

## Narcissistic In-Laws & The Ex, part 1

Since I'm currently working on a book about narcissistic in-laws, it's certainly gotten me to thinking about them. Not exactly a fun topic since I've been through so much at the hands of my narcissistic in-laws, but it's also a topic that needs to be addressed. I'll share a blog post when it's published, & that will be available at [www.CynthiaBaileyRug.wordpress.com](http://www.CynthiaBaileyRug.wordpress.com). I'll also add the link to my website at: [www.CynthiaBaileyRug.com](http://www.CynthiaBaileyRug.com)

One thing that recently has come to mind about these dreadful narcissistic in-laws book is how they are with exes. I've heard & read so many stories of narcissistic in-laws who keep in touch with their son's or brother's ex, even long after he has moved on to another woman. They may even have the ex's picture hanging up in their home or a picture of him with her when they were together. Some even invite this ex to family functions, whether or not the new lady is present. They even do this when there is no valid reason to keep in touch with the ex or when she was terrible to their son or brother.

I've been down this road. A woman my husband broke up with in 1991 is still a bigger part of my in-law's family than I ever have been. In 1997 at an in-law family party, my two sisters in-law spoke a LOT about her, talking about what a great person she was & how they should hang out with her soon. They never wanted to hang out with me, mind you. They also said all of this in front of me. Naturally no one else was around at that time. In true narcissist form, they wanted no witnesses to their shenanigans. Not long after we were married in 1998, my mother in-law told me how very disappointed she & my father in-law were that my husband married me instead of his ex. Over the years, I also learned that at least one of the sisters in-law not only keeps in close contact with this ex, but keeps my husband abreast of whatever is going on in her life. Then, we ran into the ex in a store two months to the day after my husband's father died. Like it or not, I had to deal with her myself. I saw how comfortable & friendly she was with my husband. It was painfully obvious she'd seen him recently, so I later asked what was going on with her. Turns out not only had she been to my father in-law's recent funeral, but also my mother in-law's & took one of her sons to visit my mother in-law in the hospital. She also moved only a few miles from where my husband's parents lived & began attending their church.

As if all of this isn't quite enough, I also realized the moment that we saw this woman that she obviously is still attracted to my husband.

If you're in this sort of situation like me, you're going to need a lot of wisdom on how to cope with it. This is one of those incredibly delicate situations that can go wrong very quickly. On the good side, I've learned a lot in the 20 plus years of being with my husband about ways to cope not only with narcissistic in-laws but also ways to cope with specifically this situation.

In next week's video, I will offer you some pointers on how to cope with this situation. Since this is only a video, I won't go into as much detail as I will in the book, but I believe it can help you anyway.

## Narcissistic In-Laws & The Ex, part 2

Not all friendships between people & their exes or even their family & exes are bad. Sometimes they work out fine or are necessary because of children or other ties such as owning a business together. When narcissistic in-laws are involved though, it becomes a dysfunctional situation. Like everything else about narcissists, there is a self-serving purpose in it. Never ever doubt that!

If you wonder, watch how this relationship is handled. Your feelings should be considered. Your in-laws should not flaunt this person to you. She shouldn't be frequently discussed in front of you or her picture shouldn't be in a predominant space in the in-law home, especially if it also includes your spouse.

How do they handle this relationship with the ex in regard to your spouse? Do they keep your spouse up to date on his ex's life? If your spouse wants no parts of the details of that ex, do they force him to listen anyway? Do they forward her emails to him so he not only knows but has her email address as well?

These behaviors are all red flags, & you are going to need a lot of wisdom on how to handle this situation.

As always, I recommend prayer as the best place to start. James 1:5 says, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." Luke 12:12 says, "For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say."

Never give your spouse an ultimatum. People who give ultimatums almost always end up losing, because no one wants to feel controlled or manipulated.

Stay calm. If you act angry or hurt, chances are your spouse will tell someone in his family. From there, it would be very easy for your in-laws to convince your spouse that you're unreasonable, paranoid, even crazy.

Do NOT tell him what his family is up to. One thing I've noticed is men with narcissistic families have a lot more trouble facing the truth about their family than women. No guys, I don't hate you or think you're stupid. It's just an observation. If you're in this position with your spouse, don't try to convince him of the truth. You telling the truth will come across to him as you criticizing his family, which will make him protective of them & angry at you.

You can, however, gently, let your spouse know that you are very uncomfortable with this situation. Tell him how you feel, & don't be afraid of being vulnerable. Better for him to see that side of you than anger, because it won't make him defensive. He will be more willing to listen to you if you aren't angry.

Also, what about the ex? Is she obviously still attracted to your husband? This is tough, I know. The best thing to do is to focus on your spouse. Make sure you don't stop doing things that he loves or finds attractive about you. Do nice little gestures for him to show him you love him, like slipping love notes into his lunch box, coat pocket or tape them to his steering wheel while he's in the shower. If instead, you tell him what a terrible person his ex is, you're only making him defensive of her & angry at you. Yes, I know this one is HARD. After seeing my husband's ex, every fiber in me wanted to say exactly what I think of her & his messed up family. But, I knew that he wouldn't believe what I said & would end up passionately defending them while simultaneously being very angry with me.

Lastly remember, this isn't about you. It's about some pretty dysfunctional people doing what dysfunctional people do. If the ex is still interested, she should have tried harder to keep him. He moved on & she should too. As for your in-laws, they are getting something out of this relationship. They probably want to split you & your spouse up or at the very least cause trouble between you. Maybe they think she makes them look good somehow. Who knows? But you can be sure of one thing... whatever sick mess is happening in this relationship, it has nothing to do with you & has plenty to do with everyone's dysfunction.

I wish you the absolute best in this situation!