

Rabbi David Wolpe's

# *Off The Pulpit*

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## **Je Ne Regrette Rien**

People sometimes say that they have no regrets. I confess I am at a loss to understand the statement.

All of us go through life learning as we go along, as if we were taking piano lessons, but our practices too, are in public. As a result, we hit lots of wrong notes and make many, many mistakes. We learn from them, it is true. Too often, since people learn from their mistakes, they think there is no reason to regret them.

The problem is that others pay for our mistakes as well. In an interconnected world, when I do something wrong, it may hurt me, but another also pays a price. When I am callous, or thoughtless, or selfish, or foolish, there are consequences for the life of those who are close. How can I not regret the hurt I inflicted,

no matter how much I may have learned?

Without regret, there is no repentance. *Teshuva* is predicated on the idea that we understand what we have done wrong, are sorry for it, would change it if we could, but at least we can try to make amends. We will never stop making mistakes, as I have learned once again this past week. Don't dwell on regrets, but also, don't be afraid of them; if you acknowledge what you did wrong and try to repair it, it will make you more human.