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Yes! You just signed up to make your shidduch calls 300 times less stressful.

(You're right, that was an exaggeration. Would you be allowed to say that on a shidduch call? You'll learn on Day 22 :)

Here's what's coming next:

Your daily learn: *You'll get a whatsapp each morning with a real question and answer, a halacha, and some random fun bonuses (like videos, we love them as much as you do:).*

Your place to ask: *You'll find the info at the bottom of each q&a — feel free to send us your questions there, or call the Shailah hotline at (718) 951-3696, between 9:00-10:30 PM EST.*

See your free signup gift below:

- *A shidduch call QuickGuide so you know the basics.*
- *What Not To Do On A Shidduch Call, a new video to share with your friends*

Here's to shidduch calls confidently done right (and lots of engagements!)

A HALACHIC GUIDE TO GETTING +
GIVING **SHIDDUCH** INFORMATION

When Someone's Life Is in *Your Hands*



WHAT YOU MUST SAY + WHAT YOU SHOULDN'T SAY
BY RABBI MOSHE MORDECHAI LOWY

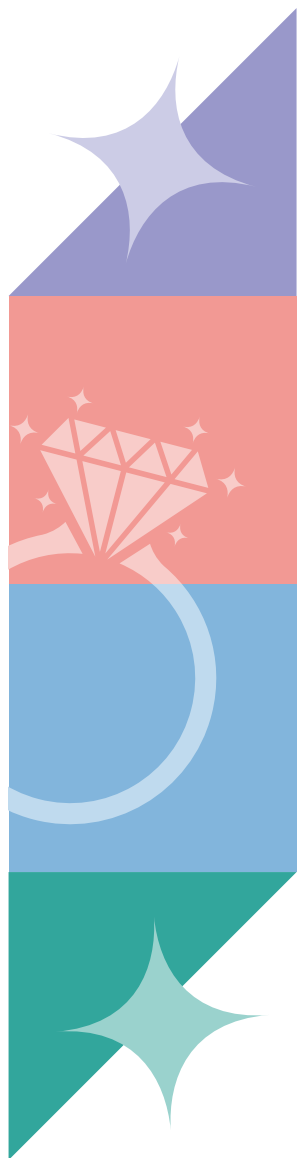
*Dedicated as a zechus for shidduchim in our
family and in all of Klal Yisroel*

Joel and Miriam Gold and Family

 **Clarity***Calls*

Shidduch calls *done right*

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AS A ZECHUS FOR SHIDDUCHIM FOR**



Rivka Baila *bas* Miriam
Shulamis *bas* Rivka
Mazal *bas* Nizha
Hinda Gila *bas* Bryna Dina
Shoshana *bas* Chaya Sarah
Avrohom *ben* Chaya Sarah
Penina *bas* Chaya Sarah
Penina *bas* Rivka Baila
Nachum Yehuda *ben* Rivka Baila
Atara Bluma *bas* Aliza Tamar
Yisroel Eliezer *ben* Miriam
Shlomo Shimon *ben* Miriam
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THE SHMIRAS HALOSHON SHAILA HOTLINE

To say or not to say? Whether it is for a shidduch, a job referral, or just among family or friends, the wrong words can do irreparable harm. And sometimes, so can silence. Our Shaila Hotline puts you in contact with expert rabbonim so that before you speak, you can be sure. Evenings from 9:00 to 10:30 pm.

CALL 718.951.3696

A word, a phrase, even just “making a face,” can change the course of two people’s lives.

Sometimes that’s all it takes to destroy what might have been a wonderful match, and create an impression that sticks to a young man or woman for years.

Everyone in the community is a potential provider of *shidduch* information.

Your words can cause a promising *shidduch* to be abandoned, while withholding crucial information could allow a *shidduch* to proceed that can lead to great pain. So every one of us has to learn what he or she is allowed to say—and how and when to say it.

PLEASE NOTE

Negative information given within the halachic category of “to’eles”—constructive purpose—for a *shidduch*, when spoken the way the Torah prescribes, is not loshon hora. The Torah is not “allowing” loshon hora for the purpose of a *shidduch*. It is defining this type of speech as something completely separate from loshon hora.

The Chofetz Chaim said that when it comes to *shidduch* information, people often speak up when they should be quiet, and remain silent when they should speak up. The *satan*, he explains, works both sides of the fence. In people who have important information that needs to be passed on, the *satan* stirs up such a dread of speaking loshon hora that they hold their tongues.

On the other hand, he encourages people who are eager to transmit fleeting negative impressions by persuading them that they’re observing the mitzvah of “Do not stand by as your fellow’s blood is shed.”

Ways to Inquire

ASKING QUESTIONS FOR A POTENTIAL SHIDDUCH

In investigating a potential *shidduch* you're required to say, "I'm asking you for this information about X because someone is considering a *shidduch* with him/her." You have to put it up front even if you feel that this might make your source sugarcoat or hide facts that you need to know.

