

LIFESTYLES

Dilemma weighs on his head

Ask Gwendolyn Baines



Dear Gwendolyn:

I got a divorce after being married for 18 years. The marriage was not happy and I made a promise to myself to never marry again.

However, that changed two years ago when I met my fiancée. She means the world to me, although I now have a problem.

About six months ago, I started losing my hair. I paid thousands of dollars on hair replacement. My dermatologist told me last week that I have a scalp infection. He advised me to remove the hair at once.

My fiancée does not know that I am losing my hair. One night when we were double dating she made remarks to the fact she did not like bald men. I am 45 and she is 26. I was going to keep the hair and tell her after the wedding. The doctor says due to the seriousness of the infection, it should be removed now. What do you think I should do?

Jason

Dear Jason:

Follow your doctor's advice. Remove the implants before they cause serious damage to your scalp.

In the meantime, talk to your fiancée about your problem. Her comments at dinner may not be indicative of her true feelings. Often people say things that they don't mean in casual conversation. Give your fiancée an opportunity to show her support and maturity by telling her the truth about your hair loss and the medical condition that arose.

Chances are when you tell her, her reaction will surprise you. Recent surveys show that "bald is in." Michael Jordan and Charles Barkley's bald styles have made the clean-shaven look popular among both men and women. Baldness has lost a lot of the stigma that it once carried.

Your fiancée obviously cares for you. Don't let insecurity about the age difference and your previous marriage affect your current relationship.

Hair loss is a hereditary condition that affects many men and women. It is not a gauge of your attractiveness or masculinity, nor should it be. If she is not supportive, there are many women who will be.

Just remember that thinning hair and baldness are a natural process of life.



PHOTOS/ JAMES BROWN

Hair raising heritage from motherland

Seminar on cornrows extols African-inspired styles' virtues

By Andrea R. Richards
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Black women are quite versatile, especially when it comes to hairstyles. Buns, hair wraps, spiral curls and shag are all current trendy styles. However, braids and cornrows are classics. They are always in style. Aaronita Caldwell of Monroe attended a lecture titled "Braids, Cornrows, Hair Wraps and Dreads: A History of Black Personal Adornment in Coiffure" Feb. 8 at the Main Library. About 50 people attended.

Caldwell, 49, said she has never had a perm and has worn braids all of her life.

"I like my heritage," she said as her natural hair styled in braids flowed over her shoulders down her back. "It's quick. It's easier. It takes care of the hair, and it's better. Keeping it natural is very good for the hair. Keep the chemicals out."

Fana Chisholm, a veteran hair braider, conducted the two-hour slide lecture and demonstration. Chisholm hopes women attending her workshop see honor and tradition in the styles.

"I try to raise their self-esteem in terms of loving yourself and loving your own hair and not feeling like you have to change to depict what other people say beauty is," said Chisholm, who has styled actress Angela Bassett's locks. "Love your own hair. Try to work with what you have, and use your own hair. Understand that the beauty lies within you without trying to emulate another culture."

Some novices, like Georgina Belk, also attended the lecture hoping to learn the history of the Afrocentric style and how to maintain it.

"This is my first time getting my hair braided," she said. "There are some things I like about it. I'm having to get used to the initial pain, which I did not expect - the itching, which I understand can be controlled, but I haven't quite mastered it yet, and finding styles. So, I've gotten a book from the library to help with that."

Aaronita Caldwell of Monroe attended a lecture titled "Braids, Cornrows, Hair Wraps and Dreads: A History of Black Personal Adornment in Coiffure" Feb. 8 at the Main Library

Minorities happy, but isolated in Rhode Island

By Joann Loviglio
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

PROVIDENCE, R.I. - Companies have difficulty recruiting and retaining minority professionals because they feel isolated and lack social outlets, according to a survey by the Rhode Island Urban League.

The study of 58 minority professionals new to the state found that most like the area but seek more avenues for getting to know their surroundings.

To address the concerns raised in its survey, the Urban League plans to help businesses develop programs so minorities can easily find social and cultural connections.

The group also wants to ease the relocation process by preparing an overview of what the state has to offer and making it available to newly arrived professionals.

"Once companies recruit folks, they think it ends there. What happens is that people stay three to five years and leave because they're missing a connectedness to the community," said B. Jae Clanton, executive director of the Urban League of Providence.

The study was prompted by companies that reported difficulty in obtaining and keeping minority employees.

Rhode Island recruitment firms and relocation specialists are not very effective in promoting the state's attractions for minorities, according to the Urban League.

