

GOOD LAUGH

by Rabbi Raymond Beyda

Everyone loves a good laugh. Some of the wealthiest entertainers in the country made their millions by making others laugh. Jokes are fine, as long as no one is hurt by them.

Something you might say to one person, which is not meant to harm, may really hurt someone that is just a little more sensitive. For example, a woman can tell her friends about some new baby clothes she bought for her infant without taking into consideration that one of the women listening has been married for many years and does not have children.

We are all only human and we do make mistakes, especially in conversation. Nevertheless, we should always be sensitive to other's sensitivity.

Today when the opportunity to let loose with a good joke strikes -- stop!

Send out your sensitivity "radar"--consider all who might be hurt as others laugh. Only speak once you are certain your joke is truly harmless. It only takes a thoughtful minute but it can eliminate hours of senseless pain.

DID YOU KNOW THAT

Every month one is required to say a blessing called Birkat Ha- Levana i.e. the blessing for the moon. Sefaradim should wait a full seven days [to the minute] from the astronomical --molad --birth of the new moon.

The blessing should be said when it is truly night and when one can benefit from the beauty of the moon's light. One should try and see the moon clearly without even a thin hazy cloud blocking it's light.

Preferably one should say the blessing outdoors and under the open sky but should that be difficult (Sha-at Ha Dahak) one may say the blessing under a roof.

One should not look directly at the moon when saying the blessing so as not to appear as one who is praying to the moon --G-d forbid. [Source Ben Ish Hail]

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