
Jewish Concepts for Healthy Relationships

B'tzelem Elohim -- "*in the image of God.*" It is the belief that we all have the Divine spark within us. Each of us is worthy of respect and honor because we are all created in God's image.

Chillul Hashem -- "*desecration of the Name.*" This concept encourages us to refrain from engaging in actions that would desecrate God's name. It teaches us that when we violate Jewish values, including abusing one's partner, it is a desecration of God's name.

Kiddush HaShem -- "*sanctification of the Name; bringing honor to God's name.*" By doing things which honor the Torah and Jewish teachings, such as helping survivors of domestic violence become safe, we are bringing honor to God's name.

Lashon Hara -- "*the evil tongue.*" This value teaches us about the dangers of gossiping. Many people do not want to talk about domestic violence and dating violence for fear that it is *Lashon Harah*. However, if the goal of the conversation is *Pikuah Nefesh*, the saving of a life, then it is not *Lashon Harah*.

Shalom Bayit -- "*peace in the home.*" Judaism teaches us that we should strive to maintain peace within the home. By definition, an abusive relationship is violating *shalom bayit*.

Pikuah Nefesh -- "*the saving of a life.*" This is the highest Jewish obligation, one that overrides almost every other law. We have a moral obligation to do what we can to help save lives.

Tikkun Olam -- "*repairing the world*" or "*healing and restoring the world.*" *Tikkun Olam* has come to signify a Jewish commitment to social justice.

Teshuvah -- "*the act of returning to a life of decency after atoning for the harm one has done to another.*" It helps those abused understand that forgiveness is a process that depends on real change in the abusive partner before the possibility of reconciliation can occur.