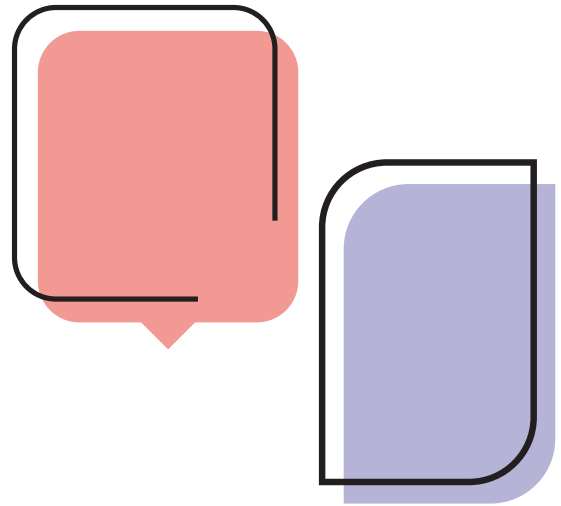
There are two reasons for this:

CORRECT INTENT

One is so that neither the person asking nor the person answering questions will be guilty of speaking *loshon hora*. Certain information may be divulged only when the intent is for *shidduch* purposes; otherwise the person giving information would be guilty of the sin of *loshon hora*, and the person requesting information would be guilty of the sin of "Do not place a stumbling block before a blind person."

WHAT TO SAY, WHAT NOT TO SAY

It is also so that the person who answers will know how to phrase his answer in a way that meets the requirements of speaking *l'to'eles*—for a constructive purpose.



Ways to Respond

ANSWERING SHIDDUCH-RELATED INQUIRIES

Four questions to ask yourself before giving information:

1. How well do I really know the person?
2. How do I personally feel about the person?
3. What is the source of my information?
4. What will happen to this information after I disclose it?

Five Rules of To'eles

1

Think your response through carefully.

Are you sure that the information you're about to share is accurate? This requires careful consideration, since many of our impressions of other people are based on secondhand, unconfirmed information.

2

Don't exaggerate.

Say only what you know to be 100% true. Don't exaggerate or embellish. There's a big difference between saying "He's quiet" and saying "He's very quiet." Even one word of exaggeration is forbidden, because it's slander.

To avoid overstating, imagine that someone is asking about YOU, and that it's your own future that's at stake. If you do that, you'll surely pay close attention to the way you present any negative information, giving it no more weight than absolutely necessary.

3

Transmit the information with the express purpose of aiding a shidduch.

If you have something negative to say, be sure you're saying it for the to'eles of helping with a shidduch inquiry. If you dislike the person you're asked about, you have to remove these feelings of dislike from your heart, at least temporarily, so that you can pass on important negative information with only the right intention (l'to'eles). If you can't get yourself to do this, refer the person asking you for information to someone else, someone who knows what you know but doesn't dislike the person you're being asked about.

This rule applies to anyone you may dislike even a little bit. Figure out what's motivating when you feel you have to pass on negative information. Avoid giving information about a person you yourself dated.

5

4

Pass on the information in the least harmful way possible.

If this shidduch needs to be stopped, is there any way of stopping it without having to provide damaging details? Maybe “I don’t think this particular shidduch is for you” would work. If the inquirer persists, saying, “Maybe I’ll want the shidduch anyway. Please give me more details. I don’t want you to be the judge,” only then may you pass on the information you have (provided that the other conditions are met); and even then, keep negative information to the absolute minimum necessary. If, after you transmit a small part of the information, the person requesting the information decides not to pursue the shidduch, then stop, because more information has no further to’eles (constructive purpose).

Passing on negative information risks reducing another person’s chance of getting married, and can affect that person’s reputation and life. So try your best to hold back potentially harmful details if at all possible.

5

Weigh the amount of harm your information may cause against any benefit that can come from revealing it.

If you know that the person you’re confiding the information to is indiscreet and will spread the details, halachah forbids you to say it. If the information is so serious that you feel the shidduch shouldn’t proceed, get someone respected by the family to simply advise strongly against the match.

It’s a good habit to tell anyone to whom you’re relating information not to spread the information further. The worst thing about loshon hora is the way it can cause fights. If through transmitting what you know a fight will result, you must ask a rav who is an expert in the laws of Shmiras Haloshon how to pass along the critical information: what words to use, or through whom to get it done.

What Information Is Relevant?

WHAT IS RELEVANT INFORMATION THAT NEEDS TO BE REPORTED?

Expert judgment is often needed to determine whether it's necessary to mention a particular quality. Even a tinge of a problem can be enough to derail a *shidduch*; yet a problem that looms large in your mind may not be a problem at all to a potential spouse.

