

[8/24/2024 6:25 AM] RLF:

Was hoping to be fever free today

[8/24/2024 7:16 AM] Amy Zinger:

Totally understand. Rest up!

[8/24/2024 7:17 AM] Amy Zinger:

I relapsed on Thursday myself and am fortunately responding to a new z-pack.

[8/24/2024 9:49 AM] RLF:

Hope the party goes well. Send pics!

[8/24/2024 3:57 PM] RLF:

Good party???

[8/24/2024 5:16 PM] Amy Zinger:

Yes! We all had naps and are now playing

[8/24/2024 6:39 PM] RLF:

Didn't see Barb in any of your pics & vids! ???

[8/24/2024 6:41 PM] Amy Zinger:

Well she was behind the camera a lot, but very much here!

[8/24/2024 6:49 PM] RLF:

Good!!

No cousins? :(

[8/24/2024 6:50 PM] Amy Zinger:

I cropped them out. Rules.

[8/24/2024 6:50 PM] RLF:

Haha. So silly.

[8/24/2024 6:51 PM] RLF:

What would have happened if I had been well enough to attend?

[8/24/2024 6:52 PM] Amy Zinger:

Lindsay wouldn't have come. Liv would have been upset. So I'm not going to risk it next year. We'll do the pool party at your place to celebrate.

[8/24/2024 6:54 PM] RLF:

Well, I'll need to rethink that.

I don't wish to be ostracized from her extended family since I am not the party perpetuating the situation.

It's LK's choice, let her pay the price of (willful) non-inclusion.

[8/24/2024 6:55 PM] Amy Zinger:

Well I'm not getting involved other to prioritize the cousin relationship in future. I didn't cause any of this.

I'm really irritated that I even have to be involved so please don't tank my mood even more. This isn't my fault.

[8/24/2024 6:57 PM] RLF:

Y'all need to have an intervention with her and tell her to agree to a reconciliation councilor.

[8/24/2024 6:57 PM] Amy Zinger:

No.

[8/24/2024 6:58 PM] RLF:

Sorry you feel that way. Nothing but victims here, because of LK but nobody will stand up to her.

[8/24/2024 6:59 PM] Amy Zinger:

You started this, don't be trying to rewrite history because you made a permanent mess of things. Doesn't matter what I think of Lindsay's decisions, you don't know what I have and haven't said or done.

[8/24/2024 7:01 PM] RLF:

I've apologized and offered counseling. She's going to finish the job she's started - by tearing us apart.

[8/24/2024 7:04 PM] RLF:

You should invite everyone that you want to be a part of your family's life - if some party doesn't want to attend because someone else is going to be there, that's their choice, not yours.

It's not your responsibility to play referee so don't let anyone put you in that role.

[8/24/2024 7:06 PM] Amy Zinger:

Yeah, well that was the attempt this year but I realize now it's not fair for the cousins to be hurt by that policy.

[8/24/2024 7:07 PM] RLF:

Their mother is hurting them, not you. Let her take the responsibility for her behaviors. My God, she's an adult now .

[8/24/2024 7:07 PM] Amy Zinger:

So that's the yardstick going forward. What's best for the children. The actual children, not the adults who are acting like children.

[8/24/2024 7:08 PM] RLF:

Then it appears I won't have a relationship with Suzette either. Lindsay wins.

[8/24/2024 7:10 PM] Amy Zinger:

My decision is made. You've made a series of decisions spanning decades that have lasting consequences. It's not a matter of "punishment," it's a matter of natural consequences. If you don't want a relationship with Suzette, that's not anyone's fault but yours. I haven't withheld her from you.

[8/24/2024 7:14 PM] RLF:

I will not be ostracized at holidays, Sorry. I am, unfortunately, a man of principle.

[8/24/2024 7:19 PM] Amy Zinger:

That's your perception. These are the realities of split families. Charlie and Jo weren't there, we do our own thing with them as well.

[8/24/2024 7:22 PM] RLF:

It's not because their children are holding them hostage

All hail Queen Lindsay! Let's do exactly as she says!

BS

[intent: Barb has no problem attending events together; we remain cordial. Though O is not the "other woman", if Barb doesn't want her there then I'll come alone. I have no desire or intent to interact with Lindsay or her family. I feel Lindsay's insistence that I not attend is a selfish and controlling act.]

