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CONVERSATION

SHABBOS MENU

PART OF THE CCHF SHABBOS TABLE MACHSOM L'FI PROGRAM • SHABBOS PARSHAS KI SEITZEI 5780 • ISSUE 205

I KNOW A SECRET

As a parent, you surely want to be told if your children are behaving improperly. But do you always have a right to know? Are all "intelligence reports" – especially from your other children – admissible evidence?

T H E

DILEMMA

Mr. Bernstein had a well-equipped toolbox, as he was handy and loved to fix and build things. He also had a strict rule for his children: DO NOT TOUCH MY TOOLS WITHOUT PERMISSION!

One day Mr. Bernstein was away, unreachable by phone. Six-year-old Yehudah's bike chain fell off and Zev, his older brother, ran to help. Zev soon realized that a tool would be necessary.

"I'm already 12. I'm responsible enough to use Daddy's tools and put them back in the right place. I'm sure he wouldn't mind."

Zev opened the garage and found his father's gigantic toolbox in its special spot. Just as he was removing the tool he needed, his brother Aryeh walked in. "Daddy's tools!" Aryeh exclaimed. "Oh, boy – you're in big trouble!"

"I'm going to put it right back as soon as I fix Yehudah's bike," Zev explained.

The next morning, Zev's father took him aside and said, "Zev, I just want to remind you that no matter what, no one is allowed to use my tools without asking me." Zev was furious at Aryeh. Why did he have to put his two cents in when it wasn't his business?

Assuming that Aryeh told his father that Zev had broken the rule, had he spoken loшон hora?

T H E

HALACHAH

There was no constructive purpose to Aryeh's report. No harm was prevented by giving the father this information. Therefore it was loшон hora.

*Sefer Chofetz Chaim
Hilchos Rechilus 10:4*



PARTICIPANTS SPEAK

I just signed up for the Shabbos table Machsom l'Fi and I got the Parshas Pinchas newsletter. It was AMAZING, with inspiring, thought-provoking and poignant lessons to remember. After reading the story we just couldn't keep it to ourselves, so we repeated it many times. Thank you so much for all the effort and thought that goes into each week's content! You should be gebentched.

G.M.
Monsey, NY

MONSEY

FOR QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS, EMAIL

Shabbosmenu@cchfglobal.org

"Peace is the

king

of all character
traits, and it must be

guarded
very carefully."

– Akeidah, Bamidbar
6:24, Shaar 74

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" T



sage advice

FIT THE CUP TO THE WATER

In the winter of 2012, Rabbi Yisroel Belsky, zt"l, was in the hospital when he suffered a ruptured esophagus. This was an emergency situation that required immediate treatment. His daughter Mrs. Tamar Rechnitz* was seeking guidance on the best venue for this risky surgery. She and her siblings were in touch with experts who could help them find the best doctor and hospital for the Rav's needs.

Their contacts steered them to a top surgeon with expertise in the surgery Rabbi Belsky required. He was affiliated with one of Manhattan's most prestigious hospitals, and he stood ready to perform the operation as soon as the patient arrived. Mrs. Rechnitz informed her father that he would be transferred to another hospital where the recommended surgeon would treat him.

Rabbi Belsky flatly refused. He knew that if he opted for a different hospital and a different surgeon, it would be humiliating to the doctor who was scheduled to perform the surgery right there in the hospital that had been caring for him until this point. He was not willing to embarrass the surgeon and imply, by being transferred, that he didn't believe his doctor was up to the task.

By making this decision, Rabbi Belsky mirrored the action of the couple in a story Chazal relate who hid in a furnace rather than


Imagine an 8-ounce paper cup filled with 2 ounces of water. Even the most starry-eyed optimist couldn't call that cup "half-full." But what if you trimmed the cup until it was a 2-ounce size? Now you'd have a cup that is not half-full or half-empty, but brimming with water.

Our expectations are like a cup that we expect others to fill. "This is how much you should do for me." "This is how obedient you should be." "This is how much attention you should be giving me." "This is how accomplished you should be." "This is how hard you should be working."

When we hold out our cup and wait for others to fill it, we are inevitably disappointed. This leads to resentment, which leads to hurtful words and *loshon hora*. The famous saying, "Expectation is resentment under construction," plays out in our lives.

But what if, instead, we take a more realistic measure of the limitations of the people in our lives? What if we acknowledge that due to their own nature and circumstances, they're never going to fill an 8-ounce cup, but they'll fill a 2-ounce cup to the brim? By using the right size "cup," we can appreciate what they do rather than staring down into an empty well of failure.

We might think, "Why should I let him get away with it? Why shouldn't I push him to do better?" The answer to that question comes from another wise saying: "Love your fellow as you love yourself." Just as we accept our own limitations even as we struggle to push past them, we must accept others' limitations and struggles as well. If we haven't reached our potential yet, why should we expect that others have?



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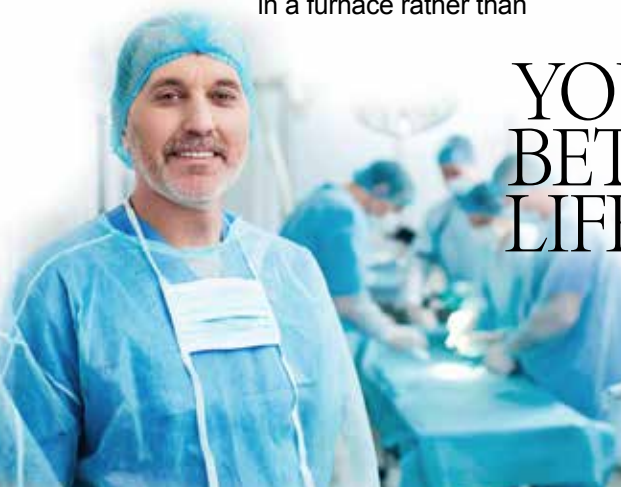
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embarrass a fellow Jew. He made a decision at the risk of his own life; the alternative, to him, was unthinkable.

*Her husband Shlomo Yehudah Rechnitz is a renowned baal tzedakah and Chairman of the Board of the Chofetz Chaim Heritage Foundation.

TALK ABOUT IT

In what way can we follow Rabbi Belsky's example in our everyday life?



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