For example, if you were raised in a calm, quiet home, then what to you might seem to be a show of anger or temper might to the couple involved be in the normal range of behavior. On the other hand, there's a level of anger significant enough to influence a person's ability to establish a peaceful home.

This is anger that needs to be reported.

The question is, where does the line between “personality” and “problem-causing anger” lie? Someone who gets angry easily at employees may be perfectly calm and relaxed at home. Someone who often gets angry at his family might be on his best behavior at work.

And then, keep in mind the other party in the potential *shidduch*. Someone who is impatient with slowness, for instance, will not present a problem to a potential partner whose personality leans toward thinking and acting quickly.



Bottom line: Whenever you're unsure how to answer a request for *shidduch* information, consult a *rav* who has expertise in this sensitive area.

When you're the one collecting *shidduch* information, you have to take into consideration the personality of the person who's responding to your inquiry. From what perspective is he/she making the assessment?

By no means may a *shidduch* inquiry open the door for any and all types of information to flow back and forth between those concerned.

Three Categories of Information

CATEGORY 1

Objective Essential Information

Objective, essential information is in the category of “Do not stand by as your fellow’s blood is shed.” This means that as long as the five rules of *to’eles* are met, such information **has to be passed on**.

But people are often driven to give too much negative information because they think that *all* information falls into this category. Be aware that holding back negative information does *not* always violate the negative commandment of “Do not stand by as your fellow’s blood is shed.”

The **only** faults this *lav* (negative commandment) covers are ones that are detrimental to establishing a Jewish home, a happy marriage and a wholesome relationship: seriously flawed character traits, lack of *tznius* or other halachic imperatives, and definable health or emotional problems.

You have to volunteer Category 1 information even if you aren’t asked.

CATEGORY 2

Subjective Essential Information

Is he smart? Is she personable? Category 2 information covers *middos*, commitment to learning, intelligence, family, and age—information that’s important, but not necessarily crucial. In this category you may not volunteer negative information; **but you must always tell the truth if asked**.

When considering whether to pass on negative information, ask yourself whether this quality would be detrimental to the establishment of a happy, wholesome Jewish home. If the answer to that question isn’t clear, it is better not to inform anyone of it until you check with a *rav*.

CATEGORY 3

Unique Personal Preferences

Many minor issues don’t stand in the way of a good marriage. Maybe a woman says she won’t consider anyone who doesn’t share her love of music; withholding the fact that a potential spouse has no taste for music doesn’t violate “Do not stand by as your fellow’s blood is shed.”

But if asked, you may answer truthfully. Doing so does not violate “Do not be a gossipmonger” even if the information may be detrimental to the *shidduch*, since it is being offered for *to’eles* (a constructive purpose). Under no circumstances may a person lie; but when choosing not to answer in the belief that the *shidduch* might be successful in spite of this particular piece of information, you have not violated the commandment of “Do not stand by as your fellow’s blood is shed.”

Sources of Information

FIRSTHAND OR SECONDHAND INFORMATION

Is information you're about to offer known to you personally, or is it secondhand information, based on hearsay? Secondhand information is possibly inaccurate and potentially dangerous.

If it's impossible to verify the secondhand information, and all five conditions of relaying information have been met, you may convey it with a clearly expressed warning that it is based on hearsay, and you don't know personally whether or not it's true.

WHEN AND HOW TO PASS ON SECONDHAND INFORMATION

You might have secondhand information that's serious and relevant to a couple's future together. In that case, the Torah requires you to expend time and effort to verify the truth of the information for yourself. "Do not stand by while your fellow's blood is shed" means that it's essential to check out and report information that could present serious problems in a marriage. Information gained from personal experience is ideal, but even with firsthand knowledge, be very careful. Analyze the reason for your opinion. Is it based on long-term acquaintance, or on a quick first impression? A recent encounter, or one of five years ago?

OPINION VS. FACTS IN "ARMCHAIR PSYCHOLOGY"

Character assessments are important and useful if a person is looking for a spouse with a certain personality trait—for instance, outgoing and sociable, or serious, or warmhearted. Again, be careful! Labels like "unfriendly" and "disorganized" can be based on vague impressions with few real facts to go by, yet they can and do derail potential *shidduchim*.

The Chofetz Chaim says that the habit of labeling people and disclosing those labels to others does immeasurable harm. Instead, develop the habit of reporting facts without rendering judgment or pinning on labels.

***"Opinions are
by nature subjective"***

Even when an assessment is halachically permitted, it should never be passed along as a factual, definitive description of another person's character. Always keep in mind that opinions are subjective, and that humans are complex beings.

When it comes to perceptions of other people, few of us pause to differentiate between fact and opinion. Facts are better than opinions; but even among facts, not everything may be reported.

