

FOOD FOR  
THOUGHT  
TO SPARK  
CONVERSATION



# SHABBOS MENU

PART OF THE CCHF SHABBOS TABLE MACHSOM L'FI PROGRAM • SHABBOS PARSHAS NASO 5783 • ISSUE 343

## “LOOKS LIKE A SURE SIGN”

*Even if no one has said a word, sometimes it's clear from surrounding facts or from someone's behavior that he intends to do us harm. May we ask around to confirm our suspicions? Are those reports rechilus that is prohibited to hear?*

T H E

### DILEMMA

The Friedmans rented out a house to a newlywed couple. They didn't come with references and their source of income was vague, but the Friedmans were desperate for tenants, and so they trusted their gut.

Their gut began churning when the second month's rent was due and instead of a check, they collected only excuses. So it went, month after month. After a year of pursuing the couple for their rent, consulting with *rabbanim* and a *beis din*, they noticed that the tenants were divesting themselves of furniture and other items; the sidewalk was filled each week with a new pile of discarded home goods. Were they planning to move and leave the Friedmans high and dry? It was a good possibility, since both of them had parents in Israel, and they could easily fly off, never to be seen again.

One day Mr. Friedman saw a young man named Rafi, a friend of the tenant. "Rafi, has Benny told you he's moving?" Mr. Friedman asked.

"Sure!" Rafi responded. "They're going back to Israel. He saved up a lot of money and they're buying an apartment there, *baruch Hashem*. I'm so happy for them."

Was Mr. Friedman allowed to ask Rafi this question?

T H E

### HALACHAH

If a person sees evidence that someone is planning to harm him, he is permitted to inquire of others to confirm or alleviate his suspicion. The person who answers is not speaking *rechilus*, and the inquirer is not listening to *rechilus*. However, he is only permitted to act to protect himself, and may not believe the information is fully accurate.

*Sefer Chofetz Chaim,  
Hilchos Rechilus 5:3*



## PARTICIPANTS SPEAK

*My life is not the same. I know that at least 10 times I didn't say lashon hara because of An Hour of Caring.*

*I am much more careful about what comes out of my mouth, and what I let myself listen to. I'm much more aware of each word I say.*

*Thank you, thank you, thank you.*



hour of caring

## FOR QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS, EMAIL

Shabbosmenu@cchfglobal.org

“One's Torah

*maintains*  
its value only when  
*one guards*  
his tongue;  
otherwise, the Torah is  
considered worthless.”

– Shmiras Haloshon, vol. II,  
ch. 1 in a hagahah

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



# CASHING IN ON BIZYONOS

**R**av Nochum Cohen, a legendary figure among the giants of Eretz Yisrael, deserves the utmost honor and usually receives it. However, on the rare occasion when someone causes him humiliation, he reminds himself that there's tremendous reward in accepting the situation graciously. He tells the story of an episode that drove the point home to him:

Rav Nochum was attending a large *sheva brachos* with about 200 other people. Everyone was eating and drinking, but no one was singing. He waited to see if anyone would take the initiative and get the crowd going, but no one did. So he stood up and began a song.

No sooner did the first notes come out of his mouth, loud and clear so everyone could hear him, than someone came over to him and shouted, "Sit down! You're not the host here!"

"I didn't answer him," Rav Nochum recalls. "But what had I done that was so terrible? I was just trying to make the *baalei simchah* happy!"

He sat down filled with shame and waited for the first available moment to leave. That Friday night, while the family slept, Rav Nochum sat staring at the 21 Shabbos candles his wife had lit for their large family. One son was in *shidduchim* at that time.

Still feeling the sting of the humiliation he had endured, he said, "*Eibeshter*, please reward me for the *bushah* I suffered at the *sheva brachos*. I need a *shidduch* for my son. Please can the first phone call we get after Shabbos be his *zivug*?"

After Shabbos, the phone didn't ring. But on Sunday afternoon, the call came; it was a *shidduch* suggestion for his son. "They now have 17 children," Rav Nochum exclaims with joy.

Adapted from an article in Mishpacha

## TALK ABOUT IT

Do you think Rav Nochum could have gained anything by reproaching the man who embarrassed him? Why or why not?

## sage advice

### Don't Give Up:

PART 3 OF A 4-PART SERIES

## THE RIGHT STUFF

*Sarah had one weak leg; she walked with the help of a brace, a walker, and various other aids. Nevertheless, she had big plans for her life and saw no reason that she couldn't achieve them.*

*Sara worked hard to strengthen her leg, but one day she fell and her leg was shattered. A year and a half of recuperation and therapy got her back on her feet, but it wasn't long before she fell again; repairing her leg would be an investment of another year or more of her life.*

*She realized that because her leg would never regain its strength, she was doomed to a life of accidents, hospitalizations, and therapy. Instead of putting her energy into the goals she hoped to accomplish, her life would be devoted to dealing with her bad leg, which was irreparable. She made a courageous decision; she would have the leg amputated.*

When Rabbi Tzvi Sytner visited Sarah in the hospital, he told her "You're a hero." She couldn't understand why. He explained that a hero isn't someone who has no fear, but an ordinary person who keeps moving forward despite his fears. Sara wanted to move forward in her life but realized that until she tended to the issue that was holding her back, she'd get nowhere.

This is a message for anyone who is having trouble moving forward, says Rabbi Sytner. "We sometimes want to give up. We think, 'Maybe Hashem doesn't want me to have this.' But maybe Hashem does want us to have it, He just wants us to first look back and deal with something, maybe fear of failure, or fear of success, or unresolved issues, or a relationship." The hero, he says, is someone who sees the issue, faces his fears and rallies the will to conquer them.

## TALK ABOUT IT

What goals would you try to accomplish if nothing was holding you back?



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