

Laws of Interpersonal Relationships:

Do Not Hate (cont.):

Hating Those Who Hate Hashem:

1. Certain people fall into the category of total non-believers. These are people who do not believe in any one of the thirteen principles of faith and / or incite other Jews to leave a Torah way of life. It is a Mitzvah to hate them, to argue with them, and to frustrate their plans. Even if their lives are in peril we should not save them from danger. These instructions are absolute - there is no element of controlling / bending our Yetzer hora.
2. Although we have a Mitzvah to hate these people and keep our distance from them; however, we would not be required to suffer financial loss because of that (e.g. quit our jobs when working for such people).
3. Still, we must be on our guard not to have more to do with him than is absolutely necessary. Certainly we should not try to curry favor or imply in any way that we condone his ideas.
4. Although there are certain leniencies regarding our relationship to such a person who was raised secular, it would appear that in case where there is a risk that he will incite other Jews to be like him, these leniencies would not apply. Consult rabbinical advice in this area.

Baseless Hatred:

1. Hatred of any person who is not a hater of Hashem, a Rasha, or someone who does not seek to do us harm, constitutes baseless hatred, which is equivalent to the three cardinal sins. The punishment for this includes; 1) a person will have strife in his home, 2) his wife will miscarry, 3) his children will die young.

Auxiliary Effects of Hatred:

1. Hatred can easily lead to ; 1) seeking someone's harm, 2)rejoicing at his misfortune, 3) damaging property, 4) informing, 5) murder.
2. The person can simultaneously violate the following sins: 1) taking revenge or bearing a grudge, 2) flattering the Rasha, 3) speaking and believing Loshon Hora and Rechilus, 4) misleading people with bad advice, 5) machlokes, 6) striking, 7) cursing, 8) publicly shaming another Jew. He may also violate: 1) loving his fellow man, 2) rebuke.) judging favourably.
3. If the hatred is directed toward a Talmid Chochom, his Rabbi, a parent, older sibling, kohen, orphan, widow, or a convert, he will be guilty of even more sins.

3 - Do Not Take Revenge & Do Not Bear a Grudge:

The Mitzvah:

1. The Torah says, “ You shall not take revenge (*Nekima*) and you shall not bear a grudge (*Netira*) against the members of your people. You shall love your fellow as yourself...”
2. These Mitzvos prohibit us from taking revenge or bearing a grudge against someone who has wronged us physically, monetarily, or verbally.
3. The Torah does not require anyone to lend any particular item to someone else. There are dozens of legitimate reasons why we may not want to lend something to someone else or do them a favor. ***Nekima*** is when a person’s refusal to help another person flows from ***our desire to take revenge***.
4. ***Netira*** is violated even when we do favours to these people, but either remind them of their past poor behaviour or even if we ***keep these thoughts only in our heart***.
5. One transgresses ***Netira immediately when you bear the grudge*** after the other person has done you wrong.
6. The Torah is telling us not only to not take revenge, but to also erase the memory of what happened from your heart, to wipe away hard feelings and, at the next opportunity, to treat the other fellow as if nothing ever happened.
7. Even though it may be impossible to erase the event from our memory (e.g. if you suffered permanent injury from the other person), ***you are obliged to remove the hostile feelings that dwell in your heart*** against the one who hurt you.
8. Consequently, we may not refrain from giving him Tzedakah when necessary or doing him a favor wholeheartedly, despite the fact that he treated us badly. Rather we must help the other person in exactly the same way we would have done so had he not hurt us.
9. If someone owes us money or compensation of some sort, then we are not expected to forget about his debt - but we should not harbour a grudge because of it. Instead, we should take the case to a proper Beis Din and get what he owes us in accordance with the laws of the Torah.
10. Anything we do - within the bounds of Torah law - to acquire what is rightfully ours or to prevent a future loss, does not fall into the category of *Nekima* and *Netira*.
11. Observance of these two Mitzvos will decrease arguments and strife within the Jewish community. Love, peace, and a feeling of brotherhood prevail, and we can be unified “as one man.”
12. One should remember that no one is able to harm you unless Hashem wants it to happen, and the people who do harm you, although they are culpable for their actions, are merely agents of Hashem.

