

Let My People Shmooz

Interactive Questions to Spark Your Shabbos Table Discussions



ISSUE 13

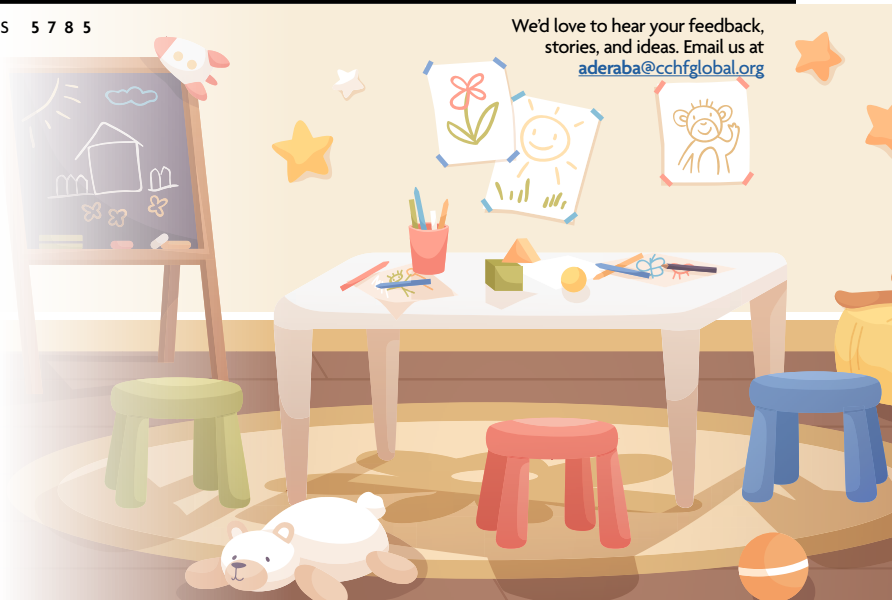
SHABBOS PARSHAS TOLDOS 5785

Why I Cancelled My Registration

I recently signed up my three-year-old to a local playgroup for the coming school year. I made it very clear to the woman running the group that I would cancel my registration if there were more than 13 kids in the playgroup. She said, "Sure. One hundred percent. I get it!" Before long, there were 15 kids in the group. So, true to my word, I cancelled my registration. A few mothers heard that I pulled out, and they're asking me why.

Can I tell them?

Ayala



We'd love to hear your feedback, stories, and ideas. Email us at aderaba@cchfglobal.org

What's the Psak?

Can you guess the halachah?

- A Yes, it was Ayala's personal preference and nothing negative about the playgroup.
- B No, it is loshon hora because it implies that the woman running the playgroup is not trustworthy.
- C Yes, it will be a *to'eles* for the others to know that the woman running the group is not trustworthy.
- D It depends on whether they've already signed up and will cancel their registrations.

The Halachah

The answer is A.

Yes—but Ayala needs to be careful how she words her reply. She can say that she only wants to send her child to a playgroup that has a maximum of 13 kids. But she must *not say* that the woman reneged on her word, because that is not a *to'eles*.¹ It has no relevance to the woman's ability to run a good playgroup (but it could cause the other mothers to leave).² And it is possible that the woman was still in the process of finalizing things and was planning to bring in an assistant due to the bigger group.

Is It To'eles?

One of the rules of *to'eles* is that if you can achieve the same outcome without saying something negative, then the negative words are not permitted.³ In this case, when Ayala tells the other mothers that she wanted only 13 kids in the playgroup, their question will be answered without Ayala having to say that the woman went against her word.

Reviewed by Rav Moshe Mordechai Lowy.

Rav Avraham Yaakov Pam zt"l advised great caution when presenting halachic scenarios to the public, as each situation is unique. This *she'eilah* is 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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the **heart**
of a **Yid**

שגרה מעלת חברים

“Oh, No! Where’d He Go?”

Two young men from Poland arrived in Vienna one Erev Yom Tov in the 1930s. They needed a place to eat. “Go to the Schiffshul to daven,” they were told. “Make sure that Reb Dovid Schlesinger notices you. He has an open house and will surely invite you for the meal.”

The two men went to the large shul and asked someone to point out Reb Dovid to

them. They tried to make eye-contact with him, but they weren’t sure they succeeded.

“Let’s just stand by the door after davening,” one of the friends suggested to the other. “He’ll have to walk by us, and he’ll notice us.”

As everyone left shul, the two stood by the exit and watched as Reb Dovid approached. But instead of looking around to see who needed a meal, he was deep in conversation with another man. He walked right by

As told by
Reb Zev
Schlesinger
of Kew
Gardens,
New York,
son of Reb
Dovid.

them and so did everyone else. They stood outside in the dark, wondering what to do.

Suddenly, Reb Dovid came running back. He warmly invited them to his table. “Yes! Thank you!” they replied with relief.

As the friendly conversation at the table went on, one of the men asked Reb Dovid why he had turned back to find them.

“The man I was walking with was wealthy, and he recently lost his money,” Reb Dovid explained. “I was afraid that if he heard me invite you, he’d suggest that one of you go to him and the other to me. I knew he couldn’t afford to host a guest, so I walked him to the corner and hoped that when I came back, you’d still be there. And you were!”

Take it to the **Table**

What can we **learn** about *chesed* from the way Reb Dovid handled this situation?

What’s
the **real**
story?

היי דין לך זכות



What Am I, a Taxi Driver?

Chezky* is a *chesed* guy—the “shirt off his back” type. It’s no surprise that he’s one of the busiest drivers for Kindness on Wheels, which drives people to medical appointments in Manhattan. His big heart really feels for all his passengers, who are seriously sick and worn down by treatments.

But lately, one passenger, Mrs. Cohen,

seems to be taking advantage of the system. Whenever he goes into Manhattan to pick her up, she’s carrying a bag from some fancy department store. Yesterday it was Lord and Taylor. A few days earlier it was Bloomingdale’s. He wants to tell her, “Hey, Mrs. Cohen, this isn’t a taxi service to take you on shopping trips!”

Chezky calls Tzali, who runs the organization, to share his annoyance. Tzali follows up with a few phone calls and finds out that Mrs. Cohen really is not well. But what about those shopping bags?

*All names have been changed.

Can you **Crack** the case?

A few weeks later, Tzali found out. Sadly, Mrs. Cohen passed away. When he went to be *menachem avei*, he heard her son talk about how private his mother was. “She didn’t want people to know she was sick and to pity her. She would take department store bags with her so when she came home from treatment, people would think she had gone shopping.”

Adapted
with
permission
from an
article by C.B.
Weinfeld in
Yated Ne’eman
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DEDICATIONS