



Dear Abby
by
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A CAREER IN LAW ENFORCEMENT IS LIKELY TO UPSET FORMER COP

DEAR ABBY: How should I tell my father that I have chosen a career he never wanted me to consider? I plan to become a police officer. Abby, all my life I have felt the call to help people. I know a career in law enforcement brings with it the possibility of danger, especially in today's climate. But I have always known I would be the person running toward danger while everyone else is running away from it. I am passionate about this, and my wife fully supports it.

The issue is, my father was a police officer. He hated every minute of it. He has always said he never wanted me to take that path. I understand all he wants is to keep me safe. At the same time, I don't want to miss out on this career. I don't want to spend the rest of my life regretting that I didn't follow my heart and do something I know I would

have success with. Should I go through with the testing and, if I am selected, tell him then? Please help, because this is keeping me up at night. -- FOLLOWING MY HEART

DEAR FOLLOWING: Your father loves you, but he cannot -- and should not -- dictate how you live your life. A career in law enforcement is not for everyone for the reason you mentioned. It would have been helpful if you had explained exactly what it was about policing that made him hate it, assuming that he told you.

When he finds out, expect him to be very upset and possibly angry about your choice. **But I see no reason why you should upset him before finding out if you qualify for a job in law enforcement. If you do pass the exams, give him the news then.**

DEAR ABBY: My sister-in-law recently asked me for parenting advice. Our kids are about the same age, and she has been having issues with her preschooler's behavior that I don't have with my son.

Abby, the reason her kid is out of control is she and her husband don't give him any limits. They don't believe in saying "no" and try instead to "guide him to positive choices." They never discipline him, even when he hits or screams at them, and as a result, he's mean and disrespectful. Little kids are uncomfortable with that much freedom.

Even though she asked, I don't think my sister-in-law really wants my advice, at least not the advice I would like to give her. So what do I say when she asks? It's clear they need help, but I'm judgmental and probably not a good messenger. I tried loaning her a parenting book I've used, but it didn't take. -- PARENTING ADVICE IN CANADA

DEAR P.A.: Your sister-in-law may simply be venting her frustration when she dumps on you. When she asks for advice again, tell her that because you haven't faced the problems she's encountering, you don't feel "qualified" to advise her. Then suggest she ask her pediatrician for guidance.

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

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