

FOOD FOR
THOUGHT
TO SPARK
CONVERSATION

SHABBOS MENU

PART OF THE CCHF SHABBOS TABLE MACHSOM L'FI PROGRAM • SHABBOS PARSHAS BESHALACH 5783 • ISSUE 328

TOO MUCH ON HER MIND

Someone was a bit annoyed and told you about it. Now you're passing it on to the person who was the subject of the annoyance. Wanting to get the message across but avoid speaking *rechilus*, you say it in "a nice way" and do so in front of three others. Are you in the clear?

T H E

DILEMMA

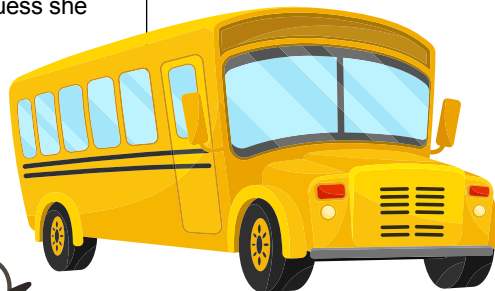
Avigayil and Michal are standing on the corner one morning, waiting to guide their children safely onto the school bus. Michal says, "Look! Here comes Tamar running down the block with poor little Rivka! Typical. You know she actually forgot to pick our little ones up from playgroup yesterday? She's so spaced out. She's got too much on her mind all the time."

When Avigayil goes out in the afternoon to pick up her daughter from the bus, Tamar and a few other women are there. "How's it going, Tamar?" she asks. "I hope you're having a better day than yesterday. Michal told me what happened with the playgroup pick-up."

Tamar looked remorseful. The other women, unaware of the story, tuned in. "Oy, I guess she was upset," Tamar said.

"Well...she did say you have a lot on your mind," Avigayil answered.

Is Avigayil's comment *avak rechilus*, even though it can be taken two ways and is said in front of three people?



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.

T H E

HALACHAH

Speaking *avak loshon hora* does not become permissible in front of three people when the words are spoken in a way that clearly implies a negative interpretation. Since Avigayil intended to relay Michal's annoyance, her words are not permitted.

*Sefer Chofetz Chaim,
Hilchos Rechilus 2:2*

PARTICIPANTS SPEAK

*Thanks for such an interesting and engaging way of learning *shmiras halashon*. I usually have a hard time sticking to the learning, but because these videos show up in my inbox every day and are so interesting, I get to learn something every day!*

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"Rabbi Shimon ben Gamliel says:
The world

endures

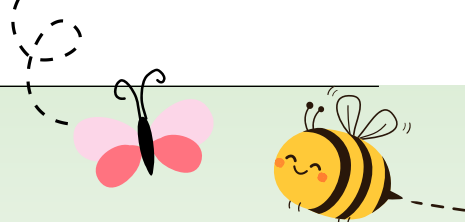
on three things—
justice, truth and

peace."

— *Pirkei Avos 1:18*

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MALKA BREINDEL A"H BAS SHMUEL FISHEL YLCH"Y



PAYING BERNIE'S BILL

In Reb Leib Klein's neighborhood, there lived a man named Bernie. He lived alone, and due to his poor health, he had difficulty getting around. Fortunately, his neighbors looked out for him, and he knew he could count on them.

Sometimes, Bernie would ask one of the neighborhood children to go to the grocery store for him to pick up a few items. One Erev Shabbos, he asked Reb Leib's daughter to do this errand for him. She went to the store, bought what he had asked for and put it on his account.

That Shabbos, Bernie passed away. On Sunday, as people were preparing for the *levayah*, Reb Leib had a sudden awakening: Bernie was going to the *Olam HaEmes* with an unpaid grocery bill on his account!

Reb Leib rushed to the grocery store and told the owner that he was there to pay Bernie's bill.

"You people are amazing!" the owner said. "I've only been open for an hour, and you're the seventh person who has come in to pay his bill!"

There are acts of kindness we do for people in their lifetimes, and there are forms of *chesed* we may be called upon to do when they pass on, such as seeing to *taharah* and burial, visiting the mourners, and learning or doing *mitzvos* as a merit for their *neshamos*.

But this special mitzvah that Bernie's neighbors sought to do for him was beyond what most people think to do. His debt could have weighed on them only because his welfare had been their true, heartfelt concern. The same people who saw to his comfort in *Olam HaZeh* wanted him to have the utmost comfort in *Olam HaBa* as well.

As heard from Rabbi Yechiel Spero at the CCHF 5783 annual dinner



TALK ABOUT IT
Why is it important to clear up debts left by someone who passes away?

לע"נ חיים אלעזר שלום בן
טובי גדלי ז"ל

sage advice

FLOAT LIKE A BUTTERFLY, STING LIKE A BEE

Rabbi Yossi Wallis's father was a prisoner in a Nazi concentration camp. The Kapo who oversaw his barracks was a particularly brutish man. Instead of distributing the prisoners' rations to them, he would eat the food himself.

Finally, one of the starving inmates approached the Nazi commander about the situation. With no concern for the life of the Kapo or the inmates, the commander decided to create some entertainment for himself. He told the Jews that one of them could volunteer to fight the Kapo to the death, and thus free themselves from his reign of terror.

The Kapo was the strongest and healthiest of them by far. No prisoner imagined he could defeat him in a fight. But one short, scrawny Jew volunteered. The others thought he had lost his mind, but the commander accepted the offer. The fight began.

The Kapo took a hard swing at the Jew, but the Jew nimbly danced out of the way. The Kapo swung again and again, missing every time as the Jew danced circles around him. Then, as the Kapo wore out, the Jew began thrusting his sharp fists into the Kapo's face and body, dancing away after each blow to avoid reprisal. Eventually, the Kapo went down.

The Jew, it turned out, was a professional lightweight boxer from Greece. What he lacked in bulk, he made up for in strategy and persistence.

What does the boxer's strategy have to do with us? He shows us how to fight the *yetzer hara*. If we try to tackle it head-on, it always wins. It appears too big and powerful in our eyes and so, we eventually give up. Instead, we have to nimbly step away from it, and then, when the time is right, get in a well-placed blow—float like a butterfly, sting like a bee. If we persist, we will weaken it to the point where we see that it isn't very strong after all.

From a CCHF Live Life Better video by Mr. Michael Rothschild

TALK ABOUT IT
How does a *machsom l'fi* reflect the boxer's strategy?

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

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