[8/24/2024 7:26 PM] Amy Zinger:

Jesus Christ. If you want to be mad about this to the point of opting out of our family out of "principle," that's ridiculous. Mom wasn't going to come if Olga came either, so calm down and think of ANYONE EXCEPT YOURSELF. You sound ridiculous. I'll give you a pass and assume you're on cough syrup or something.

[8/24/2024 7:31 PM] RLF:

That's her choice. If they want any Christian outreach they need to set an example of forgiveness .. she's watching and learning. So far it hasn't been positive.

No cough syrup.

[8/24/2024 7:34 PM] Amy Zinger:

I fail to see how any of this is my problem? All I want to do is have a kickass life and I have arranged a series of solutions to make everyone happy, except apparently you. I don't care about anyone's religion, or anyone's petty squabbles, I care about kids. And you're being an asshole about that. This is the reality. Deal with it or stand on the stupidest "principle" I've ever heard of and opt out. Your choice.

[8/24/2024 7:38 PM] RLF:

Quit playing the referee. Invite everyone, give delicate parties the RSVP list the day before, and let them make their own decisions (and bear the consequences). You can make it up to the holdouts later somehow (including fragile little Liv who seems quite

similar to her mom). I've paid my debt over the past eight years - you have no idea how many apologetic letters and unanswered texts. It's time for me to move on.

[8/24/2024 7:41 PM] Amy Zinger:

I've said everything on the subject that needs to be said. This conversation is over.

[8/24/2024 7:41 PM] RLF:

I'll not be ostracized any longer.

I guess you'll have to pick between your sister and your father. Always remember that I've reached out to her over and over.

[8/24/2024 7:42 PM] Amy Zinger:

Okay, so you're choosing to be estranged from me, too? Is that the ridiculous decision you've made here?

[8/24/2024 7:44 PM] RLF:

No, it's your choice. If you don't choose to include me in broader family events then so be it. The impression they get of me by my not being included is that I'm not an honorable person.

[intent: NO. NO, I don't choose to be estranged from you or your family. EVER. I'll take what you will give me BUT I feel punishing me for LK's attitude empowers her to continue to act ... poorly. If people continue to humor her selfish demands she'll never change and will likely just get worse.]

[8/24/2024 7:46 PM] RLF:

As I said, both you and your mom need to insist Lindsay start a dialog with me. If it fails, then we'll see. But now we have nothing to lose

[8/24/2024 7:46 PM] Amy Zinger:

Cool. Well I'm glad we did this via text so you can go back and read it and see what a deluded shithead you were leading up to walking away from me. Peace.

[8/24/2024 7:50 PM] RLF:

I love you eternally. All I expect from you is to be treated with respect

And ostracizing me from extended family events is not respectful from any perspective.

[8/24/2024 7:55 PM] Amy Zinger:

Bullshit. You're using my child's events as a way to punish Lindsay. This has literally nothing to do with actually giving a shit about my family, and you prove it by deciding to drop us like we're nothing. Petty and pathetic.

[Intent: I have no desire to either drop you/your family or punish Lindsay or her family. I fail to see how my presence punishes them other than she doesn't "win" in demanding people submit to her desires. I have no intent or desire to have any interaction with LK or her family, or otherwise use your events as a battleground with LK. They're not about her/me and our situation; they're about celebrating

the milestones of you and your family. If there is conflict, it will be at her initiation and I will leave when socially appropriate. I am ambivalent toward her at this point.]

[8/24/2024 7:57 PM] RLF:

I've not attacked your character, why are you attacking mine? Step back and analyze your emotions

[8/24/2024 7:57 PM] Amy Zinger:

Bye.

[8/24/2024 7:57 PM] RLF:

You're everything to me

[8/24/2024 8:22 PM] RLF:

This is what set me off. Essentially I am to be ostracized from extended family events.

[8/24/2024 8:23 PM] RLF:

We'll see what happens at Thanksgiving and Christmas

[8/24/2024 8:31 PM] Amy Zinger:

I'm not accepting that. You were fine with enjoying our Christmas tradition out at the river until I told you we should also have an August birthday tradition at your house. I'm really irritated you're making this all about you when I have gone so far out of my way to include you in milestones and holidays. I am absolutely appalled you're apparently trashing our whole relationship over the fact that YOU don't get to boss me around. I am a pragmatist and I work with what I have. This is the solution that up to now we have all legitimately enjoyed. You just decided you no longer value any of these things I thought we built together. Very disappointing you adopt a new daughter and are so quick to throw your old ones away.

[8/24/2024 8:58 PM] RLF:

That has nothing to do with it and you know that.

