

LIVING

A Puppeteer with Vital Strings

by Fayza Haq

THE eastern male appears to take his charms and superiority for granted. For him, the female just cannot act or think without his approval. His flaws appear only as inevitable characteristics and part of himself. He is a demigod and an unchallenged master. He does not stop to realise that some fatal fault in him can be making the woman's life insufferable. He is thoroughly convinced that he is perfection personified — almost a latter-day saint without the halo.

Sometimes the decisive, self-opinionated and exacting male expects the woman to cook, sew, serve as the children's maid and be the constantly smiling hostess for the occasional parties for his colleagues and bosses — all without a single mistake. He might be repeatedly correcting and officiously supervising even the cooking and cleaning, thus encroaching on her territory without any qualms.

He may criticise about the dessert for the *milad*, the way she helps with the children's homework and the manner in which she corrects the maid. The customary way in which she keeps the household accounts, she may again find his interference needless and uncalled for. He will poke

his nose — with that air of a perfectionist — in her method of selling old clothes and papers and buying women's magazines, and even her choice of evening wear.

Didactic Dictator

The woman will naturally be scared to tears on his very return from office. Her cold shoulders and inhibitions will, however, never be understood by the male chauvinist. Well, she should stop being a door-mat for his destructive criticism and make him realise that all his high standards are impossible for her to maintain — all at one time. He must be made to realise that she needs his backing and good opinion as well as warmth at every step. Often his superiority complex inevitably arises from a latent inferiority complex. The woman should make her own feel important and build up the confidence that is lacking in him. She should be candid instead of smothering and camouflaging her feelings. It should be made clear to him that his ebb and flow of affections and understanding are vital for her happiness.

The other variation of the "problem" male is the didactic dictator who wants to chain his female to his wrist as if she were some pet poodle who

must be shooed, tapped and corrected every hour of the day. He is the brutish "cave-man" who demands and extracts affections and caresses by force and threats. The male who wishes to regulate every aspect of the woman's life can stifle her flair for living.

She should not, in her turn, feel that "mum's the word" is the best way out. The patient sufferer seldom gets anywhere these days. The woman today is far more ambitious than someone who is satisfied with dressing up, sitting pretty, being chaperoned to sophisticated parties and bearing beautiful handsome and intelligent children.

Over-exposure even to one's husband can be stagnating and incredibly dull, apart from being outdated. Sticking to just one another can sometimes be boring. Everything and everyone needs a little airing, even old winter clothes in spring.

Set ideas in a man may also make him a pain in the neck and the cause of much dissatisfaction in conjugal harmony. The inflexible man can be overconscientious and disgustingly proud about his traditions, family standing, bank account and sense of morality and propriety. He has most probably had a very strict upbringing where nothing was "grey" —

everything was labelled as either "black" or "white". Puritans flourish everywhere, in every culture and society.

The undemonstrative and temperamental man, who may sometimes flog his children in his rage and frustration, scold his wife with the servants, if there are any, and neighbours listening on, and refuses to talk to his relatives — sinks into a morass of despair and depression. This sulking and brooding, flying into comprehensive tantrums might all have their origin in an unstable and unhappy youth — although this sounds like some hum-drum diagnosis. His childhood joys, fears and anger might not have had anyone to make him absorb the shocks of life.

When he is cold and withdrawn, the woman should help him get over his black clouds of memories and haunting fears. She should learn to accept and encourage his emotional expressions. This must be so, even if it hurts her or makes her unhappy for the time being. In the long run, with emotional catharsis, there is bound to be better co-existence.

Needs "Mothering"

As for the drug-prone, chain-smoker and occasional mild drinker who gives vent to his desires at the cost of the

economy of the home, is not to be despised and complained against. His need for the female pampering and mothering him is more than anyone else's. His resorting to the "fag" and the occasional "bottle" is just an expression of his emotional stress and lack of confidence in himself. It is like the gum-chewing teenager at an entry interview. Smoking and occasional drinking without getting intoxicated are perhaps no mortal sins, at the most, they are perhaps flaws, after all which normal man is without some adverse characteristics?

"Adonises", "Herculeases" and "St Sebastians" never made good husbands. So why should she whine or whimper about his minor defect or occasional habit? To be warm and forgiving is an integral feminine quality and giving him a helping hand to cut down on the craving for the occasional smoking, potato-couch, or any other shortcoming cannot harm her. A female can make or break a man with the amount of attention she pays him.

