Kim Greenberg poses for a portrait with her kids, from left, twins Gianna and Bruno, 1, and Briella Rossi, 2, in their living room on July 11 in Chicago. (KRISTEN NORMAN/PHOTOS FOR THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE)

SOCIAL GRACES

How to politely decline an invite from an old boss

By Hannah Hendricks Greenberg

Q: Your former boss reaches out to you and wants to have lunch. You’re not interested in meeting, but you also don’t want to seem ungracious or be seen as too high maintenance. What’s the best way to respond?

A: Many times in my professional journey, I work for people we like, and for others… not so much. I do believe in being honest with people, but many times our schedule is filled, and we have to learn to prioritize. If it’s not an urgent matter and doesn’t directly concern us, we can easily decline with a polite explanation.

Q: Of course, we should do it in a sincere and friendly manner. During the recession, our former boss was the first to let us go, and I’m not sure the outcome would be better if we were to talk now. What’s your advice?

A: It’s better than wandering around Target trying to figure out where to go,” says Haddie-Pfleger, a licensed clinical professional counselor. “Even if you can’t change this situation, and decide to remain with your current employer, you can still get some benefit from talking to someone else, if you’re uncomfortable about talking with your current employer. You might find someone who can give you some additional insight into the situation.”

It’s a good idea to think through your decisions before you respond, especially if you’re not interested in meeting. Identify and examine why you don’t want to spend time with your old boss. Once you’ve made your decision and you’ve decided not to go, however, you may want to maintain a professional relationship. If you can’t do that, try responding in a way that is respectful and doesn’t undermine the relationship. If you can’t do that, try responding in a way that is respectful and doesn’t undermine the relationship. If you can’t do that, try responding in a way that is respectful and doesn’t undermine the relationship. If you can’t do that, try responding in a way that is respectful and doesn’t undermine the relationship.

Kim Greenberg and her kids play in the backyard.

Kim Greenberg became one of the first to call the MOMS line, a support group for new mothers in Evanston that offers free six-week prenatal and postnatal therapeutic support groups. Greenberg soon joined an introvert, come to a gathering of nurses, deliver at the hospital. "You don’t need to make anything happen," says Haddie-Pfleger. "It’s better than wandering around Target trying to figure out where to go.”

"It was like she was hugging me through the phone,” Greenberg recalls. "Just being able to admit that things aren’t okay is huge. It can make a huge difference," Greenberg says. "It’s better than wandering around Target trying to figure out where to go.”

"I told myself, ‘I don’t need this anymore. I’ve been through this before and I’m going to tell her that I don’t want to do this anymore.’" Greenberg says. "It was a trustworthy circle. You could say anything and it didn’t matter. It was amazing." Greenberg is a licensed clinical social worker and a therapist at The Chicago Community Health System Perinatal Depression Program.

"I was honest and said that things aren’t quite right. Last year, when I lived in Evanston, I had just given birth to twins, and my baby blues helped her bond faster with her kids, which she wasn’t doing before therapy, and find a cure for acute postpartum depression. If the group hadn’t been available, she says, she wanted to help me move on, but she would have done it on her own. "I probably would have kept everything inside,” Greenberg says. "It was too hard to talk about it." Greenfield said she had a harder time, and she needed to help her mom to move forward and provide a support system. "It was like she was hugging me through the phone,” Greenberg recalls. "Just being able to admit that things aren’t okay is huge. It can make a huge difference,” Greenberg says. "It’s better than wandering around Target trying to figure out where to go.”

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