



## ASK DEANNA! Real People, Real Advice

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

Dear Deanna!

I met a guy who I thought was really interested in me. I helped him get employment at my company, helped with his bills and paid child support for him. As soon as things started looking up for him, our relationship changed. Things hit the fan when he got a promotion and moved into another department. He is now telling me that he's focused on improving his life instead of dating me. I heard that he's dating someone else in the company. What do I do?

Crying and Miserable  
Online Reader

Dear Miserable:

You set yourself up by confusing help with being used and also giving up your money. You never should mix business with pleasure because it's a guaranteed recipe for pain. He used you to get ahead, and you can see early on that he's leaving you behind. If you heard that he's dating someone on the job, it's probably true. You can't do anything other than move on, be glad that you got out early, and pray for the new lady who will be his next sucker.

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Dear Deanna!

My nephew has left for college and has completely lost his mind. When he lived at home he was quiet, mild mannered and well behaved. I hardly know him now that he's away from home. He's still underage but he drinks, has tattoos and has become loud and rude. My sister simply turns her head and says he's an adult and I should mind my business. Is this normal when kids go off to college, or should I intervene and get him back on track?

Loving Aunt  
San Bernardino, CA

Dear Loving Aunt:

You may be messing in business that doesn't belong to you. Your nephew is an adult and his parents don't have any issues with his lifestyle, and maybe you should do the same. If he's still in college, getting good grades and staying out of trouble, then he's fine. You can't impose your expectations on him, but you can caution him about the drinking and any moral issues. In other words, accept his newfound adulthood and be there with gentle guidance.

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Dear Deanna!

I have a platonic relationship with a male friend of four years, but my fiancé doesn't like it. He has begun making hints that I've slept with my friend and accusing me of lying to him. I've only known my fiancé for two years and if I had to choose between the two men, I would choose my friend. How can I convince my fiancé that we're only friends and that nothing is going on? This is becoming stressful because I love both men and want them in my life. Help?

Sharon  
San Antonio, TX

Dear Sharon:

Your future husband is jealous of your relationship with your male friend. It's your responsibility to find balance as you seek to have both relationships. Invite your husband to be part of the friendship so he can understand and be more open minded. Also be mindful of your platonic friendship to make sure you're not giving your fiancé reasons to complain. If things don't improve after the air is clear, your fiancé has issues you certainly need to explore.

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# T.I. uses rights icon as mentor

ATLANTA (AP) — When he was growing up, most of T.I.'s male role models were either selling drugs or locked up in jail; he ended up following in both of those paths. Even after T.I. started his rap career and became one of its biggest stars, he didn't abandon a life of crime: He recently pleaded guilty to federal weapons charges and faces almost a year in jail.

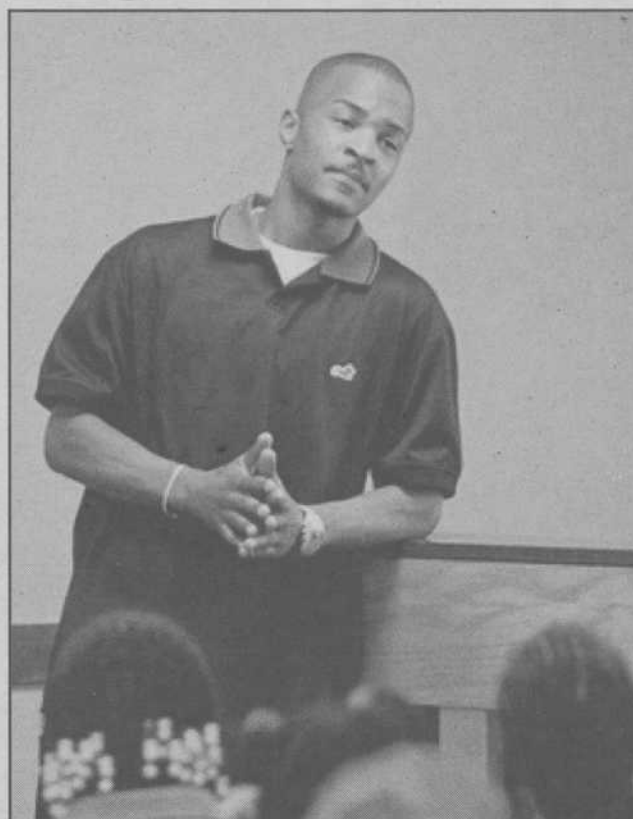
So T.I. would be the last person one would expect to be espousing the beliefs of Martin Luther King Jr. and reading the words of Andrew Young, the longtime civil rights leader, King compatriot and former U.N. ambassador.

