

PESACH
5782



PESACH MENU

The Pesach Dream:

We can't take it for granted any more — being safe and secure in our homes. Surrounded by family and friends. Together... for eight whole days... Yom Tov and Shabbos meals... Chol Hamoed trips, conversations, bonding and enjoying one another's company... Let's treasure the peace we're blessed with. Keep slights, arguments and wounded feelings off the agenda when you're together with the people you love. Discover how Shmiras Haloshon is...Discover how Shmiras Haloshon is...

THE TORAH'S Perfect Tool FOR A PESACH of Sweetness and Family Harmony

Pesach Menu is part of the Shabbos Table Mochsom L'fi program.
For more information about this free program, visit cchf.global/shabbos

A PROJECT OF THE CHOFETZ CHAIM HERITAGE FOUNDATION

The Peh-Sach Project:

For a Sweet and Kosher Pesach

Part of THE SHABBOS TABLE MACHSOM L'FI PROGRAM

The Sfas Emes taught that a primary gain of our Redemption from Egypt is that Hashem redeemed Klal Yisrael's power of speech, enabling us to bring Hashem's presence into the world with our words of Torah and tefillah. One of the interpretations of the word "Pesach" is Peh-Sach, which means "the mouth that speaks," and that is why, on the anniversary of our Redemption, we bring you the Peh-Sach Project, elevating ourselves and our Yom Tov through the power of speech.

AT ANY TIME OF THE YEAR, THE WAY WE SPEAK TO AND ABOUT ONE ANOTHER IS VITAL TO OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH EACH OTHER AND WITH HASHEM. ON PESACH, HOWEVER, THE POTENTIAL OF SPEECH TO UPLIFT US AND THOSE AROUND US IS MULTIPLIED.

This is because of all we invest in this Yom Tov. Nothing means more to a family than nurturing the connection to the next generation. The preparation, *divrei Torah* — the *Haggadah* reading itself — are all meant to be open channels through which the *mesorah* can flow on a stream of warmth, friendship and unity.

Positive speech keeps the channels clear. It enhances the spirit of togetherness and *simchah* at the *Sedarim* and Yom Tov meals. It keeps our interactions positive, sensitive and friendly, ensuring that the connections we most treasure will flourish, strengthening our family, our *mesorah* and *Klal Yisrael*. And, it elevates the spiritual atmosphere of the entire table, allowing the sweetness and *kedushah* of Pesach to shine.

PESACH IS A TIME WHEN A PERSON CAN MAKE GREAT STRIDES.

On Pesach, says Rabbi Shimshon Pincus, zt"l, the world is invested with the power of *chipazon* (great haste). This power manifested itself the first Pesach when the Exodus happened in great haste. Hashem took a nation of slaves steeped in idol worship, and dramatically and swiftly elevated us to a level that we could never have attained on our own at that point in time. Through this power, which is present on every *Seder* night, Hashem gives us the ability to lift ourselves far beyond our current spiritual level and soar to new heights. *Chipazon* defeats the *yetzer hara's* claim that refraining from *ona'as devarim* (hurtful speech) and *loshon hora* is beyond our spiritual strength.

On Pesach, Hashem gives us the power to remake ourselves into the people we thought we couldn't be. We can be people who do not demean others with our words. We can be the exalted, dignified people Hashem wants us to be.



Eleven years ago, when we asked Rav Shteinman, zt"l, for his *haskamah* for the **Peh-Sach Project** and making a *Machsom l'Fi* at each Shabbos and Yom Tov meal, he responded:

“כל מה שעושים כדי
שידברו פחות דברים
אסורים וגם דברים
בטלים, זה חשוב מאד”

“ANY EFFORT TO MINIMIZE
FORBIDDEN SPEECH AND
IDLE TALK IS OF GREAT
SIGNIFICANCE.”