All these notions and drawbacks could surely be removed by the woman herself by making him realise that she can understand and accept the actual truth — no matter how much it may pain her initially.

She should not — and cannot — "give up" just because he is a little "difficult". The woman behind the male puppeteer with the vital strings very much in her hand.

The African Ant Makes a Fashionable Mark

Ntemfac Ofege writes from Yaounde

A Cameroonian couple are making fashionable waves with their backyard designer label. Their "very African clothes" are worn by local TV and showbusiness personalities and have even caught the attention of World Bank officials.

IT'S cool. It's classy. It's Afritude. And its owners hope it's not a passing fashion. Afritude is the name of a Cameroonian enterprise in Yaounde's posh Bastos neighbourhood, where everyone who is anyone lives.

And increasingly, everyone who is anyone wears Afritude clothes, including many TV personalities and musicians.

"Look at it this way," says Christiane Doo Collins, the 25-year-old who is a prime mover of the trend-setting business. "In the beginning, the first man was black and Africa. From Africa, design and culture spread out to other lands. Afritude is the revival of the original Africa. We call our business Afritude because it is... well... African."

What they design and sell, she says, is "very African clothes" — boubas (blouses), gandouras (robes), sanjas (skirts) and much else besides, selling for between 5,900 CFA francs and 18,900 CFA francs a piece.

At Afritude, only the cloth, symbols, designs and messages of Africa count. Doo Collins seeks out these influences from all over the continent and transforms them into unique new designs.

"Thinking positive means adopting the African version of everything. We not only give you the style but we insist on the African version," she says.

Gap is the new culture, so, create an African rap. You will be surprised at how fast the African version will catch on."

Huge resources are not necessary, she insists. The business mainly uses local materials. Rather than import a \$20,000 print machine, Afritude made its own out of locally manufactured print boards and aluminium sheets.

"We know that our continent has not got financial might so we harness local technology and use minimal capital. That is our Afritude."

"If I had only 3,000 CFA francs I would not dream of going into some ostentatious product. I cut my coat according to my cloth."

"We are out to let Africans know that only creativity can save Africa. Europe and the Americas consume creativity, but Africa produces it. Africans are natural creators."

Their symbol is the ant, she says — "because we are like ants. The ant is small and a worker but it is mighty in action."

"In Afritude we are as small as ants but we believe in what we do. Africa is a continent of ants, but unfortunately Africans do not see it that way. Only an ant will fall from a tall palm tree and still continue."

The business, the idea for which was hatched in 1989 by Doo Collins and a group of friends — businessmen, company executives



Afritude design: 'Insisting on an African version' and civil servants — but which only really hit the market last year, is situated in her backyard.

Caring for Long Hair

by Blossom Kochhar

SHINING long hair, flowing loose or carefully dressed remains a sure symbol of femininity even in this age of change and controversy. Some experts believe women let their hair grow to flaunt their beauty and their sex-appeal.

Long hair needs special care and when long hair isn't properly cared for, it begins to look like a rope left outdoors for months.

Shampooing with the correct shampoo, specially formulated for long hair is very essential. After shampooing your hair, take care as wet hair is very fragile and can break easily.

After washing your hair, don't brush instantly. Wrap it

starting from the ends slowly working up to the crown. In this way you avoid tangles and excess pulling.

A problem faced by many is, oily scalp, coupled with dry and split ends. Follow your shampoo with a final rinse of diluted vinegar — one tablespoon of vinegar to a mug of water. This helps restore the acid mantle that has just been washed away. Also, use a good creamy conditioner, only on the ends.

Oily hair also requires brushing to keep oil from pooling on the scalp and to carry the oil to hair ends to prevent the ends from drying out and splitting.

Correct brushing with the correct brush is probably the



top of your head using the cushions, not the tip of your fingers. Make rotary movements, working over the entire scalp and moving the scalp, not the fingers.

Split ends especially in long hair are a result of rough treatment of your hair. Fierce brushing snaps the hair and breaks it off. The use of rubber bands to tie hair together, and winding hair into a fish hook with metal curlers or rollers can damage your long tresses. To avoid split ends, your hair deserves gentle, capable handling. First trim the hair off above the split. Keep them under control by using a cream conditioner on the dry ends. Don't use metal or wire rollers.

