to define a strategy.

If you do not know what to do, there are few things worse than offering help to someone who looks to you for help, only to learn later that you not only did not help the person, but you wasted all the time they were looking to you for help, when they could have gone to someone else.

The point is, don't fix problems unless you are an expert!

You are not the focus, they are! For this reason you need a strategy that will help the person. This may be going to an expert or perhaps you becoming an expert but don't harm a person that needs help, for that will openly become a point of shame in your life.



### Step 3.

### Implementation.

A strategy is only good if it is implemented. If you don't implement the strategy there is no use to making it and wasting your own time. Implement, implement, implement. Implementation is achieved by self-control which we discussed earlier.



## Step 4.

### **Pretend that you did nothing**

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People do not like to receive, for then they are beholden to the person that they received from. It is very important to understand this. Think about how much you owe your employer or best customer etc. You owe them. To put a person in a situation where they owe you is only to change their problem. Of course it is better to help a drowning person than to say, “I won’t save him or her so they won’t owe me,” but if at all possible you should say, “Wow isn’t that amazing, I just was driving by here with my boat and I saw you, are you o.k.? etc.”

The less effort it took for you to save the person, the less he or she owes you. It is difficult to overstate this point. Don’t say, “Boy I just used my last dollar to put in fuel in my boat after I saw a mile away that you

were drowning and I ruined my watch that grandpa James left for me when I picked you out of the water, but I am so happy to help you. Are you o.k.?”

Obviously the person will feel very indebted and few people are sophisticated enough or have the ability to repay the debt in full. Remember, make it like there was as little effort as possible in what you did.



## **Step 5.** **Maintain a Friendship**

This is probably the most difficult of all the steps, for after you have done the good deeds, you may want to congratulate yourself and drink a beer. That’s not how it works.

When you help someone, you become very important to them just like your parents are important to you.

You now need to be there for them. They will look up to you even if you think you are a nothing. They will obviously think that you are a something. Just be their friend. Ask how they are. Congratulate them during their good times and sympathize with them during their bad times. Be a friend.

I will give you an absolute guarantee that these five steps, preformed consistently and at available opportunities, will fill your life with meaning. You will find happiness and joy.

You will see that your soul has an important mission on this world and that only you can fulfill it. Remember, nothing good comes easy and if you're looking for the very best, which is happiness, it will come with lots of effort. In fact, the more effort you will put into these five steps, the happier you will become. Go ahead. Make your life meaningful. Good Luck.

### ***A Soul Stirring Short Story***

When Rabbi Sholom, the fifth Lubavitcher Rebbe was a young boy of five, he and his brother Zalman played Rabbi and student. Zalman put on a black hat

and Sholom asked the following question. “I forgot to make a blessing on my apple this morning, what should I do?” “From now on” said Zalman proudly, “you should say your blessing from the Siddur (prayer book) and in this manner, you won’t forget to say your blessings!”

“You aren’t a real Rebbe,” exclaimed the younger Sholom. “Why not, I gave you good advice,” replied Zalman. “A real Rebbe, first sighs with you and only then does he give you advice” answered Sholom, who went on to become a mentor for tens of thousands of people.

## Appendix

If a person looks at life as a place to achieve pleasure they will receive no answer as to why they were born. The ability to achieve pleasure has been reached by the advanced chemical substances known as drugs that allow people to feel great amounts of pleasure. Pleasure is certainly non-equitable with happiness, for if you asked those drug users if they prefer to be happy or on drugs they will tell you they prefer

to be happy. They are using drugs because they are unhappy and it is this unhappiness that leads them to seek pleasure.

This is often seen in people who are going through a midlife crisis; their desire to have pleasure increases as their unhappiness with themselves increases.



**Ultimately,  
happiness is a sort  
of pride that one  
has of oneself.**

A person is proud of one's achievements. A person who behaves in ways that offers pain to others will not be happy, even if they receive much pleasure in the things that are causing pain to others. Happiness comes from knowing that you have made a meaningful difference in another person's life.

Time is very precious, because before a person knows it, the opportunities to make someone else

happy are gone. How many people have lost out on the amazing opportunities of helping another person, just because they were too busy at the time. When they look back at the circumstance, they often feel bad, that with a little bit of selfless effort on their part, they could have brought happiness to another person.

There is an added dimension to happiness in that



**when you make someone happy you feel as if you were born for a reason.**

Look carefully at your opportunities to do good.

If you can tell that you are in a situation to help someone, think if there is anyone else in the world who is in the same situation where they care enough and have the ability to make a difference.

You may be surprised to find, that in this particular instance, to this particular person, you have the ability to make a world of a difference.

Saving the world is not a problem at the current moment and if it was, governments would probably find professional people who would advise them on these issues.

Helping one person in a particular situation that you know about, is saving that person's world and will bring you a world of happiness, for there is no better feeling, then to know, that you made a world of difference, to someone's world.



## About The Author



Rabbi Michael Zev Wineberg received his Rabbinic Ordination from the Chief-Rabbi of Canada, Rabbi Hirshprung OBM. He has a degree in mediation and computer programming. Rabbi Wineberg was Lecturer of Hebrew and lectured on Jewish Mysticism at Kansas University. He founded The Beth Medrash Program (advanced Jewish studies) at State University of New York, Binghamton; and co-founded The Beth Medrash Program at Yale University's, Jewish Student Union. He served as Adult Education Director for Chabad House Center, K.C. Kansas.

He is the author of over twenty personal guides based on Kabbalah/ Jewish Mysticism. He also served as the foundational Rabbi – building up the Jewish Community of Plettenberg Bay, a resort town in South Africa and servicing the thousands of Jewish tourists to it annually. He was a popular Radio Show Host on “Kabbalah “ on a number of Radio Stations. He currently is a lecturer and blogger on his website [www.KabbalahWisdom.org](http://www.KabbalahWisdom.org).

Using Kabbalah's wisdom, the author, Rabbi Michael Zevi Wineberg – Kabbalah blogger, author and lecturer - unlocks the secret to good marital intimacy.

The advice simple, the transformation, eternal!

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