

Picking Your Battles

Written by FASHIONGRANNY

Wednesday, 26 October 2011 08:30



Dear FASHIONGRANNY,

My daughter is 14 years old and is attending a school dance. I call it a "dance" because that is what it was called when I was in school. I am having a hard time convincing her to wear an age appropriate, lady-like dress, as she wants to wear her regular jeans and tee shirt look. Would you have any "looks" in mind that will make her happy and soothe my nerves?

Signed,

They didn't tell me about this part of Motherhood

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Dear They didn't tell me,

Ahhh... the "rebellious child and the mother who loves her" storyline. Ain't it grand?

Well here's the deal; this is a battle you should stop waging. I am sure this is not the first time that your daughter has given you grief over "dress" issues; it is a daughter's job to work her Mothers' last nerve. I have "looks" in mind, but I am pretty sure they are the same as yours, so no Magic Remedy have I!

I am not a shrink, but I am a Mother, and even though my daughter is now grown and in her own home, I sorely recall the battles we had on the exact same topic of femininity and propriety. At the time, I didn't get the whole "I want to be me" demonstration. I took it as disobedient, rebellious and a reflection on my parenting skills. In some ways, with my daughter being my first child, I didn't know what to expect or what to do.

No one told me about the stages of Motherhood; in fact I was led to believe it was all pink and blue booties! I never thought about how I behaved while growing up and the very same stages of difficulty my Mother had with me. I, like you, was at my wit's end at many junctures in my daughter's growth and development, and it wasn't until I became a Grandmother that I realized a lot of the stress was of my own making!

In her youth, and when my daughter still said "yes Mommy," I was able to dress her in all the frills my heart desired. There were party dresses for special times, there were tennis whites for lessons, matching swimsuits and towels, full-on riding breeches and Wellington boots for the horsies, and then one day, she dismissed all that, and I found her riding the range in cut-off jeans, Dad's shirt and barefoot! My reaction was that of shock and dismay! How incorrect! How dangerous! How could she? What will others think?

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What you are experiencing is textbook typical! In fact, if your daughter did not speak her mind about her personal dress code, I would be worried! Of course there is a huge difference between “finding yourself” and out and out rudeness, and only you know the difference.

FASHIONGRANNY says; let her wear what she wants within the boundaries of propriety. Explain to her the importance of her personal propriety; because clothes do not make the girl, the girl makes the clothes. Don't set up a wall where a wall isn't required. You are going to need all the allegiance from her – and trust – you can muster for future battles of real importance!

Ever since the Garden of Eden, when Eve got curious and believed the Lie and rebelled, so shall we all fall short until we, on our own path, turn it around. The Bible has a verse that should be very comforting to you at this time – Proverbs 22:6.

“Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.”

Whether you are a Bible believer or not, this Proverb still is true. What good seeds you plant in children's youth, will surely blossom as they mature, and in your child's time, not yours! (This also pertains to “bad seeds.”)

You will see that your early teaching will start to shine, and one day when you least expect it, your daughter will be talking like you, dressing in the frills of her youth, and you will both be laughing at the “Dance” photo from Fall 2011, at which point she will ask, “How could you have let me wear that horrible outfit Mom??!! Oy Vey!”

Dear FASHIONGRANNY!

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I happen to have in my wardrobe a few "Jumpsuits" from the old days. They are still in great shape and I see where Jumpsuits are now in fashion. If I've done it before, can I do it again?

Signed,

Miss Free Fall

Dear Miss Free Fall,

Yes! You have my permission to recycle your Jumpsuits! The only requirement for this style of one-piece dressing is that it fits correctly.

The shoulders must be aligned with yours whether or not they are padded.

The length of the trouser leg must be appropriate to the height of heel you are wearing.

The gusset must fall properly so as not to produce camel toe.

The waist must be commensurate with your own waistline.

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Comfort is a major issue, as well, when wearing one-piece styles. Sit down a few times; raise your arms to see what happens. If you are uncomfortable – and you look uncomfortable! – donate your Jumpsuit immediately!

No one more than FASHIONGRANNY likes to recycle her vintage clothing into today's fashions! However, some old clothing just doesn't fit no matter what the label size says or how big a favorite it once was! Remember, the sizing of yesterday has nothing to do with the sizing of today.

Have fun, and if you were attempting an incognito look, you blew it, 'cause now, we will all be looking for that fashionable gal in a Jumpsuit!

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