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for Your
Shabbos
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ISSUE 95

SHABBOS PARSHAS VA'ESCHANAN 5786

Please treat this newsletter with proper respect.
Please do not read during davening or Krias HaTorah.

Don't Bother

My daughter Shani is going to seminary next year. We realize that she's quite shy, so we were receptive when the principal recommended that Shani attend a "pre-seminary course" aimed at helping girls improve their social skills so they can function in a wider social circle. The principal specifically recommended a social skills coach named Aliza, who has been giving this course for several years and has good reputation.



Although the price tag was quite high, we sent Shani to Aliza to give our daughter the best chance of benefitting from her year in seminary. My husband and I feel that the course was a waste of time and money.

We did not see any growth in Shani. When we asked Shani what she thought, she couldn't pinpoint any specific benefit that she got out of the course. I'd like to let the principal know that Aliza's course is not effective and should not be recommended, so that others won't have to waste their time and money. Can I tell her?

—Hadassa

What's the Psak?
Do you know the halachah?

A Yes.
They're recommending
an ineffective service.

B Only if
the principal asks
Hadassa how the
course went.

C No.
Maybe Shani didn't grow
from it, but others might.

So, How Was It?

When a family member has an issue, most people's immediate reaction is to take that person's side. They feel, *Someone else is at fault, and letting others know is l'toeles!* This response can lead to many mistakes. The first mistake is that one doesn't think that perhaps someone else is not at fault. One of the rules of *to'eles* is that we must be sure that the person being spoken about actually did something wrong.¹ This cannot be assumed from Shani's experience. Firstly, Hadassa might not see the results now, but when Shani gets to seminary she might find the lessons she learned useful. Therefore it's too early for Shani or Hadassa to determine if the course was worthwhile.

Even if, during Shani's year in seminary, it becomes clear that she did not benefit from the course, that may be because of Shani—not Aliza. Hadassa still may not volunteer that information to the principal. We are not permitted to volunteer negative information when it is only our opinion, even *l'toeles*.

If someone asks for such information because they need it to make a more informed decision,² it may be shared—but only as an opinion: "This was our experience. It might be different for you." Accordingly, if the principal asks Hadassa how the course went, she may say only that Shani did not benefit from it—but no more than that.

Answer: The halachah is B.

Reviewed by Rabbi Moshe Mordechai Lowy

Rav Pam, zt"l, advised great caution when presenting halachic scenarios to the public, as each situation is unique. This *shailah* is for discussion only; actual halachic decisions should be made by a *rav* or halachic expert on a case-by-case basis.

The Shmiras Haloshon Shailah Hotline: 718-951-3696 2-3PM / 9-10:30 PM

THE ISADORE AND RUTH GIBBER
WORLDWIDE TISHA B'AV EVENT

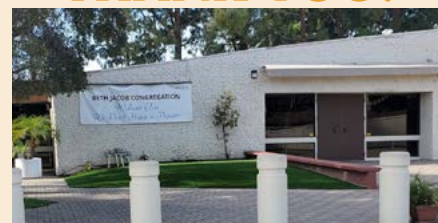
HIDDEN

MISSED ANY PART OF THE
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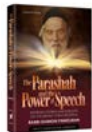
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THANK YOU!



BETH JACOB CONGREGATION IN SAN DIEGO, CA
FOR DISTRIBUTING ADERABA EVERY WEEK

See the good in the heart of a Yid



Adapted from **The Parashah and the Power of Speech**, by Rabbi Shimon Finkelman, a project of CCHF, published by ArtScroll/Mesorah Publications

Camp Malka staffers dreaded trips to the laundromat, where Maria, the dour, sour manager, ruled. She seemed to resent the Jewish families who came to do their laundry. Mothers had to keep their children under tight control. Singing and laughing were practically federal crimes in Maria's eyes.

One year, on the busy, crowded day after Tishah B'Av, Maria seemed even more tense than usual.

"Keep quiet, do your laundry, and go home!" she barked.

Mrs. Chani Mintz, who ran workshops at the camp, sensed that something was wrong.

"Looks like you're having a tough day,"

she said gently. "The girls have been waiting for over a week to do laundry. Please excuse their excitement."

A Clean New Start For the Laundromat

"Today is a very hard day for me," Maria replied. "My son would have been thirty-four today."

It's his birthday. He died in a terrible accident when he was fourteen. I miss him."

"I am so sorry," Mrs. Mintz said quietly. "I can't imagine how painful that must be."

Maria retreated to her office, tears streaming down her face. Mrs. Mintz thought, *There must be something I can do.*



She walked to a nearby florist and asked what a culturally appropriate gift for someone mourning a child would be. "Yellow lilies," the florist suggested.

Mrs. Mintz bought a large bouquet, returned to the laundromat, and knocked softly on Maria's office door.

"I was so moved by what you shared," she said. "I wanted you to have these."

"My goodness!" Maria exclaimed. She embraced Mrs. Mintz and wept. "You're so kind. . . so thoughtful."

From that day on, Maria's attitude toward her Jewish customers completely changed. The kindness shown to her became the kindness she showed others.

See the good What's the Real Story?



Chaim was a serious *bachur* in a prestigious yeshivah in Eretz Yisrael. During the afternoon

breaks, he often sat alone in the *beis midrash*, learning while most of his friends napped or took care of errands.

One day, as Chaim sat alone learning, he was startled to hear a rustling noise coming from the *sefarim* library. What could it be? Chaim walked over quietly to take a peek. And what he saw shocked him! One of the yeshivah's most respected, senior *bachurim* was sitting in a corner, scribbling away and copying the answers to a test with the text open right in front of him.

This wasn't just any test. It was part of a *shmiras haloshon* learning program in which participants would learn a

portion of *Sefer Chofetz Chaim* every week and take a test on the material. High scorers were rewarded with

money—not a lot, but enough to be helpful to yeshivah boys on a tight budget. And here was the yeshivah's star *talmid*—cheating on the test!

For the next three years, Chaim held a different opinion of this *bachur*. He didn't mention to anyone what he had seen, but there was no question that it looked pretty bad. Was it?

Best Bachur or Best Cheater?

Chaim had not been part of the *shmiras haloshon* program before those three years. But then he became *chavrusos* with the boy who ran it, and he was convinced to join. That's when he found out that once a participant completed the test on that week's material, he got one additional, extra-difficult question to answer. This had to be done with an open *sefer*. Only the strongest, most dedicated *talmidim* attempted it. . . people like that *bachur* Chaim had written off as a cheater. Now it all made sense!



Can you Crack the case?

Submitted by a new Aderaba participant, Chaim F. Eretz Yisrael



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