

Aunt Bossy

Written by Susan Murphy
Tuesday, 15 November 2016 11:25



Girl Power

Dear Aunt Bossy,

□□□□□□□□□□ *My thirteen-year-old daughter is devastated that Hillary was not elected and feels that she has no future, that women have no chance. What can I do to help her?*

Mamabear

Dear Mamabear,

It is my humble opinion that Hillary did not lose because “we are not ready for a female president.” Most of the people who voted for Trump would have voted for Sarah Palin. Hillary lost because of long time baggage and the fact that her staff missed the desire for change in the country, and my heart goes out to her. It is a terrible blow, especially at her age. (I’m older than she is, so I can say that.)

Let your daughter know that what other people think has no bearing on her success as a human, a woman, or as a professional in the job of her choice. I grew up when we gals weren’t discouraged from careers. They weren’t even mentioned.

The obvious choices were wife, nun, nurse or teacher. Wife and nun were out of my expertise at the time, and I didn't want to wear a uniform after 16 years in Catholic schools, 12 wearing a uniform. I became a teacher.

I'm on my fourth career now, and it is clear that each step along the way led me closer to what I love – communicating, teaching, and humans. Doing what she is inclined to do, or gifted in doing, will determine your daughter's future, not the opinion of people who don't even know her.

Teach her that, when criticized, she should consider the input, and then decide if it is valid. If not, she should tell herself, "What does that have to do with me?" If someone tells her she can't do something because she is a woman (never once happened to me in all these jobs and all these years) she should feel sorry for his or her ignorance and move on.

The reason we live in what looks like a male dominated society is that more men seem to have visible jobs. Women need to start going after those jobs if they want that visibility. Women are the majority in colleges, and business is desperate for competency. I work with a lot of engineering and construction firms and am always impressed with the women working at every level. They are successful because competency is hard to come by and they have it.

Also, remind your daughter that preference for birds of a feather is not always hateful. As humans, we tend to be more comfortable with people like us. Men like to hire men, women like to hire women, gay people want to support other gay

people by hiring them, and on and on. I don't think it makes things as interesting as they could be, but it is human nature. Large companies have rules that make diversity a requirement, but the tendency to be more comfortable with people "like you" is inbred. It doesn't have to be hateful.

In the name of fairness and, in my mind, an interesting life, we should make an effort to look beyond our "type" and discover the benefits that others bring to the party. It is thrilling to mix, which is why the videos of cats snuggling with dogs and cows taking care of baby goats

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are so popular.

Bottom line: your daughter can do whatever her talents, education and desire drive her to do. Letting other people tell you, or her, otherwise is just silly.

And by the way, I love men and dogs but am totally convinced that women and cats are more evolved groups. (Variety is the spice of Facebook.) Each of us should think our group is the best without disparaging or expelling other groups. Black Power, White Power, Girl Power, Boy Power, Dog Power, Cat Power. It is all good as long as we have open and loving hearts and minds.