



Dreamstime



## An in-law is tired of being an 'out-law'

By Amy Dickinson Tribune Content Agency

ear Amy: I've been married for 36 years.
Whenever we see my husband's family, there would be a point when the "family" would be in one room and the "not-family" in another.

A few years ago, one of his sisters was very ill and needed help. All the siblings pitched in.

She is healthy now, and it made them realize that they wanted to spend more time together.

However, they exclude the "non-family" in these gatherings.

They get together three or four times a year.

My husband and I moved a distance away a few years ago.

They got together just before we moved and celebrated his birthday.

I was not included.

Last year when we traveled for one of these gatherings, I had dinner with a friend, and then waited for 30 minutes for my husband to come out of the restaurant, where he was with his siblings!

He now says I could have joined them, but I know they don't want anyone but siblings.

I have told him that if I travel with him again so he can see his siblings, I will not wait in the parking lot for him!

Should I be more understanding about his time with his siblings?

-Not Family

Dear Not Family: I don't think it's that uncommon for siblings to want to get together, and yet there is a balance here where spouses should not be (or feel) deliberately excluded. In my own massive inlaw family (13 siblings!), I've formed an attachment to the spouses and we occasionally have our own "out-law" get-togethers when the siblings are hanging together.

No, your husband's siblings should not have had a birthday celebration for him in your town without including you. Your husband is responsible for establishing that he does NOT leave you behind for special occasions.

On the other hand, I can't imagine waiting in a parking lot, fuming, when you could have simply entered the venue and perhaps joined them for a cup of coffee. You're an adult. You have the responsibility to treat others as you wish to be treated.

**Dear Amy:** I have a nephew who is only eight years younger than me.

We were very close as kids, but after college I haven't seen him much, because he was living several states away.

He is now married, with kids, and works in the medical field.

Last year we were all thrilled when his family moved two hours away.

I had planned a small outdoor party to celebrate my wedding, with 50 guests.

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