

FOOD FOR
THOUGHT
TO SPARK
CONVERSATION



SHABBOS MENU

PART OF THE CCHF SHABBOS TABLE MACHSOM L'FI PROGRAM • SHABBOS PARSHAS VAYIGASH 5783 • ISSUE 323

BOSS'S PET

Someone wants to know what you know and is making you feel like a naive fool for your refusal to tell. May you rescue your dignity by giving him the information?

T H E

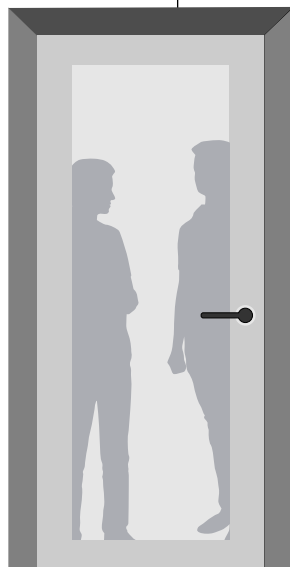
DILEMMA

Gedalia, the sales department's star performer, is one of the few people in the office who get along well with Mr. Sharpstein, the quick-tempered company owner. While Gedalia understands why his coworkers dislike the boss, he doesn't react to him as they do. Mr. Sharpstein likes to call Gedalia into his office and talk over office matters.

Another longtime salesman, Avraham, whose relationship with the boss has recently turned especially sour, asks Gedalia to tell him what Mr. Sharpstein thinks of him. "What makes you think he talks to me about you?" Gedalia answers.

"Of course he does. He talks to you about everything. You're his eyes and ears in the sales department," says Avraham. "You know, you can have friends in this office, or you can have your special spot in Sharpstein's heart. Isn't it a little embarrassing for you to be so two-faced?"

Gedalia feels that he needs to show his coworkers his loyalty. May he disclose Mr. Sharpstein's complaints about Avraham?



T H E

HALACHAH

If, as we've learned previously, a person is not allowed to disclose rechilus to save his job, then certainly he is not allowed to disclose it to save himself from humiliation, where there is no financial loss involved. Ideally, he should not respond to the insults, thereby

demonstrating his love of Hashem and earning the reward *Chazal* describe: "Those who are humiliated but do not humiliate [in response], about them the verse states 'But those who love Him shall be as the emerging sun in all its might'" (*Shoftim* 5:31).

Sefer Chofetz Chaim, Hilchos Rechilus 1:7

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"It is better to accept upon oneself a fast from

speech
than a fast from
eating."

— Sefer Shmiras Haloshon, Shaar Hatevunah ch. 2

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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**SHMIRAS HALOSHON:
A NEW PERSPECTIVE**

LITERALLY INFINITE #2 IN A SERIES

A human being can't fully grasp the concept of infinity. In our minds, it's just a very, very, very long time. Rav Dessler once portrayed this idea with a *mashal*:

Imagine a bird picking up one grain of sand and dropping it into the sea. A thousand years later he comes back and drops another grain of sand into the sea. How long would it take this bird to empty the beaches into the ocean? Well, that's still not infinity. Nothing that happens on the physical plane is infinite.

But let's look at something that really happened. Lot was traveling with his uncle, Avraham Avinu and his wife Sarah Imeinu. When they entered Egypt, Avraham and Sarah passed themselves off as brother and sister. This was to prevent the Egyptians from killing Avraham in order to take the beautiful Sarah for Pharaoh. Lot knew the truth, and in fact, had Avraham been killed, Lot would have been heir to Avraham's fortune. If he would have let the truth be known, he would have had a chance. But he kept quiet.

That was the merit that saved him—and his daughters as well—from the fires of Sedom. Those daughters became the mothers of the nations of Moav and Ammon. From Moav came Ruth, from Ruth came Dovid HaMelech, and from Dovid HaMelech will come Moshiach, who will usher in an era of peace and perfection that will never end. The reward for one brief moment of *shmiras haloshon* was literally infinite.

From a Live Life Better video series by Rabbi Jonathan Rietti

TALK ABOUT IT

How can we help ourselves master the ability to stop ourselves from speaking *loshon hora* in the moment, when the words are right on the tip of our tongue?

A prominent *kiruv* professional got a phone call from a distraught *rosh yeshivah*.

"My 19-year-old son is struggling with Yiddishkeit," the *rosh yeshivah* told him. "We've tried everything to help him, and we're out of options. I know you go to college campuses and learn with the Jewish students. My son is in college. Would you be willing to contact him and maybe learn with him a little?"

The *kiruv* professional immediately agreed to try forging a connection with this son. "And if you have a moment, I'd like to tell you a story about why I never say 'no' to learning with someone," he added.

"I grew up in a small town away from the bustling Torah centers of the Jewish community. After my bar mitzvah, my parents sent me to an out-of-town yeshivah. It had a high school and a *beis medrash*, and the learning there was on a higher level than I was prepared for. After a few weeks, I was falling behind.

"On Shabbos, I decided to try to get a *beis medrash bachur* to learn with me and help me catch up. I went into the *beis medrash* and built up my courage to approach one of the *bachurim*, explaining that I needed someone to learn with me so I could catch up with my *shiur*."

"He was nice and apologetic, but he said he had a special *seider* on Shabbos and he didn't want to lose time from it. I asked another *bachur* and got a similar answer. Then a third *bachur* gave me the same rejection, and then a fourth. Before I tried for the fifth time, I decided that this would be the last try. If I got another 'no,' I would leave the yeshivah on Sunday morning.

"But the fifth *bachur* put his arm around me and said, 'Sure!

I'll be happy to learn with you!' And he did. And the next week he actually came looking for me. I decided at that point that if anyone ever needed me to learn with them, my answer would be 'Yes!'

"This was the turning point that made it possible for me to succeed in yeshivah. And do you know who that *bachur* was who reached out to me, *Rosh Yeshivah*? It was you. If you

HELP YOURSELF hadn't been there



for me, who knows where I would be?"

The *rosh yeshivah's* long-ago kindness came back to him in his time of need, because when we give, we gain.

Adapted from a story recorded for CCHF by Rabbi Paysach Krohn

TALK ABOUT IT

How can we avoid becoming someone whose "no," even for a good reason, takes away another person's hope? Should we never say "no"?

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