

PESACH
5784



PESACH MENU

The Pesach Dream:

Planning, shopping, and weeks of preparation have led to this moment. Whether you're a host or a guest, you've moved mountains to make it happen—because there's nothing like basking in the comfort and warmth of extended family over Yom Tov. But you can be sure that there'll be some rough spots: Cousins might squabble, childhood rivalries could resurface, and hosts might grow a bit weary. Yet the pure joy of family togetherness can outshine any annoyance if we focus on keeping slights, arguments, and wounded feelings off the agenda. Discover how shmiras haloshon is...

THE TORAH'S Perfect Tool FOR A PESACH of Sweetness and Family Harmony

Pesach Menu is part of the Shabbos Table Machsom L'fi program.
For more information about this free program, visit cchf.global/shabbos

A PROJECT OF THE CHOFETZ CHAIM HERITAGE FOUNDATION

The Peh-Sach Project:

For a Sweet and Kosher Pesach

Part of THE SHABBOS TABLE MACHSOM L'FI PROGRAM

The Sfas Emes taught that a primary gain of our Redemption from Egypt is that Hashem redeemed Klal Yisrael's power of speech, enabling us to bring Hashem's presence into the world with our words of Torah and tefillah. One of the interpretations of the word "Pesach" is peh-sach, which means "the mouth that speaks." That is why, on the anniversary of our Redemption, we bring you the Peh-Sach Project, to elevate ourselves and our Yom Tov through the power of speech.

AT ANY TIME OF THE YEAR, THE WAY WE SPEAK TO AND ABOUT ONE ANOTHER IS VITAL TO OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH EACH OTHER AND WITH HASHEM. ON PESACH, HOWEVER, THE POTENTIAL OF SPEECH TO UPLIFT US AND THOSE AROUND US IS MULTIPLIED.

This is because of all we invest in this Yom Tov. Nothing means more to a family than nurturing the connection to the next generation. The preparation, *divrei Torah* — the *Haggadah* reading itself — are all meant to be open channels through which the *mesorah* can flow on a stream of warmth, friendship, and unity.

Positive speech keeps the channels clear. It enhances the spirit of togetherness and *simchah* at the *Sedarim* and Yom Tov meals. It keeps our interactions positive, sensitive, and friendly, ensuring that the connections we most treasure will flourish, strengthening our family, our *mesorah*, and *Klal Yisrael*. And, it elevates the spiritual atmosphere of the entire table, allowing the sweetness and *kedushah* of Pesach to shine.

PESACH IS A TIME WHEN A PERSON CAN MAKE GREAT STRIDES.

On Pesach, says Rabbi Shimshon Pincus, zt"l, the world is invested with the power of *chipazon* (great haste). This power manifested itself the first Pesach when the Exodus happened in great haste. Hashem took a nation of slaves steeped in idol worship, and dramatically and swiftly elevated us to a level that we could never have attained on our own at that point in time. Through this power, which is present on every *Seder* night, Hashem gives us the ability to lift ourselves far beyond our current spiritual level and soar to new heights. *Chipazon* defeats the *yetzer hara's* claim that refraining from *onaas devarim* (hurtful speech) and *loshon hora* is beyond our spiritual strength.

On Pesach, Hashem gives us the power to remake ourselves into the people we thought we couldn't be. We can be people who do not demean others with our words. We can be the exalted, dignified people Hashem wants us to be.



Thirteen years ago, when we asked Rav Shteinman, zt"l, for his *haskamah* for the **Peh-Sach Project** and making a Machsom L'fi at each Shabbos and Yom Tov meal, he responded:

כל מה שעושים כדי
שידברו פחות דברים
אסורים וגם דברים
בטלים, זה חשוב מאד

"ANY EFFORT TO MINIMIZE FORBIDDEN SPEECH AND IDLE TALK IS OF GREAT SIGNIFICANCE."



Dear Friend,

As we know, *Yetzias Mitzrayim* is the cornerstone of *emunah* for generation after generation of *Klal Yisrael*. Pesach is the time when we instill this *emunah* in our children and strengthen it in ourselves, and for that reason, it is particularly important that our Seders and Yom Tov *seudos* be times of special *kedushah*. One of the best ways to ensure the right atmosphere is to keep the mitzvah of *shmiras haloshon* when our families are gathered together at the Yom Tov table.

I urge every family to participate in the Peh-Sach Project, which is a very effective way to keep conversations on the right track at the table and throughout Yom Tov. In the *zechus* of your undertaking this wonderful effort, may your family be blessed with a sweet and kosher Pesach, and may we all soon be *zocheh* to witness the Final *Geulah*.

