

# Effortless English

## Double Standard

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### FAMILY IS UNEASY WHEN ONE SISTER DATES OTHER'S EX-LOVER

DEAR ABBY:

My sister, "Jane," and I are both in our mid-50s. Jane has had **numerous affairs** over the past several years after her third divorce, and was involved in an **"intimate relationship"** with a terrific man, "Will," that **lasted** about three months. Jane broke up with Will several months after she decided he **wasn't what she was looking for**, and she's presently engaged to be married to a very nice man ("Sam") and seems very happy.

I dated Will several times before he and Jane **became involved**. We weren't **intimate** at that time, and we started seeing each other again over the last month. This time we have fallen in love.

My problem is Jane is upset that Will and I are together and says I have **"betrayed"** her. She is worried about having her former and current lovers present at family gatherings, and our parents are also concerned. They say it's "just **weird**." The fact that my sister was **intimate** with Will doesn't bother me or Will, but it sure bothers them.

Abby, I have always been the "good girl" in the family and **bowed to their pressure**, but my relationship with Will is more than I could have ever imagined, and I don't want to give up my future happiness just to make my sister and my parents more comfortable. My adult children have all met and approve of Will and our relationship, but Jane and my parents **won't budge**. Any suggestions?

-- WANTS WILL IN WALLA WALLA, WASH.

DEAR WANTS WILL: Perhaps it's time to stop being the "good girl," begin acting like a woman who knows what she wants, and **confront** the **double standard** in your family. If your sister was "sophisticated" enough to have serial affairs, and your parents have been so **worldly** they have **turned a blind eye to it**, then they should all be adult enough to realize that you are entitled to your happiness, too.

Although this may make for some awkward first few family gatherings, as grown-ups, everyone should be able to **get past it**. But if they can't, you are going to have to decide whether you want this man, or to be a **people-pleaser** for the rest of your life.