

Words That Hurt, Words That Heal: How the Words You Choose Shape Your Destiny By Joseph Telushkin Quotes

Thus, for generations, children taunted by playmates have been taught to respond, “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words [or names] will never hurt me.” In our hearts, we all know that this saying is untrue...The statement usually is an attempt at bravado by a child who more likely feels like crying.¹

The Bible’s point is as clear today as it was in 1000 BCE: If a husband or wife, or two siblings or friends, do not restrain their words when they are angry, love is unlikely to survive, *no matter how deeply the two people once cared for each other*. The ability to control what we say when we’re angry is a prerequisite for a lasting relationship.²

Jewish law asks us to take care not to humiliate others even in far-fetched cases: “If someone was hanged in a person’s family, don’t say to him, ‘Hang up this fish for me,’ ” lest you trigger that distressful memory or remind others who are present of the shameful event. [Bava Metzia 59b] If we are supposed to be morally vigilant even in such a remote case, how much more careful should we be not to publicly mock someone’s bad breath, acne, or ugliness.³

Keep in mind the words of Johann Paul Friedrich: “If a child tells a lie, tell him that he has told a lie, but don’t call him a liar. If you define him as a liar, you break down his confidence in his own character.”⁴

Buy the book: <https://www.amazon.com/Words-That-Hurt-Heal-Revised/dp/0062896377>

¹ 10-11 (Scribd)

² 71

³ 132

⁴ 176