

## Are You Holding The Line?

Lines - of credit, of dialogue and of poetry, chorus, fishing and party - my grandmother said they all had one thing in common. They were God's way of teaching us patience. Well, Grandmother, now that I'm older there seems to be an exception to the rule. The ones across my forehead are from a lack of patience. When I was in preschool, I was taught to stay within the lines when I colored. This was meant to teach me self-control, discipline and restraint. Thank goodness Salvador Dali, Sam Francis and Pablo Picasso didn't go to preschool. When we were lined up alphabetically or by height in school, I was always near the end. I never got first choice of playground apparatus at recess or first choice of dessert at lunch. What I got were lots of opportunities to learn to share. Later when I learned to drive, I learned about other lines. Broken ones mean passing is permitted, double ones mean no crossing, in a zebra pattern they mean pedestrians have the right of way - and a very long one means you're at the DMV. As a parent, I tried to draw lines in the sand. I had some rules for my sons that were non-negotiable. Soon, however, I realized that only death and taxes are non-negotiable - and the non-negotiability of taxes is negotiable. The points I paid on my mortgage were negotiable. Although I learned in ninth grade geometry that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line, it definitely didn't seem short when I was signing my mortgage agreement. My supermarket has a meat counter, a fish counter, a deli counter and a bakery counter. It also has a three-in-a-line policy at the checkout lanes. Actually, that's where they should have the counters. Lines seem to attract people. Shopping malls, flea markets, Las Vegas casinos - people want what they think other people want. Because of this phenomenon, my grandmother thought the Devil would get more business if he put up a sign that said, "No Waiting". Nevertheless, there are ways to avoid time consuming, frustration building lineups - go early, come late or make an appointment. When there's more than one ticket line at a movie theater, my husband gets in one and I get in another. It's our way of reaffirming part of our marriage ceremony - whom God has brought together, let no man put asunder.

## About the Author

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