

Aunt Bossy

Written by Susan Murphy
Wednesday, 19 October 2016 05:04



Hit and Hurt

Dear Aunt Bossy,

This hurricane did something none of the previous ones appeared to do. It knocked me for a loop. The three days before I felt like I was waiting for a monster on the front porch to break in. During the evacuation I felt furious that I had to leave and even more furious when it was difficult to get back. I find myself exhausted, anxious, and angry, even though I am mentally grateful that my family and I were spared destruction. I don't want to live like this. Any suggestions?

Not Dorothy

Dear ND,

You have likely reached out to the wrong person: I'm a mess.

Although I am lucky to live on the friendliest and most loving block in town, and have been given physical and spiritual assistance from food to a place to weather (excuse the

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expression) the storm, I feel like a put-upon orphan under the watch of Simon Legree. I have lots of excuses, none of them good.

The week before the storm, I broke my shoulder, was recovering from a three and a half hour operation and was held hostage by pain drugs for a few days. I had to give up all vanity – decent hair and makeup and clothing were not an option – and modesty was impossible to maintain, as I had to call my neighbors to help me shower and dress. This was all very challenging for me, yet my biggest challenge is the one of which you wrote – I am dumbfounded by my strong feelings of helplessness, depression and anxiety. This is not like me.

However, it is like me to be bossy and try to be “right” so I will advise. I hope it washes back over me.

Firstly, there are a lot of things in play: the horrific election process, a full moon, and the storm. We are surrounded by either negative or very strong energy with which we have to deal, consciously or unconsciously. Throw in a family to worry about, and it could paralyze a person.

We were very lucky, and I know we all say that, but we have to internalize it. No matter how much water is in your house or how many trees down on your property, you survived in one piece and so did your family.

We have been fortunate to be FORCED to help others, and, almost more importantly, to ask others for help. This asking for help is a blessing which we do not get often enough. When we ask another to help, we are giving them the gift of helping. I know it is cringe-producing to ask for aid, but this storm has given us that opportunity to practice humility. Giving and taking help, is the same as giving and receiving love, never easy, but always fruitful.

We have experienced the great bounty of Lowcountry living, where neighbors really do step up and walk that Southern hospitality talk. We have been fortunate to have to consider, once again, the fragility of life, the power of nature and the unknown, and the trivial aspects of materialism.

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Wow, I'm feeling better already. Thanks for asking!!

Finally, as much as I hate food waste, this storm has allowed us to throw out all that crap that should never have been in our fridge in the first place.

Stay strong. Get out and about. Go to the beach as soon as it is possible, and drop by and help me button up whenever the mood hits. All will be better.

(I'm not kidding; writing this completely lifted me up. I have been depressed for days, and am grateful for this opportunity to lift that veil. Hope I helped you, too.)

Best,

Bossy

Aunt Bossy is Susan Murphy, an internationally known Communication Skills Coach who adores spending every winter and spring in Beaufort. Ask for advice at bossymurph@mac.com

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