Shimon Shteinman

תפילה על הדיבור

מאת מרן החפץ חיים זצ"ל

רבנו-של-עולם, יהי רצון מלפניך א-ל רחום וחנון שתזכני היום ובכל יום לשמור פי ולשוני מלשון הרע ורכילות: ואזהר מלדבר אפילו על איש יחיד, וכל שכן על כלל ישראל, או על חלק מהם, וכל שכן מלהתרעם על מידותיו של הקדוש ברוך הוא. ואזהר מלדבר דברי שקר, חנופה, מחלוקת, בעס, גאווה, אונאת דברים, הלבנת פנים, ליצנות, וכל דיבור אסור. וזכני שלא לדבר כי אם דבר הצריך לענייני גופי ונפשי, ויהיו כל מעשי ודיבורי לשם שמים.

Master of the World, may it be Your will, compassionate and gracious G-d, that You grant me the merit today and every day to guard my mouth and tongue from speaking loshon hora and *rechilus*. May I be zealous not to speak ill of an individual, and even more so, may I be zealous not to complain about the ways of the Holy One, Blessed is He. May I be zealous not to speak words of falsehood, flattery, strife, anger, arrogance, hurt, embarrassment, mockery, and all other forbidden forms of speech. Grant me the merit to speak only that which is necessary for my physical and spiritual well-being, and may all my deeds and words be for the sake of Heaven.

TO START YOUR MACHSOM L'FI SAY THE קבלה:

הריני (הרינו) מקבל (מקבלים) על עצמי (עצמינו) בלי נדר שמירת הלשון בדבור ושמיעה במשך סעודת שבת/יום טוב, לזכות _____ לרפואה שלימה, (שבת/יום טוב היא מלזעוק ורפואה קרובה לבוא (ON SHABBOS / YOM TOV ADD THESE WORDS) ולזכות _____ ולישועת כלל ישראל.

I (we) hereby accept upon myself (ourselves), without the force of a vow, to observe the laws of Shmiras Haloshon in regard to what I (we) say and listen to during this Yom Tov/Shabbos meal as a source of merit for a speedy recovery for _____; (on Shabbos/Yom Tov add: "Shabbos/Yom Tov hi mil'izok u'refuah kerovah lavo,") and as a merit for _____, and the salvation of all of Klal Yisrael.

Pesach Menu has been sponsored:

לע"נ שמואל חיים בן אברהם יוסף ז"ל ודבורה בת ישראל ע"ה
Dedicated by Uri and Riki Sklar

Dedicated by Bracha and Mordy Ickovitz

As a *zechus* for all the singles in Klal Yisrael to find their *bashert*
Dedicated by the Katz family of Flatbush

In honor of my wife, Carolyn Stein

Barry Stein 973.TAX.ACCT
Tax & Accounting Services

How to Participate in the Peh-Sach Project:

Today, Hashem is remaking the world before our eyes; no one can guess what lies ahead. Shmiras haloshon stands front and center as our protection against the dangers and turmoil. What more powerful response is there than to show Hashem that we love and honor each other? What could be more pleasing to our Father and better stir His compassion for His children?

THREE Steps TO Success

1 Start each of your Shabbos and Yom Tov meals by reading the Chofetz Chaim's *Tefillah Al Hadibbur*, Prayer for Proper Speech.

2 Learn the lessons from this booklet at each *seudah*. See pages 4-7.

3 We are often more willing to extend ourselves in order to benefit another person. Designate every Shabbos and Yom Tov meal as a *Machsom L'fi*, where the entire family will avoid loshon hora and *onaas devarim* as a *zechus* for a *refuah sheleimah* or other *yeshuah* for someone in need. A *Machsom L'fi* has been the catalyst for countless stories of *yeshuos*. Tap into this wellspring of *brachah* and bring *brachah* to yourself, your loved ones and those in need*. Say the *kabbalah* before each meal.

* Please consider dedicating your *machsom l'fi* as a *zechus* for Eretz Yisrael.

MORE STRATEGIES FOR ENJOYING THE SWEETNESS OF SHMIRAS HALOSHON THROUGHOUT YOM TOV

Make an effort to say more *divrei Torah* and sing more *zemiros* at your table. This will not only help you avoid loshon hora, but will also make your Yom Tov more beautiful and meaningful.

Prepare topics that you can introduce to quickly preempt any loshon hora that might get started. You may be surprised to find how easily you can change the subject and distract a person who is starting to speak loshon hora.

You can undertake this project as an individual, or as a family. To do it with others, read page 2 and page 10 of this brochure to the people at your table to inspire them to join. Let them know that the Chofetz Chaim promises that the strength of doing a mitzvah with others will give each of you the *siyata d'Shmaya* of all the participants combined.

SPECIAL NOTE

When Rav Shteinman gave his *haskamah* to this project thirteen years ago, he advised us to urge participants to conduct this program even during *Shulchan Oreich* of the *Sedarim*, despite the shortness of time.

Prepare a table

Sit for a King

with these short, engaging lessons on
**Ahavas Yisrael, Judging Favorably, Anger and Shmiras Haloshon –
one for each seudah.**

Rising Story by Story

“To tell a story, one needs to be skilled. But it takes even more skill to know how to listen to one” (Reb Sholom Dov Ber, the Rashab).

