

With thanks to Rabbi Zelig Pliskin for kindly giving me permission to use extracts from his book, "Guard Your Tongue" (based on "Chofetz Chaim").

הַלְכָה of the Week

~ שְׁמִירַת הַלְשׁוֹן ~

Rabbi Pliskin said he will be pleased to know these halachot are being publicised more widely, especially in view of the fact that his own father was a talmid of the Chofetz Chaim, who went to great lengths to make these laws better known.

לְשׁוֹן הַרְעָ Without Mentioning Names

It is not necessary to explicitly (openly) mention someone's name for a statement to be considered **לְשׁוֹן הַרְעָ**. If the listener will be able to work out the identity of the person to whom you are referring then you are guilty of **לְשׁוֹן הַרְעָ**.

You should be careful not to imitate the person's voice, gestures or mannerisms as such behaviour may also indicate his identity.

In general, it is best to completely refrain (keep away) from making any disparaging (negative, upsetting) remarks. Even though you might think that the subject of your remark (the person about whom you were speaking) is unknown to your listeners, or you think that you have not given enough of a clue to the person's identity, you might be wrong.

פָּרָקִי אֲבוֹת of the Week

פרק ו
וְגָדוֹלָה תֹּורָה יוֹתֵר מִן הַכֹּהֵנָה וּמִן הַמֶּלֶךְ, שַׁהְמִלְכּוֹת נִקְנִית בְּשָׁלְשִׁים
מִעָלוֹת, וְהַכֹּהֵנָה בְּעֶשֶׂרִים וּאֶרְבַּע, וְהַתֹּורָה נִקְנִית בְּאֶרְבַּעַם וּשְׁמֹנֶה
דִּבְרִים. וְאֵלּוּ הֵן, בְּתַלְמוֹד, בְּשְׁמִיעַת הָאָזֶן, בְּעֲרִיבַת שְׁפָתִים, . . .

To learn Torah is greater than to be a kohen or a king. A king has thirty advantages, and a kohen has twenty-four, but in order to gain Torah learning a person must improve himself in forty-eight ways.

They are:

study,

listening carefully,

speaking clearly . . .

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