

Aunt Bossy: The Life Coach Your Mother Never Was

Written by Susan Murphy

Tuesday, 22 October 2013 11:56



Sixteen Tons

Dear Aunt Bossy,

I hate my job. Every day seems like a week, and I don't know what to do. I hate being in an office, and I hate my fellow workers, and I hate my boss. The problem is that the money is great, and I like to shop and go to expensive places, so I can't switch careers. What should I do?

Dead

Dear Dead,

Well at least you have some choices. You can figure out a way to like your job, although that does seem a bit far-fetched. Or, you can stop spending all your money, start saving, figure out what you would enjoy doing, and then quit and go do it.

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"Yes, but" will probably be the first two words of your response, so I will just give it to you straight. If you want to be happy, you have no choice but to quit. The chances of your changing your attitude toward this job are slim to none, given that you have created a nest of negativity. You must break free.

The first thing you need to do is to stop being miserable. You might not like your job, but you can find ways to bring more pleasure to your day. All the little things, music, treats, short exercise breaks, nice smelling flowers or fragrance in your space (if that is allowed in our controlling world) should be in place.

If you don't know how, you should learn to meditate and find the time to do 20 minutes twice a day. When your stress is lessened, things don't look so negative and bleak.

You should also get busy determining what it is that you would enjoy doing. The one thing that should not come into consideration here is salary. You do not have to have one penny more than you need to cover the basics: shelter, enough food for you and those for whom you are responsible, transportation, basic clothing, period. Taking a job for the money is usually a bad idea, and this will eliminate that potential hazard. You might have to downsize.

The way to determine what you would enjoy doing for a job is by taking a look at what you enjoy doing in life. You say you like to shop and go to expensive places. Is that a narcotic to dull the pain of your current job, or is that something you might be able to make into a job? Personal assistants and Personal shoppers do a lot of shopping and are often included in forays to expensive places as part of that. The fashion industry, the airline industry, the hotel industry don't necessarily pay very well, but offer opportunities for shopping and travel.

If shopping and going to expensive places turns out to be a distraction and not a passion, pinpoint your passion and write down all the things you love about it. Then, start looking for a career or job that incorporates some of that into the workday. There are many fine books that can help you determine your passion and direct you to employment possibilities that match that. *What Color is Your Parachute?* is the one that comes to mind first.

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It seems to me that the whole secret to finding work you love is to start working early and often. That way, you can find the parts of any job that you like and find more of that in your next job. I started working at 14, and am still living that way.

My advice column is the result of some later life soul searching for the next step. It finally occurred to me that being Bossy was marketable. That realization came after years of jobs where I had to take charge and teach other people what to do or how to do it. Even as a young tour director, I had to boss my tour groups around if they were to have a successful vacation. Each job gave me more of that; I'm a natural teacher and love being in charge and now bossing is my focus.

I never liked going into an office and I love to travel. Writing Aunt Bossy allows me both of those luxuries. Paperwork has always been my downfall, and working for myself allows me to keep it at a minimum. One can never escape every awful aspect of a job.

I don't know how old you are or what your background is, so you may be a late starter. However, you can also be a late bloomer, who streamlines the process by focusing on what is important and setting the goal of finding a job that lets you do what you enjoy doing and are good at doing.

Every day counts, so start today. Let me know what happens. This can be a great adventure.

Too Much of a Good Thing

Dear Aunt Bossy,

My husband and I are friendly with a couple and go to dinner with them once in a while. We like both of them a lot. But there is a problem.

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The husband wears a strong cologne and wears too much of it. It gags me, and eating dinner with them is just awful.

He is very sensitive, and his wife is not the kind of person I could talk to about this. It is so bad that we can't go on seeing them as long as he is so strongly scented.

Janey

Dear Janey,

You beat me to the punch by saying that you didn't want to discuss it with his wife, but I would encourage you to do that. You would not be lying to say that you are allergic to scent – not his specifically – and tell her you don't want to hurt his feelings, but want to keep seeing them and would like to know how she thinks you should handle it.

If she is no help, tell her that you are going to speak to him about it.

Tell him that you don't mean to be insensitive, but that you really like getting together with them, but are highly allergic to scent and his aftershave (easier to say than eau de toilette) makes it very difficult for you to see them.

Unfortunately, they probably don't smell the scent any more because they are so used to it. I am always astounded – in restaurants, especially – when a woman, and occasionally a man, walk by the table leaving a wave of odor in their wake. It really can put one off one's food.

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I stopped wearing perfume because I coach people and did not want my smell to remind anyone of a dreaded enemy or ex-spouse or wicked in-law. Our sense of smell is far stronger than we know and, in fact, influences many things in our lives.

All you scent-wearing people out there, please do a smell check with a dear friend whom you do not see often to be certain you aren't overdoing it.

Good luck. This seems like such a small problem, but it is a difficult one.

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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