

FOOD FOR
THOUGHT
TO SPARK
CONVERSATION

SHABBOS MENU

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DO SOMETHING USEFUL

You've seen someone commit a sin. He's generally a Torah-observant person, but he did something clearly wrong, something that a beis din should set straight. May you get the ball rolling?

THE DILEMMA

Nachum's widowed father has passed away. The house his parents lived in will be sold, and Nachum asks you to go there with him to begin sorting through his belongings. As you help sort and pack the contents of the parents' bedroom, you're surprised to see Nachum pocketing various expensive pieces of jewelry that belonged to his mother.

"Isn't all that stuff supposed to be given out according to the will?" you ask him.

"Technically, yeah, but you know my siblings. Two of them have already gone to *beis din* to contest the will. I'm going to make sure we get our share," he says. "No one needs to know."

You feel that a *dayan* (judge on the *beis din*) should be told what happened. After all, Nachum is essentially stealing bits of his siblings' inheritance. You know you can't just stand by and watch while your friend commits such a sin and shows such disregard for the *beis din*. If you tell this story to a *dayan*, are you speaking *loshon hora*?

THE HALACHAH

The *dayan* should not be told at this point. Instead, the first step is to try to rebuke your friend yourself. In a respectful tone that does not damage his dignity, help him to see that he is trespassing on a *mitzvah*, and to view his situation with the right perspective.

*Sefer Chofetz Chaim
Hilchos Loshon Hora 4:2*



WEEKLY WISDOM

Rosh Chodesh Shevat marks the beginning of a new cycle of Shmiras Haloshon Yomi.

Bring the brachah and shmirah of Shmiras Haloshon into your life by committing to learn the laws of Shmiras Haloshon each day. Today is the perfect time to start!

**FOR QUESTIONS AND
COMMENTS, EMAIL**
Shabbosmenu@cchfglobal.org

"Rabi Masya
ben Charash says,

Always
be the
first to say
shalom
to every person."

— Avos 4:20

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.

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MALKA BREINDEL A"H BAS SHMUEL FISHEL YLCH"Y

'NOT AT HIS EXPENSE'

Every day we face challenges and frustrations. We work hard to accept whatever life brings us, and do our best to rise to the occasion. Once in a while, however, something clearly wonderful happens. We go on an exciting vacation. A new baby is born to the family. A child gets married. We get a new job, get into a great school, score high on a big test.

Our first reaction in such cases is to tell it to the world! We're so thankful to Hashem; what better way to show our thanks than to "publicize the miracle," as we do on Chanukah?

However, before we open our mouths, we must open our eyes. Perhaps our good news will sting the person we're telling by making his own challenges look worse by comparison. Rabbi Yaakov Bender tells a story of Rav Chaim Shmulevitz, zt"l, the Mirrer Rosh Yeshivah, that illustrates the extent to which this sensitivity can go:

Rav Chaim had survived the war with the Mirrer Yeshivah in Shanghai, and then became the Rosh Yeshivah of Mir-Yerushalayim. In 1950, after having lived through so much destruction and loss, his family was blessed with a great *simchah*. His eldest daughter was engaged to Rav Nochum Partzovitz, a budding *talmid chacham* and future Mirrer Rosh Yeshivah.

Shortly before the *chuppah*, Rav Chaim and his wife took their daughter aside and informed her that they would not be walking her to the *chuppah*; two of their relatives would. The reason, they explained, was that her *chassan*, Rav Nochum, did not have parents by his side. He would be standing alone under the *chuppah*, and the sight of his *kallah* being escorted by her

parents might cause him pain.

"Rav Chaim had a heart as big as the world," said Rabbi Yaakov Bender when he told this story. After so many years of suffering, his heart was bursting with happiness at this first *simchah* in his family, and yet he looked past his own happiness at those around him to make sure that his joy would not become someone else's sorrow.

TALK ABOUT IT

What guidelines can we use to balance our desire to share our good news and *simchos* with our desire to protect others from pain?

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sage advice TURF WAR

Who owns your mouth? It seems to belong to the physical, earthly you. After all, it's your lips, tongue and brain that enable you to speak.

But perhaps it belongs to the G-dly you. After all, it's the only part of you that can speak the language of your soul and express yourself to Hashem by praying and learning Torah.

In the turf war over your mouth, both sides fight a fierce battle – because the stakes are as high as possible. Your G-dly self knows that if it takes control, your mouth will pray. Your mouth will learn Torah. Your mouth will connect you to the Source of all *brachah* and bring it streaming down into the world.

Your earthly self knows that if it takes control, your mouth will tell tales. It will feed your appetites, envy and anger. The earthly you will grow stronger and stronger until your soul's sounds can barely be heard.

When Esther came to town, her old friend Suri couldn't wait to see her. They made a date for lunch and were soon sitting across from each other at a local café.

"So what's been doing in the neighborhood?" Esther asked her friend. "I've been very out of touch."

Suri told her about a few engagements, some babies that were born, a family moving out and another moving in. But what she really, really wanted to tell her was that the Landaus were suing the Kleins because a massive branch fell off the Kleins' tree and crushed the Landaus' car. The families were at war; Levi Klein moved his seat in shul to get away from Shaul Landau, and Mrs. Klein took her daughter out of Mrs. Landau's playgroup.

But what was the purpose of telling this tale? Suri felt as though the information would burst out of her. And yet, she felt low and guilty about it. Nothing would be gained, she knew – only the thrill of spending some time with Esther analyzing the situation and weighing in on the evils of machlokes.

On the other hand, Esther was close to the Landaus. Maybe she knew. Maybe she ought to know! "Come on," Suri told herself. "You're looking for an excuse."

In the turf war over Suri's power of speech, the G-dly Suri scored a victory. She claimed a few additional inches of territory, and pushed the earthly side a few inches back.

Word by word, day by day, that's how the battle for our soul is won.