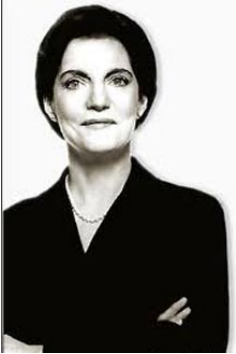


Aunt Bossy: The Life Coach Your Mother Never Was

Written by Susan Murphy

Tuesday, 25 September 2012 10:06



Doggy Do

Dear Aunt Bossy,

We live in on a dead end street in a small town. Every day, a man walks his dogs here because there is no traffic and it is also lovely. Every day, he lets his big dogs poop where they may and doesn't pick it up. It is disgusting. What can I do?

Sincerely,

□ *All Pooped Out*

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Dear APO,

This is not a frivolous problem. The way this man treats his neighbors with his inconsiderate and filthy behavior is the way he leads other parts of his life, for sure.

The first thing I would do is approach him right after his dogs make their deposits and offer him a plastic bag. A cheerful “Do you need a bag?” is the way to go. If he is hostile about it, go home and call the enforcement officer for your town and report him. Do this every day until the town takes action.

Aunt Bossy has some experience in this: I am well known in my little town and have made some enemies. One day, my adorable pup did a “double dump” for which I was unprepared. I turned back toward home in search of a piece of paper or bag, and found a newspaper to pick up the offending matter. It couldn’t have been two minutes, but the authorities pulled up just as I was packaging the poop. I loved knowing that the caller was hovering behind a pulled curtain and was denied the pleasure of seeing me get a summons.

If his behavior continues and you really want to fight, wear a plastic glove, pick up the poop and hand it to him, saying, “I believe this is yours.” Do not risk this if you can’t go right home and shower and change clothes, just in case.

Common Sense: Let people know what is on your mind.

Good Manners: A polite approach gives everyone a chance to save face.

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Discipline: It takes courage to approach an inconsiderate person.

Easy On The Gas

Dear Aunt Bossy,

I have a son-in-law, age 32, who has a few disgusting habits. He's basically a nice guy, but acts like he was raised in a barn.

Passing gas is his idea of a good time. He thinks it's funny to fart at any place or at any time, and then remark, "That was a good one!" He once advised people lounging in a hotel lobby not to go into the men's room until "things had a chance to settle." My wife and I were mortified.

He's forever going at himself "down there," yet his personal hygiene is normal. Even though I know this is prevalent in some groups of young men, he shows no class whatsoever.

His table manners are also atrocious. We can't invite him and my daughter to a dinner or cocktail party. It's a big problem for my daughter because he can't take criticism. I don't want to disturb the marriage.

Can you offer any suggestions as to how to handle this? I'm a former Marine D.I. and I have the solution, but God help me if I did what I want to do !

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Frustrated F-I-L in Beaufort

Well, Frustrated Father-In-Law, You can't kill him. I'm in favor of it, but the authorities would most certainly object.

Someone has to lay down the law with this overgrown adolescent. If you are up to the task, here is what you might say:

"Listen I love my daughter and I know she loves you. However, she deserves to be married to a guy who shows respect to her and your baby. When you go around farting like a goat and check your package more often than an old lady at the post office, it demeans her. She hasn't said anything about it, but I see it, and it breaks my heart.

"If you can't control the gas, you need to see a doctor because it could be a serious medical problem. In the meantime, here is a bottle of Beano. Use it, and also realize that when you constantly check "down there" it appears that you are worried it fell off.

"I don't want to see my daughter embarrassed, much less my grandchild. Please get busy breaking those bad habits now. You are a good guy and I know you can do it."

Call, say you have something to discuss with him, and ask him over – alone. Have your wife there so he will behave, and then say it. Do not let him interrupt you, and when you have finished, do not allow any discussion. Just say, "There is nothing to discuss, I've said what I wanted, thank you for coming." Stand up and walk him to the door.

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I'd save the table manners for another day.

Common Sense: Once again, letting a person know what you think is a way to results.

Good Manners: Firm but polite instructions make things easier for all.

Discipline: Who is Aunt Bossy to tell a Marine about discipline? Semper Fi.

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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