For example, if there is a medical or an emotional problem that would undermine the marriage, then the information should be passed along after meeting the five requirements for answering an inquiry. But this doesn't mean that every medical or emotional problem is relevant. Many couples live in harmony in spite of a medical or emotional flaw in one or the other. Because such information can derail a potential *shidduch*, **even in cases where halachah permits or obligates you to convey negative information, halachah outlines how to do it. You need the guidance of a *rav* before passing on the information.**

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

If you know something about a *shalom bayis* problem or a health problem that no one else in the community is aware of, you are **not allowed to divulge this secret**. You may hint at a problem by saying, "I don't think the *shidduch* would be right for you," without going into detail. If this information falls into Category **1** you're obligated to try to stop the *shidduch*, but **without revealing the confidential information**.

WHEN THE COUPLE IS ALREADY ENGAGED

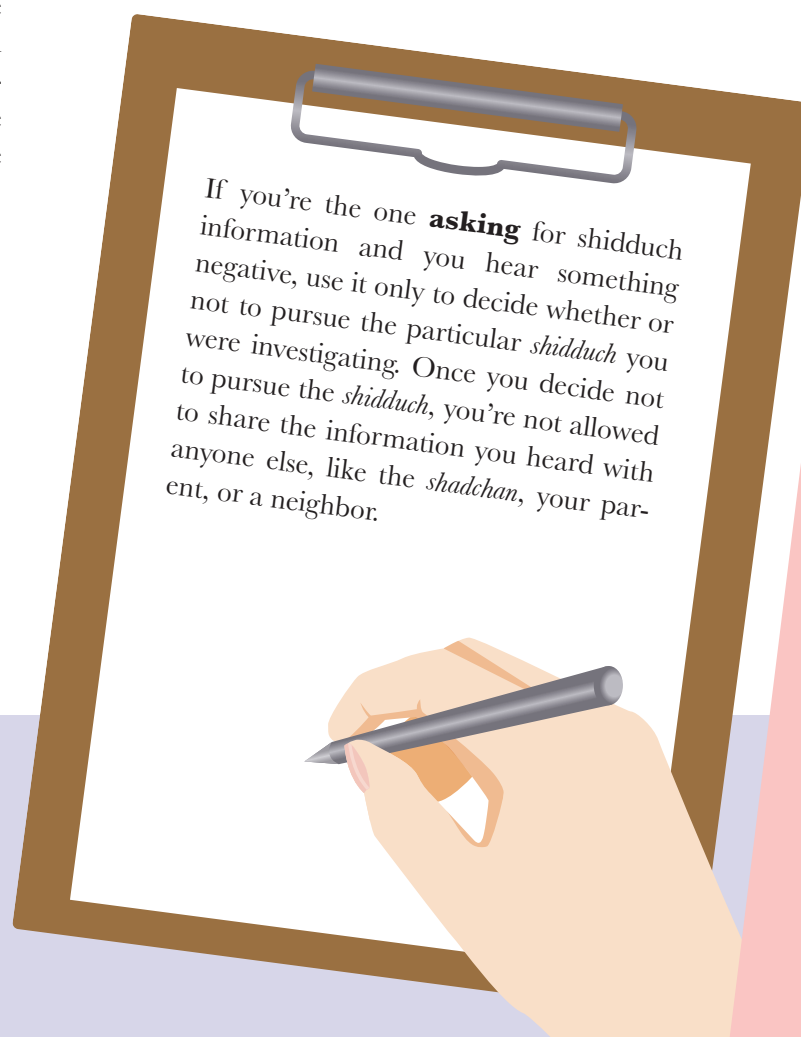
There is a difference between what may be said in the early stages and what is allowed to be said after an engagement has taken place. **Always** ask a *she'eilah* before passing on any information if the couple is already engaged.

Limits to gathering and to using information

You are not allowed to request information for *shidduch* purposes from a known enemy of the prospect or his family, or even from someone who is known to have had a disagreement with them. Although this source may be tempting because it can reveal hidden negatives, it still may not be used.

When asked for information, pass on only what will help the inquirer to decide whether to pursue a particular *shidduch*. Leave out extra details.

If you know something unflattering about a *shidduch* prospect, but you're quite sure that the person asking for the information is unlikely to shelve the *shidduch* idea because of it, don't say it.

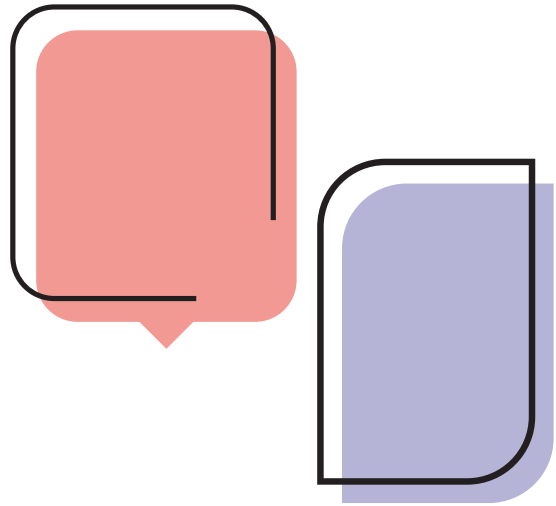


Sharing Information

It's wrong for a group of adults or students to discuss particular people and their suitability.

