



# SHABBOS MENU

PART OF THE CCHF SHABBOS TABLE MACHSOM L'FI PROGRAM • SHABBOS PARSHAS BEHA'ALOSCHA 5784 • ISSUE 395

## “I COULDN'T HAVE SAID IT BETTER”

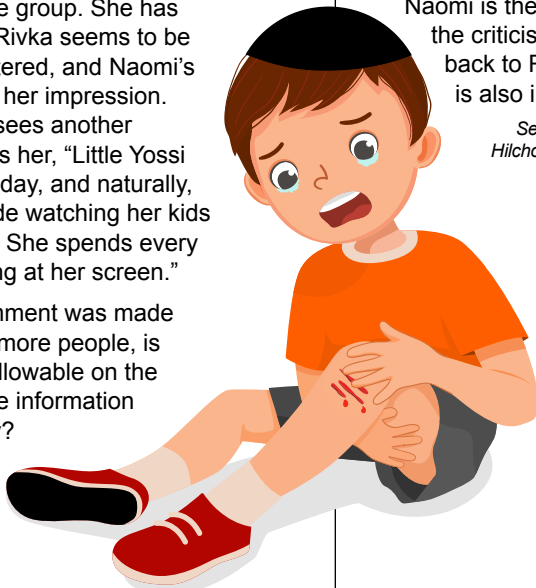
Your friend makes a negative remark about a neighbor to a group of women, and you think she's absolutely right. It's about time people find out who this neighbor really is! Now that the whole group has heard about it, are you allowed to repeat it?

### THE DILEMMA

Sitting outside with some neighbors one pleasant summer afternoon, Naomi sees a little boy fall off his bike and head to his house crying. “Poor Yossi,” she says. “He’ll be lucky if he can get his mother off the phone long enough to give him a kiss and a Band-Aid.”

The mother in question, Rivka, irks Shira, one of the women in the group. She has often thought that Rivka seems to be extremely self-centered, and Naomi's comment supports her impression. Later, when Shira sees another neighbor, Shira tells her, “Little Yossi fell from his bike today, and naturally, Rivka wasn't outside watching her kids like everyone else. She spends every spare minute staring at her screen.”

Since Naomi's comment was made in front of three or more people, is Shira's comment allowable on the assumption that the information will spread anyway?



### THE HALACHAH

Such a comment is only allowed if it comes up naturally in conversation. If Shira repeats what she heard because she wants to reveal Rivka's faults, Shira's words are *loshon hora*. If Shira mentions that Naomi is the source of the criticism and it gets back to Rivka, *rechilus* is also involved.

*Sefer Chofetz Chaim, Hilchos Loshon Hora 2:3*

## PARTICIPANTS SPEAK

Just to share how far-reaching the Shabbos Menu is. We received this request, and of course, he is now receiving it via email each week.

Dear CCHF,

Can I please sign up to the weekly parshah sheet?

I saw one in Beit Chana in Johannesburg and really like it!

Thank you  
Assael

## FOR QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS, EMAIL

Shabbosmenu@cchfglobal.org

“One who seeks to

*cure*

himself of speaking *loshon hora* should determine which

*negative*

*middah* is at the root of his problem.”

– Sefer Shmiras Halashon, Shaar HaTevunah ch.16





**W**e all try to do what the Torah requires of us. But in most people's lives, gray areas abound. This is especially likely to happen when the Torah wants something that seems difficult for us at the moment. And it is even more likely to happen when that "something" is a mitzvah *bein adam lachaveiro*, for which—to many people—the rules don't seem as "hard and fast" as those of *bein adam laMakom*.

But for a true *tzaddik* like Rav Shalom Yosef Elyashiv, there was no such distinction. He treated his fellow human being with the high level of sensitivity that can only come from the Torah's wisdom, as this remarkable story illustrates:

*Rav Elyashiv needed new electrical wiring in his house. His grandson suggested hiring a man who regularly attended the Rav's shiur, but Rav Elyashiv was reluctant. What if the electrician did not charge the Rav his usual price out of gratitude for the shiur?*

*He finally agreed to hire the man but insisted that his grandson make sure the price would not be lowered. The man argued but finally saw that Rav Elyashiv wouldn't budge. He worked for a few days and completed the job on a Thursday.*

*That day, Rav Elyashiv's daughter passed away. He put away the sefer he was learning and took out a sefer on the laws of mourning. Before he left for the funeral, he called his grandson. "Please call the electrician right away and find out how much I owe him," he requested. When the grandson called back with the price, he wrote out the check, and only then did he leave for the funeral.*

The Torah's *mitzvos bein adam lachaveiro* express Hashem's perfect understanding of the deepest needs and desires in the human heart. "Pay a worker on the day he does his work," may seem like a technicality, but it, like every other mitzvah governing our

## sage advice

# THE CHINESE FINGER TRAP

The boy was fascinated by the simple toy his father had given him. It was a woven bamboo tube with a hole at each end. What's it for?" the boy asked.

"You'll see!" his father said with a smile. "Put one finger from your right hand into one hole, and one finger from your left hand into the hole on the other side. Then you have to get your fingers out."

"That's easy!" the boy declared. "Who couldn't do that?"

He put his index fingers into the holes and then tried to pull them back out. But the more he pulled, the tighter the tube closed around his fingers. After a few minutes of struggle, he stopped pulling and relaxed, with his fingers still inside the tube. But now, without the strain of his pulling, the tube, too, relaxed. Because it had opened wider, he was able to slip his fingers out.

This boy didn't just learn the secret of an old-fashioned toy called a Chinese finger trap. He learned the secret of dealing with other people. We tend to think that forcefulness will get others to yield to our view or do what we want them to do. If they balk, we apply more force. But like the Chinese finger trap, people's resistance increases as we pull harder.

Rav Aharon Leib Shteinman mastered the art of using a patient, soft-spoken approach to influence others. Once, when he was trying to help get a child into a school and finding the principal difficult to convince, someone asked him why he didn't speak more forcefully. Certainly, the situation demanded it!

"Even when I was a rosh yeshiva on my own in Kfar Saba, I never spoke forcefully," he explained. I always used terms like 'maybe' or 'possibly' rather than handing out orders. When a person speaks forcefully, his words are less likely to be accepted." He quoted Rav Chaim of Volozhin, who once wrote to his grandson, "A person will achieve his desires through the attribute of patience more than with all the forcefulness in the world."

When we stop straining to move another person's position, we stop stirring up his resistance. That is when, if Hashem deems it best, we will find success.

### TALK ABOUT IT

How can a person be firm in his message without being overly forceful?



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Adapted from *Gedolei Yisroel: Portraits of Greatness* by Rabbi Mattis Goldberg, Feldheim Publishers

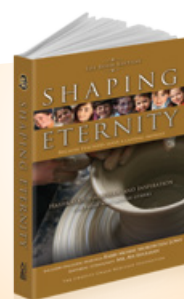


### TALK ABOUT IT

Why do we find that *tzaddikim* and *talmidei chachamim* tend to perform *mitzvos bein adam lachaveiro* at such a high level? How can we work on ourselves to get closer to that level?

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