Girls who wear long hair in tight plaits and women who wear a tight chignon seems to be the most frequent victims of spot baldness. It is caused by pulling the hair tightly back in an elastic band or bun in exactly the same place for a long period. The position of a pony tail or a bun and the parting of these hair-dos should be changed often if loss of hair is to be avoided. Hair pulled back into confined styles should have the benefit of extra care in correct brushing and massage.

Once again, those of you who use electric rollers, curling irons and blow dryers, be sure to condition your hair after shampoo and use hot oil treatments regularly to keep hair from drying out.

Courtesy: Hair, Skin & Beauty Care

in a towel and blot out some of the moisture. Rubbing splits the ends and tugging very wet hair in its weakened state, pulls out the hair. When your hair is slightly dry, comb it with a wide toothed comb,

brush your hair, of course, is with your head hung down, while you brush finely from nape to ends of hair and all round. Use firm, even strokes. Don't tear your hair and don't yank it.

Leading trichologists recommend frequent massage of the scalp. Massage, certainly loosens the scalp and improves the circulation, giving elasticity to the hair. Start massaging with the fingers together at

The First Rule for Happiness: Work

by Frederick Ecker

MANY years ago, in reply to a question, I said, "If I were to suggest a general rule for happiness, I would say: Work a little harder. Work a little longer. Work!"

There has grown up a philosophy which may make my suggestion look like a copy-book maxim of an outworn day. There seems to be a general belief that work is merely a means of securing leisure, that we work in order to be released from work. That attitude is fatal to creative endeavour and progressive life.

When I speak of work, I do not mean the mere performance of an irksome task. Real

work consists of solving the problems of life for oneself and others by unceasing thought and action. In brief, work is man's functioning at his best — to the best social advantage. I cannot imagine anyone wanting to take a holiday from it. Work is timeless; it knows no limitations except those of energy. One can lose a job; one need not lose work.

On the other hand, do not be deceived into thinking that you are at work simply because you are employed eight hours a

day. Where is the mind, when the hand is pulling the lever? Where is the imagination while the motor is humming? A great firm of carriers was founded by a messenger who worked while he delivered parcels; he thought while he did his errands.

Much of the real work in life is accomplished after the job is done. Anton van Leeuwenhoek, the famous Dutch naturalist, had a routine job in a merchant's office — but he did not complain. When he left the office at night, he went to work grinding lenses for microscopes. Through these tiny windows he peered into the world of the invisible, and discovered bacteria. That was his work. He pursued it until death.

Courtesy: The American Magazine

Talent? Ability? These are almost beside the point. Work is the principal factor. I say that if one ploughs the field and sows the grain, the harvest will come as surely as day follows night. We make our talent, ability, even genius, through discipline and endless work. No philosophy of do-as-you-please leisure, of loafing and inviting the soul, can outwit the necessity of work as the forerunner of harvest and the fulfillment of self.

Courtesy: The American Magazine

Organising Papers in Our Life

by ASM Nurunnabi

IN our daily life, we receive lots of papers of various kinds: personal letters, official letters, notices, bills, advertisement leaflets, etc. When you arrive home from work, you grab the mail out of the mail box. At that moment you don't feel like going into these. So you pile these letters on a side of your desk and keep yourself engaged otherwise. At last when you settle down to read the mail, you find a number of categories: one pile for trash, one for bills and another to read. By the time you finish the readable portion of the pile, you get involved in other family chores. So part of the mail remains pending, and in this way, piles of letters clutter your room.

The deluge of paper is a reality in the life of many and as such the sheer volume of papers that confronts us at home and at work place should be organised.

Successful paper management requires a system that fits our needs. Our personal programme should proceed from this simple axiom: paper management is decision making, paper clutter is postponed decision.

People have trouble with the basic question: "Do I need to keep this?" because of the fear that they will be proved wrong. They ask themselves, "What if I throw something away and it turns out to be important?" Everyone occasionally needs something he once threw out. But most of the time you can get another copy if you must.

Uncontrolled information isn't a resource; it's a burden. The wastepaper basket lies at the start of any paper management system. Research shows that 80 per cent of the papers we collect is never used, and it is felt that our ability to achieve success is directly related to our willingness to use the wastebasket.