It's often important to discuss a prospective or current date with a parent or the *shadchan*. One rule is clear: Once you decide not to pursue a *shidduch*, you are not allowed to tell anyone why you said no unless there is a very clear purpose, even if the *shadchan* or a family member or even a parent presses you to tell. To anyone who knows that information was being collected, all you have to say is, "I decided not to pursue this *shidduch*. It wasn't for me."

In the process of researching a *shidduch*, you might uncover negative information that would be important for the *shadchan* to know in order to prevent another person from being harmed. Since this is a subjective judgment that can have major repercussions, **ask a *she'eilah***.



Shadchanim

Shadchanim have to be discreet; they have to be cautious with information they gather or pass on when suggesting *shidduchim*.

To learn more about the halachos of *shmiras halashon* please view our seforim and publications at powerofspeech.org/shop/product-category/books/

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Using a Third Party

Q

My daughter was redt to a boy from Chicago. My friend in Chicago will have an easier time than I would in getting the truth. May I ask her to make inquiries on my behalf even though she may hear lo-shon hara?

A

If your friend can ascertain the truth more easily than you can, it would be permitted to ask her to make the inquiries on your behalf. If there is no particular advantage in her asking in your place this would be assur, as it would be causing the messenger to hear loshon hora that is not pertinent to her, with no to'eles(purpose).

These shailos and teshuvos are for the sole purpose of opening the eyes of the reader to the many complex shailos that may arise during the course of a shidduch. A specific and personal question should always be asked to a Rav or Posek.

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Handling Calls About HER

Q

I keep getting shidduch calls about a girl from camp who I never got along with. Is it okay for me to give information about someone I dislike?

A

No. Say that you didn't have much to do with her and don't know her well enough to give information. One of the conditions of to'eles is that your intention in sharing the derogatory information is to protect a fellow Jew from harm, and is not fueled by your dislike for the subject or your desire to harm him or her. Therefore, if you have a specific dislike for that girl you may not give information about her. To avoid giving information in a forbidden way it would be permitted for you to say that you didn't really have much to do with her.

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Anonymous On The Line

Q

I get calls for shidduch information from people who do not identify themselves. Is it okay to give information to an anonymous person?

A

When giving information, you must be satisfied that the information will be used only for to'eles purposes, and not shared or misused. Therefore, when you do not know the caller you must be extremely careful with what you say.

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As a zechus for a refuah shleimah for Mina Rochel bat Yocheved and as a zechus for a shidduchim for Yonatan Yehuda Yosef ben Mina Rochel & Eliyahu Menachem ben Mina Rochel.

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What I Know About My Friends Date

Q

My friend is dating a boy seriously and I know some disturbing things about the boy's family. Should I keep it to myself, or should I call my friend?

A

Permission to reveal information about a boy's family when not specifically asked would depend on whether that issue has significantly affected the boy or will significantly affect the marriage. Otherwise, it would be considered a minor flaw and should be disclosed only if you are asked directly. Because so many variables are involved, a shailah must be asked.

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The “Undercover Shidduch Spy”

Q

May I casually discuss a girl I am investigating, or do I need to disclose that I am calling for shidduch purposes?

A

The Chofetz Chaim clearly states that before inquiring about a possible shidduch, one must disclose that he is asking for shidduch purposes. You should say, “I am calling for shidduch information and I will keep everything you say confidential.” The Chofetz Chaim acknowledges that some people feel that they will get better information if they do not disclose why they are calling, but the Chofetz Chaim says that if you ask in accordance with halacha will not result in less accurate information. Inquiring about a girl or boy without informing the person you are asking that you are doing so for shidduch purposes would constitute the sin of Lifnei iver, causing another Jew to sin : Although the information-giver is sharing information that has to’eles for you, the fact that he or she is not doing so with to’eles intentions would cause the words to be loshon hora, making you, the asker, transgress the sin of Lifnei Iver.

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He Drove Off Without Me

Q

I just had the most hilarious dating story. May I tell my friend about it? She knows the boy I am dating and it paints him in a negative light.

A

Sharing negative information is forbidden even when there is no ill intent. Regardless of the speaker's intent, another Jew is being degraded, which is forbidden.

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L'ilui nishmas Baruch ben Avrohom Tzvi z"l.

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But She Is So Moody

Q

My friend can be quite moody and it is often difficult to get along with her. What should I say when people inquire about her temperament?

A

While negative character traits and middos is something that must be told to the questioner, that is only so if the negative trait or middah is severe enough to affect the couple's marriage or quality of life. Therefore, it is important to ask a shailah before sharing such information.

