



SHABBOS MENU

PART OF THE CCHF SHABBOS TABLE MACHSOM L'FI PROGRAM • SHABBOS PARSHAS MISHPATIM 5784 • ISSUE 377

THE FENCE OFFENSE

You have some information about a purchase your friend just made. If he asks your opinion, may you tell him?

T H E

DILEMMA

Avraham had a pristine, white vinyl fence erected around his property. His neighbor Shmuel came over to take a look.

"I think it makes the entire property look so much classier. What do you think of it?" Avraham asked.

"Yeah, it's nice. For as long as it lasts," Shmuel said. "I see they gave you their cheapest vinyl. They really shouldn't even be legally able to sell it. Everyone who has it says it cracks and peels within a few months. You know, like the fence around Stein's yard."

Avraham's mind flashed to Stein's deteriorated fence that surrounds his weed-infested lawn and a scraggly shrub or two. Not the look he had been hoping for.

"If he sold me junk," thought Avraham, "I'm not giving him the last portion of the payment."

Is Shmuel responsible for turning Avraham's mind toward withholding payment from the fence-company owner?



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

Shmuel might cause damage that the laws of *rechilus* are meant to prevent. Even though he was asked for his opinion, if indeed Avraham had no halachically sanctioned recourse against the fence seller, there was no constructive purpose in telling him he had been deceived. This is especially true if Shmuel had reason to believe that Avraham would, in turn, try to withhold payment from the seller.

Sefer Chofetz Chaim, Hilchos Rechilus 9:11

PARTICIPANTS SPEAK

Yesterday my friend was so distraught that I let her unload. I empathized. I did not add fuel to the fire, and she was left with a good feeling. Thank you again and again and again for all I have learned through your programs.

A grateful participant in many CCHF programs

FOR QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS, EMAIL

Shabbosmenu@cchfglobal.org

*"The ability to
restrain
oneself from speaking
when the situation*

*warrants
silence is precious."*

*- Sefer Shmiras Haloshon,
Shaar HaZechirah ch. 17*

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MALKA BREINDEL A"H BAS SHMUEL FISHEL YLCH"Y

Are there situations in which a person **has** to get angry? As this story about Rav Shmuel Kamenetsky, *shlita*, illustrates, it all depends on how you see it.

At one time, a friend of Rebbetzin Temi Kamenetsky, *a"h*, was being forced out of her apartment and needed a place to stay. The *Rosh Yeshivah* and his wife welcomed her into their home. Although her stay extended far beyond what they had expected, they continued to treat her with warmth and hospitality, making sure she felt right at home.

One day, a close *talmid* was with Rav Shmuel when he overheard a phone conversation between the *Rosh Yeshivah* and his Rebbetzin. She told him that there were insurance papers he needed to sign, and he agreed to send someone to the house to get the papers so he could sign them.

The *talmid* wondered what it was about. Rav Shmuel explained that the woman who was staying in his house had tripped over a carpet and hurt herself. "She's *monning* (seeking compensation from) the insurance company," he said.

"So... she's suing the *Rosh Yeshivah*?" the student asked, incredulous that someone who had been welcomed into the home would make a claim against her hosts.

"No, no, she's *monning* the insurance company," the *Rosh Yeshivah* insisted. The student reiterated that, in fact, the woman was suing the *Rosh Yeshivah*, but he again insisted that this was all between the woman and the insurance company.

Finally, after the student tried to clarify yet again that Rav Shmuel was being sued, the

LET'S PUT IT ANOTHER WAY

Rosh Yeshivah smiled. "I know that," he said, "but I can't look at it that way." He would sign the papers and the claim would be paid, but he would reframe the incident in a way that drained it of any hard feelings.

And he succeeded completely. The woman remained a welcome guest for as long as she needed to stay.

Adapted from a column by Rabbi Yitzchok Hisiger, *Yated Ne'eman*



TALK ABOUT IT

How do you know when you should reframe, and how do you know when you should seek redress? Can you do both?

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sage advice

DO SOMETHING!



PART OF A SERIES
ON BEING NOSEI B'OL

A child has her appendix taken out. She's lying in a hospital bed in pain, frightened of her surroundings. She just wants to go home! Even though her parents are with her, they can't bring her home yet and they can't heal her stitches.

The mother strokes her daughter's hair. She smooths out the blankets and arranges the pillows. Her father tells her a funny story and reads her a get-well card from her siblings.

Nothing they are doing changes her situation. But they're accomplishing something even more important than that. They are letting her know that they're there for her.

This is the goal of *nosei b'ol im chaveiro*. This little girl detects from her parents' behavior that they wish with all their hearts that they could remove her discomfort. They would gladly suffer in her place if they could. Their small, caring gestures raise her spirits and make the situation easier to bear.

We see this paradigm when Moshe Rabbeinu went out among the Jewish slaves to share in their suffering, carrying bricks and mortar along with them. But how did that help? One man's labor couldn't lighten the load of a million slaves. Yet Moshe did it because he wanted to know exactly what it felt like to be in their shoes. Also, he knew that his being there—a member of Pharaoh's household sharing the lot of the slaves—would console them.

In lifting the heavy building materials, Moshe taught us that it's not enough to just feel for people. **We have to do something** that shows them they are not alone, even if it makes no practical difference to their situation. In this way we strengthen their spirit, and that really does make their load seem lighter.

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