

FOOD FOR
THOUGHT
TO SPARK
CONVERSATION

SHABBOS MENU

PART OF THE CCHF SHABBOS TABLE MACHSOM L'FI PROGRAM • SHABBOS PARSHAS VAYECHI 5783 • ISSUE 324

WHITE LIES FOR PEACE

When someone wants to know what was said about him and there's no way to avoid giving an answer, how faithful must you be to the truth? If the truth – even sugar-coated – will cause animosity, what may you say?

T H E

DILEMMA

Your son's *rebbe* is inexperienced and having trouble managing the classroom. Your son Eliezer is a lively tenth-grader who needs a balance of flexibility and boundaries in order to thrive. *Rebbeim* with this approach have had great success with Eliezer, while the few who came down too hard, or lacked structure, found him difficult.

This year's *rebbe*, Rabbi Young, is in the second category. Every day, Eliezer comes home with tales of punishments and humiliations. Now Rabbi Young wants to have a conference with you and your wife. You come to the yeshiva one day and meet with him.

"I think Eliezer should be evaluated for ADHD," he says. "He's completely unmanageable, on the way to more serious problems as he gets older." You mention some strategies that have worked in past years and offer to try some incentives to encourage him to behave better, but it's clear that Rabbi Young isn't budging. That night, Eliezer asks what his *rebbe* said about him.

Since nothing from the conversation would be encouraging to Eliezer, you say, "Your *rebbe* loves you! He really thinks you can be a great learner." Were you allowed to lie to avoid worsening the relationship between the boy and his *rebbe*?

T H E

HALACHAH

If the only option is to lie in order to avoid creating or increasing animosity, we are permitted to do so. In such cases, we must be careful not to swear in an attempt to convince someone of the truthfulness of what we are saying.

*Sefer Chofetz Chaim,
Hilchos Rechilus 1:8*

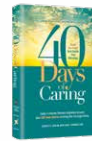


40 Days of Caring is a life-altering sefer/book. We read it on a family conference.

The GO FOR IT is AWESOME – we each discuss what we will actually do.

Thank you!

Hentchy Lemel



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FOR QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS, EMAIL

Shabbosmenu@cchfglobal.org

"May your

friend's
honor be
as precious

to you
as your own."

– Pirkei Avos 2:10

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

BERNIE'S BEST DAY EVER

Bernie, an older man in poor health, seemed to have a hard life. He lived alone in an out-of-town community and had little to do with anyone else. Even so, he was surrounded by families who helped him as needed.

One day he mentioned that he had a birthday coming up. That gave one of the neighbors, Reb Leib Klein, an idea.

Why not make Bernie a surprise birthday party? Surely his heart would be lifted by the outpouring of recognition from his neighbors. So the party was planned. It was to take place in the Kleins' house, across the street from where Bernie lived. Several neighbors were invited to take part, all of them respected men in their fifties and sixties.

The men decorated the house with balloons and a *pinata*. They set the table with birthday-themed paper goods and put a big birthday cake in the center.

Then someone crossed the street to get Bernie. Meanwhile, the other men hid in various spots in the living room. The door opened, Bernie walked in, and the guests jumped out and yelled, "Surprise!" It was a classic surprise birthday party, which could just as easily have been for a ten-year-old, only the guests were all middle-aged.

Bernie stopped in his tracks and took in the sight. He walked with his slow, unsteady gait toward the table and burst into tears.



TALK ABOUT IT

There are some people who don't fit in and are always on the sidelines of our social group. Which *middos* does it take to notice such people and bring them in?

לע"נ
שמואל חיים בן אברהם יוסף ז"ל
דבורה בת ישראל ע"ה
Dedicated by Uri and Riki Sklar

לע"נ חיים יחיאל מיכל בן
רפאל פייוועל שניאור ז"ל
נלב"ע ערב שבת קודש
י אלול תשע"ז
ת.ג.צ.ב.ה.

sage advice

NO OFFENSE

Almost everyone knows a person or two whom he finds unappealing. Maybe the person has an odd sense of humor, or maybe he seems to have no sense of humor at all. Maybe he comes across as a bit aggressive, or perhaps the person is not your "type" – too religious, not religious enough, too wealthy or too poor.

But you certainly wouldn't say you "hate" this person! You just keep your distance.

We learn from Leah Imeinu, however, that someone who feels that little bit of distance can feel "hated." As we see in the Torah, when Hashem granted Leah a second son, He did so as consolation because "He saw that she was hated."

But of course Yaakov did not hate his dear wife. She simply perceived that she wasn't as beloved to him as was Rachel, and that was enough to make her "feel" hated. Hashem responded not to the reality of Yaakov's feelings, but to the reality of Leah's perception.

Knowing this, we have an opportunity to relieve others of the crushing sense of feeling "hated" even when we would never use that word to describe our feelings toward them. The cure is to bridge the distance they feel with a few kind words every time we see them.

This is a cure that works in both directions. When we are committed to saying something nice, we are compelled to look for something good in the person. We suddenly take notice of a talent, effort, achievement, personality trait... From the other side, when we thaw the ice we set loose the other person's friendliness and kindness. We often find that our original impression was wrong.

Rabbi Yechiel Spero recommends doing this for 30 days and writing down each interaction. At the end of that time, a person should celebrate his achievement; he's turned a cold peace into true shalom – the unflinching result of relating to a fellow Jew *neshamah* to *neshamah*.

"This is the nicest thing anyone has ever done for me in my entire life," he told the guests in a broken voice. And then, as his well-wishers surrounded him, he sat down and enjoyed his party.

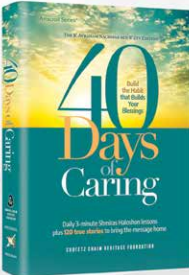


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