

Woman needs attitude check to become a good stepmom

DEAR ABBY: I am in my late 20s and have been with my boyfriend for more than two years. We are serious, having lived together for a year, and we discuss marriage often. We make all our major decisions and purchases together and are generally very happy.

The problem arises when his children from a previous relationship are around (he shares custody with his ex). I am overwhelmed by them. They are very needy and have some minor manner problems. I am uncomfortable with all the attention they demand of me. They are literally always in my space, trying to sit on my lap or show me something, etc. It gets to the point where I just want to get away. Sometimes they're OK and we have some fun, but it's the downtime at home that is annoying.

I am ashamed writing this, but I need some advice because the kids are obviously not going away. Will they grow out of this? It's making me question if I can remain in the relationship. — **BOTHERED IN BUFFALO**

DEAR BOTHERED: You need an attitude adjustment. I don't think you realize what a compliment it is that the children compete for your attention and want to be close to you. A way to deal with this could be to arrange to have one-on-one time with EACH child while your boyfriend spends time with the others. It is very important



DEAR ABBY

that they spend quality time with their father.

If you and he agree that their manners need tweaking, it shouldn't be too difficult to set a good example, and praise and reward them as they improve. When they grow older, they will develop interests of their own and be less needy. But for now, it is important you work on being patient, show the children you care about them -- and let your boyfriend know when you need a timeout. Everyone does.

DEAR ABBY: My 26-year-old son has been going with a 23-year-old woman off and on for a year and a half. He has tried to break off the relationship several times. Last week-end she played the "I'll kill myself" card when he told her he wanted to move on.

I take any threat of suicide seriously. However, she is holding this over his head. I need the right words to use to talk to him about her threat. — **FEELING LOST IN GEORGIA**

DEAR FEELING LOST: The woman is trying to manipulate your son using

emotional blackmail. He should not attempt to "rescue" her by continuing to see her. During their next conversation, he should let her know the personal responsibility for her well-being is hers and hers alone, and he wants no part of it. If he feels she is truly a danger to herself, he should notify her family so they can help her get the psychological help she needs.

DEAR ABBY: Can you please tell me what women are looking for? I keep being told that they feel so "safe" with me, it's like dating their brother. They know I won't force them into doing anything they don't want to do. — **PUZZLED IN NEW MEXICO**

DEAR PUZZLED: It looks like the women you're asking out may have been dating men who forced them into doing things they didn't want, or may be trying to tell you politely that their interest in you is only platonic.

It's time to ask some married friends what is causing women to react to you this way. Having been through the dating scene, they should be able to give you some helpful input.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

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			6		3		2
3	4		1			9	7
	5		3		8		4
2			7		3	4	
8				4			1
		1	9		6		5
	8		5	4		2	
5	3				1		8
6		7	3				

Instructions for play: Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9.

That's all there is to it. There's no math involved. The grid has numbers, but nothing has to add up to anything else. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic. It's fun. It's challenging. It's addictive!

Solving time is typically from 10 to 30 minutes, depending on your skill and experience. The solution for today's puzzle will be published in Saturday's paper. Or you can go to www.sudoku.com to find the solution.

5	8	2	1	7	3	6	4	9
3	7	1	6	9	4	2	8	5
4	6	9	5	8	2	7	3	1
2	5	6	7	3	1	8	9	4
7	3	4	8	6	9	5	1	2
9	1	8	4	2	5	3	6	7
6	9	7	2	1	8	4	5	3
8	4	3	9	5	7	1	2	6
1	2	5	3	4	6	9	7	8

HOROSCOPES

ARIES - Mar 21/Apr 20

Aries, you have some shopping to do, but it is better if you space out your purchases and conserve your funds. A surprise bill may pop up and catch you off guard.

TAURUS - Apr 21/May 21

Taurus, recreational plans may have to take a back seat to responsibilities at work this week. Just when you thought you were done with all of your assignments, some extra work finds you.

GEMINI - May 22/Jun 21

Gemini, you may feel as though you are alone this week. All it takes is a phone call or email to have some company if you feel the need. Don't hesitate to make a connection.

CANCER - Jun 22/Jul 22

It may be difficult to get to the heart of a matter that has monopolized your time, Cancer. But some things will come to light soon enough if you remain patient.

LEO - Jul 23/Aug 23

There is no easy way out of a tricky situation involving some friends. You will end up in hot water if you take one's side over the other. The best thing to do is remain neutral.

VIRGO - Aug 24/Sept 22

Virgo, this week brings a chance to get rid of old habits that have been keeping you from putting your best foot forward. Take advantage of this opportunity.

LIBRA - Sept 23/Oct 23

Libra, you are expected to lead the way for others, even though you do not have all of the answers. Don't worry, you work well under pressure and others will follow your lead.

SCORPIO - Oct 24/Nov 22

Your career could be coming to a crossroads, Scorpio. Start networking now as much as possible so you are in a better position should you need to make a move.

SAGITTARIUS - Nov 23/Dec 21

Sagittarius, jump into something new if you feel like taking chances. Even if your leap of faith doesn't reap any rewards, you will feel better for having tried.