Dear Friend,

As we know, *Yetzias Mitzrayim* is the cornerstone of *emunah* for generation after generation of *Klal Yisrael*. Pesach is the time when we instill this *emunah* in our children and strengthen it in ourselves, and for that reason, it is particularly important that our Seders and Yom Tov *seudos* be times of special *kedushah*. One of the best ways to ensure the right atmosphere is to keep the *mitzvah* of *Shmiras Haloshon* when our families are gathered together at the Yom Tov table.

I urge every family to participate in the Peh-Sach Project, which is a very effective way to keep conversations on the right track at the table and throughout Yom Tov. In the *zechus* of your undertaking this wonderful effort, may your family be blessed with a sweet and kosher Pesach, and may we all soon be *zocheh* to witness the Final *Geulah*.

Shimon Shteinman

Today, Hashem is remaking the world before our eyes; no one can guess what lies ahead. Shmiras Haloshon stands front and center as our protection against the dangers and turmoil. What more powerful response is there than to show Hashem that we love and honor each other. What could be more pleasing to our Father, and better stir His compassion for His children?

1 Start each of your Shabbos and Yom Tov meals by reading the Chofetz Chaim's *Tefillah Al Hadibbur*, Prayer for Proper Speech.

2 Learn the lessons from this booklet at each *seudah*. See pages 4-7.

3 We are often more willing to extend ourselves in order to benefit another person. Designate every Shabbos and Yom Tov meal as a Machsom L'fi, where the entire family will avoid loshon hora and *ona'as devarim* as a *zechus* for a *refuah sheleimah* or other *yeshuah* for someone in need. A Machsom L'fi has been the catalyst for countless stories of *yeshuos*. Tap into this wellspring of *brachah* and bring *brachah* to yourself, your loved ones and those in need*. Say the *kabbalah* before each meal.

**MORE STRATEGIES FOR ENJOYING
THE SWEETNESS OF SHMIRAS
HALOSHON THROUGHOUT YOM TOV**

Make an effort to say more *divrei Torah* and sing more *zemiros* at your table. This will not only help to avoid loshon hora, but will also make your Yom Tov more beautiful and meaningful.

Prepare topics that you can introduce to quickly preempt any loshon hora that might get started. You may be surprised to find how easily you can change the and distract a person who is starting to speak loshon hora.

You can undertake this project as an individual, or as a family. To do it with others, read page 2 and page 10 of this brochure to the people at your table to inspire them to join. Let them know that the Chofetz Chaim promises that the strength of doing a mitzvah with others will give each of you the *siyata d'Shmayá* of all the participants combined.

מאת מרן החפץ חיים זצ"ל

רבונוֹ-שֶׁל-עוֹלָם, יְהי רָצוֹן מִלִּפְנֵי אֱ-ל־רַחוּם
וְחַנּוּן שֶׁתִּזְכְּנֵי הַיּוֹם וּבְכָל יוֹם לְשֹׁמֵר פִּי וּלְשׁוֹנִי
מִלְשׁוֹן הָרַע וּרְכִילוֹת: וְאַזְהַר מִלְדַּבֵּר אֲפִילוּ עַל
אִישׁ יָחִיד, וְכָל שָׂכָן עַל כָּלֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל, אוֹ עַל
חֵלֶק מֵהֶם, וְכָל שָׂכָן מִלְהַתְרַעֵם עַל מִידוּתָיו
שֶׁל הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא. וְאַזְהַר מִלְדַּבֵּר דְּבָרֵי שֶׁקֶר,
חֲנוּפָה, מַחְלֻקָּת, פֶּעַס, גָּאוֹן, אֲנָתָת דְּבָרִים,
הַלְבַּנֵּת פָּנִים, לִיצְנוּת, וְכָל דִּיבּוּר אֲסוּר. וְזִכְנִי
שֶׁלֹא לְדַבֵּר כִּי אִם דְּבַר הַצָּרִיךְ לְעֻנְיִי גּוֹפִי וְנַפְשִׁי,
וַיְהִי כֹל מַעֲשֵׂי וּדְיָבוּרֵי לִשְׁם שָׁמַיִם.

