



HELP YOURSELF BY HELPING OTHERS

Purim 5725*

Our Rebbeim strongly encouraged Chassidim to be involved in *hafatzas hamaayanos*—traveling to far-flung lands, spiritually and physically distant, to bring Yidden closer to Yiddishkeit.

What justification could the Rebbeim have for sending *everyone* on *hafatzas hamaayanos*? Are all Chassidim really up to the task? Sure, there are holy individuals who have completed their own self-improvement and can justifiably throw their efforts into helping others. But most people aren't like that. Most of the Chassidim to whom the Rebbeim were speaking had much self-improvement ahead of them before they reach their own potential. How, then, can it be expected of the Chassidim to neglect their own spiritual growth and focus on the growth of others?

The answer lies in *how* the Rebbeim expected *hafatzas hamaayanos* to take place.

When it comes to *mivtzoim*, there are two approaches a person might have

towards the task at hand. The person may decide that he's going to preach, but not practice: he will tell others what to do and hope that they listen. And if they don't listen, he will quickly give up. He does not absorb his own message. He doesn't really mean what he's saying; therefore, of course, nobody else does either.

The Rebbeim taught us that *hafatzas hamaayanos* means *mesiras nefesh*. It means that a Chossid goes out on *mivtzoim* with the commitment to do whatever it takes to accomplish his goal. He absorbs his message; he practices what he preaches. And because he is inspired, he inspires others.

That's the answer: the Rebbeim sent Chassidim out on *hafatzas hamaayanos*, knowing that in order to elevate others, they would have to elevate themselves.

By helping others, you are ultimately helping yourself.