



*Revealing the inner beauty of the Torah in a way that touches and inspires the Jewish soul*

## CHAMPION MINDSET

B.S.D.

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FLOW is a state of mind and body, where peak performance resides. It is a resourceful state where a person performs with complete detachment from self-consciousness or the possibility of failure - where your mind and body work in perfect balance and synergy, totally alert, focused and eager for action. This present-tense, high-octane performance style occurs when a person has tapped into, or unleashed, his greatest potential.

Professor Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, former chairman of the Department of Psychology at the University of Chicago, describes FLOW as a state of concentration so intense that it amounts to an absolute absorption in a particular activity, regardless of whether it is in the context of sports, business or life. It is the complete absorption in an activity to the point where all doubt, anxiety, fear, and distractions fall away and are replaced by a mental state characterized by self trust, enjoyment and focused relaxation.

What can be so frustrating about FLOW is that it's an elusive commodity, appearing suddenly and without warning and then vanishing just as quickly. This sudden change is usually triggered as a person's focus shifts into the future by Polar Thinking, and its two option success - failure scenario. This shift in focus awakens in us our Critical Advisor, who offers up thoughts of doubt, anxiety and fear of failure.

Sometimes, our Critical Advisor will shift our attention to revisit past failures, losses and embarrassments. This, in turn, produces feelings of guilt, anger and sadness - all raw materials used by our Critical Advisor to manufacture toxic doses of self-criticism. This constant battle with Polar Thinking, negative thoughts and our Critical Advisor brings so much unnecessary doubt, negativity, anguish, and chaos into our lives.

So how do we stop the negativity? And how do we achieve a Mindset called the FLOW?

The secret lies in the power of mental imagery! In order to understand this concept better, we need to look deeper at how our minds work. First, brain-based research has taught us that we have two minds. One is our conscious mind, which houses all our thoughts and operates our 5 senses. It has reasoning capabilities, distinguishes right from wrong and is functioning all of our waking hours.

Our second brain is called the subconscious mind. This mind controls all of our bodily functions, such as digestion, blood manufacturing, cell repair, and breathing. It also has no reasoning capability, and it never shuts down, operating 24/7.

Now what is of extreme importance for us is that our conscious mind reasons and our subconscious mind does not. That means that our subconscious mind takes things literally! It doesn't know the difference between fantasy and reality! This means that "I am stupid" thoughts (sent by the conscious mind) will produce "I am stupid" actions (by the subconscious mind).

This is precisely why creative visualization and mental imagery work. Your subconscious mind does not distinguish if the ideas you send it are real or not. Therefore, whatever ideas you send it will become reality. From this scientific fact, we can also see why negative thoughts are capable of causing so much destruction in our lives.

Rabbi Eliyahu Dessler in his famous work, 'STRIVE FOR TRUTH', explains in great detail how the giants of the Mussar Movement harnessed the power of mental imagery and visualization in their service of Hashem. Our ability to tap the power of our imagination will to a great extent determine our ability to perform Torah and Mitzvot on an exalted level.