Master of the World, may it be Your will, compassionate and gracious G-d, that You grant me the merit today and every day to guard my mouth and tongue from speaking loshon hora and rechilus. May I be zealous not to speak ill of an individual, and even more so, may I be zealous not to complain about the ways of the Holy One, Blessed is He. May I be zealous not to speak words of falsehood, flattery, strife, anger, arrogance, hurt, embarrassment, mockery, and all other forbidden forms of speech. Grant me the merit to speak only that which is necessary for my physical and spiritual well-being, and may all my deeds and words be for the sake of Heaven.

**TO START YOUR MACHSOM L'FI
SAY THE קבלה:**

הֲרִינִי (הֲרִינוּ) מִקֶּבֶל (מִקְבָּלִים) עַל עֲצָמִי (עֲצָמֵינוּ) בְּלִי נֹדֶר
שְׁמִירַת הַלְשׁוֹן בְּדַבּוּר וּשְׁמִיעָה בְּמִשְׁךְ סֵעוּדַת שַׁבָּת/יוֹם טוֹב,
לִזְכוּת _____ לְרִפּוּאָה שְׁלִימָה,
(שַׁבָּת/יוֹם טוֹב הֵיא מוֹלְזָעוּק וּרְפּוּאָה קְרוּבָה לְבּוֹא
וּלִזְכוּת _____ וּלְיִשׁוּעַת כָּלל יִשְׂרָאֵל.
(ON SHABBOS / YOM TOV
ADD THESE WORDS)

I (we) hereby accept upon myself (ourselves), without the force of a vow, to observe the laws of Shmiras Haloshon in regard to what I (we) say and listen to during this Yom Tov/Shabbos meal as a source of merit for a speedy recovery for _____; (on Shabbos/Yom Tov add: "*Shabbos/Yom Tov hi mi'ilzok u'refuah kerovah lavo,*") and as a merit for _____, and the salvation of all of *Klal Yisrael*.

PESACH MENU HAS BEEN SPONSORED

לע"נ שרה בת בילה ע"ה

and as a zechus for *shidduchim* for our family

Dedicated as a zechus for
Nechama Dena bas Chana Batya

לזכות רפואה שלימה אליעזר בן פנינה נחמה נ"י

Dedicated as a zechus for
hatzlachah and shidduchim for
Dovid ben Yocheved and Esther bas Yocheved

SPECIAL NOTE

When Rav Shteinman gave his *haskamah* to this project eleven years ago, he advised us to urge participants to conduct this program even during *Shulchan Oreich* of the *Sedarim*, despite the shortness of time.

Prepare a table

Sit for a King

with these short, engaging lessons on
Ahavas Yisrael, Judging Favorably, Anger and Shmiras Haloshon –
one for each seudah.

First Seder

FELLOW TRAVELERS

Isn't splitting the Yam Suf a big enough miracle? Why did Hashem have to go so far as to provide each Shevet with its own tunnel through the sea?

The *Haggadah* teaches that the splitting of the Yam Suf was in fact comprised of 50 individual miracles. One of these was that the sea separated into 12 different tunnels, one for each tribe. In a further miracle, the walls between each of these tunnels were transparent, so that the tribes could see each other as they progressed together across the sea.

Why did they need to see each other? So that they wouldn't worry about the other tribes. The transparent walls were a message of *ahavas Yisrael*, of caring about the progress of our fellow Jew. We don't just grab our success and run ahead, without concern for others who are struggling.

The question then arises: If Hashem wanted the tribes to see each other, why didn't He simply have them cross in one group? The answer is that although we need our separate paths, our love and concern aren't limited to those walking the same path as we are. As long as we are all heading toward the same destination, our concern must extend to every Jew, no matter which path he pursues.

