



ASK DEANNA!
*Real People,
Real Advice*

Ask Deanna! Is an advice column known for its fearless approach to reality-based subjects!

Dear Deanna!

I got caught shoplifting and it was a traumatic experience. I had to go to court, perform community service and pay a fine. I made it through all of that, but now reality has set in. My friends think that I'm a thief, they are always watching their purses; when things come up missing, they look at me first. I made a mistake, it was one incident, and now I'm struggling in my personal relationships because I'm being judged. How can I prove I'm not the bad person they think I am?

Anonymous
Online reader

Dear Anonymous:

The crime you committed not only put a scar on your public record, but it has also put doubt in your credibility as a person. You're human and you will make irrational decisions. However, your friends knew you before the incident, and they are wrong to treat you in this manner. Use this as an opportunity to become a better person and do some housecleaning with your friendships. If they can't get over it, then, personally, you need to kick them to the curb, grow, and keep it moving.

Dear Deanna!

I'm in a happy relationship, and I think the world of my fiancé. He has proposed several times, but I keep telling him I'm not ready. After the first year, he began to show his impatience. We've been together over five years now, and I'm comfortable the way things are. I'm not in a hurry and think it can wait. He recently gave me an ultimatum that he won't wait much longer. I feel offended and want to know if this is considered disrespectful.

T.J.S
Oklahoma City, OK

Dear T.J.S:

There are plenty of women that would love to have your problem. If he loves you and the relationship has trust, good communication and no issues, then the problem is you. You're selfish, and if you have no intentions on marrying this man, you need to let him go. It's to your advantage from a benefits perspective, as well as the spiritual perspective. Don't wait. Marry this man before you lose him and end up looking back saying, "He's the one that got away."

Dear Deanna!

My mother plays favorites when it comes to my younger brother and sister because of who the father is. She is with my brother's father, and she's trying to hold on to a failing relationship. My brother is a terror and gets away with everything because if he is disciplined, that causes an argument. I am sick and tired of my little sister being miserable, going through punishment while my mother makes a fool of herself. How can I get through to my mom?

Anita
Wilkesboro, NC

Dear Anita:

You're mature enough to see the problem, so you should feel secure talking with your mother woman-to-woman. Simply point out the differences she makes between the two children and the harm she's placing upon your little sister. At the same time, you need to show her the flaws in the relationship without making it personal. Have this discussion in a neutral setting and also point out positive things, as well as the negative, and hope for the best.

Write: Ask Deanna! Email: askdeanna1@yahoo.com or 264 S. LaCienega Blvd. Suite 1283 Beverly Hills, CA 90211 Website: www.askdeanna.com.

Griffin gets tagged for N-word

MIAMI (AP) - A standup routine by Black comedian Eddie Griffin was stopped after he repeatedly used the n-word, a magazine's spokesman said recently.

Griffin, who has appeared in movies such as "Undercover Brother" and "Date Movie" and the TV show "Malcolm & Eddie," was performing at a Black Enterprise magazine event in the Miami suburb of Doral on Friday when he was cut off after using profanities and the n-word, said Andrew Wadium, a spokesman for the publication.

"We believe that ending the performance was the appropriate action," Wadium said.

About 1,000 people registered for the performance.



Eddie Griffin's set was cut short for using the n-word.

Griffin's publicist, Jeff Abraham, didn't immediately return an e-mail and a

call seeking comment.

Rev. Al Sharpton, who attended a meeting held by the magazine in Miami but not the performance, said the crowd gave an ovation to Earl Graves, the magazine's publisher, when he came on stage after the 39-year-old Griffin was pulled, according to a statement on the website of Sharpton's National Action Network.

The statement said

Sharpton "expressed gratitude that the nation's pre-eminent magazine for African-Americans stands behind the efforts of National Action Network in getting rid of the n-word."

Public discussion on the word's use increased last year following a tirade by "Seinfeld" actor Michael Richards, who used it repeatedly during a Los Angeles comedy routine and later issued a public apology.

The issue about racially insensitive remarks heated up earlier this year after talk show host Don Imus described Black members of the Rutgers University women's basketball team as "nappy-headed hos" in April.

At its July convention in Detroit, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People held a mock funeral for the word.

Black leaders, including Revs. Jesse Jackson and Sharpton, have challenged the entertainment industry and the American public to stop using the n-word and other racial slurs.

Rap's heroes talk money at college

GREENSBORO, N.C. (AP) - Those new Nikes are fresh, but will they rock your retirement like a money market account?

Rap artists and fans debated the finer points of money management this weekend at a seminar at North Carolina A&T University in Greensboro.

The event was sponsored by the Hip-Hop Action Network, led by music industry heavyweight Russell Simmons.

Simmons and performers like Jim Jones and Lil' Mo talked about how to avoid debt and invest intelligently. They discussed credit ratings and the advisability of buying a home.

Simmons brought street cred to the subject: He sold his stake in Def Jam Records for a reported \$100 million in 1999 and is now head of Rush Communications, an Entertainment, fashion and marketing conglomerate.

Their overall advice: Work hard, don't abuse credit and balance the bling against your future needs.

"Everybody wants to make it rain, but they never have something saved up for a rainy day," said Lil' Mo, a singer and songwriter.

The stars acknowledged they like the occasional frill.

Jones admitted that he buys "the hottest cars that come out," but advised that people with more modest incomes should stick to more practical transportation.

Singer Anthony Hamilton

sheepishly acknowledged a side-trip to the mall before the event, where he was dazzled by "sparkly Nikes that I purchased — on sale!"

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