Pesach is the time for telling stories. For each Pesach *seudah*, we bring you an engaging true story about people who used the Torah as their compass when faced with interpersonal challenges. Reading these stories, you will see that those who follow Hashem’s guidelines for *ahavas Yisrael*, *shmiras haloshon*, being *dan l’chaf zechus*, and shalom merit His blessings.

Whoever has “the skill to know how to listen” will see what ordinary people can do, and realize that people—including ourselves—are not ordinary at all. Like the story of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*, these are stories that teach us who we really are.

First Seder

MONDAY NIGHT
15 NISSAN / APRIL 22

AHAVAS YISRAEL: Living Like a Family

The Jewish people are a family, and by commanding us to “Love your fellow as you love yourself,” Hashem has described the beautiful, warm, and caring family we can be.

All for One, One for All

Everyone in the shul knew that Mr. Goldstein’s favorite food was ice cream. In fact, whenever he was involved in planning an event for the shul, ice cream was always on the menu. One Motza’ei Shabbos, the shul held a *melavah malkah* and, to no one’s surprise, the dessert was Mr. Goldstein’s favorite cold, creamy delight.

Oddly, however, Mr. Goldstein didn’t indulge. While everyone around him spooned the delicious treat into their mouths, he sat with an empty place-setting in front of him. Someone noticed.

“No ice cream?” the man asked Mr. Goldstein. “Are you all right?”

“I’m fine, *baruch Hashem!*” he answered. “I’m just not in the mood tonight.”

The man didn’t believe it. Mr. Goldstein saying he was “not in the mood” for ice cream was like the sun saying it was “not in the mood” to shine. It seemed like a violation of the laws of nature. The man went over to the rabbi to discuss this anomaly.

Agreeing that this was indeed unusual, the rabbi went to check on his congregant’s health and state of mind. “What’s going on?” he asked Mr. Goldstein. “Why no ice cream?”

“To tell you the truth, Rabbi, I’ve stopped eating it because it doesn’t feel right. With the Intifada [Arab violence in the 1990s] going on in Eretz Yisrael and Jews being killed, how can I sit here and enjoy myself? As long as Jewish blood is being spilled, I’m not eating ice cream.”

Fast-forward a few years... A teenaged girl is washing the family’s Shabbos dishes on a Motza’ei Shabbos. Her father overhears her whisper to herself, “Tonight I can sleep on a pillow.” When he asks her to explain her comment, she tells him that her *rebbe* had been ill, and for all the time that he was suffering, she stopped sleeping on a pillow as an act of solidarity. However, now she had just received word that her *rebbe* had recovered enough to make a *seudas hodaah*, and, *baruch Hashem*, she felt that now she could allow herself to sleep comfortably again.

This girl was Mr. Goldstein’s daughter.

Adapted from a story recorded for CCHF by Rabbi Binyomin Pruzansky

TALK ABOUT IT

What can you undertake to connect yourself to those who are living through the current, difficult situation in Eretz Yisrael? What would be meaningful to you?

GO FOR IT

In your words, deeds, and conversations, create a legacy of *ahavas Yisrael* for your family.

First Day of Yom Tov

TUESDAY DAY SEUDAH
15 NISSAN / APRIL 23

POSITIVE WORDS

If only we realized the healing power of a few positive words spoken to someone who needs to hear them, we would try never to miss the opportunity.

Life Support

"Ma, you got flowers!"

"Who are they from?" Gitta Levin asked in surprise.

The enclosed card only added to the mystery. It read: "Dear Mrs. Levin, I can't thank you enough. Sara Green."

Sara Green was a lovely young woman whom Gitta knew only casually. She recalled that they had seen each other in shul a few weeks ago. But why had Sara Green sent her flowers? Perhaps there was a mistake. She picked up the phone and called her.

"Hi, this is Gitta Levin. Um, I just received a bouquet of flowers and a thank-you note, but I think it may have been a mix-up."

"Oh, it's not a mix-up at all," Sara said, her voice brimming with excitement. "Let me explain."

"Remember I walked out of shul with you a few weeks back? There was an *aufruf* that Shabbos, my best friend's *chassan's aufruf*. With her getting married, I would be the only girl from our class still single."

"I can't describe my feelings as I watched everyone congratulate Adina's mother and throw candies at the *chassan*. I yearned to meet

my bashert, too, but at nearly thirty years old, I felt like it would never happen. I felt I could no longer bear the repeated disappointments, and I was ready to resign myself to being single. If a *shadchan* called, I decided, I would not even listen to the suggestion.

"Of course, you had no idea of my despair when you smiled at me as we walked outside together. You asked me how my teaching was going, and how my mother was feeling. Then you turned to me with a big, friendly smile and said, 'Sara, you look simply stunning in that suit! Wherever do you get your great fashion sense? I'm sure your children will be the best-dressed kids on the block!'

