

Aunt Bossy

Written by Margaret Evans
Tuesday, 02 June 2015 14:01



Swine Survivor

Dear Aunt Bossy,

I love my husband so much, but his family is determined to divide us.

He is of Cuban heritage. I am of Jewish heritage. The family haven't mentioned that directly, but have made comments that indicate it is an issue for them.

□□□□□□□□□□ *I am allergic to many things, two of which are pork and garlic. My daughter, who was born prematurely, is also allergic to these foods. Just being in the vicinity of the open pit roasting pig they have at all their holiday parties, I get very sick, and have had to be rushed to the hospital because my esophagus was closing.*

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□□□□□□□□□□ *My husband's family laughs about this. They confronted me, even after my serious reactions to the smoke, and said I was a liar, that it is not possible to be allergic to pork or garlic.*

□□□□□□□□□□ *One of them said they didn't want to raise a kosher grandchild. We do not keep kosher. We are allergic to certain foods. This has nothing to do with our religion.*

□□□□□□□□□□ *My husband's relatives don't generally treat me or the children with love and care, but at least we are not in physical danger except when they are forcing food on us. It has become a game of challenge for them.*

□□□□□□□□□□ *I dread seeing them, get so nervous and don't know what to do. It is putting a lot of stress on our marriage.*

□□□□□□□□□□ *Please help me.*

Distraught Diane

Dear DD,

These people sound like a group psychosis in search of a victim. Too bad we can't get "Babe" to round them up and herd them to an isolated island. (Pigs can swim.) However, they are not your problem; they are your husband's problem, and he is your problem.

Firstly, if you haven't, you must discuss this with him. The best approach is to remind him of how much you love him and then ask him what suggestions he has to deal with this situation. You should have the research on pork and garlic allergies handy, just in case. It is all over Google.

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It all depends on how he would like to thwart the torture coming from his family, but, if he is hesitant, you will have to go direct.

Arrange to get them all together, somewhere where you control the menu, if there is a need for food. Be sweet as can be.

Next step is to get those swine lovers to sit down while you stand and make the announcement that you have something to say. This is a version you may want to use as your guide:

“You all know how much I love Raul (don’t call him that if it isn’t his name). I love him with all my heart and will do anything to make him happy. Our children feel the same way.

“However, my daughter and I are cursed with a terrible allergy to some of your favorite foods. This makes it almost impossible for us to participate in your family festivities. This makes me very sad and makes the children sad. “Unfortunately, we cannot risk exposure to the meat, smoke or chemicals involved in preparing what appears to be a delicious treat for most people. And, everybody knows that garlic with pig is one of the best tastes imaginable and our allergy to garlic complicates things even more.

“I have contacted Dr. Senior Cubano (this is the doctor in their community with whom you met to discuss this before the meeting takes place) and asked him for medical advice. He has told me I have no choice but to avoid the preparation and consumption of pork.

“So I am here today to ask you to share your ideas about how we can celebrate life together without putting my daughter or me in danger. I will do whatever it takes. Thank you so much for understanding.”

Then, you use all the power of discipline within your reach and stand there in silence, looking at them and waiting for a response. If anyone dares to question the allergies, hand out

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the research, including the phone number of the doctor you consulted.

Do not argue. Just keep repeating, "I will do whatever is necessary."

You will want to have practiced your speech numerous times in private, using your phone to video it and play it back over and over until you are confident that it is ready for family Sty.

Then, fly out of there. Pigs can't fly.

Good luck. Do not let this get between you and your husband. If it turns out that they go into full attack, at least your husband will see how unreasonable they are and have to make arrangements to see them alone. In any case, it will be difficult and nerve-wracking, and never-ending, but you really have no choice.

Best,

Aunt Bossy

P.S. You do realize that this has nothing to do with food, right? They are resentful that you took their prized boy away from them, could possibly be jealous of your background, and could be ignorant swine that accidently raised a great guy. (I wouldn't make that point to your husband, though.)

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