A STEP FORWARD

Did you know that the Seder night is an auspicious time for prayer? Activate your concern for all your "fellow travelers," especially those who are not at a Seder tonight because they are either prevented from doing so or are removed from Torah, by taking a moment to pray for their welfare.

Second Seder

LOOKING AROUND

What's wrong with minding your own business and leaving other people to do the same?

Many people tend to operate from inside a bubble filled with their own thoughts and emotions. If such a person is in a bad mood himself, he won't smile at an acquaintance on the street. He might not even notice him.

But in the story of Yosef and his stay in Pharaoh's prison, we find a strong case for breaking free of the bubble. Yosef was in desperate straits, falsely accused, indefinitely imprisoned, far from his home and family. Yet when he met Pharaoh's butler and baker, he noticed their despair and reached out to help them. "Why are you looking so downcast today?" he inquired.

His concern led to his interpretation of their dreams, which eventually led to his coming to Pharaoh's attention and being elevated to the highest office in the land. From that, the rest of history unfolded.

No kind word or act can be forthcoming if a person doesn't even notice that it's needed. Yosef shows us that there's much to gain, and nothing to lose, by simply looking around us and reaching out.

A STEP FORWARD

Right now, tonight, at Shulchan Oreich, do something to make the meal better for someone.

Does the host need help? Are there small children you could feed or put to sleep? Is there a guest who is shy or ill at ease?

Look around, think, and DO IT!

First Day of Yom Tov
Shabbos

15 NISSAN/APRIL 16

THE SIX QUESTIONS *A Guide to Judging Favorably*

The Torah teaches that whenever we experience or hear about the negative behavior of another person, we must "judge favorably." In simple terms, that means giving the benefit of the doubt. But how can one follow that advice when it seems that the facts clearly point to someone's guilt?

Sometimes we jump to the wrong conclusion because the facts are different from what we perceive them to be. Even if our facts are accurate, we often misinterpret the intent behind them. When we drop the assumption that there was a negative intention behind someone's action towards us, we automatically deflate much of the anger and hurt we feel.

Here are six possible ways to analyze a situation and jump to a good conclusion.*

- 1 Are you sure it happened at all?**
Sometimes our perceptions of what we see and hear are mistaken.
- 2 Are you sure the details are correct?**
One small detail can completely alter the scenario. Something may have been exaggerated or omitted that would make a big difference.
- 3 Do you know if the other person intended harm?**
Often the consequences are unforeseen.
- 4 Do you know the assumptions the other person was operating under?**
Maybe the other person was operating under a misconception that would explain his behavior.
- 5 Could the other person's act have been the result of an innocent human error?**
Everyone has limitations. Perhaps this person lacked experience, was forgetful or distracted, or simply didn't think carefully enough before acting.
- 6 Do you know what events preceded the negative action?**
The other person may be enduring a great deal of pain, frustration, or stress. This might be a response to a specific situation, like an illness or financial loss. Or it could be a deeper, more pervasive problem that affects the person's entire life.

*Although the Torah requires us to judge others with favor and compassion, we are not required to accept abusive behavior. Physical, verbal, or emotional abuse must be addressed and corrected.

BEYOND COMPREHENSION

How does the Satan bring a Jew to give up on mastering Shmiras Haloshon before he even gets started?

The Chofetz Chaim explains: He makes it look like an unwinnable battle. If you've ever thought to yourself, "There's no way I can fulfill this mitzvah... no way I'll never speak another word of loshon hora," then you've heard the Satan's argument.

In the following quote from *Sefer Shmiras Haloshon*, the Chofetz Chaim identifies this particular strategy of the Satan and responds: "Even if this were correct, is it reason enough to ignore this mitzvah? Imagine a person walking along the seashore who sees that the sea has washed ashore precious gems. Would such a person — even if he were wealthy — refrain from picking up any gems because he knows it will be impossible to gather them all?"