Experts in this line advise that always open your mail next to the "circular file." The bigger the wastebasket, the better. For some reasons,

people do use large ones more often.

In deciding whether or not you will keep something, ask yourself these questions: 1) Is this only for any information, and now I know it? 2) Does this information exist elsewhere? In a book you already have, for instance. 3) Is the information recent enough to be useful? 4) Under what circumstances would you want this information? Just in case it's not sufficient. If you can't identify how you'd use the information, it's unlikely that you'd remember you have it, or be able to find it. Keep in mind the principle "If you don't know you have it or you can't find it, it's of no value." 5) What is the worst thing that could happen if you don't have this piece of paper? If you can live with the consequences, toss it.

The next step is to establish a permanent location where you'll routinely handle all paper work. Choose a place that you find comfortable, and do whatever you can to make it a place you like to be.

Paper — or the information on it — that isn't headed for the waste basket can be put in one of the following places: a "To sort" tray, a calendar, an address book, a "To do" list, an action file, or a reference file.

The "To Sort" tray is a temporary resting place. It could be a bin, a box or a shelf. "Well," you may say, "there is nothing special about that." I already have 16 "to sort" piles all over the house. Here's where discipline comes in. To make the tray work, you must sort frequently, before the next pile begins. If it's becoming a permanent home and there are other piles popping up, you aren't sorting often enough.

Your calendar is not only critical for time management but for paper management as well. Get into the habit of extrapolating information you need from paper and entering it on your calendar, then throwing out the paper. You will need a calendar with plenty of writing space, or perhaps one calendar for your personal life and another for

business affairs. Hang a monthly calendar in a strategic location in your home for information that affects your family.

A personal directory for important phone numbers and addresses is an essential part of organisation. Each one of us needs a personal "white pages" and "yellow pages". The first is for relatives and friends with whom we always want to stay in touch regardless of where we live, and the second is for neighbours, services, stores, schools or organizations we will no longer have contact with if we move.

The "To Do" list provides a consistent place for notes to yourself, eliminating the envelopes and old shopping lists on which you've jotted reminders. A small spiral or looseleaf notebook is preferred by many people because they can be removed easily. The list is not designed for tasks that need to be done at a specific time; those go the calendar — but for tasks you want to do, but haven't determined when.

Your "To Do" book can be divided into several categories depending on your needs: phone calls to make and return, letters to send and answer, errands, projects, books to read, gifts to buy. A major joy is crossing items off when they're completed.

Action files are for papers that need your attention immediately or in the near future. Reference files are for papers you know you'll need at some point in the indefinite future. A bulky action file indicates that some papers could go in a reference file.

A good-quality file cabinet, located close to your work centre, is one of the best investments you can make. That is where your reference file should go.

The result of cleaning up your paper glut will be more than just an uncluttered home or office. Controlling paper will enhance decision-making skills, lessen a sense of guilt, free up your time and energy, and nurture an environment supportive of your plans and dreams.

COOKERY

Vegetable Hot-Pot

- 2 carrots
 - 1 turnip
 - 2 Bombay onions
 - 2 tomatoes
 - 2 or 3 potatoes
 - pepper and salt
 - butter
 - sugar
 - powdered breadcrumbs
 - light stock or water
- Wash and prepare the vegetables and cut them in slices. Cook the carrots, turnips and onions in boiling salted water for 20 minutes and the potatoes for 5 minutes. Grease a deep baking dish and dust it with powdered breadcrumbs. Arrange the carrots, turnips and onions in the dish in layers, season with pepper and salt and put a few pieces of butter on the top, then a layer of tomatoes and sprinkle over with sugar. Lastly, a layer of potatoes seasoned with pepper

Potatoes, Stewed

- 4 or 5 potatoes
 - 1 Bombay onion
 - 2 oz dripping
 - 1/2 pint stock or hot water
 - pepper
 - salt
- Peel and cut the potatoes in quarters or thick slices. Skin and slice the onion thinly. Melt the dripping in a stewpan, put in the potatoes and onion and cook them for a few minutes without allowing them to brown. Then pour in the stock or hot water, season to taste and stew very slowly until the potato is cooked but not broken. Serve very hot.

WINTER FASHION

Feel Comfortable (right) and cozy (below)



WINTER FASHION

Feel Comfortable (right) and cozy (below)

