



SHABBOS MENU

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GREAT GUY, RIGHT?

Can you ever go wrong by praising someone to another person? That depends on how the listener feels about it.

T H E

DILEMMA

Nechama, Miriam, and Sarah all live in New Jersey and work in Brooklyn. Nechama drives daily to her job. Although she knows it would be a *chesed*, she chooses not to take passengers for several reasons. One morning, Sara calls her and says, "My car is dead. The tow truck is coming in a few minutes. Could you possibly give me a ride today?" Nechama is happy to oblige, and in fact drives Sara for the rest of the week, until her car is repaired.

The following week, Miriam, who is sick of commuting, says to Nechama, "Why don't we carpool? It will save us all a lot of money and it will be more fun than travelling alone."

"You know me," Nechama replies. "I like my alone time. And I like to be able to do errands after work. It just doesn't work for me."

"Come on!" Miriam says. "Sara told me you drove her every day last week! Why did you break your rule for her?"

Was Miriam allowed to tell Nechama that Sara said that Nechama gave her a ride?



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

When Miriam tells Nechama that Sara said that Sara said that Nechama drove her, she is causing Nechama to resent Sara for putting her in a difficult position with Miriam, who now wants the same favor. Therefore, Miriam's report to Nechama is *avak rechilus*.

*Sefer Chofetz Chaim,
Hilchos Rechilus 8:3*

As we become more and more sensitive to not saying negative or hurtful words, at the same time we should make sure never to lose an opportunity to share a good word... and even more...

A LOVELY TRAIT

*What a lovely trait it is
to say kind words.
How much lovelier
to say them right away
before the moment's flown,
to phone early
in the morning,
to make the whole day sweet,
to set hearts singing.*

From "Memo to Self," by Ruth Lewis

FOR QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS, EMAIL

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No one is too poor to

give
a gift with the
words he

speaks,
nor too rich to
need that gift."

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MALKA BREINDEL A"H BAS SHMUEL FISHEL YLCH"Y



THE ONE-WORD REALITY CHANGER

In our busy lives, we sometimes feel overwhelmed. Work, family, and religious obligations fill our day. We go to bed with our to-do list half-done and a new list for tomorrow. How can we not only cope, but thrive in these circumstances? It's all in the power of one word.

Leah woke up to her alarm at 6:30 a.m. with a sense of dread. In half an hour, she had to begin waking up the children for school. One of them would refuse to get up. One would say "no" to every breakfast option. One would claim to be sick. It was a long march uphill until she got them onto their buses.

Then she had to drop her toddler off at playgroup. She had to be at work by 9:45. At work, there was a long list of tasks she had to tend to. Then she had to pick up her toddler and go to the supermarket to refill the pantry and fridge. Then she had to get supper started.

After the kids came home, she had to help the younger ones with homework. She had to oversee bath-time and clean-up time and eventually get everyone to bed. Then she had to pack briefcases for the next day.

The weight of this hectic routine landed on her shoulders the moment she woke up in the morning. But if she was going to get through the day, she had to—absolutely *had* to—get up right now!

Leah's lot in life seems to fit the phrase, "quiet desperation." Yet it's all good. She has a husband, a home, children, a job, schools for her children, food to feed them, and her health. The key to her feeling blessed rather than burdened is to replace the words "have to" with "get to."

This advice, given by Mrs. Yael Bertram, changes burdens into opportunities. "I get to wake up my children and send them off the school!" "I get to use my abilities to earn money!" "I get

sageadvice

 **PART OF A SERIES ON BEING NOSEI B'OL**

WHEN YOU WANT TO HELP

You see the person's pain. You know he's dealing with something too big to handle alone. And you want to help.

But sometimes, people are not open to accepting help, whether the support is emotional, financial, or practical. It might even be a close relative—an adult child, a spouse, a sibling—who shuts you out. What can you do?

Rabbi Sruli Fried of Chai Lifeline's New Jersey branch offers three helpful perspectives:

1. There's no "right way" to cope with difficult times. The Gemara teaches, "If there's a worry in the heart of man, talk it over." However, that is interpreted two different ways right in the Gemara itself. One is the simple meaning, and other is for the person facing hardship to disregard the problem; put it aside. The conclusion is that both are valid ways to deal with suffering.
2. Our job as caring Jews is to reach out. When someone we know is going through a challenge and it's not a secret—for instance, if someone is in the hospital and people know about it—it is always appropriate to offer a listening ear and whatever help we can provide. The person has a choice as to how he wants to respond.
3. Take your cues from the person who is in distress. If he wants to talk about it, talk. If not, then do not press it. We can also expect that the person's needs will change as he experiences the roller coaster of emotions that crisis situations provoke. Someone who pours out his heart one day may want to avoid the subject the next day.

Rabbi Fried observes that whether a person prefers to talk about his troubles or is more introverted and therefore more comfortable keeping his feelings to himself, he will be helped by knowing that there are people around him who care. In an atmosphere of outreach, support, and caring, he says, most people can cope with their challenge.

to walk into a supermarket and fill my cart with whatever we need!"

If we stop for a moment and consider the alternative—no family, no job, not enough money and so forth—the switch isn't hard to make. Thinking "I get to" brings a sense of wonder and gratitude into our lives.

TALK ABOUT IT

Do you think that making this one-word change could also help a person feel more energy for handling his obligations?

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– Shabbos 119b

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As a *zechus* for a *refuah sheleimah* for *Eliyahu ben Luna*

Dedicated by
Shimon Chocron

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