It is exactly the same regarding Shmiras Haloshon. It is well known that in his famous letter, the Vilna Gaon quotes the *Midrash* that says that for each moment a person refrains from speaking the forbidden, he merits a hidden light that no angel can fathom. Note

that the *Midrash* does not speak of refraining from forbidden speech for a month, a week, or an hour — but for only a moment!

"If you will seek it like silver and hunt for it like hidden treasures, then you will understand the fear of Hashem, and knowledge of G-d you will find" (*Mishlei* 2:4-5). One must strive to attain spiritual goals the same way that he would seek the greatest valuables that this world has to offer. This is the intent of the statement, "Do not distance yourself from a quality that is without limit." Attaining even a small fraction of the quality of Shmiras Haloshon brings merit so powerful that the Torah describes it as "without limit." If we will only pursue this quality, and not tell ourselves that it is out of our reach, then we will have achieved that which no angel could fathom.

It Takes Just a Percentage

How can a few moments of Shmiras Haloshon bring untold reward? Look at Bill Gates. In the relatively brief span of 30 years, he amassed one of the world's largest personal fortunes. His company, Microsoft, brought him wealth that is beyond the average person's comprehension. And yet, how much of Microsoft does Bill Gates own? Just a percentage. That's all it takes to make him the richest man in the world.

So when you debate in your mind whether one certain instance of refraining from loshon hora is really worth anything — remember Bill Gates. You, too, can be one of the world's richest people.

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The Chofetz Chaim's words.

Translated phrase-by-phrase in the study flow of the Artscroll Shas.



* Many halachos clarified with real-life scenarios

* In-depth notes

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THREADS OF BRILLIANCE

(Day 49 in Positive Word Power)

Akiva, are you crazy? You're 40 years old and you've never learned a word of Torah in your life. What on earth makes you think you can pick it up now? You don't even have the skills of a second-grader!

Had that been the attitude of Rabbi Akiva's wife, the Jewish people would be missing one of their most important links in the chain of the Oral Torah. Fortunately, Rabbi Akiva's wife believed in him with all her heart. As a result, he was able to throw himself into his mission and access the intellectual and spiritual gifts that had until then remained hidden inside him. This was not a miracle. It was the natural outgrowth of an environment that nurtured his confidence and self-esteem.

Anyone rooted in such an environment will achieve the same result; he may not become a Torah giant of the ages, but he will become all that his own Divine allotment of talents and abilities will permit

him to be. One who lacks faith in his own potential can feel like a failure even in the face of success. But a person who believes in himself can see success even in the midst of failure. One of today's most successful real-estate investors started his career in bankruptcy court. To him, the experience was not the death knell of his career, but a chance to learn what mistakes to avoid the next time.

Calling someone a failure is one of the cruelest expressions of *ona'as devarim*. A person's self-image is a tapestry woven of thousands of threads, and each is an impression conveyed by another's words. If the threads are predominantly the bright and light colors of "good job," "thanks," "I can count on you," "I love you," and so forth, the person's self-image is light and bright as well. Unfortunately, however, there are those whose tapestry is woven of criticism and insult. It hangs, dark and somber, like a shroud over the person's life.

Even without the use of blunt, negative labels, the cumulative message to a person whose efforts are constantly met with

criticism is, "You're a failure." People strive hard to please a critical person, whether it is a parent, teacher, boss or friend. The critic may believe that he is really performing a great service, driving others to reach for higher standards.

The truth, however, is just the opposite. The great leaders, teachers, and parents are masters of encouragement. They seek out the smallest shred of talent in others and nurture it with encouragement. In such an environment, people are inspired to conceive of their most creative ideas, their most idealistic plans, knowing that they will never be knocked down for trying and failing.

The power to build another human being belongs to every person. In fact, this is one of the key purposes for which Hashem endowed man with the power of speech.

IN OTHER WORDS

I will become more aware of the underlying message in my words when I have to correct or criticize someone.

