

Laws of Interpersonal Relationships:

2 - Do Not Hate (cont.)

8. Many Poskim link the prohibition of “Lo Sisna” to the Mitzvah that follows in the same Pasuk - the obligation to rebuke our fellow Jew. If someone does us a bad turn, we should not pretend to be his friend while hating him in our heart. Instead, we should go over to the person and privately tell him our grievance. This can result in either finding out that the person was justified in what he did or he will admit his mistake and apologize. either way, the hatred will be drained.
9. One must give the rebuke carefully. Sometimes it is better to approach the person through a letter or an emissary. Sometimes, the risks are too great and chances for success are slim, and it is best to forego the rebuke and instead work on uprooting the hatred by forgiving the person completely in your heart.
10. If all else fails, once we have informed the individual of the reason for our hatred and brought the issue out into the open, we are no longer liable for violating “Lo Sisna” in your heart. However, you must still be careful not to violate other related transgressions that can result from this. (such as taking revenge, bearing a grudge, not loving your neighbor.)
11. The Chofetz Chaim says that “hatred of the heart is the most potent sin of all” because of its intensity and because the object of someone’s hatred is unaware of the other’s feelings and cannot defend himself.

The Measure of Hatred:

1. Aside from obvious feelings of hatred, we violate this sin even when:
 - A. We don’t greet someone because of our feelings of anger or animosity.
 - B. If the person is someone that we generally speak to regularly and we do not speak with him for three days because of our feelings towards him.
 - C. By scheming to cause harm to another Jew.
 - D. When we rejoice in someone’s misfortune because of hostile feelings between us.

Detailed Laws:

1. Even if someone hates you or your family, this does not place that person in the category of a Rasha; therefore, according to some Poskim, you are still prohibited to hate this person. You are required to overcome your natural, base instincts. If you consistently respond to the hatred with expressions of love, most likely you will eventually melt your opponents hatred and ultimately make peace with him.
2. Envy of another’s success (e.g. in social relationships) or rivalry (e.g. in business) does not give you license to act or feel hatred toward another person.
3. When people rub us the wrong way, such as 1) when people differ in their opinions or hashkofos on life, or 2) when another person’s physical defect, habits, or actions are repugnant to us, we are permitted to keeping our interactions with that person to a minimum, as long as we are not doing it because of underlying feelings of hatred.
4. At times, keeping a certain distance may be recommended, as it will help us retain a sense of mutual respect. However, we should always be careful to nurture feelings of love for the person, even if certain aspects of his behaviour, personality, or lifestyle are not to our liking, so to avoid violating the mitzvah of loving your neighbour as yourself.
5. We may avoid a person’s company because:
 - A. we find it a waste of time,
 - B. we are not on the same wavelength,

- C. we don't want to tolerate his bad Midos,
- D. we don't want to learn from his ways from his poor character,
- E. we just don't enjoy being with them.

We are not obliged to maintain friendships with these people, but we still must meticulously avoid any feelings of anger and avoid doing anything that would fall into the category of revenge or bearing a grudge.

What To Do When You Sense That Someone Hates You:

1. Try to discover the reasons for his feelings. At times, this is best done indirectly through a third party.
2. If there are legitimate reasons for his hatred, we can apologize and clear the air.
3. If matters are not so open-and-shut, we should go to a Rav or even to a mutual friend to hear both sides and settle matters. Go to a Beis Din if necessary.
4. When all else fails, we must accept the fact that it is a Heavenly decree and that the other person is no more than an agent for bringing it about.
5. Even though the other party may be guilty of hating you for no legitimate reason; according to many opinions, we are not allowed to hate him and certainly not cause him any harm or refrain from doing him any favor that the Torah would require us to do for another Jew.
6. The exception to this rule would be if we are absolutely certain that this person wants to cause us physical, emotional, or financial harm, even though we have not done him any wrong.

Hating Sinners - Wicked People:

1. If you personally see someone violate a prohibition that everyone knows is prohibited (such as committing an immoral act or eating food that is obviously not kosher), we are permitted, and even obligated to hate him.
2. If two kosher witnesses saw him sin and testified against him in a Beis Din, then everyone is permitted to hate him.
3. However, the above only applies, according to all opinions, only if 1) the person either was warned beforehand or we know that he knows what he did is forbidden, 2) has not done Teshuva, 3) and has refused to listen to rebuke from others. i.e. the person knows what he has done is wrong and is clearly unrepentant. (It is very difficult to categorize someone as a sinner when he sins in financial matters towards others due to his biased view of the situation.)
4. The above **does not** necessarily apply to people who have been raised as secular Jews or were raised religious but have totally turned away from Judaism.
5. Even when you are permitted to hate the person and keep your distance from him, that does not give you carte blanche to act in any way you want against the wicked person. e.g. you can not cause him any harm or speak loshon hora about him and to rouse hatred against him in others.
6. Even in a case where you are permitted to hate the evil person, you should attempt to control / bend our evil inclination and help him when he is in need. (e.g. help him change a flat tire, return his lost item, give him a lift in the rain, or any other favors.) The hatred we have towards the Rasha, which should be in reaction towards his affront to G-d's honor, should not spin over into areas of forbidden hatred.
7. Even though there is a Mitzvah to hate the Rasha, if we receive specific, genuine benefit from him, financial or otherwise, or if we think that remaining in his company might afford us the opportunity to draw him back to Judaism, then we are not required to distance ourselves from him.