"I was speechless. Your kind compliment awakened the hope in me that maybe I, too, could meet my *bashert* and become a wife and a mother.

"I walked home a new person, all my self-pity gone. And your words came at just the right time, because I had been all set to reject the *shidduch* offer that had just come my way. Who wanted another failure? But your words gave me *chizuk* and I agreed to go out.

"The flowers are just a small token of my *hakaras hatov* to you, Mrs. Levin. Last night I became a *kallah*. Who knows what might have been if not for you and your thoughtful, positive words?"

TALK ABOUT IT

We see how Sara benefited from hearing Mrs. Levin's kind words, but how does Mrs. Levin (and every one of us) benefit from speaking kind words?

GO FOR IT

There's always something special to acknowledge in someone, especially when it's clear that the person is in need of acknowledgment. Take an extra moment to notice and say something kind.

Second Seder

TUESDAY NIGHT
16 NISSAN / APRIL 23

THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT

When we train ourselves to jump to positive conclusions, we leap over the gaping trap of *loshon hora* and land safely on solid ground.

There's No Need for Alarm

One Shabbos afternoon, the Green* family's home alarm went off by mistake. Unable to shut it off, they relied on the system the alarm company had put in place: The company would call and if no one answered the phone, the police would be dispatched to investigate. Oddly, the alarm stopped ringing, but the police never showed up.

After Shabbos, Yitzchok Green called the company to report what had happened. The owner, a religious Jew, promised to look into it. This was a fairly simple procedure, because all the actions taken when an alarm goes off are recorded. When the owner reviewed the recording from the Greens' alarm on Shabbos, he became alarmed himself: Apparently, the company's call was answered after just a few rings by a woman who identified herself as Rochel Green (Yitzchok's wife) and confirmed the correct code.

"How am I going to tell Yitzchok that his wife answered the phone on Shabbos?" the owner worried. He decided to keep the information to himself for the time being.

Later that week, Yitzchok called his daughter who was living in Eretz Yisrael. She told her father that on the past Motza'ei Shabbos, she received a call on her cellphone from the alarm company. She gave her mother's name and the confirmation code so that the system would be turned off. Yitzchok then called the alarm company owner to explain what had happened.

"*Baruch Hashem!*" the owner exclaimed. "You don't know what I was going through all week since I heard your wife identify herself on the recording. Who could have imagined such an unlikely explanation?"

*All names have been changed.
Adapted from an article by Rabbi Ephraim Eliyahu Shapiro in *Inyan* magazine

TALK ABOUT IT

How do you know whether you should share negative information with someone who should know, or hold onto it assuming there's a good explanation?

GO FOR IT

Follow the alarm company owner's lead. If you can't make sense of someone's negative behavior, hold your tongue and wait; the reasonable explanation is bound to emerge.

Second Day of Yom Tov

WEDNESDAY DAY SEUDAH
16 NISSAN / APRIL 24

SHMIRAS HALOSHON

When we guard our tongues, we guard ourselves from troubles.

The Torah's laws of speech are

the unfailing path to a life of blessing, security, and happiness, ensuring that we protect every Jew's dignity and, in doing so, uplift our own.

Don't Forget to Remember

Rabbi Yosef Shapiro led the Poale Zedeck congregation in Pittsburgh for nearly 50 years. His adherence to the mitzvah of shmiras haloshon was so ironclad that the Ponovezher Rav once referred to him as "a young Chofetz Chaim." Nevertheless, Rabbi Shapiro never took for granted his ability to meet the next challenge to guarding his speech.

A member of the congregation once had a complicated issue to discuss with the *rav*. The *rav* invited him to speak in his office. On opening the door, the *rav* walked in first, found a piece of paper lying on the floor, picked it up, and placed it on his desk. The man didn't think much about Rabbi Shapiro's action until they finished their conversation and both men got up to leave the office. That was when the *rav* took the paper and placed it back on the floor.

The man met with Rabbi Shapiro several times regarding his

personal matter, and each time Rabbi Shapiro repeated the same odd routine. The man was confused. Was the paper trash? If so, why did the *rav* keep redeeming it? Was it important? If so, why did he return it to the floor? Finally, during one such meeting, the *rav* was distracted by a phone call and the man had his opportunity to glance at the paper. On it were written the words, "*Netzor lishoni mei'ra*"—Keep my tongue from [speaking] evil.

When Rabbi Shapiro finished his call, the man asked him to explain the paper. "I need to do something to remind myself not to speak loshon hora," the *rav* explained. "I can put a reminder on my desk, but eventually I'll become used to seeing it and it won't have an impact. By putting it on the floor, I have to bend down and pick it up every time I walk into the office, and that makes the reminder fresh and new each time."