THEIR PRIDE AND JOY

(Day 50 in Positive Word Power)

The young wife walked to shul with her husband, feeling as if she were living a fairy tale. Not only was she a married woman dressed in her elegant new suit, but at her side was the wonderful, talented husband with whom Hashem had blessed her. This Shabbos her husband, gifted with a fine voice, was to be the baal korei. The wife climbed the stairs to the women's balcony. She sat down next to one of her neighbors, a middle-aged woman who had belonged to the shul for decades. At last, it was time for the Torah reading. The young wife followed every word in her Chumash, marveling at the perfection of her husband's recitation. "Do you know who the baal korei is?" her neighbor asked between aliyos.

"I do," the young woman said proudly. "That's my husband."

"Oh, how cute!" the woman commented. "With time, I'm sure his voice will mature."

One can imagine the speed with which these words tarnished the joy in this young woman's heart. Clearly, demeaning someone or something that another person holds dear is a type of *ona'as devarim*. Indeed, it is a form of verbal insult that is easy to stumble into because the "insult" may seem rather benign. The factor that gives it so much power to wound is that it is directed at a particularly sensitive area of the other person's ego.

For instance, a person who considers himself a good pianist may be terribly

wounded by a comment as benign as "Your style is classical. I have to admit, I never much cared for classical music." The pianist identifies himself closely with his music, and hearing that it is displeasing to someone else produces pain and embarrassment for him.

This is also true of people's prize possessions. Telling someone that his treasured antique *Gemara* is just plain old and probably not worth much, or that his fabulous new car didn't rate well in *Consumer Reports*, serves no purpose other than to detract from the joy the owner takes in his possession.

One who has children, whether they are junior *tzaddikim* or world-class troublemakers, takes innate pride in his family. General negative comments about another person's children have no positive purpose and can do real harm.

Every parent wants others to see the good in his children. No matter how annoying or lacking a child might appear to someone else, to his parent he is beloved.

If we want to enhance other people's lives, there is no sense in relating to them the negatives we see in the people, places, activities, and things they love. Rather than laying a coat of tarnish upon someone's treasure, we can admire it with them. Theirs may well be the truer view.

IN OTHER WORDS

Before I offer my "constructive criticism" of someone's pride and joy, I will think carefully as to whether my comments will in fact accomplish anything positive. If they will not, I will remain silent or find something positive to say.

WHAT DOES TO'ELES MEAN?

At times it may be necessary to relate loshon hora l'toeles, for a constructive purpose. It is imperative that you know the seven rules of to'eles to ensure that your words will be truly constructive.

YOU ARE SPEAKING IN ORDER TO:

PROVIDED THAT:

- The information is accurate, based on first-hand information and careful investigation.** You must have seen the person's behavior yourself. The only time that one may repeat second-hand information is to protect someone from potential harm. Even then, it is necessary to state that you are relaying second-hand information.
- The situation is well understood.** Any possibilities to judge the person favorably have been explored.

A Help the one you are speaking about.

B Help someone victimized by the person or prevent others from being victimized.

- All other options were tried.** If there is any other way to achieve the desired result, without passing on the negative information, then one may not relay the negative information.
- You tried to speak to the person yourself, before speaking about him.** Note: This condition does not apply if speaking to the person yourself will make it impossible to achieve the desired result.
- Your intent is truly l'shem Shamayim.** You do not bear a grudge against this person or have any reason to take pleasure in relating this negative information.

When Rabbi Yochanan met the bandit Reish Lakish, he formulated in one instant a mind-boggling proposal for the bandit's remediation: If Reish Lakish would agree to learn Torah, he could marry Rabbi Yochanan's sister. How does one dare to propose a match between one's sister and a robber? Rabbi Yochanan did so with confidence, because at his high spiritual level, he was able to perceive the neshamah of Reish Lakish. He knew that he had greatness within him.

