

Aunt Bossy

Written by Susan Murphy
Tuesday, 24 July 2018 13:34



It's a Wonderful World, 2018. Or, it could be. Maybe.

Dear Aunt Bossy,

□□□□□□□□□□ *How can I stop despising people who do not have the intelligence, knowledge or humility to know what they are talking about, especially when it comes to politics? Some of my friends and relatives have become both stupid and feral, and I get dragged in and it is making me sick.*

□□□□□□□□□□ *Sadly, Sarah*

Dear Sarah,

If you can't save yourself, you can't save anyone, so head for the high ground. Just as I have found that acting "cheerful and stupid" goes a long way when you are dealing with those who want to take advantage of you or hurt you, I find that benign arrogance can be a saving grace when you feel as though you are being driven mad by idiots.

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What the heck does that mean? It means I have trained myself to feel sorry for the people I think are on the wrong track. I force myself to avoid trying to figure out why they are so stupid, uninformed, clinging to the thorns, and unable to reason.

Their situation saddens me, but I don't need to dwell on their inner workings to understand that. I avoid the "what, why and how" of their arrival at their unreasonable thoughts and feelings. My good side throws in a little "There but for the grace of God go I" to help me along and make me believe I am not a bad person.

You wouldn't get angry with a person who tells you the moon is made of green cheese, so don't waste your energy being disturbed by someone who says equally ridiculous things. Count your blessings instead, and be nice to the antagonists. They aren't happy and need some love.

As for getting "dragged in," don't. You can't get dragged in if you don't allow it, and you dis-allow it by focusing your energy elsewhere. Once you get really good at this – and it does take diligence and practice – you might want to give opening your heart to one of the fools a chance. You don't expect people to reject you because you aren't perfect, so you need to embrace imperfect people you would like if they weren't so obdurate and stupid. If they try to capture you and drag you into a conversation that is doomed, just say, "I don't discuss politics because my love for my friends is more important than my love of any leader, celebrity or ideology."

I find that these people thrive on conflict and making other people wrong. They work hard at it. If you won't play their game, they eventually calm down around you or they disappear from your life. As I said earlier, count your blessings.

Good luck navigating our crazy world.

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□□□□□□□□□□ *I see that you are in France for the summer. What do you like about the French?*

□□□□□□□□□□ *Anthony the Italian*

Dear Anthony,

I love their warmth, humor, generosity, and lack of industriousness. I love their food, the way they raise their families, their inability to grasp retail, and their language.

I love dealing with people who hold me to a set of standards that are sometimes mysterious.

I love that they force me to plan, because no way will I get fed outside of strict restaurant hours (I'm in the country, big cities are more lenient), buy groceries during mid-day closed hours, do anything on Monday.

I love them because they are unique in a homogenized world. And, Anthony, guess what? I could say almost all the same things about the Italians and the Spanish. (The Italians do better with retail.)

It's the humanity, baby!

Pax vobisum,

AB