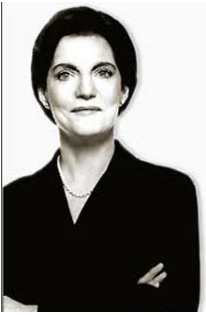


## Aunt Bossy: The Life Coach Your Mother Never Was

Written by Susan Murphy

Tuesday, 20 November 2012 10:01 - Last Updated Wednesday, 21 November 2012 09:09

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### Wounded Warriors

*Dear Aunt Bossy,*

*I have some dear friends who are smart and good looking and seem to have it all going for them. However, they view anyone who doesn't see life EXACTLY the way they do as mean-spirited, stupid, uncaring, and possibly evil. They seek out perceived injustice almost as a hobby.*

*To make it worse, they sentimentalize those who do agree with them, giving them credit for being wonderful people when all they do is share devotion to the same issues.*

*These folks seek out those who disagree, even in the slightest way, demonize them, and dwell on how "horrible" those "others" are. It consumes them. It is truly almost all they talk about. When I point out that negativity breeds negativity, they accuse me of being stupid and wearing rose colored glasses. It is particularly destructive because I agree with their goals, just not how*

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*they are trying to achieve them through constant battle.*

*There is a place for confrontation, but that is the only approach they use. If I point out that Bill Cosby's show and Oprah have done so much for the inclusion of blacks in society and "Glee" and "Modern Family" have made an enormous contribution to moving forward with gay rights, they say that these shows are tokens. If I point out that women have more options than ever and need to learn how to take advantage of those, they say I live in a privileged cloud of denial.*

*Most of them had sad or confused childhoods, and refer back to that frequently as to why they are so focused on both perceived and real prejudice and disrespect.*

*It breaks my heart because I have elements of that thought process in my own personality, but have overcome it and have found great happiness in refusing to let others decide who or what I am and if I am worthy. I fully realize there are wonderful people who do not agree with me on some very basic issues. It brings me great joy to love them anyway.*

*How can I help them?*

Dear WW,

You can't. In fact, since you have conquered that feeling, it is important that you steer clear because it will drag you down in your concern for people you can't possible help.

Many people recreate the life they grew up with, even if it was miserable and populated with hateful people. That explains women who always find men capable of hitting them, men who want a woman with the same traits as their mothers, even if the mothers were abusive. This is very, very sad.

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If you are religious, pray for them in the hope that they find peace.

- Common Sense: If you seek unhappiness, you will find it.
- Good Manners: It is the ultimate in bad manners to attack others based on what you THINK they believe.
- Discipline: It is not easy to accept the opinions of others while refusing to embrace those ideas.

### **Easy Rider**

*Dear Aunt Bossy,*

*It drives me nuts that, when I try to give another car room to merge, they don't take it because giving another person a break is not how they think. It is dangerous and causes traffic confusion.*

*I don't need advice. Just wanted to say it.*

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Dear Easy Rider,

Please don't stop trying to make it easy to merge. Each of us has to do what is right, even if the culture blows us off.

- Common Sense: Doing unto others usually works.
- Good Manners: Taking turns is a mannerly activity.
- Discipline: Takes energy to keep that middle finger in place when you have good reason to flip it.

## Hoard No More

*Dear Aunt Bossy,*

*We are moving from a house full of stuff. I am freaking. I hate to throw things away if people can use them, but don't know how to go about this. I sort of feel like one of those Horders on TV, except I really am happy to give stuff away. I just don't want to see it thrown out or given to an organization who doesn't make sure those in need get it.*

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Dear HNM,

First, tackle it in small steps. As you do each room, call your church if you have one. Otherwise, call the Salvation Army or equivalent. Reach out to Habitat For Humanity, which will sometimes take furniture and building materials and tools. If your things are nice, call Housing Works, which supports those with AIDS and has very cool things.

Good luck. I am going through this, and it is really psychologically challenging as well as physically difficult work.

- Common Sense: Enormous tasks should be broken down into small steps.
- Good Manners: Sharing with your fellow humans is good manners. It shows respect.
- Discipline: Letting go is a challenge.

*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](mailto:Bossymurph@mac.com)*

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