

What do I Know? I'm just a Clown : Nov. / Dec. 2015
"Ask the Clown" : an advice column by Martin "the Clown" Barry



Dear Clown,

I feel like I have no privacy in my own home. I keep a diary and write down random thoughts and store this in a spot that, until recently, was known only to me. My husband has been snooping through my diary lately. I discovered this due to displacement of my notes. He has also been looking through my closet, jewelry box, computer, and my personal items. What can I do?

Sincerely, Violated

Dear Violated,

Lay down boundaries immediately! Ask why he is behaving as such, of course, but assert your right to keep your personal items and thoughts private. If this continues, leave. Love cannot live where there is no trust.

The Clown

Dear Clown,

I am a single mother of three and I have been dating a man for the past year. My children have become close to him during this time and he has been very good with them. I recently found out something about his past, through a background check, that is making me distant. Without stating the problem, I will say that we have discussed this and he assures me he is not the same person. What do you advise?

Sincerely, Suspicious Mind

Dear Suspicious Mind,

As the issue is not stated, I cannot make a direct assessment. I will say, however, that if you feel strongly enough that this issue will cause a dangerous situation to you or your children, ties should be broken. If this is something that you feel will fade as you discuss it and your situation with this man is good, then carry on and be happy.

The Clown

Dear Clown,

I am seeing a woman that I regard as the girl of my dreams. I'm excited to have her in my life and I am working toward a day where we can live together and eventually marry. My

trouble is that I don't get to see her as often as I like. When she is available, I am there, but it seems that I initiate plans more often than she does. Help?

Sincerely, Sincere Suitor

Dear Sincere Suitor,

Slow down, my friend! Take a moment to analyze what each of you contribute and look at the development of your relationship. If this seems to be a partnership developing, move forward. If this a situation where one of you is extending more than the other, slow down the efforts to make things comfortable. Know what you bring to the table, but don't be afraid to eat alone.

The Clown

Dear Clown,

I am a teacher. Over the past ten years, I have been noticing a sad trend in the behavior of my students and of the parents I meet with. While it does not apply to all, it has become an increasing majority. Students feel as though they do not have to work to master the skills I am attempting to teach them and I have parents arguing that I am at fault when their children fail a test or a class. I fight daily to make a difference, but I could use advice on new approaches.

Sincerely, Exasperated Educator

Dear Exasperated Educator,

First, let me thank you for being one of the teachers that refuses to give up. As for the students not doing their work, I am certain that you have offered alternatives and admonitions on the consequences. Perhaps adding a parent notification for each incident would encourage them more. This would also help you have a document trail to share with parents when you meet. Any parents that treat you as the source of failure do not deserve to have their children in your classes, quite frankly. There has been enough of the dumbing down; everybody gets a trophy in our culture already.

The Clown

Dear Clown,

It is currently early October and I am seeing Christmas items up in stores. I think this is ridiculous and I wanted to have your take on it.

Sincerely, Xmas is for December

Dear Xmas,

I am certain that retailers would have Christmas items available in July, if they wanted to. Here is the important thing... every day we vote with our dollars. If a retailer participates in a practice that does not agree with what you like/believe/feel, then do not shop that retailer. The beauty of a competitive market is that there are several options for any given item on your list. Except cable.

The Clown

Do you have a question for The Clown? Write him at martin.barry@yahoo.com