Clanton cited a suburban Providence company that recently tried to recruit an out-of-state black woman. When she asked about the kinds of professional organizations available to single black women, the company had to call Clanton for information.

Despite that, half of the 58 survey respondents said Rhode Island is a good place for minorities to live and would recommend it to others.

Forty of the respondents, or 69 percent, said they knew little about Rhode Island when they moved. Upon their arrival, most were unaware of the cultural organizations, churches, or social groups available to the state's 110,000 minorities, who make up roughly 11 percent of the population.

"The groups are here for people, but they're not used by companies and real estate agencies" to draw minorities to the state, Clanton said.

The respondents suggested community orientation, minority professional organizations and mentor programs to help minorities and their families better adjust to the state.

The respondents came to Rhode Island from every part of the country, and most have lived in the state for one to three years. Blacks and Asians made up the majority - 81 percent - of those answering the survey.

When asked what they found most attractive about their new community, the top replies were opportunity,

beaches, aesthetics and scenery.

Some respondents said they found Rhode Islanders to be friendly and welcoming, but several cited a sense of detachment from social, economic and political activities.

The Rhode Island Urban Project is a group of business and individuals who work to foster minority access to business opportunities. It includes R.I. Hospital Trust National Bank, Brown University, Citizen's Bank, Cookson America Inc., Davol Inc., Fleet Bank, Johnson & Wales University, Miriam Hospital, Narragansett Electric Co., Providence Gas Co., The Providence Journal Co., Raytheon Co., Textron Inc. and the University of Rhode Island.

Horoscopes

ARIES: (March 21-April 20) Just when you were on a roll, your momentum slows down and everything sputters to a snail's pace. Plan a few outings to spice things up. If you've been holding your feelings back, don't go to the other extreme and express affections intensely.

TAURUS: (April 21 - May 21) You may feel on top of the world, both physically and emotionally - don't take unnecessary risks. Use a close friend as a sounding board for those ideas that have been churning within you for some time. If practical, your ideas will be good.

GEMINI: (May 22 - June 21) Just being yourself will be a big asset in the workplace and at home. Your personal finance situation is rosy, be aware of

get rich quick schemes, and make sure to think things through completely. Adjust to whatever it is that is bothering you.

CANCER: (June 22 - July 23) Doors will open which will lead to wonderful family, property or household developments. Start the week with your eye fixed on an important target. If you don't concentrate and stick to your resolve, a number of possible distractions will send you off course.

LEO: (July 24 - August 23) Your romantic prospects are likely to enjoy a lively upswing during the weeks ahead, as well as life in general. You will no doubt have more free time for pleasures. The romance theme will continue for some time, but you now have a more realistic view about love.

VIRGO: (August 24 - September 23) A brighter

future, concerning career activities, will now be in plain view. Many actions will be related to your income, so plan carefully. There is a fortunate accent on your home and property interests this week, and your personal aims are supported by all.

LIBRA: (September 24 - October 23) Don't push your luck concerning a job or career opportunity. Confidence is good, but what you may be banking on now is not a sure thing. Your efficiency on the job will be noted by a superior. You will receive answers to some questions today.

SCORPIO: (October 24 - November 22) Caution is the keyword. Try not to sound off in the heat of the moment; you will no doubt say things you will later regret. Be careful regarding any transportation plans. You have ideas which will eventually come to fruition, but be practical.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 23 - December 21) Love and marriage is definitely in the air. If you are already married, you and your partner will share and communicate even more, which will strengthen the rapport within your relationship. If you are presently on the sidelines, you may soon fall in love!

CAPRICORN: (December 22 - January 20) This week may seem long and unduly drawn out. There is trouble everywhere you look, so be aware of what you say and what you do; others may be overly sensitive. Concentrate on doing your best at work, instead of worrying about romantic uncertainties.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 - February 19) Don't take on anymore tasks than you can really handle, or you may find yourself feeling totally drained. If there is a problem, you need

to speak out and not let negative feelings fester inside. Work on your various friendships this week, people need to know you care.

PISCES: (February 20 - March 20) A family member or friend could use some of your sympathy and quiet understanding this week. You are in tune to a lover's feelings and are appreciated for this fact. Watch out for any mood swings which may cause you to overdo it with regards to spending or eating and drinking.

IF THIS WEEK IS YOUR BIRTHDAY: You don't make it easy for other people to know you, putting up big walls between you and those around you and wondering why no one tries to get through them. Let others see your fun-loving side.

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