
 <p>Prescribing Information Safety Information/Boxed Warnings Medication Guide</p>	<p><b>What are the possible side effects of Symbyax?</b></p> <p>Symbyax is associated with possible side effects. Tell your doctor about any side effect that concerns you.</p> <p><b>Symbyax may be associated with the following serious risks:</b></p>	 <p><b>It's not your fault</b></p> <p>Symbyax is approved for acute treatment of treatment-resistant depression and bipolar I depression in adults.</p>
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# Psychology Today



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Timothy A. Pychyl, Ph.D.

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## One Among Many

The self in social context  
by Joachim I. Krueger, Ph.D.



**Joachim Krueger** is a social psychologist at Brown University who believes that rational thinking and socially responsible behavior are attainable goals.  
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## The Germans and their water

If you eat that Bratwurst, don't forget to irrigate.  
Published on April 25, 2009



You don't need to be a hydrologist to recognize the importance of water. All life depends on it. One does not need to be an anthropologist to recognize the importance of cultural differences in food and drink preferences. The Chinese eat dog, the Italians horse, and the French rabbit, among other things. The Russian love their vodka and the Mexicans their tequila. But water: don't we all love water? Yes we do, but what kind of water? Americans take it for granted that they will receive a limitless amount of tap water to go along with the meal. Germans don't. Germans care about their water, but with a difference. Germans adore their Sprudel, most of which comes from

certified mineral springs and is heavily fortified with carbonic acid, so much so that the term Rülpswasser (burp water) comes to mind. If you doubt this claim, ask a German friend (or better yet, a stranger) to open the trunk of his or her car. You will find a case of 1-liter bottles of Rülpswasser. Sprudel is not expensive, but it is not cheap either. The rational German mind demands a justification of why Wagnerian quantities of a moderately costly good should be consumed when comparatively inexpensive and wholesome tap water is at hand. It's easy. One can attribute medicinal qualities to Sprudel, pointing to the presence of numerous little-known trace elements, or one can denigrate tap water by raising suspicions about natural or government contamination. Lab tests do not offer much support for these views, though.

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What can Americans expect when they ask for tap water in a German eatery? The typical response is not unlike what one would see after ordering a flank steak of horse in Baltimore: a mix of incredulity and resistance. Sure, there is variation. Before giving up and returning to ordering beer, I sampled about 20 experiences with ordering water for my family and me. On a couple of occasions, we were stoically served. On all other occasions, there were raised eyebrows, loud repetitions of the request as if it had been barely audible, attempts to [persuade](#) us to order "real" drinking water (i.e., the burping kind), creative ad hoc charges for the precious liquid, and stubborn delivery of Sprudel. We found our toughest opponent in a faux Caribbean place in Marburg. After ordering dinner for four and requesting "Leitungswasser," the waiter explained that he would bring it only with orders of coffee or wine. He'd be happy to supply us with expensive designer mineral water, though. When we insisted on tap, he promised to ask the boss for permission. The boss confirmed the policy, and the waiter explained why. If they provided water anyone could walk in, just sit there and sip free water (as if, and never mind the dinner for four). El Caribe proposed an ultimatum. Either we order the expensive stuff or go thirsty. We countered with an ultimatum of our own. Either you water us, or we leave. We left.

Let us linger on this episode, prop it up with a few reasonable assumptions, and explore its surprising psychology. It is safe to assume, I believe, that drinks yield a higher profit than meals. I also assume that the rate of profit for meals is not negative. Hence, it is better to serve a meal without drinks than to serve no meal at all. I also assume that the cost for Leitungswasser is low. And by the way, customers consume water no matter what. Compared with the gallons of water rushing down the low-flow urinal, the amount of tap water running down the gullet is negligible. El Caribe's ultimatum was a variation of the famous game played by

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behavioral economists. In the standard game, a proposer has \$10 and offers some of it to the responder. If the responder accepts the offer, the money is distributed as proposed. If the responder declines because the offer is low (e.g., \$8 vs. \$2), no one gets anything. In the water game, the proposer asked for a higher profit and the responder to pay for it. Let's take the purchase of a meal as a starting point. Suppose it is a fair trade, leaving both parties with 10 units pleasure. Adding a profitable but undesired item would add 4 units to the host's account and subtract 1 from the guest's. Why would the guest choose 14/9 (host/guest) over 10/10? (I will return to this question.) The guest's counter ultimatum reverses the ratio. Getting tap water subtracts 1 unit from the host's account and adds 4 to the guests. Hence, the host's choice is between 9/14 and 0/0 (the guests leaves).

Why would the host decline the offer? Is he being completely irrational? Well yes, from a narrow economic point of view. From a broader cultural point of view, he probably thought we would cave in to his original demand. Why? I drew my conclusions after several conversations with patient friends willing to listen to this tale and a good amount of introspection. My first hypothesis is that it hardly ever comes to the ultimatum because Germans love their Sprudel, and for that reason alone would not consider asking for tap water in the first place. More critically, my second hypothesis is that Germans, even if they believe the designer drinks to be overpriced, also believe that restaurants have a right to overcharge them. They really would go bankrupt if they served tap water with the meals. If you believe that, you have to order Evian even if you're not thirsty at all. This is a remarkable feat of persuasion on a grand scale. To buy something you don't need or want because the seller has instilled a sense of obligation in you. It is remarkable because it reverses the effective tactic of throwing in a low-cost item to sweeten the deal. Other food entrepreneurs know this and do well. In Europe, the Greeks serve up an oily yet tasty digestif called Ouzo at no extra charge. They let you know they appreciate your business and that they want you to come back. I will do just that, have my souvlaki and drink my Ouzo too.



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