

Aunt Bossy: The Life Coach Your Mother Never Was

Written by Margaret Evans

Wednesday, 20 November 2013 08:22



Daddy Dearest

Dear Aunt Bossy,

I am almost fifty years old and am still held hostage by my parents.

Recently, my father had a retirement party. I am very good at organizing events, so I took charge, spending lots of time and money.

At the party, my father got up to give a speech and started by saying he wanted to thank his daughters, called up my two sisters and then changed the subject to his career. I stood there in the audience feeling like a fool.

My mother and sisters didn't say a word. Finally, my cousin spoke up, "What about Marilyn?" He said, "Oh yes, Marilyn."

I could have melted into the floor.

He has a history of trying to hurt me. When I was first out of college, I worked for him, but got married and pregnant so he fired me saying that women should not work if they have children. I got another job, as a purchaser of the product he sells.

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I made it clear that it would be a conflict of interest for me to buy from his firm, so, behind my back, he started another company and had the attractive guy he hired buy from me. I had no idea they were in business together.

My boss found out, and fired me. It was the first I heard of what my father had done. My boss did not believe me. No sane person would.

There is much more, but I think these two stories give the picture. My mother is as bad, and I could go on forever about what she has done to me and how she treats me.

This situation makes me miserable and affects all my relationships, including the one I have with my wonderful husband.

What should I do?

Daddy's Girl

Dear DG,

Normally, I would say to talk to him and confront him with how he has hurt you, and explore the possibility of family counseling. However, given your age and the pattern of abuse, I would highly recommend cutting him and your mother, who must be an efficient enabler, out of your life.

It would probably be best to cut all ties. However, if you don't want to have that conversation, you don't have to tell them, you just have to revert to "stupid and cheerful" when and if they call. Tell them, "Oh that sounds fun, but we will be out of town." "That sounds great, but we have

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plans." Don't give in or give up. Keep telling them that and they will either attack or stop calling. If they enroll your sisters in the quest to engage you, do the same with them.

I'm not a psychiatrist, but I imagine it will upset them a lot to lose the control they have had over you, so prepare yourself for an attack. There is no point in arguing with people like this because you can't change them or "win." It is best to refuse to discuss the situation with them.

This will be very, very difficult. They are your parents. However, from what you have written, they are mentally unstable, if not downright evil.

Now, what about you? I don't know what happened in your earlier childhood, but it is obvious that your father wants to control you and in the event that doesn't work, destroy you. This is horrific, hurtful beyond imagination, and since you have been putting up with it for at least thirty years of your adult life, must be addressed by a professional.

Get yourself the best therapist or analyst available and get to work now on putting this behind you. You have a life and can't allow it to be controlled or owned by people who do not wish you well.

It is really hard to believe, much less admit, that the two people who are supposed to love you unconditionally, do not. This is not something any one of us can handle alone, or without a professional.

Love yourself enough to get the help you need.

Love,
Aunt Bossy

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Faux Friend

Dear Aunt Bossy,

I have a friend who constantly takes shots at me. It is very subtle and I would appear paranoid if I complained. What should I do?

Confused

Dear Confused,

Simple: If you like this person, call him or her on it and look for a change of behavior. If you don't feel you get enough out of the friendship when you aren't dodging bullets, de-friend.

Read the above and be glad it isn't a parent.

Best,
Aunt Bossy

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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