

Aunt Bossy

Written by Susan Murphy
Wednesday, 15 November 2017 06:48



Help or Hinder

Dear Aunt Bossy,

For all kinds of reasons, I live in a different city than my mother. She is in her nineties and is in good health, but I feel so guilty because I fear she is lonely.

My father died, I am an only child, and she has a big house. Most of the neighbors are younger couples with children, who just don't have the interest in hanging out with an old lady, even if they do have the time. Also, my Mother no longer has much patience with kids, especially those who are raised without manners or decorum, which seems to be the trend.

Many of her friends have died, and I fear she makes doctor appointments just to see people. I have a husband and kids who are established in our town, and I try to get to see my Mother every couple of months, and bring her here for holidays. I talk to her on the phone frequently.

We have tried to get her to move in with us, but she won't leave her community.

Aunt Bossy

Written by Susan Murphy
Wednesday, 15 November 2017 06:48

What should we do?

Guilt Ridden

Dear GR,

This is tough. You appear to be doing all the right things, but here are some suggestions: If she belongs to a church, reach out and see if they have some volunteers who would visit on a regular basis.

Look into other organizations to find support. If she is willing, she could even participate in some charitable work at home, especially if there were a team available to join her. I'm thinking packing things for shipment to the women and men serving overseas, knitting simple things for the homeless, even making phone calls for a cause. Dig a bit and see if any of this would interest her.

Also, consider hiring a companion. It could even be someone who lives in and could transition to a caregiver if necessary. My friend, Katie, does that for a living, and she has so many fine stories of the people she lived with for years, first as a companion and then as a caretaker. They both benefited so much.

If you do hire someone, be sure to hire someone who can entertain themselves part of the time, and really enjoys the job. References are vital.

Good luck. Let me know what you decide to do and how it works out. Your experience could help many others with this difficult situation.

Best, AB

Aunt Bossy

Written by Susan Murphy
Wednesday, 15 November 2017 06:48

Praying for an Answer

Dear Aunt Bossy,

I am not a religious person. I believe in energy, a spirit and a greater power, and like to attend church, but am not a regular. I love the community that people of faith create. I wish I were one of them.

I do pray, though, and am very disturbed by these people who demean prayer and sending good thoughts when something bad happens or someone is in distress. To me this is very hateful. How can someone possibly object to people hoping and praying for comfort for others?Â

I know their answer is that action is better. Well, who says prayer doesn't create action? Daydreaming does, and it isn't that far removed. And, praying and sending good thoughts does not rule out taking action.

I just find the whole thing to be so hateful and dividing. What do you think?

A praying fool.

Dear Pray-er (you aren't a fool),

Couldn't express it better myself.

Aunt Bossy

Written by Susan Murphy

Wednesday, 15 November 2017 06:48

I recently wrote about how people are awkward when it comes to expressing condolences, and this falls into that category. If someone puts him or herself out there to console another, it is a good thing, no matter what the words are. We should be encouraging people to show empathy and compassion, rather than destroying them because they didn't do it the way we have decided is the only way.

One of the most horrifyingly hateful things I have read lately was posted by a woman who was so offended that a 'friend' mentioned prayer and compared those killed in Houston to angels, she announced that she would never speak to that 'friend' again.

Let's start making it easier for people to love, not lay down a bunch of rules that fuel our egos and need to be superior and 'right.' And, please, pray for me.

Keep the Faith, whatever yours is,

Aunt Bossy