

Auntyji Ko Pucho

By: Auntyji

Now that the hurricane season is upon us again, Auntyji is hearing a lot of stories and speculations about it. There are, of course, stories about the destruction caused by hurricanes like Katrina and Wilma and the times when people had to spend days without power and water and the damage that was caused. These were the luckier people who were spared the devastation of lives or their homes being lost. Most of the people who talk about having lived through these hurricanes don't talk about suffering major losses, but only of the inconveniences of losing utilities, about the kindness of neighbors and making new friends.

Everyone around seems to have a theory on what the hurricane season will be like. If we've had a mild winter, we are likely to have major hurricanes; if we've had a cold winter, we're likely to have big hurricanes; if we've had a long winter, we are likely to have a lot of hurricanes; if we've had a short winter; you get the picture! If Auntyji was to believe all of them, every time she sneezed, there would be a hurricane. The truth of the matter is that it's not a precise science, and even the weather man is often wrong.

With the housing market the way it is these days, a lot of people secretly want a bad hurricane season. The prices of their homes are falling everyday, while the insurance they have been paying keeps on rising. If a good hurricane was to come along and destroy their house, they would actually come out ahead by claiming the insurance money.

Now Auntyji is not in favor of a big hurricane (it scares her pussy cats), and there are enough disasters in the world as it is. She does however caution all these folks to be careful about what they wish for because they just might get it.

Q: Dear Auntyji, I am 50 years old and am dating an American man. I was widowed at age 35 and worked really hard to bring up my two children by myself in this country. Now, they are grown and in college and this amazing man has come into my life. The problem is, my family HATES him, my kids included. He comes from a good family, he does not drink and believes in God. When I am with him I feel good about myself. We like doing the same things and he makes me laugh. I have never been closer to anyone in my life, not even my first husband. We supported each other when his father and my mother died. My sister wanted me to come help clean out my mother's things and she told me to leave my boyfriend home because no one likes him. She doesn't care how I feel. All she cares about is how others look at him when we get together for a typical "desi" gathering. He is always eager to help and loves to be a part of everything I do. I feel very strongly for him but at the same time, I feel a bit embarrassed about fighting for my "boyfriend" at age 50! What should I do?

Sudha from Ft. Lauderdale

A: Arre Bahen, when will you learn? If at age 50 you cannot do what you want to do to get happiness for yourself, then it will never happen. You cannot keep on putting other people ahead of you all the time. You were a good wife and mother. Your children are now in college. It's time to think about your needs, rather than your sister's awkwardness.

A good start would be to talk to your children and find out why they dislike him. It is common for children to react when they see a stranger try to replace a parent, but in your case they are adults and should be more rational. All of you spending time together might help - they could see how happy you are with him - and might get to know him better. If this anger is deep rooted, then Auntyji suggests that you see a family therapist to try

to resolve it. Many times the problem lies elsewhere, and this poor guy is an easy target to vent their anger at.

Now to Auntyji it sounds like you really like this guy, and it seems to be a mutual feeling. If this is so, then why not take it to the next step and get married to him? This way you will no longer be embarrassed to call him your boyfriend, and your relationship will be more formalized and might be easier to accept by some people. You have been alone for 15 years, and at age 50 you are not going to have many people who come into your life that you feel this way about. If finances and prior children to whom you want to leave an inheritance to is an issue, then sign good pre-nuptial agreements. As for your sister, or any of the other 'desi' people, they should be happy for you. They should embrace him, rather than making him feel like an outsider. Not liking him because he is "American a.k.a. WHITIE" is reverse discrimination and is as bad as if the "Americans" were treating you (or your sister) like a "Desi Dot Head a.k.a BROWNIE". People need to grow up and see beyond skin color. Your family needs to grow up and look beyond his skin color and appreciate his good points.

So girlfriend, your prince charming is here and it's time to make it your day and then live your life happily ever after. You deserve this happiness. Other people will see it, and come to their senses.

Q: Hello Auntyji, I am 22 years old and I just joined a great company, my first real job, about 6 months ago. I love it! The only flaw: a co-worker who works no more than 3 hours in an 8-hour workday. She spends roughly two hours at lunch, runs out all the time to do her personal shopping, spends time on personal phone calls,

and chatting with other workers. I have to take up the slack. She has been here for two years and I just don't see how she keeps her job. Should I make waves and complain about her performance, or go with the flow?

Reema from Tampa

A: Your first job - what a great feeling! Now, don't you go around ruining it by becoming a snitch. No one likes a rat, and the brown nosing really gets you nowhere except in a person's rear. You have been there only 6 months, and it is your first "real" job. She has been there for 2 years. She might even have had a "real" job before this one. That all adds up to experience. Maybe she is faster and smarter than you at getting her work done. Maybe she makes less mistakes. And since she is not observing her co-worker's behavior all the time (like you are), she is able to concentrate on getting the work finished faster.

It also sounds to Auntyji that there really is not that much work to be done in that office. Even with all the distractions that you have, and all the additional effort that you spend in monitoring your co-worker, you still have enough time to finish your work, and then her work too. If you were busy with just your work, and did not pick up her slack, then her performance might suffer, and someone might notice without you having to complain.

Come to think of it, her performance really should not concern you ... only yours should. You have your whole career ahead of you. Concentrate on your work rather than being so concerned about this other co-worker. You do not have to pick up her slack. How she does her job is up to her. If it bothers you so much, distance yourself from her. If it's a big enough office, you might be able to work in a different department and not have any contact with her.

Don't forget, life is short - live it to the fullest with attitude! Auntyji@citymasala.com.