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SHABBOS MENU

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DO THE MATH

You're not ashamed of what you have to say. In fact, you're willing to say it out loud in front of a whole crowd of people. Everyone knows that it's just an offhand comment. You don't actually dislike the person you're talking about. You just happen to find his idiosyncrasies worth noting.

T H E

DILEMMA

It's time for your company's weekly marketing meeting. Only one person is missing: Shimon, the person in charge of public relations.

The meeting commences, and soon a lively give-and-take is underway. After an hour of brainstorming and narrowing down the possibilities, the marketing director says, "I think that's about it for now. We've got plenty to work with."

"Somehow, this went really well without Shimon's expert advice," says the head of sales.

Everyone knows what he means. Shimon, who has a marketing degree, often dominates the meetings and shoots down others' ideas based on his presumed expertise. Now four people have this negative impression of Shimon ringing in their ears. What are the repercussions?



Reviewed by Rabbi Moshe Mordechai Lowy. For discussion only; actual halachic decisions should be made by a rav or halachic expert on a case-by-case basis.

T H E

HALACHAH

When loshon hora is stated in front of a group of people, the sin multiplies. The sales director hasn't committed loshon hora once but four times, once for each person who heard it.

*Sefer Chofetz Chaim,
Hilchos Loshon Hora, Klal 2:1*

PARTICIPANTS SPEAK

This really adds to our Shabbos joy and awareness of shmiras haloshon. Thank everyone at CCHF for us, please.

C. Levin
Lakewood NJ

LAKEWOOD

FOR QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS, EMAIL

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"... Hillel says:

Be among the

Disciples
of Aharon, loving peace
and pursuing peace,
loving
people
and bringing them close to Torah."

— Avos 1:12

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MALKA BREINDEL A"H BAS SHMUEL FISHEL YLCH"T

THE TORN CHECK

Mrs. Rivky Glick, a *h*, a mother of four, was no ordinary person. She lived with a deep sense of *ahavas Yisrael* that connected her heart to her fellow Jew in a very real way. One day she walked into a local store and as she approached the counter to pay, she noticed a \$50 check lying on a shelf under the glass. On it, visible to all who stood at the counter, was written in large letters the word "BOUNCED." Equally noticeable was the check-writer's name.

"How humiliating!" Mrs. Glick thought. She opened her purse and counted out \$50 in cash.

"Here," she said to the man at the register. "If I give you this money, will you rip up this bounced check?"

"Is she a friend of yours?" the man asked her.

"No. I don't know her," Mrs. Glick answered.

"So why do you want to pay her bill?" the man asked.

"Why? Because I don't want this person to be shamed," she replied, as if this were the most obvious answer in the world. "Everyone who comes in here can see this person's name on a bounced check. I can't bear to think of it!"

The storekeeper had seen dozens — if not hundreds — of people stand at that same counter, notice that same check and just walk on. Now, he saw the check through Rivky Glick's eyes and his own vision was suddenly clear. He reached under the glass, removed the check and tore it to pieces.

At that moment, Mrs. Glick no doubt caused a great roar of excitement in Heaven, and stirred Hashem to look lovingly down upon His children. And we, too, have the opportunity to do the same, more often than we realize.

All she thought about when she saw the check-writer's shame was that it couldn't be allowed to stand. But what do we think about when we're sitting at the Shabbos table or a business meeting or a *simchah*, and someone begins to speak about another person in a demeaning way? Figuratively, the subject's name is being displayed under glass, with his flaw spelled out for all to see. Each time we restrain ourselves from adding

sage advice



4 Shalom Strategies Perfect Isn't the Plan

To build a world of peace we sometimes need a "vision correction," for while everyone possesses inherent goodness and value, most people also possess traits that are less than appealing in our eyes. The Chofetz Chaim offers us a new set of glasses that will enable us not only to tolerate these negative traits, but to treasure them as integral to our own existence.

He teaches us this wisdom through a blessing, "*Borei nafshos*." The words of that blessing address Hashem as the "Creator of numerous living beings and their deficiencies." Why, asks the Chofetz Chaim, do deficiencies warrant mention in a blessing?

The answer is because the deficiencies create the essential bond of *chesed* among us. Hashem could easily have created us complete within ourselves, but then we would have no need for each other. Other people's deficiencies are Hashem's method of prodding us to build patience, generosity, talents and skills. The student needs the teacher, the teacher needs the grocer, the grocer needs the doctor and the doctor needs the electrician. This makes the world go round, as the Chofetz Chaim explains through subsequent words of this *brachah*, "*U'hachayos bahem nefesh kol chai*" — "to sustain the soul of every living thing." The world stands on *chesed*, and without human neediness, *chesed* would not exist.

We are not meant to be perfect. Imperfection is an integral part of Hashem's design for the world. It is even a subject of blessing. With this focus, we can prevent or at least reroute the mindset that expects perfection from others and assumes perfection in ourselves. "No one is perfect," this blessing tells us, "and that's part of the plan."

TALK ABOUT IT

Practically speaking, how can you learn to react to an annoying trait without becoming annoyed?

to the *loshon hora* or take a step to protect the person being besmirched, we too are arousing Hashem to smile lovingly down upon Klal Yisrael. We, too, are shaking the heavens.

TALK ABOUT IT

How can we become more sensitive to other people's honor and reputation?

Children's Line

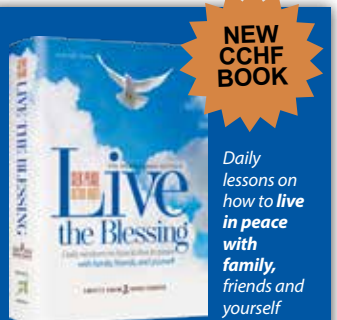


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