Even without such elevated perception, however, one can be sure that every person put into this world was put here for a reason, that there are tasks that are his alone to perform. Hashem makes no mistakes. He creates nothing without a reason. Therefore, even if a person encounters someone in his life whose sole purpose seems to be vexing other people, he cannot go wrong by assuming that this person, too, is worthy of respect by virtue of the potential within him.

A frequent obstacle to perceiving others this way is the bias most people have toward their own way of behaving, dressing, speaking, and acting. "Normal" and "good" are often defined as "just like me." Yet the Talmud teaches (*Yerushalmi Brachos* 9:1) that just as no two faces are alike, neither are two opinions alike. Each person sees things through the lens of his own upbringing, nature, and experiences. When one expects others to think and act as he does, he invites frustration, which soon evolves into disapproving thoughts, which in turn express themselves in insensitive, disapproving words.

When a person's mind focuses on the differences or the flaws or the limitations of another person, the raw material for *ona'as devarim* is manufactured in abundance. It is only a matter of time before those thoughts turn into hurtful spoken words, even if they are modified somehow in the belief that they will thereby deliver less of a sting.

The higher and more productive road is that taken by Rabbi Yochanan. Once a person makes the effort to acknowledge

the essential worth of another person, he will see that person's strengths. He will realize that even the person's apparent flaws are signposts that mark the road to his greatness. The shy person needs his shyness and the aggressive person needs his aggression. The soft-hearted person needs his softness and the tough guy needs his toughness. They all have before them the opportunity to accomplish something unique with their specific collection of traits and abilities.

By validating the person's value, rather than deriding him for his flaws, one can help the person channel all his traits — those that are positive and even those that appear negative — into hope, growth, and achievement.

IN OTHER WORDS

The next time I notice someone who is different from me and begin to make prejudicial assumptions, I will stop myself and think, "He is who he is supposed to be. He is the man for his job."

"I just want you to know how much we enjoy having your son around," Leah told her friend Tova. Leah lived in Israel, where Tova's son was learning in yeshivah. He spent many a Shabbos with Leah and her family, eager as he was to enjoy a family atmosphere and home cooking. Tova sometimes wondered if he wasn't perhaps overusing his welcome.

"He's so helpful and such a terrific addition to the table," Leah added enthusiastically.

Later on, when Tova spoke to her son, she was happy to relate her friend's warm words. Her son was happy to hear that his presence was

welcome. He felt valued and good that he was seen as someone with something to offer. Thereafter, each time he visited Leah's family for

*Shabbos, he aimed to enhance his reputation further. He made sure to bring an especially interesting *dvar Torah*. He brought puzzles and games for the family's children, and delicious cake from the local bakery for the family to enjoy. He wanted to maintain and enhance his status as a "terrific addition," and he did.*

Everyone is well aware of the negative impact of hearing unkind words passed along about oneself. People do not often consider, however, the ripple effects of good words being passed along. Everyone loves to hear that something nice was said about them. It enhances their self-esteem, and, more importantly, it builds their desire to continue doing the good thing for which they were praised.

The child who is told, "Your teacher says you always have interesting ideas to add to the class discussion," will look forward to the next opportunity to raise her hand in class. The husband who is told, "Your wife always quotes your opinion," will feel honored and admired by his wife, thereby encouraging him to continue earning her respect. The wife who hears, "Your husband says he couldn't manage anything without you," will be happy to dig in and provide the support her husband counts on.

People long to feel acknowledged and appreciated. Praising someone to his face is one way to convey this recognition, yet there is always the lingering thought that perhaps the praise is meant just to be nice. When a person hears that he was praised to another, the praise rings that much truer, for there can be no ulterior motive.

Aharon HaKohen employed this method to foster peace and friendship among the Jewish people. He would tell each person how much the other person valued him, thereby building friendship and warmth.

