

Aunt Bossy's Back

Written by Margaret Evans
Wednesday, 11 April 2012 08:05



The Life Coach Your Mother Never Was

Let her show you how Common Sense, Good Manners and Discipline can get you out of the mess you're in.

A Lone Jew at Easter

Dear Aunt Bossy, I am not a Christian, but am annually forced to attend an Easter celebration at my daughter's house because she is married to one and has converted to Catholicism. The conversion didn't bother me so much because I'm more of a casual Jew, but the whole thing makes me very uncomfortable. I skip the Mass part, but what should I do about the rest? How can I make next year better?

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Dear Lone,

First of all, could you please remember that Jesus was a Jew? You know why the Christians loved him? He made life interesting. He had opinions. He accepted people as different from him as Mary Magdalene, and he pitched in. You don't have to get involved with loaves and fishes, but how about hiding the eggs while everybody is at Mass?

When they return, turn the attention from yourself and your egg hiding abilities, and seek out the relatives you don't ordinarily talk to because they aren't your kind of people. If there is a Mary Magdalene type, it could really be interesting.

Say, "Hey, I'm Jewish, and I realize I don't know a whole lot about this holiday. Tell me what you think about it." If you find a really interesting conversation, stick with it. If not, move on.

Try not to cling to your daughter and the people you already know. In other words, get over the differences between your religion and the religion of the others who are there. You'll probably find out most of them are not so religious as they are celebrating because of the food, candy and kids; but love is the motivator, and you can participate in that, right?

You will have such a good time next year, you'll probably be curious enough to go to Mass the year after. The music is great.

COMMON SENSE: Going along to get along is a family value.

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GOOD MANNERS: Showing interest in others' lives is good manners.

DISCIPLINE: It isn't easy.

Utterly Not Pretty

Dear Ms. Bossy, I am homely. No way around it. My hair is mousy, my skin is dull, my body is okay, but nothing to attract attention. My clothes look boring, and I'm not rich. What can I do so I feel better about how I look? I'm just miserable.

Dear Utterly,

Oh my dear, you will do exactly the same thing that beauties do: you will learn to work it.

Check your posture. Stand up as straight as possible and walk around like you own the place. Faking confidence produces the real thing.

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Check your smile and eye contact. Smile, even if it feels ridiculous; look people in the eye. If someone looks away rapidly, please whisper to yourself, "they lose!" and move on.

Practice on old people. Volunteer at an old folk's home, or a place where people have real problems. Bring some joy to their lives while practicing your confidence.

Be sure you are perfectly groomed. Sparkling clean.

Clothing? Keep it very simple and find color that looks good on you. Buy or borrow Ines de la Fressange's book, "Parisian Chic," Genius advice at any price.

Ask a friend to accompany you to Target, the GAP, TJ Maxx, or Marshall's. Brake for high-end thrift shops and check out ebay. Auntie Bossy swears by used Eileen Fisher and Eskander from ebay.

Buy one very casual outfit and one work outfit that make you feel as pretty as possible, or at least don't make you feel homelier. This can be done for less than a hundred dollars.

Head for the drugstore and get lipstick, mascara, blush, and a light foundation. Period. If you go to Ulta, CVS or a big chain, they will help you and you can return an opened package if the texture or color don't work for you.

Get what you need to make your hair shine and cooperate. Keep your hair simple. Without seeing you, I can practically guarantee that you need a haircut.

Involve your friends. Ask them to make you up, suggest hairstyles. People love to help. Find a friendly beauty at work or in your community, tell her how much you admire her looks, admit you don't have that naturally, and ask her for advice. You will be surprised at how generous folks can be. Also, send me a picture at Auntiebossy@gmail.com and I will tell you what I think.

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Avoid the bizarre, in an effort to show people you don't care. Oddly colored hair, multiple piercings and tattoos make one look pathetic.

The most important part: Forget that you aren't physically stunning. Most people aren't, and many who are don't know it, or only concentrate on "what is wrong." Beauty is in the eye of the subject. Sparkle with happiness, energy and interest in life.

Act as if you are gorgeous, and that is what people will see.

And, never, ever forget that everyone hates that model who won on "The Bachelor."

COMMON SENSE: Most of us aren't crazy about how we look.

GOOD MANNERS: Show consideration to yourself as you would to another.

DISCIPLINE: It is difficult to forget about yourself.

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Aunt Bossy is Susan Murphy, an internationally known Communication Skills Coach who adores spending every winter and spring in Beaufort. □ Ask for advice @ Bossymurph@mac.com