

DEAR ABBY

BY JEANNE PHILLIPS
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby: This is in regard to "Blocked Writer in Oklahoma," who has been writing in journals for her son for 22 years and wonders when to give them to him now that he's married and has a son on the way himself. I agree with you that giving them to him now would be unwise because he has too much going on in his life.

She should give him a year's worth of writings when his son turns 1, so he'll know what his mom was going through when he was 1. Then give him another year's worth when his son turns 2, etc. All I can say is, wouldn't it be a great world if all kids had a mom like Blocked!

Kathy in Edmond, Okla.

Dear Kathy: Thank you for your letter. Blocked may have been unsure of when to present her son with the journals she had been keeping for so many years, but readers experienced no writer's block

in expressing their views on the subject.

Read on:

Dear Abby: Any mother who secretly keeps a journal for 22 years has a screw loose. Instead of mothering, she sounds like she is smothering. For her to record every moment of her son's life is an attempt to control him forever. That woman ought to get a grip and get a life of her own.

Andrew in San Francisco

Dear Abby: You advised Blocked Writer to wait for a milestone birthday (25th) to give her son the journals. I would implore her not to wait three years. You never know what life brings. *Now* is the time for sharing such a wonderful, loving gift.

Linda in Calgary, Alberta

Dear Abby: This journal is priceless, not only to her son and his posterity, but eventually to historians. Imagine how it will be to read this journal in 200 years and glimpse what life was like for this family. I beg her to make a copy of it before she gives the

original to her son. I hope she can find some historical society willing to accept this journal as part of its collection.

Jo Ellen in Bountiful, Utah

Dear Abby: I smell a narcissist! No new father has the emotional reserves to confront this encyclopedia. If the entries are all proud and glowing, great. But many narcissists time their gifts to steal some spotlight from other momentous occasions. I'd save the journal for a future date. Meanwhile, she should pitch in and help the new parents. This is one time when actions speak louder than words.

*Anonymous in
West Orange, N.J.*

Dear Abby: Giving the journal now would be a waste. She should continue writing. Her son's life isn't over; he is just beginning.

Continuing the journal on his journey through life as a parent and memorializing her feelings watching him and her grandchild would be a better gift for the son to find once the mother is no longer here.

A journal should never replace telling people in person how you feel. If Blocked at any time is unable to continue the writing, the last of the journal could be dictated and transcribed by a friend for her.

I agree she should start a companion journal about her life as well. I encourage her to continue writing her son's journal. It would be the gift of a lifetime.

Christy in Tampa, Fla.

Dear Abby: Journaling your child's life when he is a child is fine — and he may appreciate having a record to look back on. Once a child becomes a teenager, it would be all right to note special events. But every day? No! Teenagers want some privacy. Frankly, the idea that she has continued this after he became an adult strikes me as creepy and stalkerish.

Shocked in California

Write to Dear Abby at P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, Calif. 90069. E-mail via dearabby.com.



GET OUT THERE!

Check, mates

Chess masters from around the globe will converge at 5 this afternoon on the Hyatt Regency North Dallas for Round 1 of the seventh annual University of Texas at Dallas Grandmaster Invitational. Players will include members of the UTD chess team. In addition to vying for individual supremacy, six players will attempt to upset the four top-rated grandmasters and increase their own ratings. Rounds 2 through 9 will take place Friday through Tuesday. 701 E. Campbell Road, Richardson. Free to spectators, but space is limited. Make reservations by e-mailing james.stallings@utdallas.edu. Visit utdallas.edu/chess for the complete tourney schedule.

Deep Ellum goes festive

If you live in Deep Ellum