For reminders to work, they have to enter one's mind. Rabbi Shapiro found a way to prevent his reminder from becoming part of the background, and that is how he ensured that shmiras haloshon would always occupy center stage.

Heard from Rabbi Ephraim Eliyahu Shapiro at a CCHF Mishmeres Yom Iyun

TALK ABOUT IT

What can you do to make a shmiras haloshon reminder stay fresh and powerful?

GO FOR IT

How do you keep shmiras haloshon in the forefront of your mind? Develop a strategy that will keep your commitment fresh.

Shabbos Chol Hamoed

FRIDAY NIGHT SEUDAH
19 NISSAN / APRIL 26

HALACHOS OF SHMIRAS HALOSHON: Learning the Laws

There is only one way to build a new habit—with small, consistent steps. Learning the halachos of shmiras haloshon, a little each day, is the proven method to turn our good intentions into reality and begin enjoying the vast blessings this mitzvah brings. The Chofetz Chaim promises that when we do our part, Hashem helps us succeed.

No Coincidence

Rabbi Yosef Weiss *zt"l*, *Menahel* of Yeshiva Shaagas Aryeh in Lakewood, was close to Rav Yehuda Zev Segal, the Manchester Rosh Yeshivah, who was known as the Chofetz Chaim of his generation.

He was also a *rebbe* and a mentor to many people.

Among them was Reb Moshe. Thus, during the *shivah* for Rabbi Weiss,

Reb Moshe went to comfort the family.

He told them that in seeking a *zechus* to have a child, around ten years earlier he and his wife committed to learn from *Sefer Chofetz Chaim* every night. When they went away for Shabbos or took a trip, they always packed their *Sefer Chofetz Chaim*. Four months later,

when they completed *Sefer Chofetz Chaim* for the first time, they found out that their first child was on the way. They continued their learning, completing *Sefer Chofetz Chaim* a second time, and then a third.

The due date was a week and a half before Rosh Hashanah; they were slated to complete their third cycle of *Sefer Chofetz Chaim* just around then, and they did. Several days later they welcomed their first child, a baby boy.

At 7:47 a.m., Reb Moshe got a mazel tov text message from Rabbi Weiss. "Mazel tov! Not *pashut*—your son was born on the Chofetz Chaim's *yahrtzeit*."

Adapted from an article in *Yated Ne'eman*

TALK ABOUT IT
What motivates us to keep learning shmiras haloshon until we see our *yeshuah*, or even if it doesn't come?

GO FOR IT
Learn shmiras haloshon with confidence and conviction that Hashem will repay your effort to increase your compassion for His children.

WHAT DOES TO'ELES MEAN?

At times it may be necessary to relate loshon hora l'to'eles, for a constructive purpose. It is imperative that you know the seven rules of to'eles to ensure that your words will be truly constructive.

YOU ARE SPEAKING IN ORDER TO:

PROVIDED THAT:

- 1 The information is accurate, based on first-hand information and careful investigation.** You must have seen the person's behavior yourself. The only time that one may repeat second-hand information is to protect someone from potential harm. Even then, it is necessary to state that you are relaying second-hand information.
- 2 The situation is well understood.** Any possibilities to judge the person favorably have been explored.
- 3 All other options were tried.** If there is any other way to achieve the desired result, without passing on the negative information, then one may not relay the negative information.
- 4 You tried to speak to the person yourself, before speaking about him.** Note: This condition does not apply if speaking to the person yourself will make it impossible to achieve the desired result.
- 5 Your intent is truly l'shem Shamayim.** You do not bear a grudge against this person or have any reason to take pleasure in relating this negative information.

A Help the one you are speaking about.

B Help someone victimized by the person or prevent others from being victimized.

Shabbos Chol Hamoed

SHABBOS DAY SEUDAH
19 NISSAN / APRIL 27

SHMIRAS HALOSHON AND SHIDDUCHIM

The path to the *chuppah* is paved by the words we speak about others and those they speak about us or our children. Shmiras haloshon is the all-important guide to protect this delicate process from the tragic fallout of improper speech, and to imbue it with respect and compassion.

A Little Off

Chaim Steinberg* was in the middle of his first Shacharis at Yeshivas Mir Yerushalayim. As an American, he hadn't realized until the last minute that he would be required, as a *kohen*, to participate in *Bircas Kohanim* that is performed every day in Israel. He needed a *tallis* right away, but where could he find one?

He asked a man standing near the *bimah* if he could borrow his *tallis*, but the man was himself a *kohen*. HaRav Nosson Tzvi Finkel zt"l, the Mirrer Rosh Yeshivah, noticed what was going on and offered Chaim his own *tallis*. Chaim hesitated: How could he borrow the revered Rosh Yeshivah's *tallis*? But an onlooker gave him a slight poke and

whispered, "When the Rosh Yeshivah offers you his *tallis*, you take it!"

