

Auntyji Ko Pucho

By: Auntyji



2009 has arrived upon us. It might not have come with the best of economic times, but there is hope in the air. This is the time for change. It will not be easy, we will go through a difficult period, but will come out ahead in the end ... as a tougher and happier people. As Auntyji's friend Jayant used to say, "my name is 'Jayant'- I will come out as the Victor in the End!"

This year, Auntyji has decided to devote more time to herself. She has always been there for other people – and will always be – but that does leave her drained at times. Sometimes she forgets to take care of herself because she is too busy thinking about others. This has resulted in her having more sleepless nights and bags under her eyes.

We all get caught up in our lives. What is happening to us becomes the focus of our attention, and sometimes we lose track of what is happening in the lives of other people around us. There are times when we have expectations from others, but we get disappointed because those people are too busy with their own lives to be aware of our expectations. These are the times when we should start reflecting upon our own inner self and strength. One does not need to lower one's expectations, one just needs to add more contentment to one's own life.

On a more uplifting and superficial note, Auntyji plans on this being a great year for her. She hopes get in a lot of travel, get a perfect body (plastic surgery is not out of the question!) She is already well known, but in the coming year, she will definitely be expanding her social circle and might even realize some of her political ambitions. After all, Auntyji did bid farewell to 2008 with a dirty martini and welcomed 2009 with sparkling champagne!

Q: Dear Auntyji, I am a 32 year old woman who has never been married. I have been dating a 43 year old man for the last 4 years. He is divorced with a 12 year old daughter for whom he shares custody with his ex-wife. He is a good man and seems to have a decent relationship with both his ex and his daughter. He has recently proposed marriage even though at the onset, we had both agreed that we would not be considering a long term relationship. Things have changed and we have come to care very deeply for each other. I am considering his proposal very seriously. What worries me is how his daughter will feel about this. She and I get along fine but I have only been a friend until now. How she will react to my taking on a more important role in her father's life and becoming a permanent fixture in it is another thing altogether. Although I don't see myself in the wicked step-mother's role, I don't see myself playing mother either. I like her and think she's a great kid but have seen her giving serious attitude to her dad. I don't know how I will deal with that once it is directed towards me. Do you think I should take her out before I say yes to her dad and talk about how she would feel if I were to accept her dad's proposal? I have shared my feelings with her dad who feels that I should not over-think this and that things will settle down as we move forward.

Sunita from GA

A: Sunita behan, Auntyji is thrilled that you have found the man you might want to marry. Having a partner in life can bring a lot of joy. When you meet someone, and want them to become part of your life, you have to accept the whole person ... not just parts of him. The daughter is a part of the life of the man you want to marry. Taking the attitude that you do not want to play mother to her will just cause a rift in your life ... first with the daughter, and then with your husband. Auntyji understands where you are coming from, and also that this might be a very delicate situation. You need to form a strong bond with the daughter. If the role of a mother is difficult, then you need to become the good friend or older sister and create good harmony between the two of you. The attitude that you might see coming from

the daughter right now is probably just childish behavior to get attention. This might continue throughout her growing years until she matures. You will have to become the more responsible person and resolve any issues. If you are not willing to do so, things might not go so well in your married life.

So, if you are ready for all that ... go jump in and say "yes" to this man. Before you get married, talk to the daughter. Get her involved. Make her feel like she is also gaining something wonderful in life. With the right positive attitudes, everything will be fine

Q: Dear Auntyji, I am writing to you because I don't know who else to turn to. I am 15. My best friend comes from a conservative Indian family and has a mother who is always on her case about everything she does. She is one of five daughters. Her mom is always after her about boys calling, housecleaning, and other chores. Everyday I go over and help her with her chores because she is not permitted to go out. My friend makes it worse by yelling at her mother, forging her signature, and lying to her. How can I help them? Can I help them?

Name withheld upon request.

A: It's a good thing that you have withheld your name, otherwise Auntyji would have given you a good tongue-lashing. At fifteen years of age, you might think that you know a lot – but you are very immature. It is your friend's mother's job to raise her family and tell them what to do - you have nothing to do with it and should not get involved. If your friend's mother is always on her case, it's because your friend is not doing what she is supposed to do.

It seems like your friend does need all the discipline that she can get. If you really do want to help, rather than blaming the mother, work on your friend instead. Encourage her to do household work and not be so involved with boys. Maybe once she becomes a better person, her mother's parenting might not feel that bad.

Don't forget, life is short - live it to the fullest with attitude! Send in your questions to auntyji@citymasala.com.