

CLOSE TO HOME by John McPherson

McPherson 8-25

“And if you lose ANOTHER major account, Higgins, you will stay in the crate ALL DAY LONG!”

Dad dating ex causes reader to be upset

Dear Abby: I have a complicated family situation. My dad was married to a woman named “Cynthia” for 16 years until they divorced. He met and married my mother the next year. My parents were married for 40 years, until Mom died of cancer a year ago. Since her death, I have gone with my dad to a few holiday events hosted at his other daughters’ houses, where we saw them and Cynthia. Everyone was cordial and welcoming.

A few days ago, Dad told me that he and Cynthia are dating, and he asked me to wish them luck. My immediate reaction was “Why?!” I left immediately, and have ignored his phone calls ever since.

I cannot express how upset this made me. I realize he’s a lonely old man who would like to maybe start dating again, but his EX-WIFE? It feels like a total betrayal of my mother and me, like we were only some sort of intermission from his first family.

There are so many reasons why this feels

JEANNE PHILLIPS
DEAR ABBY

like a sad and terrible idea, up to and including the havoc it will wreak on all of his daughters if something goes wrong again. I feel like he hasn’t taken into account anyone’s feelings but his own.

Am I selfish to feel this way? Is there anything I can do to stop this dead in its tracks? I don’t want to be the bad guy, but I will NEVER be OK with this. — “Intermission” Daughter

Dear Daughter: If you are never OK with this, you will punish only yourself. Your father’s divorce from Cynthia appears to have been amicable. His attraction to her may have more to do with the fact that he is drawn to someone familiar than any lack of feeling for you and your mother.

Instead of punishing him by ignoring his calls, I urge you to talk to him. What he’s doing isn’t disrespectful. He has mourned your mother’s death for a year. Let him find happiness if he can, because if you do, I predict that it will spill over into your own life.

Dear Abby: “Hiding My Smile in New Jersey” (Feb. 28) was embarrassed by the condition of her teeth, which she had neglected

for years. Your advice to her/him was excellent, but I’d like to add one more suggestion:

Schools of dentistry often have programs in which care is offered to lower-income patients under a reduced-fee structure, based on the client’s income. Care is provided by dental students under close supervision by their board-certified dental professors. Students participate as assistants in procedures prior to being allowed to perform these procedures. In the latter case, the senior dentist serves as the assistant (and guide). — Patricia in Kentucky

Dear Patricia: Thank you for offering that suggestion, one that was echoed by many readers who wrote to lend support to “Hiding.” Some of them also advised looking into a company that provides credit to finance medical and dental work. Usually it’s a no-interest loan for a certain period, which allows patients to pay over time without having to wait for their care. The dental care provider may be able to recommend one.

Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

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FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE by Lynn Johnston

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Daily Horoscope

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Your mind operates differently from the minds of others. Be glad for your unique mental process and you'll set up your work and domestic flow in a way that supports the way you think.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). If you can't add value to the situation, you won't even want to be in it. When you get lost (a natural response in such unfamiliar territory as where you'll be traveling today) just remember that you're there to bring the goods.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). However low or high it may be and however long you've been in it, you never take your position for granted. Humility is the way of the angels and saints and of all the forces of good in the world today.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). No yawns allowed: It's time to think! As the scene grows stale, the person who has intriguing ideas and a fresh perspective automatically becomes the most attractive person in the room.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). The short-term perspective isn't giving you enough juice to stay motivated. So what about the more distant future? Does it shimmer enough to keep you reaching? If it's not glowing, perhaps it's time to pitch your goals a little higher.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). In order to be persuasive, you have to get the facts right — a no-brainer for you. Details and integrity are the spokes in your wheel. Now you just need to give

those facts an emotionally compelling context and you'll be set.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). The opportunities come to you — a result of your hard work. Capitalizing on these opportunities will be a matter of skillful communication. Your influence is growing exponentially.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You will have many people wanting different things from you today, and you'll somehow make each feel like his or her needs are the most important and pressing in the universe. Brilliant!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). When projects go off the rails, people often look back and note that calamity could have been avoided were people paying attention to the job at hand. Look. Listen. Check twice. Stay aware. Something is at stake.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). When you take the time to understand the concerns of the people you're dealing with, you'll save yourself from a lot of wasted effort in trying to solve a problem that no one is having.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You make others the star of the show — even when it's your show. Maybe that's why your social demand is higher than you'll be able to meet. Expand your network and reach by getting people together in groups.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You love to come across a problem you already know the solution to, but what you love more is learning something new. Today you'll be an especially quick learner with an exceptionally wonderful teacher:



HOLIDAY MATHIS