

### **Defined Benefit Plan**

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**Excerpted and adapted from a *shiur* by HaRav Yitzchak Berkovits**

[https://baishavaad.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/VA74\\_03\\_Tazriah\\_-She miras\\_Halashon\\_in\\_Shidduchim-1.mp3](https://baishavaad.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/VA74_03_Tazriah_-She miras_Halashon_in_Shidduchim-1.mp3)

*And the person with tzara'as in whom there is the affliction—his garments shall be rent, the hair of his head shall be unshorn, and he shall cloak himself up to his lips; he is to call out: "Contaminated, contaminated."*

Vayikra 13:45

Although speaking *lashon hara* usually entails a Torah prohibition, it may be permitted in certain cases of *to'elless* (benefit). The Chafetz Chaim lists seven conditions that must be fulfilled to permit *lashon hara*: First, one must know the information to be true. Second, he must know that the person of whom he speaks is indeed in the wrong. Third, he must, if possible, speak to the subject about rectifying his behavior.[1] Fourth, he may not exaggerate in any way. (The Chafetz Chaim says that if the *to'elless* cannot be achieved otherwise, one may exaggerate, e.g., if one's child would otherwise refuse to stop spending time with a friend who is a bad influence.) Fifth, the speaker's intention must be to help the victim, with no ill will toward the subject. Sixth, there must be no alternate means to achieve the *to'elless*. Seventh, he may only relay it if he expects that the listener will not overreact. If he is likely to do so and cause more damage to the subject than allowed by halacha, it is forbidden.

With regard to *shiduchim*, the Chafetz Chaim writes that one may inform a prospective mate of a major, objective issue that would ruin the marriage, like a serious disease or a severe character deficiency. But one may not volunteer information about objective facts that would not ruin the marriage, like that the girl cannot cook or sew. If asked directly about such matters, the Chafetz Chaim says to try to avoid answering, but if it's necessary to reply, tell the truth.

[1] An exception is if this might cause the subject to take precautions to continue behaving badly.