The Rosh Yeshivah, who suffered from Parkinson's disease, was meanwhile slowly removing his *tallis*. He gave it to Chaim with shaking hands, and Chaim had the memorable privilege of wearing Rav Nosson Tzvi's *tallis* on that first morning at the Mir.

The following year, Chaim entered the *shidduch* process. The brother of a prospective match called Chaim's friend for information. The friend sang Chaim's praises. Then, to show Chaim's lively side, the friend said, "Once he borrowed Rav Nosson Tzvi's *tallis*!"

The girl's mother, hearing this information, thought Chaim was perhaps a little off

socially. However, because this information didn't match up with everything else she had heard, she went forward with the *shidduch*. The couple went out and after a few dates, Chaim told the *tallis* story. Now it all made sense! Chaim ultimately married this girl and is now a *maggid shiur* raising a beautiful family.

However, Chaim's friend had played with fire. He told a half-baked story the way he recalled it, rather than as it really happened. Fortunately, the mother's wisdom in handling the information saved the *shidduch*.

*Name has been changed. Adapted from a story by Rabbi Yitzchok Hisiger in *Yated Ne'eman*

TALK ABOUT IT

Why are many people inclined to believe negative information as soon as they hear it?

GO FOR IT

If information seems out of line with everything else you've heard, don't think, "Aha! The truth!" but rather, "This doesn't make sense."

Shvi'i Shel Pesach

SUNDAY NIGHT SEUDAH
21 NISSAN / APRIL 28

SHMIRAS HALOSHON: Unleashing the Power

Mishlei tells us, "One who guards his tongue guards his soul from troubles." This *mitzvah* is the "prescription" that has been used by Jews through the ages to heal the troubles in their lives and bring *yeshuos* of all kinds. Every day, the power of the *mitzvah* proves itself anew as Hashem shines abundant compassion upon those who have made a commitment, through *shmiras haloshon*, to shine their own compassion on their fellow Jews, as this story by Mrs. T. Baron illustrates.

One Simple Segulah

Rav Shimon Galai is a famous *tzaddik*. HaRav

Aharon Leib Shteinman zt"l and HaRav Chaim Kanievsky zt"l would often send people who came seeking

a *yeshuah* to Rav Shimon to benefit from his special *koach hatefillah*.

I learned of Rav Shimon's rare character when I attended school with his oldest daughter. As young girls, we once studied together for a test. Rav Shimon's wife came to my friend and said, "Saraleh, Tatte went to the vegetable store long ago and he hasn't come back. Can you go with your friend to look for him?"

We went to the store and there we found Rav Shimon Galai. He had a small Gemara

perched on a pile of potatoes, and he was engrossed in his learning. This picture has remained in my mind for the past 35 years.

Now, years later, as a wife and mother, I try to find time to help people who are in need of a *yeshuah*. One day, I was bringing a widow to Rav Shimon for a *brachah*. As we headed to his home I told the woman about his legendary devotion to Torah.

When we reached Rav Shimon, I told him that my friend wanted a *brachah*. "Please, promise me. I need a *yeshuah*," she said to him.

"I cannot promise," he said.

"But people say you can bring *yeshuos*," she argued. "Miracles happen for you."

continued on next page

GO FOR IT

Empower your own *tefillos* for yourself and others by keeping your mouth pure of *loshon hora* and *rechilus*.

C Resolve major disputes.

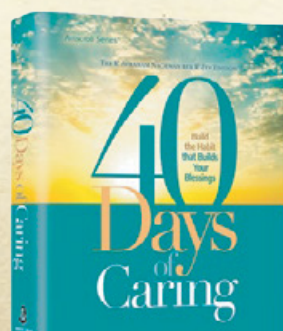
D Help others refrain from improper behavior.

6 You will transmit the information accurately. No exaggerations may be made, nor any altering of the facts. One may also not leave out information that would minimize the severity of the person's behavior. In addition, one may say only the minimum necessary for the intended purpose.

7 No undue harm will be caused. If the person will receive a more severe punishment or incur more damage than *beis din* would assess, one may not relate the incident.

In addition, there must be a reasonable chance of bringing about the desired result, otherwise your words will not be *l'to'eles*.

Reminder: You must preface your words by saying that you are speaking *l'to'eles*.



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He closed his eyes. "I cannot make miracles," he said quietly. "I can only say one thing about myself. I have tried my best to make sure that this mouth will not say one word of loshon hora or rechilus."

From a presentation for Tiferes, the women's division of CCHF

Shvi'i Shel Pesach

MONDAY DAY SEUDAH
21 NISSAN / APRIL 29

Those who undertake a *machsom l'fi* see for themselves that *shmiras haloshon* is not only possible, but satisfying and uplifting. As they succeed hour by hour in speaking with forethought and caring, they build a positive, lifelong habit—and a powerful merit for the blessings we all need.

