

FOOD FOR
THOUGHT
TO SPARK
CONVERSATION

SHABBOS MENU

PART OF THE CCHF SHABBOS TABLE MACHSOM L'FI PROGRAM • SHABBOS PARSHIYOS ACHAREI MOS-KEDOSHIM 5783 • ISSUE 338

SPOILED

A person shares with an interested listener his negative impression about someone's children. If the listener brings the negative words to a parent of those children, is this rechilus? Does the fact that the report is about someone's children and not about the person himself, change the situation?

T H E

DILEMMA

The Cohens made the *shidduch* between Devorah and David Levy. The Levys subsequently moved out of town and had two children. When the Levys needed to return to their old neighborhood for a wedding, the Cohens offered to host them.

It quickly became clear that Devorah and David were the loyal servants of two cranky, demanding children. There was no bedtime and no limit to the candy the parents would provide to buy a moment's peace. The older child, who was three, hurled whatever was in his hands at anyone who defied his iron will. The younger one was still working on the technique.

"It must be such a *nachas* for you to have the Levys there with their children," a neighbor, Tzvi, said to Mr. Cohen.

"Honestly," he answered, "they need a good parenting class. The kids are impossible. Spoiled rotten. The house is in chaos."

At the wedding, Tzvi saw David! "So good to see you!" he said with a warm handshake and hug. "The Cohens say your little crew is quite a handful. Well, welcome to parenthood!" David thinks of his host, who he looks up to, criticizing his children, and he's wounded.

Although the report isn't about David, has Tzvi spoken *rechilus*?

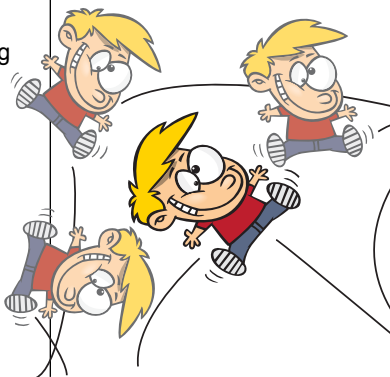
Reviewed by Rabbi Moshe Mordechai Lowy. For discussion only; actual halachic decisions should be made by a *rav* or halachic expert on a case-by-case basis.

T H E

HALACHAH

A negative report about a person's children or family members is *rechilus*, because people are hurt or insulted by criticism of their loved ones, sometimes even more so than if the criticism is of themselves.

Sefer Chofetz
Chaim, Hilchos
Rechilus 3:3



PARTICIPANTS SPEAK

Thank you for this hotline. My children can't get enough of it! My only complaint is that now I need to put in another phone line!



FOR QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS, EMAIL

Shabbosmenu@cchfglobal.org

"If only I could love the biggest

Tzaddik
in Klal Yisrael as much
as Hashem loves
the biggest
rasha."

— Baal Shem Tov

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MALKA BREINDEL A"H BAS SHMUEL FISHEL YLCH"Y

THE SUMMER THE SUN SHONE BRIGHTER

At Camp Romemu, as at most boys' camps, being good at sports is a ticket to fun and popularity. Being poor at sports, or uninterested in them, usually guarantees a less-than-spectacular summer for a camper.

Aryeh* had no interest in sports at all but he came to camp anyway. While his bunkmates were out on the playing fields, he was indoors reading a book. The only outdoor activity that interested Aryeh was horseback riding, and all his bunkmates knew that this was his passion.

Even though Aryeh didn't fit the mold, the other boys accepted him for who he was. They just felt bad for him. How could he be happy sitting in the bunk reading when everyone else was out there having a blast?

Each Shabbos of camp, there was a special learning program. Boys who participated received tickets that they would be able to put into a raffle at the end of the summer. And one of the prizes was an overnight horseback-riding trip.

The day of the raffle came. The winning ticket for the horseback riding trip was drawn ... and it was Aryeh! The boy couldn't believe his good fortune! The trip of his dreams was in his hand!

What he did not know, however, was that his *real* good fortune was to be placed in a bunk full of boys who had golden hearts. They had all put their raffle tickets in Aryeh's name so that he could win the prize. "Why shouldn't he have some fun too?" one boy explained.

Aryeh was a little different, yet his friends didn't let that blind them to the fact that he was a person like everyone else, who wanted to be happy and appreciated. Sometimes *ahavas Yisrael* hides beneath the surface. But sometimes, it shines brighter than the sun.

*Name has been changed

Heard from
Rabbi Yaakov
Asher Sinclair
on a CCHF
Live Life Better
video

TALK ABOUT IT

Why do people sometimes react negatively to someone who is not bad, just different than them?

sage advice

A CROOKED DEAL

Shoshana, a clothing designer, was supposed to be at a meeting with her biggest customer, the owner of a small chain of clothing stores, at 1 p.m. A series of difficulties caused her to arrive 20 minutes late. The client was furious.

"I'm so sorry," Shoshana apologized. "I completely understand if you want to reschedule."

"Don't you have any respect for other people's time?" the client retorted. "How irresponsible can you be? Is this how you run your business?"

"You're right," said Shoshana. "I won't make excuses, but look, I have some beautiful spring designs to show you, and your store can have an exclusive!"

The client replied sourly, "You're so unprofessional. Why should I want to deal with you?"

Shoshana's client is clearly violating the Torah's law against "afflicting" our fellow Jew, meaning that that we may not cause others pain with our words. The *Gemara* (Bava Metzia 58b) comments, "Just as it is forbidden to wrong someone in money matters, so too is it forbidden to wrong him with words."

But how can we compare cheating someone out of money to hurting someone's feelings?

Rabbi Ephraim Shapiro suggests a connection. There are two ways to wrong someone financially: The seller might overcharge, or the buyer might underpay. Likewise, when we wrong someone with words, we are saying either too much or too little.

Shoshana's client had a legitimate point; people should keep their appointments. However, once she rebuked Shoshana and Shoshana apologized, the client was "overcharging" with every added insult.

Likewise, when we keep words of encouragement in our pocket rather than handing them over to someone who would benefit, we are underpaying. We have something to give, but we are negligent about giving it. Either way, the *Gemara* is teaching us, when we misappropriate our words, we're giving a fellow Jew a bad deal.

TALK ABOUT IT

If you have to rebuke someone or give constructive criticism, how do you know when you've said enough?



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דבורה בת ישראל ע"ה
Dedicated by Uri & Riki Sklar

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