

Living with hair-fall problems as a teenager

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Hair problems have been a thorn in my side ever since I was a child. My first streaks of white hair appeared when I was just 10 years old. Initially, my parents thought it was normal as both my grandpa and dad suffered from the same problem when they were younger.

Then, I noticed when I was 16 that a single strand of thin hair had fallen from my head. I was scared and went straight to my parents. They told me that in fact, it's normal for one to shed 80 hairs every day and assured me it would pass soon.

Turns out, it was nothing more than wishful thinking. With each passing month, my hair fall only worsened. On top of that, a bad bout of dandruff appeared in my scalp which caused my hair to fall out rapidly. What used to be a head full of lush hair started to become ever thinner with each passing day.

As a result, I pulled all-stops to prevent my hair-fall. From seeing shady social media tutorials on how to apply homemade oil to basking in the sun deliberately to improve my hairline, I used all my cards. All the while, I berated myself for not listening to my parent's advice of applying



PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

oil to my hair daily and having a balanced diet to help maintain my hairline.

The situation turned even worse during a haircut session. Once the barber caught a whiff of my insecurity, he offered me a treatment which he claimed would "remove all dandruff and prevent hair shedding". Little did I know, all he would do is rub the hair follicles off my head, after which a bald patch appeared on my head.

I felt like an outsider when I looked at

my peers and saw their heads full of luscious hair. The general stigma surrounding baldness coupled with the humiliating comments I heard people make about me, made me desperate as I attempted to stop hair loss at any means.

Thankfully, I was in luck.

Sensing my plight, my mom started to apply nutrient rich oil on my hair every day. On top of that, I started to take vitamin supplements. Gradually, that worn patch started to disappear. Hearing

countless stories of how helpful onion is for hair growth, I started to apply onion paste, with mixed results in my case.

Although the onions thickened my hair considerably, my scalp became very dirty, and to clean that, I had to tear my hair out, literally.

As a safety measure, I consulted a trichologist – a hair doctor. It was an eye-opener for me as a lot of the myths I had regarding my hair and its treatment was debunked.

Over the course of my treatment, I learned how the centre patch of the male hair is vulnerable due to a lack of hormones, with the sides and backside of the head being the "permanent" areas of men's hair. He made me realize the importance of balanced diets in producing hair growth stimulator hormones.

Hair shedding is tough for anyone as it hurts their looks and self-esteem. I consider myself lucky that my ordeal ended positively, but it helped me stumble upon an epiphany: our society can do better and should accept people for who they are.

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Manifestation is not a ruse

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I bought a copy of Rhonda Byrne's *The Secret* three years ago, and completely forgot about it. The book resurfaced in my memory when I read an article where Megan Fox said she "manifested" Machine Gun Kelly, her fiancé. I found it staring at me, dust covered and all, sitting on the third ledge of my bookshelf. It looked like something I would never even touch, let alone read.

Now, naturally, I went through a spell of self-castigation for buying a book that didn't quite suit my taste. So, to atone for this act of mine, I picked up the abject thing and decided to give it a read. At first gander, the book seemed nothing but an attention seeking collection of nonsensical expressions. However, it is regarded with a staggering level of appreciation and approbation by a certain cohort among the readers – those who believe in the art of manifestation. Also, the insurmountable amount of content related to this phenomenon made me want to study it further.

As it were, this art of manifestation, otherwise known as the law of attraction, has its own set of rituals. There are incenses to be burned, candles to be lit, and "angel numbers" (e.g. 777, 1111) to be trusted. Not to be confused with witchcraft, this art solely focuses on "making the universe give you what you want." Numerous people on the internet proffer (with heartfelt conviction) that money, success, and even romantic partners, that were rightfully theirs, came to them through manifestation.

Various techniques are there to come to your assistance if you are willing to give manifestation a try. Your desired object can be called for from the universe through positive affirmations, specifically in the present tense.

Similarly, scripting is also a quite widely employed method where you write down what you want, again, in present tense. The tenet intrinsic to manifesting asserts that what you desire is already yours, you just have to claim it from the universe. Without a doubt, such an act would



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raise incredulous eyebrows. But there are elements of the psyche playing in the background which corroborate that manifesting isn't wholly folly, even science has its explanations for why manifesting works.

Science tells us that manifesting can bring forth results because it makes us adopt a growth mindset hemmed with a positive attitude. Manifestation requires us to not just set a goal and look for windfalls along the way, rather, it pushes us to participate in activities and thoughts that are aligned with our goal.

It whets the subconscious to eliminate negativity bias, and so, confidence spirals upwards as the mind enjoys calmness. The art of manifestation provides a sense of

direction, hence, the feelings of "being lost" and "I am not good enough" eventually fade away. When it comes to chanting positive affirmations in building a healthy self-image, a little goes a long way. After a while, we start believing in them. All in all, manifestation is... kind of cool.

Reference:

Psychology Today (September 15, 2020). *What Is Manifestation? Science-Based Ways to Manifest*

Mastura believes Hozier himself is a balladic masterpiece. Tell her you agree at choudhurymasturamahbub@gmail.com