

# HILCHOT RECHILUT REVIEW: PART 1

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*Thank you to David Solomon for this review material, which was part of his class for BMT students in Jerusalem in 1993.*

1. The Definition of [Rechilut](#)
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*This is the first of three review classes on Hilchot Rechilut.*

## Hilchot Rechilut Review: Part 1

### I. Definition of Rechilut

Rechilut is sharing information about a subject which will incite or increase the listener's ill feelings against that subject. Often the information is derogatory, in which case it is Lashon Hara as well as Rechilut. Some examples:

1. Reuven tells Shimon that Levi is obnoxious (which is Lashon Hara). Then Shimon tells Levi what Reuven said about him (which could make Levi angry at Reuven, and is Rechilut).
2. Two years ago, Diane got a disastrous haircut from Evelyn; Diane was very angry and told many of her friends (which was Lashon Hara), including Sarah. The dispute was never resolved, and Diane does not go to Evelyn's salon anymore. Sarah tells Diane about Evelyn's fabulous salon renovations (even though this is not derogatory information, this stirs up the anger that Diane has about the bad haircut, which is Rechilut; Sarah should not have mentioned it).
3. Karen told David that Elizabeth cheated him out of \$5.00 by not giving him the same discount she gave other customers that day. (This might be permissible in order to rectify the situation, but only if certain conditions are met; see the third Hilchot Rechilut review or Hilchot Rechilut chapter 9.)
4. Darren and Shari applied for the same scholarship. It was announced that Shari won. Later that day, Jerry was telling Darren how great Shari's entry was (this emphasis on Shari's winning could make Darren jealous of Shari, so it's better left unsaid).

Rechilut causes arguments, hatred, and can incur damage. It is considered more severe than

Lashon Hara, or a more severe form of Lashon Hara (depending upon terminology).

Even if the speaker's intention was not to create a dispute or ill will between the listener and the subject, if ill will results, the speaker has committed the sin of speaking Rechilut.

## II. Definition of Avak Rechilut

Avak Rechilut is an implication that causes ill will, rather than an explicit statement of what the subject did or said. In "Chofetz Chaim: A Lesson a Day," Rabbi Berkowitz points out that this would only be when the result of Rechilut was unintentional (p. 312, 314, 316). There are several types of examples of Avak Rechilut:

1. An implication that there is Rechilut to be spoken. Someone asks, "What did Jennifer say about me," and you reply, "I cannot say." The questioner takes this as an implication that Jennifer said something against him.
2. Praise about an action of the subject which was at the listener's expense. Jim and Jane are business partners. John tells Jim how nice Jane was to extend him \$100 in credit last week so he could purchase equipment from them. Jim might be upset that Jane was so generous with their business funds.
3. Conveying that someone gave information about the listener that he didn't want getting around. Ed asks Harry if he can borrow some power tools. Harry says no, and Ed replies, "But you let Fran borrow them last week." Harry might be angry with Fran for telling people that he lent his tools to her. Rabbi Berkowitz (p. 320) adds that revealing secrets is the most severe type of Avak Rechilut.
4. Repeating non-derogatory information that would bother the listener. Deborah tells Leah that Rachel is "very organized." If Leah knows Rachel would be bothered by this compliment (maybe Rachel thinks it means she isn't spontaneous), Leah shouldn't tell Rachel.

**Hilchot Rechilut Review** 

**Part 2**

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