CAPRICORN - Dec 22/Jan 20

Capricorn, you may end up getting blamed for something that isn't your fault. Bide your time and the truth will come out. Accept the apologies of those who were quick to blame.

AQUARIUS - Jan 21/Feb 18

Aquarius, try not to overdo things when you are met with a burst of creative energy this week. You may start more projects than you can possibly handle.

PISCES - Feb 19/Mar 20

Pisces, so much is going on this week that you will need to organize your thoughts and manage your time effectively. You're up to the task.

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

AUGUST 25
Tim Burton, Director (55)

AUGUST 26
Macaulay Culkin, Actor (33)

AUGUST 27
Sarah Chalke, Actress (37)

AUGUST 28
Florence Welch, Singer (27)

AUGUST 29
Leah Michele, Actress (27)

AUGUST 30
Andy Roddick, Athlete (31)

AUGUST 31
Deborah Gibson, Singer (43)

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Aloud

7 Petty argument

11 Get in

12 Choir voice

13 Flute's cousin

14 "Toodlee-oo!"

15 Pandora's box held them

16 Banjo's cousins

17 Jazz club units

18 Be contrite

19 News article

21 Billboards, e.g.

22 Camera feature

25 Jumble of noise

26 Letterman rival

27 Tell, e.g.

29 Brewery sights

33 Swell

34 Emerald, for one

35 Letter opener

36 King of music

37 "Lonely Boy" singer

38 Mis-treated

DOWN

1 Wise guys

2 Bear out

3 Round-the-world trip

4 Does a great standup act

5 Preparation times

6 Tennis need

7 Showed interest

8 Mesa's kin

9 Goes to

10 Wedding reception events

16 Cleaner scent

18 Allude

20 Apartment sign

22 Fleet owner

23 Pops open

24 Suppression of a sort

25 Blots

28 Fights

30 Came up

31 President with

15 children

32 Some coasters

34 Rum-soaked cake

36 Pinnacle

S	H	I	P	S		P	A	L	S
K	A	R	A	T		T	I	B	E
I	V	O	R			H	E	A	V
B	E	N	T			M	U	S	S
U	F	O		B	A	R		E	E
M	U	R	A	L	I	S	T		
		N	E	R	O		D	E	L
				M	O	R	A	L	I
L	A	D		P	A	Y		B	O
A	M	U	L	E	T		T	E	L
S	P	E	A	R			C	O	R
E	L	L	I	S			O	R	A
R	E	S	T			T	Y	L	E

Previous Puzzle

NEW CROSSWORD BOOK! Send \$4.75 (check/m.o.) to Thomas Joseph Book 2, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11							12		
13							14		
15						16			
17					18				
			19	20			21		
	22	23				24			
25				26					
27			28			29	30	31	32
33					34				
35					36				
37					38				
39					40				

8-24

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Rogues

5 Show

embarrassment

10 One of the woodwinds

11 Fulminated

13 Ore

source

14 Peter of "Lawrence of Arabia"

15 Enhance

17 Make a choice

18 Design

19 Fawn's mother

20 Anger

21 Rain

heavily

22 Binge

25 Polite

chaps

26 Dessert

fruit

27 Saloon

28 Have

lunch

29 Be

composed

(of)

33 Cry of insight

34 Masters setting

35 Come back

37 Oodles

DOWN

1 Some soft

drinks

2 Concerning

3 Not to be believed

4 In better taste

5 Statue

metal

6 Espresso order

7 One, for Juan

8 Observed

rigorously

9 Lend a hand

12 Hinders

16 The Emerald Isle

21 Convince

22 Javelins

23 Strutters' mates

24 Jackhammer sound

M	A	T	E	S		K	A	F	K	A
O	L	I	V	E		A	G	A	I	N
W	A	G	E	R		N	E	R	D	Y
		E	N	V	O					
S	I	R		A	P	E		S	P	A
I	N	S	A	N	E		A	H	A	B
E	L	E	C	T	R	I	C	E	Y	E
G	A	Y	E		A	T	H	E	N	A
E	W	E		E	T	A		P	E	R
			S	M	E	L	T	S		
T	A	G	U	P		I	R	E	N	E
A	L	E	R	T		C	O	Y	E	R
B	E	E	F	Y		S	T	E	E	R

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1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	
					11					12
10										
13					14					
15					16				17	
18									19	
			20				21			
22	23	24				25				
26					27					
28				29				30	31	32
33					34					
35			36				37			
38							39			
	40						41			

8-26

Daily Cryptoquote – Here's how to work it:

A X Y D L B A A X R
is L O N G F E L L O W

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

8-24 CRYPTOQUOTE

T F Z K H T J H L Z N F Y D I
E K T H N D B O E N Z E N
F P E K N C N H L E N
H N Y K J Q H Z N H H J B F P E K D X

Previous Cryptoquote: IN SOME FAMILIES, "PLEASE" IS DESCRIBED AS THE MAGIC WORD. IN OUR HOUSE, HOWEVER, IT WAS "SORRY." – Margaret Laurence

COMICS

Tundra

