

The wrong kind of waiting: what the film Clockwatchers can teach us

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By Cathy Goodwin, MBA, PhD

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Clockwatchers is about living your life on someone else's time. Four temporary office workers meet in a featureless building. We meet the heroine, Iris, as she spends much of her first day sitting in a chair where she was told to "wait till someone comes for you."

The building, with its square corners and cubicles, becomes a metaphor for the box that contains everyone's dreams. The temps feel ghettoized and eventually are physically segregated into a separate office. Their isolation is real: temps rarely cross the border to permanent jobs in the company. To escape they will have to think outside the box., yet as the film begins, each temp focuses on her immediate four walls.

Iris seems overqualified yet she lacks confidence. She tells her father she feels comfortable and accepted in this job and doesn't want to move on.

Margaret deals with frustration by rebelling and acting out. She steals time from the company and cosmetics from the stores.

Jane is engaged to a man who, we are led to believe, will offer her money and security but not love.

Paula jams the copy machine so she can flirt with the repairman; she waits for a man to deliver her dreams in his toolbox.

Everybody's waiting, like a hot summer day before a storm. The temps try to look busy and amuse themselves till they can begin at nine; at the end of the day, they crouch in their chairs, waiting to leave precisely at five.

Change comes about not by drama but by small events that have significance only in the context of an office world. People report thefts of coffee money and clothing. What is significant is Iris's response when she realizes her umbrella and her notebook were stolen. Iris refuses to play victim. She confronts the thief over lunch and silently but dramatically makes her point. The thief gives Iris a new notebook inscribed with an apology.

As Iris feels stronger, she wears her hair differently and, at last, wears the power suit her father gave her for job interviews. The film ends ambiguously, but we sense that Iris was transformed. She has used the box as a temporary comfort zone to build her confidence and test new behaviors. She waited creatively till she was ready to move. She has observed and learned; while her coworkers twirled idly in

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their chairs or played games with rubber bands, she kept a journal. And now, we sense, she is ready to leave the box behind.

I won't give you details of the final scene. Iris uses her new-found power to defy the corporation and help a friend. She turns the firm's own refusal to acknowledge her into a source of strength. It's believable and strong and well worth a viewing.

Cathy Goodwin, MBA, PhD, is a writer, consultant and speaker, who specializes in career transitions that increase personal freedom. For her ebooks on career and life transition, click on <http://www.movinglady.com/ebooks.html>. For her free ezine, email subscribe@movinglady.com.

Using Black and White Film

By Kelly Paal

It's hard to find sometimes but it's making a resurgence, black and white film. If you've never used this film now is the time to try it out. Here are some tips to using b&w film and what you can expect from the results.

1. Forget color. This is the hardest thing to do and the number one reason that you will not get good results with b&w film.
2. Look for contrast. Once you can ignore color look for contrast. You will want your image to have a bit more contrast than you would normally want in a color image.
3. Consider shooting situations that are more formal. Black and white film gives such a wonderful timelessness to an image and it's perfect for formal situations.
4. Keep your photos simple. Black and white film simplifies so don't fight it. Keep the images simple by keeping close to your subject or place your subject against a simple back drop.
5. Babies and pets look great on b&w film. Place the pet or baby on a white background and you'll be stunned at the beautiful results.

Black and white film creates a timeless simple look. It's wonderful for portraits and formal events. After shooting a few rolls of b&w you'll notice that you start to pay attention to composition of your image more, since you don't have to worry about color. If you're just learned photography try using b&w film for awhile it will help you teach yourself good composition. Think of light and dark, black and white, and good composition and you'll find that b&w film could be a whole new hobby for you.

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Kelly Paal is a Freelance Nature and Landscape Photographer, exhibiting nationally and internationally. Recently she started her own business Kelly Paal Photography (

). She has an educational background in photography, business, and

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commercial art. She enjoys applying graphic design and photography principles to her web design.

Using Black and White Film

Digital Film Processing is Really the Only Option for Truly Quality Prints

Using Film Speed Effectively

Tips On Selecting A Film School

Clerks II Earns Decent Respect

The Ultimate guide to a Multi-Orgasmic Male

Tattoo Secrets

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