



Dear FASHIONGRANNY,

*What's up with women today? I want to be the best gent I can be when I am out on a date with a woman, but they just won't let me! Case in point: I go to open their doors and they've already gotten out or say they can do it themselves. I stand up when my date returns from the ladies room at a restaurant, and she asks me why I'm standing! I attempt to pay the dinner bill discreetly and she wants to know how much it is and tell me how much to tip! Don't women know how they should be treated? It seems not! I am not allowed my full manhood! Help me please!*

*Signed,*

*Frustrated Knight in Shining Armor*

Dear Frustrated Knight,

No doubt, you're frustrated! Have hope! On the other side of your frustration is a real woman who's been looking for you for a long time!

This malady took hold of my gender way back when Gloria Steinem began roaming the earth.

Equal rights for women in the workplace are indeed important, but this throwing out of femininity (and its perks) with the bathwater was a huge and seemingly lasting mistake!

Big old brutish looking hags started speaking for women and somehow women were no longer to be the fairer, gentler sex. The inability to separate their womanhood from their message was off-putting. Equality did not mean, for me, that I was to lose my looks, let my bosom go haywire, dress as a man and start chewing tobacco! In fact I liked being different from men!

Were we to begin plowing through life with an "Annie Get Your Gun" attitude, proudly singing, "Anything you can do I can do better"?

Many of us knew that the scales were tipping, yet we did not stop the railroading of femininity by these hustlers, and what we got is what you describe. Females leaping from cars, en masse, with no male help, thank you very much! Women now wanted to pay their half at dinner, demanded to know the cost of their evening – as though that somehow made us "equal."

You're rising from your seat or pulling out her chair? Are you nuts? I'm not surprised many women don't know what you're up to! I am laughing here, but it's a darn shame we bought the lie to the degree that we stopped being ladies, so most men stopped being gentlemen.

Don't blame the guys, ladies; blame yourselves! The guys are not off the hook, however, and must return to appropriate behavior and not be slothful about it. Above all, remember dinner and courteous behavior does not merit a payoff of casual sex.

I am sorry for your dilemma, Frustrated Knight. I hope this answer tweaks some gals back into a right-mindedness where their wiles are concerned. If it will give you some solace, FASHIONGRANNY will gladly go out with you and let you practice your gentlemanly etiquette.

Trust me, you will be up and down from your chair all night, opening all my doors and paying for everything! We will end the evening with a handshake at my door and a thank you note addressed to you in the mail!

*Dear FASHIONGRANNY,*

*I am an overweight woman; in fact, I fall into the category of obese. I am not proud of this and I am doing most of what I've been told to do by doctors and weight loss experts to rectify my condition. In the mean time, as I change into a healthier me, what can I wear that is fashionable and becoming? I have been reading your advice column every issue and I trust your advice. Please help!*

*Signed,*

*Overcomer*

Dear Overcomer,

Wow! It takes a real woman to speak the truth about herself and then ask for help with it! Thank you for trusting my advice in the matters of fashion; it means more to me than I can say.

I am so proud of you doing all the things that the pros are suggesting, as it truly is a matter of life and death. There is one more component that, with all due respect, I pray you don't mind me mentioning. I know that big women don't always have medical reasons for their weight. If this is you, I hope you are also seeing a professional therapist who can guide you through the issues in your life that have you acting out with weight gain. Don't be afraid to tell them the truth of your life as I guarantee it will set you free from self-sabotage and an early grave. You are worth it!

OK! What to wear! There is nothing more becoming than classic clothing for big women in transition. This would be a same color silhouette, both top and bottom. Pants, skirts, tops, jackets, etc. should all be the same color. I do not subscribe to only dark colors for plus size women, but please be sensible when choosing colors, and, of course, make sure they look good on you. Always check the mirror. Do not avoid the mirror for any reason!

An example of a solid color silhouette? First, let's say Navy, a color that is hot this season, would be a perfect choice. A navy top and navy pants or skirt combo will give you a streamlined look, making you appear thinner. Add color with your jewelry – either a beautiful strand of pearls or something kooky and artsy. Brooches are a great addition, too, and don't forget colorful scarves for an accent! But don't overdo!

I would purchase maybe three same-color outfits in compatible colors at a reasonable cost to start with. With your reducing weight, it would be foolish to buy expensive and extensive wardrobing. A crisp white blouse or two would compliment these choices. I think this is a good start.

Overcomer, I really would love to have you keep me updated on the “new you” if you would be so kind. You are definitely on the right track and I know your new clothing look will make a big difference in how you see yourself. As you continue to lose pounds and arrive at champion

weight, remember that even for the other side of the fence from you – the girl with no meat on her bones who is trying to gain weight – it is only the Truth that is going to free you into being all that you can be. Loveable, Capable, Valuable, and so very important in the human family!

You go girl!

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