

Auntyji Ko Pucho

By: Auntyji

Auntyji has noticed that people who live in this country have developed a tendency to complain and be very dissatisfied with life in general. This applies not only to *non-desis*, but also to a lot of *desis* who come and settle down here. Life here is generally more comfortable for most people unlike the struggle for daily survival in our native land. When the basic needs of food and shelter have been met, our mind starts to wander and we crave more.

The smarter ones take this opportunity to enrich their lives, and in this process they give back something to the society or to those who are less fortunate than them. America is a land of opportunity – there is so much of everything – the choices one has are practically limitless. A person can immerse themselves in education, the arts, culture, science or indulge in politics, recreation and hobbies that they may not have had time for back home. One can actually think of taking up more noble goals such as philanthropy and volunteering one's time to help others.

There is a growing number of us who do not know how to be thankful for what we have. Things that we take for granted are luxuries for those less fortunate. We do not take the time to realize that there are millions of people in the world who are starving and live below poverty line with no access to fresh water, food and electricity. Basic necessities to make our community grow and thrive such as education, health care and even having a home is a far cry from reality for them. These people have no choices.

Auntyji tries to remember how blessed she is, though she admits that it is very easy to complain. She tries to keep herself busy and enriches what this life has to offer. But, when things do not go her way, she does tend to dwell on the negatives too. In her life she has tried to reduce her “wants”, and has become more comfortable with what she has. That in no way suggests that she has become complacent (she still has a lot of fire left in her). Her goal is to maybe become more content, but she believes that her nature is not inclined to let her do that. So, on a regular basis, she reminds herself of all the things that she has to be thankful for ... which brings her to this letter that she received from one of her readers.

Q. Dear Auntyji, I got married recently and am doing very well as far as my married life is concerned. I am an engineer and graduated in 2004. I took a break for a year and then started to work for a company in India. I had to travel and was sent to Switzerland and some other places. During one of my travels, I was accompanied by an older consultant who was about 65 years old. He did not behave appropriately and tried to get me into his hotel room late at night. I related this incident to my boss on our return but nothing was done about it. I decided that it was better to quit the job rather than have a repeat incident of this kind which could make me regret my decision. After that I got married and have moved to the US recently. I am here on a dependent visa and cannot work. I am an artist as well and spend a lot of my time pursuing this hobby. I also enjoy cooking and reading and am also studying for certification exams in IT. I just feel very low sometimes. I have had a long break and now getting back on track sounds tricky. I have to apply for a work visa in April but don't know if it will go through. I do not know what will happen to my career. What should I do? I feel myself getting into severe depression from time to time. My husband tells me not to worry but I keep thinking about my career.
Shirupa Gupta.

A. Shirupa dear, you seem to have a very good life. Why is it that when you hit a bump here and there that you have to look at the glass as half empty? You admit that you are happy in your married life. You are obviously well educated and have had wonderful opportunities to travel and visit other countries. When a situation at work did not work for you, you had the luxury of being able

to quit the job. You did not even feel the need to get another job. You were then fortunate enough to get married and move to the US. It seems like your husband makes enough money to be able to support both of you. You have the opportunity to devote time to your talent of being an artist, improve your home life, and also on continuing education. Yet, all this means nothing to you because of the temporary problem of not being able to work.

You are quite obviously used to having everything in life, and to taking it all for granted without realizing how fortunate you are. If things do not go your way, it becomes an insurmountable problem for you. Rather than looking at the bright side, or alternatives, your reaction is to complain and go into depression.

Auntyji does not understand why you even brought up the incident regarding the old man and the job in Switzerland in relation to this current situation. Since you brought it up, Auntyji is going to comment on that situation too. Instead of creating a huge drama about something like this or crying to your boss about it, you could have dealt with this yourself. First of all, could it be possible that this consultant called you to discuss work because you may have had deadlines that you were working with? Did he ever make any inappropriate moves? Would it have made a difference if it was a younger guy instead of an old man? Did you try to ascertain why he wanted to meet with you and think of suggesting a hotel restaurant to meet in, instead of his room, to project a more businesslike situation? Auntyji is sure that you are going to have answers to any and all of these questions. If having a career is so important to you, you would have dealt with this situation in a

more mature manner. You would also have tried to find another job after you quit this one.

Now, here you are, quite happily married and settled in the US with no pressure from anyone to work. You say you are an artist ... most artists would die for the opportunity to have the time and the luxury to create art work without having other liabilities. This is obviously not enough for you. You also seem to derive no joy in being a good home maker, or advancing your education. If work is so important to you, you do have the option of volunteering your time within organizations that would love to utilize your skills. You can also look at consultancy based projects to occupy your time and to enhance your career prospects.

April is not that far away. Even if your work visa does not come through now, it will eventually do so. In the meantime, rather than dwelling on the negatives and getting depressed, you should count your blessings and think of all the positives in your life that you can be truly thankful for. You can also look at this time as an opportunity to take stock of your life and to enjoy what you may never have time for again. Once you do start working, life is going to get extremely busy and hectic not to mention what it will become once children come along. At that point, you will look back at this time and wonder what you ever complained about in the first place! Auntyji is sure that you will find something else to complain about once you get a job. Until then, she hopes that her answer has provided you with a reality check and that you will follow her advice.

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