Simple and Effective

Shalom* was a member of a daily carpool from Lakewood to Brooklyn. One day a fellow passenger told Shalom, "You want to hear something incredible? In the development where I live, there were 20 girls of marriageable age, and some of the neighbors decided to do a *machsom l'fi* as a merit for them. Within a year, every last one of those girls was married!"

"Wow!" Shalom responded. "That really

is incredible." He was thinking about his sister, already 27 and still unmarried. Could a *machsom l'fi* help her? "It's too much for me to get something like that organized," he thought. "I have to be realistic."

The idea settled into the recesses of his mind. On Tishah B'Av, it was awakened when he learned about the Shabbos Table Machsom l'Fi. This didn't take any organization—it was just the people around the Shabbos table, and just for the duration of the meal. How could he not try something so simple to help his sister? Her situation seemed worse than ever because a potential *shidduch* that had seemed

MACHSOM L'FI: An Exercise in Positive Speaking

Acharon Shel Pesach

MONDAY NIGHT SEUDAH
22 NISSAN / APRIL 29

RESTORING SHALOM: Forgiveness

People who can apologize and people who can forgive travel through life unburdened by grievances. Each is a mindset and a skill that opens the door to true happiness.

The Heirloom Battle That Wasn't

Yehudah* possessed a fine piece of Judaica. He entrusted its care and safekeeping to his son Yaakov, and Yaakov fulfilled his duties to perfection. As Yaakov grew old, his children took over the maintenance of this precious possession.

At a ripe old age, Yaakov passed on. His children felt that since their family had been the keepers of this precious heirloom, it should rightfully pass into their possession. They sought the advice of a *rav* who concurred, based on the details they provided, that they had a right to the heirloom.

At that point, without consulting Uncle Shlomo, their father's one remaining sibling, or any of the cousins, Yaakov's children decided that they would sell the piece. A dealer in rare Judaica bought it

from them for a six-figure amount.

When the cousins found out about the sale, they were enraged. Even if Yaakov's children did have ownership rights, why could they not have given the cousins a chance to buy the piece and keep it in the family? Why had they not consulted Shlomo?

The family erupted. The outraged cousins referred to Yaakov's children as "robbers" and "a gang of thieves." Shlomo, an elderly man, watched sadly as the family his father had proudly established devolved into warring factions.

One day, he decided to call an end to it. He looked at his children and said softly, "I don't care if Yaakov's family received millions of dollars for this heirloom. Shalom in the family is the most important thing in this world. No money can ever replace the value of shalom!"

TALK ABOUT IT

Why do you think Rav Galai attributed the power of his *tefillos* to *shmiras haloshon* more than to his incredible Torah learning?

to be progressing had recently gone off track.

Shalom brought the idea home and everyone agreed to try it that week. When Shabbos was over on the very first week of the family's *machsom l'fi*, Shalom found out that the boy who had seemed so promising wanted to reconsider his sister. After some serious discussion on both sides, the couple met again; a few weeks later, they were engaged.

"I have to tell people this story," Shalom said in a call to the CCHF. "This a *zechus* that very many people need!"

*Name has been changed

TALK ABOUT IT

Why do people hesitate to join a *machsom*?

GO FOR IT

If you haven't already introduced the Shabbos Table Machsom l'Fi to your family's Shabbos table, take it on as a merit for someone you are all motivated to help.

"I declare as the last remaining member of the [original] family, that I am fully *mochel* my nephews who sold this precious heirloom. This is so that shalom will prevail in our family at all times. I don't want to hear anything more about this subject, nor do I want to discuss it anymore!"

"And," said the cousin who told this story, "so it was."

With this one selfless, far-sighted declaration, Shlomo taught his children that peace has no price tag.

*All names have been changed.

Heard from a CCHF Shalom Challenge2 participant

TALK ABOUT IT

Why is it so easy to see when someone else is doing wrong but so hard to realize when we ourselves need to stop and ask forgiveness?

GO FOR IT

In dealing with family conflicts, especially to do with inheritance, remember that the most precious inheritance our parents leave us is the family to which we belong. No material possession can replace it. Therefore, when weighing money against family peace, family peace is always the winning choice.

SHALOM: Living in Peace

Whatever life brings us, we find happiness only when we're at peace with others and within ourselves. We

discover that there's almost nothing we fight for that is as precious as shalom itself.

Sometimes Procrastination Pays

Aviva* struggled for years with a medical condition and couldn't help her feelings of bitterness as she suffered alone. Toward the end of her saga, she decided to use her sense of humor to bring some laughter into the lives of others with similar conditions. That's when her humor column was born. An organization started including her wry observations in their mailings. Determined to remain anonymous, Aviva used a pen name.

Decades passed. Aviva's condition was *baruch Hashem* behind her, but her *chizuk*/humor column continued. One day a relative phoned, jokingly calling Aviva by her pen name.

Aviva cringed.

As she learned, the organization that featured Aviva's columns had sent out a promotional brochure that included her pen name **next to her real name**.

