

FILL IT UP

by Rabbi Raymond Beyda

Sitting in a doctor's waiting room can be an excruciating experience. One time, while waiting over an hour past my appointment time, I read in disbelief an article that was laminated and posted on the waiting room wall that was called "Getting your waiting room to run on time." The frustration only increases as you are politely led by a medical assistant into the examination room only to wait in solitude for the doctor's arrival. If you don't explode, the doctor will eventually arrive pleasantly defusing your anger below the boiling point with a professional good morning as if the schedule was running right on time.

Rather than get upset in frustrating situations, one should learn how to best use the valuable minutes when one is trapped beyond his or her control. On a practical level one can bring along paperwork that never seems to get done, or those unpaid bills one just can't seem to find the time to attend to, or the major medical forms that are so boring to fill out but which represent real dollars out of pocket. Reviewing one's "to do" list when confined to a waiting room gives one clarity of thought achievable nowhere else. On a spiritual level it is a great time to perform one of the six commandments, which are constant requirements. Think about how much you love Hashem and why -- and for every second waiting you earn eternity. You might prefer to think about your firm belief in Him and your computer calculating spiritual reward will keep on adding to your bounty as each second ticks on that waiting room clock. Sages who knew how to maximize their time rather waste it getting impatient wrote some of the greatest Torah literature while confined.

It is inevitable that one day you will be forced to sit and wait. Don't blow your cool. Think of a productive way to spend your time material or spiritual. Planning doesn't take long and you won't get annoyed until you are interrupted by the nurse's voice as she calls out your name as "next".

DID YOU KNOW THAT

One should not take food or drink into a rest room even if they are in sealed packages. However, if one already did take the food or drink into a rest room [i.e. b'diavad] then one does not have to discard the food but instead may eat it. If one has food in one's pocket and wants to enter the rest room, one should leave the food outside unless there is no place for safekeeping in which case one may take the food into the rest room. Unwrapped food like fruit, which was taken into the rest room should be rinsed three times if possible but if there is no water available then one may eat the fruit

without washing. One who would like to act stringently should not eat fruit that was in the rest room if it cannot be washed. [Source Yalkut Yosef, vol. 1, p16, paragraph18]

CONSIDER THIS FOR A MINUTE

The Gemara discusses the Torah's requirement that one refrain from using speech that will hurt or embarrass another. "Better that one throw oneself into a fiery furnace rather than embarrass one's friend in public." We learn this from Tamar, the daughter in law of Yehudah, who remained silent risking a death sentence by fire rather than reveal the truth of her innocence at the expense of revealing the embarrassing wrongdoing of Yehudah publicly.

The Gemara also says that a man should be careful in speaking to his wife. Should she be brought to tears the punishment will come swiftly.

One should listen to the advice of his wife in matters that concern the running of the home but he should decide the spiritual issues that confront the family. [Baba Mesiah 59b]

NOTE: This is one of the many places where the Talmud elucidates the fact that the speech of a Jew is not merely words but has a special potency to harm and to heal. This power should be used judiciously.

Raymond J Beyda
www.raymondbeyda.com

Text Copyright © 2004 by [Rabbi Raymond Beyda](#) and [Torah.org](#).