

Advice & More

# Fiancee feels she will not ever measure up to man's late wife

**Dear Abby:** I have been engaged to a widower I'll call "Grant" for about a year. Grant's wife, "Lilly," has been gone for 15 years. He talks about her frequently, which is OK with me. Lilly was an important part of his life for a long time.

My problem is, I feel I can never quite measure up to her. When we're out in public, he frequently refers to "his late wife," which makes me a bit uncomfortable. Recently he told me in conversation, "Do I wish I had never met you and Lilly was still alive? Absolutely!" It came out of the blue and hit me like a lead balloon.

I understand that Grant wishes his late wife were still alive, but did he have to say, "Do I wish I had never met you?" He is also critical of me and puts me down rather often. When I became upset about his comment, he acted like I was overreacting and overly sensitive.

I feel so hurt. I don't even know if I want to be with Grant anymore. Please give me some advice. My self-esteem is at an all-time low, and I am very depressed. — Undervalued in Panama City, Fla.

**Dear Undervalued:** Is it possible that your fiance's



**Jeanne Phillips**

Syndicated advice columnist

Dear Abby

comment was in response to something you said to him? (Example: "Grant, you bring up Lilly so often it makes me feel like you wish you had never met me ...")

It appears your fiance isn't particularly sensitive to your feelings and isn't likely to change. However, what troubles me more about your letter than the fact that Grant lacks tact and often refers to his late wife — with whom he obviously had a lot of history — is the fact that he puts you down and then blames you for reacting. If this is what you would tolerate in a husband, then you're a glutton for punishment.

**Dear Abby:** We recently invited friends to join us at a special event plus dinner. As plans are coming together, I find that their adult children and spouses have been invited to join us.

Am I wrong in thinking when you invite your friends to a special event, dinner, etc., that it's inconsiderate for them to ask other people to

join the party? If I had wanted to spend the evening with their children — or anybody else — I'd have included them, but I didn't. I wanted to spend the evening with the people with whom I initiated the plans.

I'm hoping my letter will be published and those folks will recognize themselves. I still plan to go and will grin and bear it, but it's frustrating. What is your advice? — Really Annoyed, Albuquerque, N.M.

**Dear Really Annoyed:** Please do not rely too heavily on the people you mentioned reading your letter and recognizing themselves. Dear Abby readers are considerate, and the majority of them abide by the rules of etiquette — at least the majority of the time.

What your guests did was extremely presumptuous. Perhaps they don't recognize that their "children" are individuals and not simply extensions of themselves. You are a good sport to go along with their co-opting your evening, but the next time you invite them out, state plainly that you want it to be "just the four of you." No need to be nasty, just clarify.

Write Dear Abby at P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069 or www.DearAbby.com.

# Medications can cause dizziness

**Dr. Gott:** My husband is 76 years old. Nine years ago, he had open-heart surgery and now takes anticoagulants. He has high blood pressure, which is under control.

The problem is, he is dizzy. Every time he stands, he has to hang onto something for a few minutes before he can start walking around. He told his last two doctors of this problem, and they just ignore him. I don't know if they are unsure how to treat it or simply don't want to. Can you give us any suggestions about what this might be caused by?

**Reader:** Your husband's dizziness when standing suggests that his blood pressure is too low. He may be overtreated. This is likely related to something called "white-coat hypertension." This simply means that your husband's blood pressure rises, usually because of anxiety or stress, during his appointments but returns to normal between them.

Bring your concerns to his physician and propose the following, which will include a home blood pressure machine: Stop medication



**Peter Gott**

Syndicated medical columnist

two or three days before his next appointment. His blood pressure should be taken during the visit, and his blood pressure machine can be calibrated to the doctor's to ensure it is accurate. Then, after the visit, he should monitor his blood pressure twice a day at home for one or two weeks. Be sure to keep a record of readings as well as the time of day taken (morning and night). He should then return to the doctor with his results and again have his blood pressure checked while in the medical setting.

I suspect his home readings will be much lower than the readings taken by the doctor. This is not to say he does not have hypertension; he may simply have a mild abnormality that can be controlled with diet, exercise and minimal medication.

If his doctor does not agree to this, it may be time to find

a new primary-care physician that is more understanding and willing to listen.