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Family Struggles

Q

My friend is dating a boy whose sister was with me in camp. The sister had confided in me about some serious family struggles. Should I give my friend this information?

A

Disclosing a secret that someone told you is generally forbidden (the issur of gilui sod). Therefore one must not reveal a secret without asking a posek. This is even more true in a case where the secret involves the family and may not even directly affect the boy in question or the possible marriage.

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The Bulk-Batch Shidduch Technique

Q

May I ask information from my nephew about a few boys in his chaburah so that he doesn't know which specific boy I am interested in for my daughter?

A

No. The Chofetz Chaim specifically states that you must disclose that you are calling for shidduch information about a particular person. By asking about a group of people you would be exposing yourself to too much unnecessary information.

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What They DIDN'T Ask

Q

My classmate no longer keeps Shabbos. The caller has asked only about personality. Should I mention the chillul Shabbos?

A

It would be prudent to ask what type of boy this shidduch is for. Perhaps this shidduch would be appropriate for a boy who also struggles with Yiddishkeit. If someone is publicly not shomer Shabbos or frum, you may give this information. If you are aware that someone may be struggling with shmiras Shabbos but that is not public information, use your judgment to encourage the caller to look into aspects of Yiddishkeit for this shidduch suggestion.

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How Old Is She?

Q

My friends and I just turned 28. My friend wants me to keep telling callers that she is 27. May I do that?

A

According to halachah, subtracting one year is okay because in some places this is common practice. However, you should ask a mentor if this is a wise thing to do.

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The Stingy Splurger

Q

My friend's family wastes money on unnecessary extravagances. Then they skimp on important things. Should I tell this to the caller?

A

No, you should not tell this to the caller. Although you think this is a very important piece of information, it may not be particularly important to the caller, and therefore may not be passed on since you were not specifically asked. It is also important to note that your friend may have different financial habits than her family does, so this issue would not impact her marriage. If you are asked outright about spending habits, you don't need to lie; just state the facts.

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The Very Messy Roommate

Q

My roommate in seminary was extremely disorganized. The woman on the phone asks if she is neat and organized. What should I say?

A

During the call, make sure to emphasize the other strong points that the girl has. Because the caller has asked you directly about neatness, you may answer that you do not think that this was one of them. If the woman had not asked you directly, then you would not be permitted to mention it.

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My Friend From Ten Years Ago

Q

I got a call about a friend I have not spoken to in 10 years. May I give information about her?

A

You should certainly share positive information about this girl. Then say you have been out of touch for 10 years and you don't have current information. You can advise the caller to call someone that is in touch with her at this time. It is important to emphasize that you are not trying to avoid giving information about this person but have truly fallen out of touch with them.

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She's Not Brilliant

Q

My friend is a great girl with average smarts. She never did great in school, but she does great in life. She has a fantastic job. Now a woman on the phone is asking me if she can be described as “very intelligent” or “brilliant,” because her son is looking for a very smart girl.

A

Say “she is a smart girl”. They can then deduce from this answer that while she may not be brilliant she is in fact a smart and capable girl. They will decide if they feel this shidduch is appropriate for their son.

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Fact Or Fiction

Q

I just heard negative information on a shidduch call. May I drop the shidduch based on this information? What should the proper mindset be in regard to the person I was researching?

A

You may drop a shidduch based on negative information that you heard. However:

1. Do not accept the information that you heard as fact
2. Remember to judge the subject favorably; be dan l'kaf zechus
3. Don't pass the information further.

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The Nosy Neighbor

Q

My neighbor is really bugging me about why I'm not going ahead with the shidduch she suggested. Can I tell her that I found out some negative information about the boy's *yiras shamayim*, just so that she realizes that this shidduch is definitely off the table?

A

No, you may not repeat derogatory information that you heard. Just keep on saying that it's not for you.

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1,000 Questions And Counting

Q

Is there any limit to the amount of questions or number of people I am allowed to ask when getting shidduch information?

A

You may ask as many questions and as many people as you want until you feel ready to green-light the shidduch. Just make sure that you're only asking about things that affect the shidduch, so that you're not gossiping without purpose. Once you've made up your mind about the shidduch, you may not ask any more.

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When The Information Is Secondhand

Q

I heard something very upsetting about a girl in my class. Now I am being asked information about her. Should I repeat what I heard secondhand, or should I not mention it?

A

It depends on what the information is and who is asking. If it is the type of information that would affect a marriage, then you may say it if you have personally verified it. Or you can say “I heard such-and-such, but it’s second-hand information, please look into this.” In addition, you must be sure that the person you are informing is someone who will not repeat it to others. A case-by-case she’eilah must be asked.

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The Appointment Misser

Q

My workmate is late to work every day. She tells stories all the time about the flights, appointments and events she misses due to her lateness. Should I mention this?

