

FOOD FOR
THOUGHT
TO SPARK
CONVERSATION

SHABBOS MENU



PART OF THE CCHF SHABBOS TABLE MACHSOM L'FI PROGRAM • PARSHAS NOACH 5782 • ISSUE 261

WITNESSES WITHOUT A COURT

The information is l'to'eles and there are two witnesses giving you the same report. They're not doing an aveirah – they're just trying to warn you. May you believe them?

T H E

DILEMMA

You're the new manager at a gift and candy store. The two men who create your store's lavish candy platters come to you on your first day at work and tell you, "You should know that Pinchas (a young man who refills the bins of loose candy) grabs handfuls of everything he stocks. He's the old manager's nephew, a kind of messed-up kid, so everyone leaves him alone. But we thought you should know."

May you believe the workers? After all, there are two witnesses reporting Pinchas's wrongdoing, which would seem to make their report valid testimony. Also, there is a constructive purpose, and as long as the men are speaking the truth, they are not considered *resha'im*.



T H E

HALACHAH

Even though the speakers are permitted to report the information for constructive purposes, the fact that there are two of them does not convert their story into believable truth.

The validity of testimony from two or more witnesses applies only in a *beis din* proceeding. You are allowed to *suspect* that the information is true and be on guard.

*Sefer Chofetz
Chaim,
Hilchos Loshon
Hara 7:3*

WEEKLY WISDOM

For one full year in the teivah, Noach worked non-stop taking care of the animals Hashem created.

To create a new world, non-stop chessed was the necessary ingredient. And if that was Hashem's command to sustain the animal world, how much more so should we learn from this to exert ourselves to help and care for the crowning jewel of Hashem's world—your fellow Jew.

FOR QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS, EMAIL

Shabbosmenu@cchfglobal.org

"Pleasant words
are a honeycomb,

sweet
to the soul and

healing
to the bone."

– Mishlei 16:24

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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WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT?

On a visit to the Vizhnitzer yeshivah in upstate New York, Rav Osher Zelig Greenberger, zt"l, the *Rosh Yeshivah* of Yeshivah Shaar Ephraim, received the honor of an *aliyah* at the Monday-morning *minyán*. When Rav Greenberger saw the *baal korei*, he recognized him as a former student of his yeshivah. Surprisingly, the young man showed no sign of recognizing his former *rebbe* – not even a nod.

Rav Greenberger found the cold reception disturbing. The boy had been a very successful *talmid* and Rav Greenberger had enjoyed a warm connection to him. Why was he giving him the cold shoulder now?

Several weeks later, Rav Greenberger met the young man again and decided to express his concern. The boy was puzzled by the story. "Rebbi, I've never been to the Vizhnitzer yeshivah in my life!" he said. "I think the person you saw was my identical twin brother. He never met you and would not have recognized you."

The mitzvah of judging others favorably calls upon us to search high and low for any merit that might explain behavior that outwardly seems to be dead wrong. This story shows how difficult that can be. It also shows that what we might consider a far-fetched excuse can very easily be the truth. The Kedushas Levi tells us that making these



sage advice

THERE'S A WORD FOR THAT

Why Labels Matter

How do you know what something is?

You know it by what you call it. If you tell someone, "That flower is poisonous," they'll steer clear. If you tell someone, "That flower smells like heaven," they'll come close. We're still doing the job G-d gave to Adam, defining reality by naming everything in it.

When Moshe started his job, the first coworker to befriend him was Dovi. He was warm and talkative, just what Moshe needed to ease his way into a new situation.

A few months later, Moshe attended a marketing meeting. His coworker Aaron suggested an online campaign for a new product. Moshe suggested Dovi to head the project.

"Who wants to work with him?" Aaron said. "He's chronically awkward and he never stops talking."

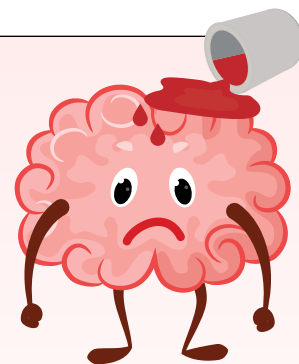
Those few words were like a little capsule of red paint that lodged in Moshe's brain and stained his image of Dovi. Instead of the nice guy who reached out to Moshe when he needed a friend, Dovi became the awkward guy who glommed onto Moshe in hopes of finding a friend.

It doesn't take much to change someone's image of another person. For better or worse, people will see it as you call it.

great leaps of faith is entirely worthwhile, because when we judge others favorably, Hashem does the same for us in the Heavenly Court. Therefore, it always pays to err on the side of the other person's innocence.

TALK ABOUT IT

Can you think of a time that you judged someone wrongly, only to find out that the situation was completely innocent? Has that ever happened to you?



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