

FOOD FOR  
THOUGHT  
TO SPARK  
CONVERSATION

# SHABBOS MENU



PART OF THE CCHF SHABBOS TABLE MACHSOM L'FI PROGRAM • SHABBOS PARSHAS KI SISA 5783 • ISSUE 333

## UP-FRONT BACKSTABBING

*We would think people would know better. But in some circumstances, a person thinks it's useful to tell another person what a third party said about him — right in front of the third party. Is "honesty the best policy?"*

### THE DILEMMA

Avi, Chaim, and Dovid, three roommates in Yeshivah Davar Tov, are sitting in their room and talking at the end of a long day.

"You know, Dovid, Chaim is sick and tired of the mess you leave on the floor," Avi says.

Knowing that Dovid is as sensitive as he is messy, Chaim jumps in to smooth over the situation.

"No, I don't really care," Chaim says. "I just ignore it."

"What are you talking about, Chaim? Speak up for yourself!" Avi persists. "I'm telling you, Dovid, Chaim really has had it. He's talking about moving out of our room, right Chaim?" Speaking right in front of Chaim, are Avi's words *rechilus*?



### THE HALACHAH

They are 100 percent *rechilus*, as they pit Dovid against Chaim. In fact, because Avi's report of the conversation is given right in front of Chaim, Dovid has more reason to believe that it is true. This makes such a situation a worse form of *rechilus*.

*Sefer Chofetz  
Chaim,  
Hilchos  
Rechilus  
3:1*

## PARTICIPANTS SPEAK

*Thanks for giving us the awareness to think positively. Today I had a difficult bein adam lachaveiro situation, and due to these CCHF Shalom Challenge messages, I reacted sensitively.*

*You, too, can enjoy this free life-changing program. Sign up at [cchfshalom.org](http://cchfshalom.org) – Ed.*

## FOR QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS, EMAIL

[Shabbosmenu@cchfglobal.org](mailto:Shabbosmenu@cchfglobal.org)

"Happy is one who  
*avoids*  
this sin [loshon hora],  
for he is

*blessed*

by all of Israel together."

– *Sefer Shmiras Haloshon 2:23*

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MALKA BREINDEL A"H BAS SHMUEL FISHEL YLCH"Y

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.

# SAY IT!

**T**hree women were waiting in line to speak with their daughters' teacher on Parent-Teacher Night. One of them, Miriam, had recently headed a successful fundraising event for the school—the first time she had taken on the job—that had been very successful, in spite of frustrations along the way. Yet in her opinion, she had not been very effective. Next year she'd ask someone else to take the reins.

"Miriam, the event was amazing!" said one of the women. "It was so well thought-out and so much fun! And you got a huge crowd!"

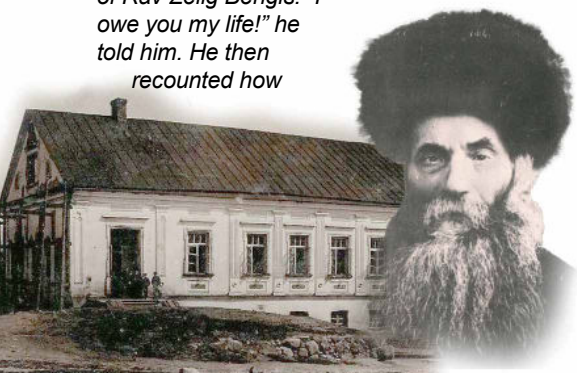
The third woman had also enjoyed the event and admired the way Miriam had produced it. But she didn't say so. Meanwhile, Miriam was basking in the momentary glow, thinking "Maybe I will do it again next year, now that I have some experience."

Often, positive thoughts run through our minds, but for some reason, we don't feel the need to verbalize them. But if we realized how much those words might be worth, we'd speak up loud and clear every time. We never know what insecurities our words might soothe. We never know what positive power they might unleash.

Rav Isser Zalman Meltzer was a new bachur at the Volozhin Yeshivah. He felt lost and homesick and was ready to return home. One day, the Rosh Yeshivah, the Netziv, asked a question, and Rav Isser Zalman offered an answer that pleased him.

During lunch an older bachur, Zelig Bengis, later to become the great and famous Rav Bengis of Yerushalayim, came to Rav Isser Zalman and asked him, "Are you the one whose chiddush the Netziv is talking about with so much admiration?"

Decades later, when Rav Isser Zalman came to Yerushalayim, his first stop was at the home of Rav Zelig Bengis. "I owe you my life!" he told him. He then recounted how




## It Can Be Different: Breaking the Loshon Hora Habit

PART 1 OF 5

### Remodel Your Mind

You're sitting at your Shabbos table when someone drops a sly comment about a neighbor. Your little alarm bell goes off: "This is definitely heading to loshon hora." But you ignore the bell. "What am I going to do about it anyway? He was just going for the laughs. Am I the loshon hora police?"

This is our challenge with loshon hora. On one hand, we know it's bad...awful...damaging...abhorrent to Hashem. On the other hand, we never seem to be able to banish it firmly from our lives. After a while, we may give up trying.

What is missing from our effort to stop speaking loshon hora is a strategy, and that strategy begins by understanding the power we have over our minds. With very few exceptions, all the things we are able to do—our skills and routines—and everything we know—language, attitudes, perceptions—establish themselves in our minds through frequent repetition. The more we practice a certain skill, the more natural it becomes to us. The more we think a certain thought, the more it becomes part of our outlook on life.

This proves two things: First, **we create our own negative habits.** Second, **the same process can empower us to change these habits.** New thoughts and actions create new connections within our brains, which result in new types of thoughts and actions. Science has proven it. Changing negative thought patterns is only a matter of creating new patterns.

The first step, however, is to know it can be done—to understand that as much as we think, "I'm helpless. It's impossible for me to not speak loshon hora," this is simply not so. **Our brains have the inherent power to think differently, but we have to develop that power.** We can be motivated to do so by knowing that it CAN be done—and that it is well worth doing.

From a CCHF lecture by Mr. Charlie Harary

#### TALK ABOUT IT

Prove to yourself that people really can change a habit by thinking of a positive change you or someone you know has made.

Rav Bengis's encouraging words had restored his confidence so that he remained in Volozhin. The value of positive words is their power to make another person feel, "I have value." And that is the foundation of everything good that a person accomplishes in life.

#### TALK ABOUT IT

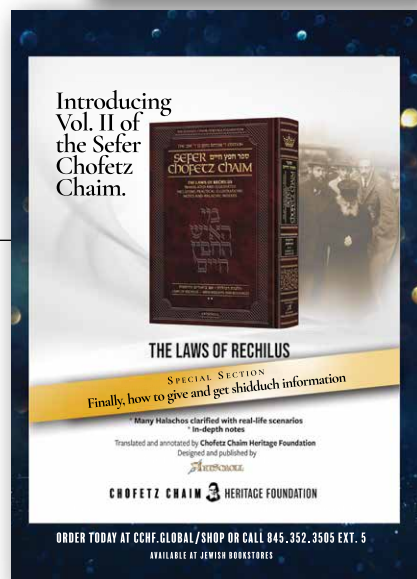
Can you think of a time when encouraging words made a big difference to you?



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