A

Not unless you are asked. If you're asked about this specifically, you may confirm it without giving too many details; you might say, "punctuality is not her strong point." If you are asked specifically, then they have a right to know, but say it as gently as possible.

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Last Season's Styles

Q

I just got a call about a classmate who does not dress stylishly at all. Should I tell this to the caller?

A

Only if you're asked. If you know the caller very well and you know that they want a very stylish girl, then you may volunteer it without being asked, because when someone is close to you it can be as if you found out about this on their behalf.

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The Red Flag

Q

My friend repeated to me a conversation that she had with her chassan. I think the way he spoke to her indicates a serious problem. Should I tell my friend my thoughts?

A

DO NOT say anything to the friend. Instead, reach out to your friend's mentor, *kallah* teacher, *mechaneches*, etc. Perhaps she can get into a conversation with your friend and tactfully guide her in what to be concerned about.

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Brainstorming Shidduchim Together

Q

Family Yom-Tov meals are a great networking opportunity for the aunts, uncles and cousins to try to make shidduchim. Is this a problem?

A

It's a big mitzvah if done correctly. The purpose should be to see if people are suitable for each other, with a main focus on the positive; it's only a problem if it degenerates into discussing people's negatives. If something negative needs to be brought up, it should be done in a more private setting.

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In honor of, and in memory of, our parents. Dedicated by Adele and Leonard Schwartz

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Fake-call My Own References

Q

May I have someone call the references on my daughter's resume to find out if they are giving good info?

A

NO. Doing so would involve many issurim. A better way is to have your daughter ask the references if they are comfortable being put on the resume; this should weed out those who have negative things to say. If someone feels that a specific reference is giving negative information, then a she'eilah should be asked.

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As a zechus for a shidduch for Shoshana bas Chava Gila.

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How To Stall On A Shidduch Call

Q

I got a call about a classmate. I know something about her, but I'd like to call a Rav to find out if I can pass it on. How do I buy time to find an answer to my question without making the caller suspicious?

A

There isn't one right way to do this; it's a judgment call. If you know any positive information, you can give that. Or you can pretend you don't know your classmate as well as you do. You can always call back later if necessary. Ask a Rav now before you start getting other calls about her, so then you will know what to answer.

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Mismatched

Q

My friend is adventurous, fun loving, and daring. Many boys say no to her after a few dates because they want a more serious personality. May I tell callers about her fun-loving personality to save her from dating a boy who won't appreciate her personality?

A

If they specifically ask about her personality, you may do so. Otherwise, find ways to say that she has a lively nature without stressing it too much.

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The Boy I Wanted To Date

Q

I just got a call from a woman inquiring about my friend for her son. My parents have been working really hard to get me a date with this boy, and also I don't think the other idea makes sense. May I discourage the shidduch?

A

NO. You have ulterior motives, so your judgment may be clouded. Refer the caller to a neutral person who is in a better position to give information in this case.

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May I Sing Her Praises?

Q

May I exaggerate the good qualities of my roommate so that the caller will be interested in her?

A

Yes, but only a little. This is permitted because it has become common practice to exaggerate a bit about a potential shidduch. If you don't sound extra-enthusiastic it can reflect negatively.

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Should I Say That I Don't Know The Person I Am Being Asked About?

Q

I got a call about someone that I don't know well. Should I tell the caller to call someone else instead?

A

Yes. If you know something positive, mention it, but then say you don't know the girl very well so she might want to call someone else.

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The Yearbook Shidduch Strategy

Q

My aunt wants me to go through my high school yearbook and tell her the pros and cons of each girl in my class. May I do this to help her pick out a great girl for her son?

A

Absolutely NOT! You can recommend some girls as possibilities and tell about their good qualities.

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As a zechus for shidduchim.

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Can They Afford To Support The Couple?

Q

I know my friend's family lost all their money in a bad investment. They are practically penniless. May I tell a caller this?

A

No. If they ask, you can pretend not to know and then ask a she'eilah. Lack of money does not necessarily mean they won't live up to their financial obligations.

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As a zechus for a shidduch for Bracha bas Malya.

As a zechus for shidduchim for our family and friends.

As a zechus shidduchim for Shaina bas Gittel Leah and Elisheva bas Leah

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Truth: I would NOT take her for my brother

Q

A caller is asking information about my roommate. She asked if I would take this girl as a shidduch for my brother. Truthfully, I would not. Should I tell this to the caller?

A

If the caller is someone very close to you (a friend or a relative), answer truthfully, because she is being shoel eitzah and you understand her needs. If you don't know the caller well and you're not familiar with her needs, do not tell her. Figure out how to sidestep. You might say, "I'm not sure – I don't know her that way."

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L'ilui nishmas Faiga bas Shlomo Zev, 25 Adar, and for health for our family.

As a zechus for my children that they should all have the yeshuous that they need.

As a zechus for shidduchim for Chaya Nechama bas Malka Baila and Alta Tzivia bas Sara Leah.

