Fame is a Dangerous Drug

**#1**

**Merriam-Webster’s Definition of Success**

The fact of getting or achieving wealth, respect, or fame.

**Questions:**

* **Do you agree with this definition?**
* **Are famous people happy, successful, rich, popular?**

**#2**

**Today’s Learning Material**

**Torah Bereishis, chapter 11**

*1 All on earth had the same language and the same words. 2 And as they migrated from the east, they came upon a valley in the land of Shinar and settled there. 3 They said to one another, “Come, let us make bricks and burn them hard… 4 And they said, “Come, let us build us a city, and a tower with its top in the sky, to make a name for ourselves; else we shall be scattered all over the world.” 5 The Lord came down to look at the city and tower that man had built, 6 and the Lord said, “If, as one people with one language for all, this is how they have begun to act, then nothing that they may propose to do will be out of their reach. 7 Let us, then, go down and confound their speech there, so that they shall not understand one another’s speech.” 8 Thus the Lord scattered them from there over the face of the whole earth; and they stopped building the city. 9 That is why it was called Babel, because there the Lord confounded the speech of the whole earth; and from there the Lord scattered them over the face of the whole earth.*

**Rabbi S. R. Hirsch on Torah, Bereishis 11:4**

*… the generation of the dispersion was dominated by the lust for honor.*

**Question: Why do people have the need for fame?**

**Rabbi S. R. Hirsch on Torah, Bereishis 11:4**

*All passions have a saturation point, except for the lust for honor, which has no limit.*

**Question: What could be the reason for this?**

**#3**

## **Filmmaker Jon Waters, 2004**

## Most everybody secretly imagines themselves in show business and everyday on their way to work, they’re a little bit depressed because they’re not . . . People are sad they’re not famous in America.

**Question: Do you agree with Waters’ statement?**

**#4**

**Pirkei Avos, Mishnah 1:13**

*Hillel used to say, one who seeks a name loses his name ...*

**Talmud Eruvin 13b**

*One who pursues glory, glory runs away from him; and one who runs away from glory, glory will chase him.*

**Questions:**

* **Have you ever seen this phenomenon in real life?**
* **What are the dangers of fame?**

**#5**

**We are raising a generation of deluded narcissists, Fox News, January 8, 2013**

I have been writing a great deal over the past few years about the toxic psychological impact of media and technology on children, adolescents and young adults, particularly as it regards turning them into faux celebrities—the equivalent of lead actors in their own fictionalized life stories.

On Facebook, young people can fool themselves into thinking they have hundreds or thousands of “friends.” They can delete unflattering comments. They can block anyone who disagrees with them or pokes holes in their inflated self-esteem. They can choose to show the world only flattering or funny photographs of themselves (dozens of albums full, by the way), “speak” in pithy short posts and publicly connect to movie stars and professional athletes and musicians they “like.”

Using Twitter, young people can pretend they are worth “following,” as though they have real-life fans, when all that is really happening is the mutual fanning of false love and false fame.

**Questions:**

* **What is your opinion on this article?**
* **Is there a way to fix this issue?**

**#6**

**Talmud Sanhedrin, Mishnah 4:5**

*One is required to say the ‘world was created for me.’*

**Questions:**

* **How do you understand this statement?**
* **Doesn't it encourage us to be narcissistic?**
* **How do you achieve healthy self-esteem without becoming narcissistic?**

**#7**

**Torah, Bereishis 12:1-3**

*And G-d said to Avraham, "Go forth from your land and from your birthplace and from your father's house, to the land that I will show you.*

*I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you shall be a blessing.*

*And I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curse you I will curse, and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you."*

**Questions:**

* **What are the benefits of fame?**
* **Is it possible to stay humble and grounded if you are famous? If yes, how?**

**#8**

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