I was fine until you told me in the future I was to be a backdoor guest. I get Lindsay's leftovers. Suzu will see it and wonder why. You can explain how your loving Christian sister uses her victimhood to control the family.

[Intent: this made me feel punished for an estrangement that I am not perpetuating. I was not the sole cause of the situation and it's time to act like mature adults. See Dear Abbey letters, below.]

[8/24/2024 9:03 PM] RLF:

There is absolutely zero reason Addy & Liv can't be around me, especially in "supervised" environments - you KNOW that. Yet Lindsay exerts her control over everyone by doing so. She's got major psychological problems. And playing into them just make them worse.

[8/24/2024 9:10 PM] Amy Zinger:

As I said, I work with what I have. I live within the reality I have been dealt. I have worked very hard to give Suzette a relationship with everyone who wants a relationship with her. To effectively achieve this, I have to do a certain amount of calculus that is extremely common in divorced families. You really need to respect the deep thought I've put into arranging things, because all I try to do is keep the peace and make sure quality time is had. I've never denied you access to your granddaughter, but you think it's reasonable to turn around and spit in my face over who gets invited to parties.

Newsflash:

no one gets to deeply interact with Suzette at parties. You're willing to walk away from truly quality time with your remaining bio daughter and granddaughter (not to mention a great son in law) just to score a point on Lindsay. That's objectively pathetic.

[8/24/2024 9:29 PM] RLF:

im looking forward to interacting with you and family at times other than holidays ... unless you change your mind about playing referee with a terrorist :)

[8/24/2024 9:36 PM] Amy Zinger:

So business as usual?

[8/24/2024 9:43 PM] Amy Zinger:

If you want to be part of the family again, I'll put you back in the album, but I am exhausted with the topic of what I do in regards to my extremely complicated family structure and I refuse to discuss it any further.

[8/24/2024 10:11 PM] RLF:

Your call. Actions, reactions, consequences

[8/24/2024 10:12 PM] Amy Zinger:

Speak English

[8/24/2024 10:12 PM] RLF:

Your call

[8/24/2024 10:19 PM] Amy Zinger:

You can apologize for so very casually threatening estrangement, and you can say you value my family, and you can stop insulting me about the way I run my life, and you can say this subject is permanently closed and we'll leave it there.

[8/24/2024 10:21 PM] RLF:

And you can apologize for not honoring or respecting me by threatening to exclude me from extended family occasions in the future.

[8/24/2024 10:22 PM] RLF:

You know I value and love you, and your family.

[8/24/2024 10:26 PM] Amy Zinger:

I did nothing disrespectful outside of using foul language to describe your behavior, so I'll apologize for that.

[8/24/2024 10:29 PM] Amy Zinger:

Never mind. You could have apologized, you didn't. Don't bother at this point.

[8/24/2024 10:30 PM] Amy Zinger:

I hope you realize someday you are the sole architect of your own misery and stop blaming everyone else.

[8/24/2024 10:37 PM] RLF:

It is very much a matter of perspective. Had you suffered from and walked on tiptoes around this topic for 8 years you might feel differently.

[Comment: I've never encountered a situation where one person was the sole architect of any misunderstanding. I felt falsely accused of a number of things over the years (e.g. pedophile, narcissism, implications of sexual predator, etc.) and reacted defensively. I've apologized numerous times and have offered to fund counseling with a counselor of your choice. That offer stands.]

[8/24/2024 10:44 PM] RLF:

I'm very proud of you and how you run your life in general. You're an amazing mom, wife, worker, and individual.

I am entitled to my opinion regarding your decision to ostracize me from extended family gatherings and deserve the opportunity, as your father, to voice my perspective. How you perceive or react to that I cannot control. But sometimes the truth just needs a voice.

April 27, 2025 in the *Chicago Sun-Times*

DEAR ABBY: My parents have been divorced for almost 30 years. My father is still furious with my mother, and she is indifferent toward him.

My son is about to graduate from high school, and both grandparents want to attend the ceremony and dinner afterward.

However, Dad refuses to be in proximity, or even sight line, to my mom. He wants me to plan the day so there is no chance they will cross paths — separate cars, separate routes, separate seats, separate photos, separate meals at different restaurants.

My brother did this when his kid graduated, and it was a lot of work. It is silly. They are 75 years old and should be able to sit down in the row from each other without throwing a tantrum. I want to hand out tickets to the ceremony and make one dinner reservation, and anyone who wants to come and be civil is welcome.

