

# GUEST BEHAVIOR

*by Rabbi Raymond Beyda*

It's really funny. No matter how hard you try you can't seem to get the kids to stop bickering at the dinner table. Manners-- forget about it --there is no hope! "Clean your room!"--Don't fantasize please! Let's face it--it's not only children but all people act quite differently at home in the familiar, comfortable environment where one can let it all hang out. Even the way one dresses breaks all the rules when one is hidden in the safe confines of one's home.

Things really change, however, when one has house guests. The adults have the good sense to "clean up their act." Even more miraculous is the transformation of one's little devils into sparkling, neat, well-behaved kids. David Hamelech didn't wait for guests. His approach was to imagine that G-d was opposite him at all times. The Shulhan Aruch opens with that approach to our behavior on a daily, constant basis. Yet most of us still have a tough time envisioning the Almighty watching us at close range. It is more difficult to imagine when we are at home doing our menial chores.

Today when you are working through your daily routine imagine that you have guests. Walk, talk, sit and dress to impress your VIPs. Be on your "guest" behavior. It doesn't take much effort to avoid slipping into a "sloppy" mode of behavior that is really beneath your dignity.

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