She was furious. Her years of carefully guarded anonymity had evaporated with one careless move!

Her impulse was to immediately call the organization and blast whoever picked up the phone. However, she had been learning a CCHF book, *Shalom: Live the Blessing*, and knew about the strategy of "procrastinating" anger—putting the fight off for a day. Maybe tomorrow she'd be just as angry, but she wouldn't have lost anything by waiting.

"The next morning I woke up, thought about it for just a second, and started

laughing hysterically," she says. "I told myself, Aviva, you're a 50-something-year-old Bubby. What does it matter at this point if everyone knows? It hasn't been a total secret for a while." She did call the organization anyway, to calmly point out the mistake.

"They were very apologetic," she says. "They even told me that I had the merit of going through shame and not striking back! I had the power to give *brachos*, so I went around giving *brachos* all day."

*Name has been changed.
As told to CCHF by "Aviva"

TALK ABOUT IT

What does this story teach you about your own ability to keep the peace?

GO FOR IT

Stop yourself when you want to respond in anger and ask yourself, "Can't this wait until tomorrow?" Sleep on the situation and give your better self a chance to emerge.

"I only bensch from this bentscher. It automatically makes me concentrate on the meaning of the words."
—ATARA REISS

Give the Gift of Brachah.

"I have been so inspired by this bentscher that I changed my breakfast menu to include bread so I can bentsch."
—P. KRIZ

"This bentscher brought me to a new level of cherishing bentsching. I won't let a day go by without bentsching!"
—E. REICHMANN



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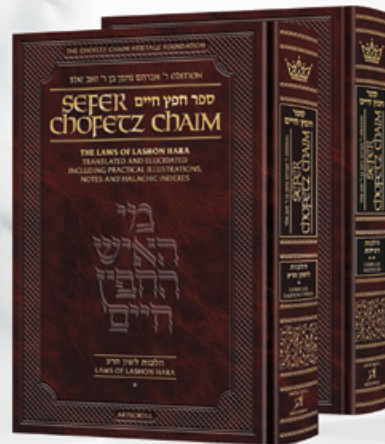
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Shmiras Haloshon: FOR HEALING, FOR PROTECTION, FOR GEULAH

YOU PLACE YOURSELF UNDER HASHEM'S PROTECTION

"Hashem says: I can save you from all harm, provided that you 'Conceal yourself from a prowling tongue' (loshon hora)."

—Zechor l'Miriam, perek 3

YOU LIVE IN HARMONY WITH OTHERS

"Through shmiras haloshon one is blessed with the precious quality of peace. By refraining from speaking ill of others, one ensures that he will not be the object of their enmity; to the contrary, others will love him and confide in him."

—Sefer Shmiras Haloshon, Shaar Hazechirah, perek 11

YOU SECURE YOUR LIVELIHOOD

"I would advise those seeking to improve their economic situation to take exceedingly great care in regard to loshon hora..."

"If one respects another person's feelings and possessions, his own possessions shall certainly be blessed more than if he had performed any *segulah*."

—Sefer Shmiras Haloshon, chelek beis, perek 9

YOU MAXIMIZE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF YOUR TORAH AND TEFILLAH

TORAH Through the loshon hora and *rechilus* one speaks, one loses the little Torah one has... but, the Chofetz Chaim concludes, the Torah of someone who is careful with shmiras haloshon is cherished in the eyes of Hashem, since it will contain no shortcoming.

—Sefer Shmiras Haloshon, chelek beis, perek 26

TEFILLAH The prayers of one guilty of loshon hora do not appear before the Holy One. But the Torah writes that as soon as one repents and resolves to change, then:

"On the very day he purifies himself, he shall be brought to the *kohen*..."

—Vayikra 14:2

YOU CREATE DEFENDERS IN HEAVEN WHO WILL INVOKE COMPASSION FOR YOU

"One who speaks well of his fellow man, the angels speak well of him in front of Hashem."

—Midrash Mishlei 12

YOU ACQUIRE GREAT BLESSING

"One who refrains from speaking loshon hora receives an extraordinary blessing."

—Sefer Shmiras Haloshon, chelek beis, perek 23

"There is no family in the world who studies the laws of loshon hora daily who has not seen some form of salvation in their lives."

—Rabbi Yehuda Zev Segal, Manchester Rosh Yeshiva, founder of Shmiras Haloshon Yomi

YOU HELP REBUILD THE BEIS HAMIKDASH

"Whoever strengthens himself to correct this sin will have a share in the future Beis Hamikdash."

—Sefer Shmiras Haloshon, chelek beis, perek 7

YOU BUILD YOUR SHARE IN OLAM HABA

"The main way to merit *Olam Haba* is through guarding one's tongue. This is more important than any Torah or good deeds one has...because the mouth is 'holy of holies.'"

—Vilna Gaon, in his famous Iggeres HaGra

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