To Whom Do These Mitzvos Apply ?:

1. The Mitzvah applies to people at all times and places, and to men and women, in their relationships with those as close as spouse and child and as distant as a stranger.

2. There is no prohibition of taking revenge or bearing a grudge towards a non-Jew, although it is not recommended either.
3. There is no prohibition of taking revenge or bearing a grudge towards a hater of Hashem, a heretic, an informer, and certain categories of sinners. We should exercise extreme caution in these situations.
4. Children should be trained in this Mitzvah as much as their ability to understand it permits.
5. While revenge is prohibited, a child is permitted to protect himself and should be taught to do so when abused by other children. However, he should also be taught that he may strike out or speak up only to protect himself from further blows and insults in the midst of conflict, but not in order to get back at the fellow.
6. A child can be shown that at times he might accomplish his purpose more effectively by using the strategy of “buying a friend” in order to win over the other person.
7. A child should not heed a parent who instructs him to not speak to or forgive certain people that have hurt the child or the parent.

Protecting Yourself:

1. Distancing ourselves from a person or refraining from helping him, just because of something bad he did to us, would be considered *Netira*.
2. However, if your purpose in doing so is to avoid further suffering or in order to protect yourself from his negative influence, then you are permitted and entitled to do so, as long as you make every effort to prevent feelings of *Netira* from creeping into your hearts. Also, you have to make your motives clear to others, so no one will be misled into thinking that you are acting out of *Netira*.
3. A Talmid Chacham is defined as anyone who has reached such a level of knowledge and leadership qualities that his community has an obligation to honor him. A Talmid Chochom is not just a private citizen but a representative of the honor of Torah. The rules change when someone publicly humiliates a Talmid Chacham. In such a case, the Talmid Chochom is forbidden to forgive the person and must “take revenge and bear a grudge like a snake” until the offender comes to apologize. Only then can the Talmid Chochom resume his soft demeanor, forgive him, and drop the matter. However, the Talmid Chochom should try to respond in a pleasant tone, without an extreme outburst of anger.
4. One should not demand heavenly justice upon the perpetrator who has hurt us.
5. These two Mitzvos do not apply at the time an offence is committed against you.
6. If a bully starts hitting us, we are permitted to hit back - not only to protect ourselves, but even right after he stops, as long as we are still works up (“hot hearted”).
7. This is not only the case of physical abuse, but also when when we are insulted and shamed. The torah does not command us to be silent as a stone in the face of an attack.
8. The Shulchan Aruch rules that in a case where compensation is due, the one who started the fight - and not the one who fought back - must pay the penalty.
9. The exception to this rule is when a person’s parents hurt him. Whether or not we feel the parent is justified in his or her hurtful or humiliating words or painful actions, we are commanded to keep quiet and not answer back at all.

Revenge For a Constructive Purpose:

1. According to some opinions, in a case where justice can not be served by a Beis Din, an act of revenge may be permitted "*Leto'eles*" - for a constructive purpose.
2. Accordingly, one would be permitted to strike or humiliate an offender, even in public, in order to ensure that he will not repeat the offence against ourselves or against others.
3. One must be extremely cautious when utilizing this Heter, since we must be extremely careful to eliminate any trace of resentment about what was done in the past and to focus our attentions purely on future improvement.
4. This behaviour is only permitted when **all** of the following conditions are met:
 - If there is another way to accomplish the same purpose, we must try that alternative first.
 - If we can give the offender rebuke and perhaps prevent him from repeat offence in that way, we must try that alternative first.
 - We have either seen the offence ourselves, or to be absolutely certain that it really took place, and there is no reasonable explanation for it.
 - We must examine the matter closely to confirm that the act is really considered an offence according to the laws of the Torah.
 - Even if all the above conditions have been met, and we have received a ruling from our Rav, we still have to be careful not to strike or humiliate the offender more than is absolutely necessary to accomplish the purpose.
5. At times, we are permitted to listen to *rechilus* for constructive purpose. Although we are not permitted to believe what we hear, we are allowed to exercise caution based on what we heard. This change of conduct based on exercising caution would not be violation of *Nekima* or *Netira*. (i.e. not lending a large sum of money without requiring a guarantor).