

Aunt Bossy: The Life Coach Your Mother Never Was

Written by Susan Murphy

Tuesday, 03 July 2012 13:52 - Last Updated Tuesday, 03 July 2012 14:37



MARRIAGE PRISON

Dear Aunt Bossy,

I have a big problem and don't know what to do. I have been married for a long time and my husband has never been very interested in doing the things I enjoy, but, as we get older, he has withdrawn more. I always worked and had my own friends, and got to travel, so I could stand it, but I am more and more isolated, and have to spend lots of energy trying not to be sad and lonely.

For example, I like to entertain; he suggests takeout when I mention inviting people for dinner. I like to walk; he will only walk on a flat surface following a specific time schedule. He becomes furious if I go with him, walk home with him and then go off to climb the hills that I love. I gave up on the idea of dancing or going to the beach with him years ago.

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What can I do? I know he won't change, so I have to find a way.

Sincerely,

I Love My Husband But...

Dear ILMHB,

Well, honey, you could get an award for being an excellent co-dependent, but that won't solve your problem. This is not a good thing, nor will it be easy to continue. However, if you want to stay, you will just have to put the pedal to the metal and up your game.

It will be more difficult as you age, but you must keep up making friends, seeing them, and going places, especially dancing and the beach. Invite people over, make all the arrangements and then tell him. When he has a snit fit about your going off walking on your own, just go ahead and leave that negativity behind.

Try to involve him in your activities, but put up a big wall of protection if he tries to put a damper on things. If you let him drag you down, you will lower your resistance to illness, become depressed, and get old way faster than necessary.

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If I were you, I'd pretend that he is a difficult guest in your house. Do what you can, but do not allow him to break your spirit.

Good luck, and let me know how it goes.

Common Sense: People rarely change, especially when they are older

Good Manners: It is good manners to try and include people and invite them to participate.

Discipline: It takes tons of discipline to neutralize negativity.

TO MEAT OR NOT TO MEAT

Dear Aunt Bossy,

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I am a vegetarian. How can I have dinner at other people's houses without causing trouble?

Veggies R Me.

Dear VRM,

When you are invited, tell them that you are a vegetarian, and ask if you can help by bringing a veggie dish that everyone can enjoy. Ask what would go with the planned menu, and show up with plenty for everyone. Whatever you do, once you are there, do not mention your dietary preferences. If your host serves animal products, just make them look pretty on your plate and be sure to eat everything else.

One more thing. If you told your host upon being invited that you are a vegetarian and he/she serves you meat, don't go back.

Common Sense: Telling people what they need to know makes sense.

Good Manners: Giving a host a head's up is thoughtful.

Discipline: It is difficult to take the bull by the horns and say what is important to you.

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Aunt Bossy is Susan Murphy, an internationally known Communication Skills Coach who adores spending every winter and spring in Beaufort. □ Ask for advice @ Bossymurph@mac.com

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