How to Win Friends and Influence People



**Introduction**

**Pirkei Avos 1:6**

*Yehoshua ben Perachya says: Establish a rabbi for yourself, acquire (buy) a friend for yourself, and judge every person favorably.*

**Pirkei Avos 2:13**

*Rabbi Yochanan said to them: Go and see which is the proper way to which a man should cling…Said Rabbi Joshua: A good friend…*

**Koheles 4:9-10**

*Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift his fellow. But woe to the one who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up.*

Pirkei Avos 6:6

*… the Torah is acquired with 48 ways. These are: … (38) judging others favorably…*

**Maimonides on Pirkei Avos 1:6** *“…acquire (buy) a friend for yourself…”*

*A person must acquire someone who loves him…as the Sages said, ‘Give me a friend or give me death’*

**Talmud Taanis 23a**

*Choni Ha’Ma’agal was a miracle worker.*

*One day he happened to be walking along the road and noticed an elderly man planting a carob tree. Choni wondered why the man planted this kind of tree.*

*"Tell me, my good man," said Choni, "how long does it take for this tree to bear fruit?"*

*"It takes 70 years to produce fruit," answered the old man.*

*"Do you believe that you can live 70 more years to derive benefit from the fruit of this tree?" asked Choni.*

*"I found this carob tree in this world," replied the old man. "Just as my ancestors planted the tree for my sake, so do I plant this tree for the sake of those who will follow me."*

*Choni fell asleep and slept for seventy years. When he woke up, he saw a man gathering carobs from that very tree.*

*Choni was amazed and asked the man, "Do you know who planted the tree? Are you perhaps the same man who planted it?”*

*"No, I am not,” was the reply. "This tree was planted by my father's father, 70 years ago."*

*Choni was astounded at what he had heard. 'Apparently, I must have been sleeping for 70 years,' he thought to himself.*

*He went to his own house, but no one recognized him, and they didn’t believe him when he said, “I am Choni.” When the same thing happened at the study house, Choni was even more devastated.*

*When Choni saw that everyone refused to believe him, he was broken-hearted and walked out, wandering through the streets for a long time. No one would listen to him or believe him. In anguish, he prayed to God, "Lord of the Universe! Either give me a friend or give me death!" He then prayed to G-d for death. His prayer was granted and the pure soul of the saintly body of Choni left and returned to its Creator.*

**#1** In Hebrew, friend is *“Chaver”*, same as the word for connection – inherent connectedness.

**#2 Question: What is the purpose of a friend?**

**#3**

There are two types of friends:

(a) Mutual interests create the friendship.

(b) The friendship causes reciprocal interests.

**Question: What is the difference between the two types of relationships?**



**#4**

*Two drunken men were sitting together and talking. One asked the other, “Are you my friend?” to which the other responded immediately, “Of course! What do you need?” The first answered back, “Obviously you are not my friend. If you were my friend, you would know what I need!”*

**Questions: What type of friend does this man refer to?**

**Can you relate to this concept in your own life?**

**#5 Question: Should one choose friends, or should friendships happen organically?**

**#6**

**Pirkei Avos 1:6**

“…*acquire (buy) a friend for yourself…”*

**Question: What could this mean?**

**#7**

**From Shmone Esre (daily Jewish prayer)**

*“…O King, (You are) a helper, a savior and a shield (protector)…”*

Some say that we can learn from the way God acts with us about how to be a good friend.

**Question: Your thoughts?**

**#8 Question:**

**How would you apply these concepts and your findings to your own life and personality?**