My son is upset with me because his grandfather is guilt-tripping him about us not “making it possible” for him to be at the graduation. However, my son isn’t willing to take over the logistical strategizing for how my parents can enter and leave the building with no chance of interacting.

Am I right that this is silly? For what it’s worth, Mom doesn’t care one way or the other.
— DAUGHTER WITH A DILEMMA

DEAR DAUGHTER: What your father refuses to recognize is that these special occasions are NOT all about him and his grudge against your mother, presumably for having the audacity to leave him.

Because you are unwilling to jump through hoops to accommodate his childish, demanding behavior, tell your father that if he can’t bury the hatchet on this special occasion and celebrate your son’s achievement, you will understand and omit him from the guest list. The choice is his to make — whether to celebrate his grandson’s milestone or continue to feed his grudge.

November 8, 2022 in the Chicago Sun-Times

DEAR ABBY: My parents were married for 22 years. They separated in 2007, and by 2008 the divorce was final. While this was a good thing for both of them, the fallout from their marriage was intense. I won’t dig into the ugly details, but they both had their faults, and it was rough.

Since the divorce, Dad has moved on. Sadly, he lost his wife of 13 years suddenly several months ago. Mom still blames Dad for every bad thing that has happened to her since the divorce, even though she chose to quit her job and go on disability, which severely limited her income and options. When Dad’s wife died, Mom was almost happy. She said she knew that same grief because of what she went through with the divorce. (It’s NOT the same thing.)

I would like to invite Dad to holiday gatherings with the family this year, as he will be alone most of the time, but Mom refuses to come if he is there. How can I help her move on? -- INCLUSIVE IN MICHIGAN

DEAR INCLUSIVE: Remember the adage, “You can lead a horse to water but you can’t make him drink”? All these years, your mother has nursed her anger as though it was an infant. The only person who can help her “move on” is herself, which she is clearly unwilling to do.

Ask your father how he would feel about joining the family during the coming holidays. You may find that he would prefer to avoid her and socialize with friends he and his wife cultivated during their marriage. But please do not allow your mother to dictate whom you can or cannot entertain in your home. If she wishes to stay away, that will be her privilege and her punishment.

Lindsay,

I love you, Addy, and Livi deeply; y'all are an integral part of mine and Suzette's life. I feel the same about Dad. Your estrangement from him is forcing us into a position where we're having to choose sides, and that's taking a toll on our family.

Suzette needs her grandfather, and I need my father. He needs us too, badly. We're all adults, and it's time to find a way forward that doesn't let past wounds overshadow celebrating new milestones in our lives.

These events are about celebrating — not revisiting past grievances. While Dad will be invited to very few gatherings, there will be major milestones where both of you will be invited and encouraged to attend. He's promised not to initiate any interaction with you or the girls, and he understands that violating that boundary means he won't be invited again.

If there are some celebrations you opt out of, we live close enough that we'll continue to have plenty of quality time together. I hope you can see that this approach is about protecting my family's well-being and honoring Suzette's, Jeff's, and my significant life moments.

With love,

Amy

I've included two files for your insight.

1. A psychological assessment.
 - a. Please honor my desire for privacy. Bottom line: I'm eccentric but not pathological in any way (e.g. narcissism).
2. My adoption contract with Alexandra.
 - a. Amy, I've helped a number of people (both men and women) over the years in many ways ... starting businesses, buying houses, buying cars, etc.. I've no ulterior motives other than common human kindness. I'm willing to take a lie detector exam about this or any other matter you have concerns about. There is NO WAY an adopted child can replace the love of a natural child,

especially a firstborn. She had no father figure or education path. I provided both and would do it again because it was the right thing to do in her case. I love you and Lindsay first and foremost and that will never change. Right now I don't particularly like Lindsay but remain eternally optimistic that that will change in time.

As to Preston, it was an awkward request. I didn't see where a phone call or text exchange with a cousin was destructive or dangerous. It's not like he has your address and is going to show up for a handout. He's struggling and a kind, compassionate, empathic word might be the difference between regression to drugs (or worse) and the will to persist through his difficult life for another day. That said, I know there are "judgementals" in your circles who would, in fear, treat him as a pariah. Over the past several years I've had positive experiences with him and, because I've set tight boundaries, there's been no requests for support (he knows not to ask for anything other than family updates or we'll have no future communications). I see him as a suffering soul and treat him as I would like to be treated if the roles were reversed. We all struggle in life and are just walking each other to the grave - there's no reason to not be kind and compassionate if we can control the interaction boundaries. Show compassion, don't live in fear.