If, however, your husband does not have white-coat hypertension, I recommend that he have a special blood-pressure reading. First, he will have his pressure taken while lying down, then immediately after sitting up, then again immediately after standing, and finally after standing for several minutes. This type of reading will let the physician know whether your husband has orthostatic hypotension (positional low blood pressure).

Because hypertension and hypotension are a result of circulation problems, your husband may want to see a cardiologist.

Your husband must be careful to rise slowly and have something to aid his balance when standing. If he rises too quickly, he may lose his balance and fall, which can cause serious injury, especially if he is home alone and cannot get back up. Let me know how this turns out.

— Write to Dr. Gott c/o United Media, 200 Madison Ave., 4th Fl., New York, NY 10016.

# Self-centered remark was wrong

**Dr. Wallace:** I'm 15 and so is my best friend Allie. We spent a lot of time together before Bill entered her life. We used to be really close and talked on the phone every night. Now Bill takes up all her time. The only time I get to see Allie is once a week in church.

Last Sunday I got mad at her. I told her I was upset and tired of playing second fiddle to a stupid guy. I said she could always find another boyfriend, but it's not so easy to find another best friend. This made her mad and she turned on her heel and left. Did I say something wrong? — Gina, Gary, Ind.

**Gina:** Yes, you did. What you said was self-centered and confrontational, hardly



**Robert Wallace**

Syndicated advice columnist

the way a friend would act. You gave Allie an ultimatum: Choose me or your boyfriend. This sort of challenge usually backfires. In your case, it was a good way to lose a best friend. You owe Allie an apology. Call her and let her know you still want to be friends.

**Dr. Wallace:** I know people can die from being anorexic. Literally, they starve to death. Can people also die from being bulimic? — Angie, Goshen, Ind.

**Angie:** The bulimic eats

compulsively and then uses a combination of self-induced vomiting, laxatives, rigorous exercise and fasting to prevent weight gain. The addictive binge-purge cycle is often done secretly and can increase from once or twice a week to many times a day.

Bulimics have died from their eating disorder. This usually happens when they choke to death while vomiting. Anorexia nervosa and bulimia are both serious eating disorders that can only be overcome with professional help.

— Write to Dr. Wallace c/o Copley News Service, P.O. Box 120190, San Diego, CA 92112 or e-mail to rwallace@galesburg.net

Community Life Bulletin Board



**Garden club council celebrates Arbor Day** Posted by Rosemary Maulden



The Glynn County Garden Club Council, Blythe Island Garden Club, Urbana Garden Club and student representatives from each grade at Sterling Elementary observed Arbor

Day recently by planting three native trees — two Live Oak trees, Georgia's state tree; and one Little Gem Magnolia — on the school's grounds. Pictured, in front, from

left are **Kamari Williams, Adam Flores and Reese Stalvey**; and in back, from left, **Vicy Snyder, Sherle Beck, Hayden Adams, Jordan Love and De'Andre Alston**.



**Glyndale Elementary holds science fair** Posted by Jim Weidhaas



Four Glyndale Elementary School students were recently named grand prize winners of the school's annual Science Fair. Pictured from left, are **Rovin Simmons**, fifth

grade; **Aaron Shedlowski**, fourth grade; **Taylor Hardy**, fifth grade and **Ashley Williams**, fourth grade.

The students represented Glyndale at the 24th Coastal

Georgia Regional Science and Engineering Fair held recently at Coastal Georgia Community College. All four were awarded first place ribbons.



**STAR students donate blood** Posted by Leslie Lamkin



As part of their STAR Foundation life skills training, 10 students recently did something they've never done before. They donated blood to the American Red Cross.

According to Ellen Murphy, executive director of the STAR Foundation, the students' participation enabled the American Red Cross to exceed

their quota for the day. Now in its 12th year, the Brunswick-based STAR Foundation is an agency of the United Way. Its mission is to change the lives of individuals with limited income by teaching them the skills that help them become financially stable and productive members of the community and to

improve the quality of the local workforce.

Participants included, in front, from left, **Meka Moran, Brian Plummer, Michelle Sifuentes, Amy Pate and Karen Forry**; and in back, from left, are **Jackie Bryant, Balinda Fleming, April Quimby, Brendette Robinson and Alan Harper**.

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