Shalom to my dear family.
I have written this for you.
With much love and all the best to everybody.
Dad/Grandad.

English translation of the Original Hebrew text.

Coping with Pride

Part 1: Lessons from life

This part describes various occurrences in my life that happened over the years, and from which I learnt lessons as to how to cope with pride. They are written according to their importance in my eyes, and not in the order in which they occurred.

1) Channel pride into other positive feelings

When one of my children was in secondary school, he returned home with an excellent certificate in his hand. He said he was proud of the certificate he received. I replied, don't take pride in it because it might make you think you're better or more important than others. But be as happy as you please, and try to channel feelings of pride into other positive feelings such as joy, contentment, satisfaction, etc. My joy was twofold because both my child and I accepted what was said. Channeling pride into other positive feelings helps coping with pride.

2) Praise the deed, and also praise the doer

The following discussion, with a little editing, took place between me and my children:

Eldest and youngest son: We are proud of you Dad.
Me: Thank you very much; but don't be proud, even of others. Particularly with children, if you say "I'm proud of you", that might put pride in them. It is best to be happy, calm, contented, satisfied, joyful, etc. You can say "it really encourages me" etc. Please help me add words and phrases of encouragement to the above list.

Second son: Agree with the above.
Youngest Son: Everything's fine. Proud of you, but also happy for you, encouraging you with every other word you want.

Pride is not us; we are proud of you. That is something else.

I think according to Jewish law, it is permissible to be proud of your son, or your dad. Maybe you can check it out?

Me: I know that phrases like "I'm proud of you," are used to encourage others. But perhaps someone who hears this, especially a child, may become proud! Perhaps the
speaker will become proud. In my opinion it is better to encourage with other words. I once again ask for your help in adding words and expressions of encouragement without mentioning pride.

**Daughter:** Praise the action in a more specific sense, for example: fascinating writing, an interesting idea, such a colourful painting, what good eyes that found things so quickly, what quickness, etc., etc. It is tailored to children from life’s experience. The fact that the other person receives a positive response, that they were seen and appreciated, is all that is needed.

**Me:** Praise the deed, and also praise the doer. Here are some examples: excellent suggestion my daughter, you painted such a colourful painting, what a good deed you did, etc.

3) **It’s nice to be important**

**but it’s more important to be nice**

This happened during a time when I was a department head. At that time, I thought of myself that I was important, I judged others unfavourably. There was anger and resentment in my heart. I wanted to belittle others who did not agree with me but didn’t do this. And what happened? I went to the bank to collect a cheque book, and behind the clerk was written "It’s nice to be important but it’s more important to be nice", a message that was very appropriate for my situation at that time. In the end, I resigned as a department head because I felt I couldn’t cope with the challenges of authority.

4) A lesson from an executive toy

This too happened during the time when I was a department head. I once saw in a shop window, a small helicopter with a cheque book, and behind the clerk was written "It’s nice to be important but it’s more important to be nice". I didn’t buy the toy but learnt that there is no need to get upset or angry when progress is not as I wanted.

(Though this matter is not directly connected with pride, I have included it because pride can cause us to be upset or angry.)

**Part 2: Lessons from faith**

This part describes how faith in the Creator and recognition of His wisdom helps eliminate pride.

5) Faith in the Creator helps eliminate pride

According to science, the laws of nature apply everywhere in the universe and at all times. Also, each animal stores genetic information using the same molecules: DNA and RNA. Evidence that there is one Creator.
An allegory: What would happen if a computer prides itself on its ability to do quick calculations and retrieve information quickly for us? Computer designers and manufacturers would think - what is the computer proud about? And the analogy: All our abilities have been given to us by the Creator and we have nothing to be proud of. One can rejoice in our abilities as stated above.

6) Recognizing the Creator's wisdom helps eliminate pride

Here are two examples of well-known phenomena that seem simple on the surface but testify to the great wisdom of the Creator.

• The path that a ray of light traverses from one place to another is such that its travel time is the smallest of all possible paths. It even happens when it passes through different transparent materials (and mirrors).

• The shape of a soap film has the smallest area that joins its boundary.

Finding the path with the least time or the shape with the least area as in these examples, requires advanced mathematics. (See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minimal_surface.) However, in these examples, this happens "naturally" because of the law of refraction for light rays and the law of surface tension for fluids.

It is beyond my understanding as to how the Creator conceived and established such laws, and also created such materials that faithfully work according to these laws. These laws make finding these paths and shapes effortless and fast. For us advanced mathematics and a computer are needed! All this testifies to the Creator's genius and great abilities.

In view of the Creator's greatness, pride is inappropriate for us. We can rejoice in our abilities as stated above.

Briefly:

• Channel pride into other positive emotions.

• Praise the deed, and also praise the doer.

• Faith in the Creator helps eliminate pride.

• Recognizing the Creator's wisdom helps eliminate pride.

Thanks:

Thanks to the Creator for giving me the understanding to learn lessons from the above occurrences, and for His guiding hand in my life. Thanks to my dear wife for her constant support for nearly fifty years. Thanks to my sons and daughter for the enlightening discussions above and for their help producing this article. Google Translate has assisted me to produce this translation and I thank Google LLC.