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She's Unfit For Marriage

Q

I got a call for information about my neighbor. She unfortunately has many unresolved issues, and it seems to me that she is not ready for marriage. What should I tell the caller?

A

When giving shidduch information, it is important to stick to facts rather than impressions, which may be unfounded. Call a Rav to discuss the specifics of this case and what you may say. If you are very close with the caller and certain that the answers will not be misused or passed on to other people, then you may answer direct questions carefully and truthfully, without elaboration. Otherwise, say that you do not really know the girl very well.

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In memory of Yosef ben Hersh Mendel and shidduchim in Klal Yisroel.

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In memory of Ahron ben Moshe Leib.

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In My Humble Opinion

Q

My friend was redt to a boy I went out with seriously. May I tell her my impressions and opinion of him?

A

It would depend on how and why the *shidduch* ended and what your feelings are now about that boy. If you do not have negative feelings towards the boy, then you may share facts with your friend if she asks. If a very close friend asks for your opinion it may be permitted to express it, but a *she'eilah* should be asked first.

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Anonymously.

As a zechus Chaim Yeuda Mordechai should be healthy in every way and accomplish what he needs to do in this world. L'zechus zivug hagin with clarity for Gittel Shoshana bas Shaindel Yaffa.

As a zechus for good health for our family.

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I'm Just Her Secondary Source

Q

My aunt is asking me information about some girls from my class. She never listens to what I say anyway, because my high school principal is her neighbor, and she gets more information from her. What should I tell her when she asks me for information?

A

Your aunt may need more information than the principal can give her. Tell her whatever positive information you know. If you know something negative, ask a she'eilah.

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In honor of Hashem, his Torah, and Am Yisroel.

As a zechus for a shidduch for Chaim Moshe Yehuda ben Sarah Raizel.

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Should I Warn My Friend?

Q

I just heard something unflattering about a boy who was redt to me. This boy may be redt to my friend in the future, because we often overlap in shidduchim. Should I tell my friend what I heard to save the family time and energy pursuing this shidduch if it comes up?

A

NO. If any of your friends are redt to him and they ask you about him, then you may reveal what you heard if it's important. Of course you must say that you heard this, so it's second-hand information. A *she'eilah* is warranted in such a case before saying anything.

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As a zechus refuah shleimah for Freidel Pessel Sorah bas Chava Rochel and Aryeh Ephraim ben R' Yacov Eliezer Hachohen.

As a zechus shidduch for Sarah Tzira bas Ety Chia.

L'ilui nishmas Faiga Chaya bas Yitzchok. As a zechus for a refuah shelimah for Reuven Peretz ben Chaya Sorah and Rivka bas Faiga Chaya. As a zechus for a shidduch hagun for Fraida bas Shaindel.

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Families In A Fight

Q

I've been redt a boy but hear that his parents are not on speaking terms with the neighbors. May we call the neighbors to find out the details of the fight?

A

No, you must speak with unbiased sources and ask neutral questions. You may call their Rav or another unbiased person and ask general information, such as "Are so-and-so easy to get along with?" "Do you know how they get along with their neighbors?" "Is there anything I should be aware of in regard to their relationships with others?"

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As a zechus our children.

As a zechus for Kol Tov.

As a zechus for a refuah shelimah for Sara bat Amo and all others in need

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Is She A Yenta?

Q

A shadchan called me to inquire about a friend of mine. I know that she'll share the information I give her with other shadchanim that she works with. Is that okay?

A

It depends on the information you give. It is a problem to share negative information with someone who is likely to share it indiscriminately; but if the shadchan is part of a network that shares information appropriately and l'toeles, then it is generally okay. A *she'eilah* should be asked on a case-by-case basis.

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As a zechus shidduch for Rochel Leah bas Devorah, Yosef Yozef ben Malka Chana and Fradel bas Chaya Sorah.

As a zechus shidduch for David ben Nina, Iris bas Sarah, and Mazel bas Sarah.

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Posting Pictures?

Q

I recently redt a shidduch to a friend. It looks promising and I am hoping that the boy's side will say yes. May I give (or show) the boy's mother a picture of the girl?

A

Halachically, if it is a public picture (from a yearbook, etc.) you would be permitted to pass it on without specific permission. Any other picture shouldn't be shown without asking a *she'eilah*.

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As a zechus refuah shleimah for Reuven ben Toiba, Golda Chaya bas Rivka, Rachel bas Toiba and Channa bas Golda Chaya.

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You Won't Believe Who I Saw

Q

I saw my friend on a date with a boy I recognized. May I tell people?

A

Since the average person would not want this information publicized, you may NOT pass it on without explicit permission. However, if you know that the particular person does not mind, then it would be all right to do so.

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As a zechus for a shidduch for Shoshana bas Michal and L'zchus refuah shleimah for Klal Yisroel.

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