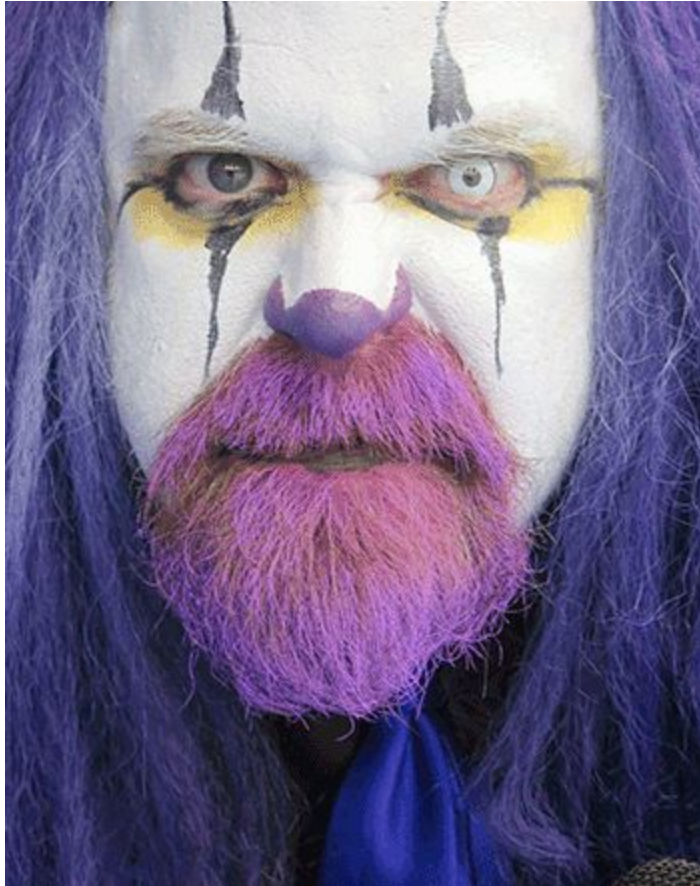


**What do I Know? I'm just a Clown : July / August 2015**  
**"Ask the Clown" : an advice column by Martin "the Clown" Barry**



Dear Clown,  
My sister did not invite my family to my niece's graduation from high school. Our parents and our brother and his family were invited and attended the ceremony and small party following. We sent a gift, but kept quiet about not being invited. Next year, our son graduates from high school. I am thinking of excluding my sister's family just as she excluded ours. What is your advice?  
Sincerely, Bruised Aunt

Dear Bruised Aunt,  
First, I suggest you invite your entire family for the celebration of your son's graduation next year. Never exclude family and remember that the day will be very important to your son. As for the exclusion of your family this year, there are several possible reasons, other than willful hurt. The number of people each graduate may invite might be limited, your niece may have forgotten to mail invitations, or the postal service may have lost the item. Please think positively and continue to be caring to your sister and her family.  
Clown

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Dear Clown,

I am a single parent and I have a problem that has been bugging me more and more. My children are in high school and making good grades, we are financially stable, and we are a solid family. The thing that bugs me is that I miss companionship. I have tried online dating, activity groups for singles and other things for over a year now. I have expressed interest in others and gone on some dates, but it seems that the other person does not connect well with me. There have been multiple causes including my children, being "too nice" and not being a good fit. What else can I do?

Sincerely, Nice Dad

Dear Nice Dad,

I can personally identify with a lot of what you have experienced. My suggestion to you is to back away from online dating altogether. Reconnect with friends, get out and do more of what you love to do. As the old saying goes; once you stop looking, it will find you. Keep your filters on for the ones always looking for a bigger, better deal since they lead only to pain. Don't ever lose sight of what is most important in your life. It seems you have a handle on that already. Best of luck, my friend.

Clown

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Dear Clown,

My sister is in an abusive relationship. I want to get her out of it, but I don't know where to start. She lives with the monster, works two jobs and gets beat up for her efforts. What can I do?

Sincerely, Concerned Sis

Dear Concerned Sis,

Thank you for looking out for your sister. Each and every time you witness her being abused, please report it, encourage her to press charges, and offer her a safe place in your home. I hope you can get this person restricted right out of your lives. At the same time, you may wish to obtain a weapon and train on its use. Please be safe.

Clown

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Dear Clown,

My mother watches my child while I work and lives with us. I love her dearly and I am thankful that she is there for us. Lately, however, she has been teaching my child that some people are bad based on their country of origin or the color of their skin. We are African American and my son is bi-racial. I do not want my child to think this way at all. What can I do to prevent her teachings?

Sincerely, Proud Mama

Dear Mama,

PLEASE have a discussion with your mother immediately about this! Hate and discrimination should never be taught to anyone. Discrediting her to your child is difficult as well. Perhaps you can do so without breaking the bond between any of you.

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)**