Often, we hear good things about someone, but fail to pass it on. It takes just a little awareness to tuck that compliment away and bring it out when it counts. Doing so takes the positive power of the comment itself and amplifies it a thousand times over, giving people the encouragement to keep on doing what they do well, and the blessing of knowing they are appreciated.

IN OTHER WORDS

When I hear a compliment or positive statement about someone, I will try to pass it on to the subject of the comment.

C Resolve major disputes.

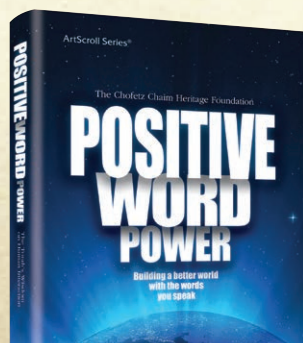
D Help others refrain from improper behavior.

6 You will transmit the information accurately. No exaggerations may be made, nor any altering of the facts. One may also not leave out information that would minimize the severity of the person's behavior. In addition, one may say only the minimum necessary for the intended purpose.

7 No undue harm will be caused. If the person will receive a more severe punishment or incur more damage than *beis din* would assess, one may not relate the incident.

In addition, there must be a reasonable chance of bringing about the desired result, otherwise your words will not be *l'to'eles*.

Reminder: You must preface your words by saying that you are speaking *l'to'eles*.



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YOU PLACE YOURSELF UNDER HASHEM'S PROTECTION

"Hashem says: I can save you from all harm, provided that you 'Conceal yourself from a prowling tongue' (loshon hora)."

- Zechor l'Miriam, perek 3

YOU LIVE IN HARMONY WITH OTHERS

"Through Shmiras Haloshon one is blessed with the precious quality of peace. By refraining from speaking ill of others, one ensures that he will not be the object of their enmity; to the contrary, others will love him and confide in him."

- Sefer Shmiras Haloshon, Shaar Hazeirah, perek 11

YOU SECURE YOUR LIVELIHOOD

"I would advise those seeking to improve their economic situation to take exceedingly great care in regard to loshon hora..."

"If one respects another person's feelings and possessions, his own possessions shall certainly be blessed more than if he had performed any *segulah*."

- Sefer Shmiras Haloshon, chelek beis, perek 9

YOU MAXIMIZE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF YOUR TORAH AND TEFILLAH

TORAH Through the loshon hora and rechilus one speaks, one loses the little Torah one has... but, the Chofetz Chaim concludes, the Torah of someone who is careful with Shmiras Haloshon is cherished in the eyes of Hashem, since it will contain no shortcoming.

- Sefer Shmiras Haloshon, chelek beis, perek 26

TEFILLAH The prayers of one guilty of loshon hora do not appear before the Holy One. But the Torah writes that as soon as one repents and resolves to change, then:

"On the very day he purifies himself, he shall be brought to the Kohen..."

- Vayikra 14:2

YOU CREATE DEFENDERS IN HEAVEN WHO WILL INVOKE COMPASSION FOR YOU

"One who speaks well of his fellow man, the angels speak well of him in front of Hashem."

- Midrash Mishlei 12

YOU ACQUIRE GREAT BLESSING

"One who refrains from speaking loshon hora receives an extraordinary blessing."

- Sefer Shmiras Haloshon, chelek beis, perek 23

"There is no family in the world who studies the laws of loshon hora daily who has not seen some form of salvation in their lives."

- Rabbi Yehuda Zev Segal, Manchester Rosh Yeshivah, zt"l, founder of Shmiras Haloshon Yomi

YOU HELP REBUILD THE BEIS HAMIKDASH

"Whoever strengthens himself to correct this sin will have a share in the future Beis Hamikdash."

- Sefer Shmiras Haloshon, chelek beis, perek 7

YOU BUILD YOUR SHARE IN OLAM HABA

"The main way to merit *Olam Haba* is through guarding one's tongue. This is more important than any Torah or good deeds one has...because the mouth is 'holy of holies'."

- Vilna Gaon, in his famous Iggeres HaGra

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