

**What do I Know? I'm just a Clown : Jan. / Feb. 2016**  
**"Ask the Clown" : an advice column by Martin "the Clown" Barry**



Dear Clown,

My wife and I are new parents. We knew we would be facing late night feedings, battling illness and some grumpy times in addition to the joy building our family. For the last three weeks in a row, our child has either not slept or has taken a very long time to get to sleep. This has had an impact on my work and our home life. I wanted to see what you would advise.

Sincerely, Dreary Dad

Dear Dreary Dad,

The joy of a growing child and a developing brain can wear one down. I have two fine works in progress of my own. Seeing as how you have a newborn, I trust that you are seeing a pediatrician regularly. Please broach this topic with your doctor and perhaps a neurologist. Interruptions in sleep patterns can be devastating on development and on family life. My best to you and your family.

The Clown

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Dear Clown,

My household is very busy. My children have a lot on their plates with school and extracurricular activities and also my husband has begun to add items of interest to the family calendar. I want to avoid situations where my children feel overwhelmed and my husband feels like his items are not as important. What's a girl to do?

Sincerely,  
Management Mom

Dear Management Mom,

I can certainly relate to this. Kids have so much going on sometimes, it is a wonder we can do anything else but deliver them to each necessary spot. My best advice would be to have a family meeting and survey your children's feelings on the current schedule and discuss anything that needs to be cut or added. Get your husband's input here as well. Are there alternatives to the events coming up? If so, can these be an option? Don't forget to include your input. Hold that team together and make sure everyone finds a harmony.

The Clown

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Dear Clown,

I have actually met you and I think this is a good thing you do for the city. I am distressed lately, though, and I need to see what you have to say. I have faced the death of six people dear to me lately. These deaths were far too soon and the losses were due to addiction or suicide. I wish I could have done something, anything, to prevent this for the people I mourn and those that mourn with me. Please send guidance.

Sincerely,

Hates to Lose

Dear Hates to Lose,

I am so sorry for everyone impacted by these losses. I was near speechless when I read your note. Losing friends to addiction or suicide is as confounding as it is painful. We ask ourselves if there was something we could have done or said to change this outcome. The answer to this is always YES. If you see friends close to you slipping into addiction, get in their face about it. Tell them that they matter to you and that you do not wish to see this poison take their lives. Hold an intervention and encourage them to get help. Suicide is trickier. One must see signs in order to identify what is happening and, at times, there are no signs. The best idea here is to always, ALWAYS let those close to you KNOW that they matter and that you are there for them. You have to temper this with knowing when to let them be and let them think. In short, be the friend you would want to have if you were in the same situation. Battle these forces with all the love in your heart and encourage others to do the same. My love to you and all the families and friends impacted. I hope we can make changes for each other daily.

Sincerely and with a heavy heart,

The Clown

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**Do you have a question for The Clown? Write him at [martin.barry@yahoo.com](mailto:martin.barry@yahoo.com)**