But these days, T.I. is thinking about social responsibility and leadership, thanks to an unlikely mentor in Young, who reached out to the rapper a few months ago.

"He's bright enough, sensitive enough, vulnerable enough and intellectual enough that he might be able to help the society deal with the problem of violence," said Young, also a former mayor of Atlanta.

It may seem odd that the 76-year-old Young, who marched and stood for non-violence alongside King, would affiliate himself with someone caught purchasing machine guns and silencers.

But Young sees T.I. in a



Hip-hop star T.I., whose real name is Clifford Harris, talks with children about guns, gangs and drugs at a camp in Decatur, Ga. T.I. is facing jail time on federal gun charges.

positive manner — especially after they met at Young's home — saying the rapper has the potential to influence this hip-hop driven generation in a similar way King did during the civil rights movement.

"If you put him in jail for 20 years, that won't do any good toward gun violence," Young said. "The judge had the wisdom and courage to give him a chance and force him to think about the process."

T.I., whose real name is Clifford Harris, was sentenced in March to serve about a year in prison after completing at least 1,000 hours of community service and three years of supervised home detention. He was also given a \$100,000 fine. To avoid a lengthy sentence, he agreed to speak with youth about the pitfalls of guns, gangs and violence.

That's where Young stepped in. He took T.I. to a rehabilitation hospital in

New York to meet with people who were paralyzed from gang violence. He's given T.I. books to read, including one written by Young and another on the genocide in Rwanda.

Young hopes to take T.I. on a trip to Africa before he starts his prison sentence in late March. He already took him to an exclusive birthday party for poet Maya Angelou in May.

"He's a mentor of some sort to me," the 27-year-old T.I. said of Young in a recent interview, shortly after lecturing almost 100 youths about the importance of education and entrepreneurship.

"Thing is, I didn't really expect to be the spokesperson for positive decisions in kids lives," he said. "That's not necessarily what I saw for myself."

It's also not the kind of message he's doled out in his music. Though his lyrics aren't exceptionally violent or profane given rap's often raw standard, his rhymes depict — some would say glorify — life on the street, whether it deals with gunplay or drugs. He would certainly never be called a conscious rapper. Yet Young sees him doing great works. He welcomed T.I. to his home: They talked for almost three hours about King not initially wanting to lead the civil rights

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# Obama reaffirms his ties to Blacks

By Hazel Trice Edney  
Special to Sentinel-Voice

WASHINGTON (NNPA) — U.S. Sen. Barack Obama, the presumptive Democratic nominee and possibly America's first Black president, denies that he is distancing himself from Black constituents as he seeks to win broader support in the general election.

"I've spent the last year and a half on the campaign talking about problems of poverty and problems of injustice. That's been what my whole campaign has been built around," Obama said in an exclusive interview with the NNPA News Service. "My answer is, that's what I've been doing my whole campaign."

Obama was responding to a question pertaining to his criticism of absent Black fathers in a Father's Day message at the Apostolic Church of God in Chicago.

He said that speech should not send a signal that his gen-

eral election campaign will focus on the negatives of the Black community in order to win the support of undecided or conservative Whites.

"The fact that I made one speech about the very real problems of the fathers not looking after our kids doesn't negate everything that I've been talking about during the course of this campaign, about people lacking health-care about the problems of the unjust criminal justice system. I've given multiple speeches on these issues and I will continue to," he said.

Some pundits have observed that since the end of the primaries, Obama's campaign appears to be doing less reaching to African-Americans since he is no longer competing with Sen. Hillary Clinton.

In a current column headlined, "Obama Distances Himself From Blacks: Is There a Cost?" Dr. Ron Walters wrote, "It is common knowledge now that Barack

Obama has to distance himself from Black radicals, from his church, and much of his community in order to make White voters comfortable enough with him to trust him and then give him their votes. And he will probably show at the NAACP Convention. But the troubling trend which finds him absent from other venues that are the substance of Black life looks like he is taking the Black community for granted because of their thirst for his victory."

Even some members of the National Newspaper Publishers Association, a 200-member group also known as the "Black Press of America" that has given Obama two awards this year, note that he has been absent during both events.

"I am disappointed that Sen. Obama is not here. That is a big disappointment for me," said Seattle Medium Publisher Chris H. Bennett, a former NNPA president, as he spoke on a Black Press-

Black Church unity panel at the organization's summer convention late last month. "We're the Black Press of America. If you don't come down here and talk to us and ask us for your support, don't take us for granted. Yes, we love you Obama. But, we'll love you more, Senator, if you bring some of your Obama drama down here and talk to us in our annual convention."

Bennett continued, "We don't need a representative. Does that tell us that when he gets in the White House that we've got to go through 10, 12 or 15 other people in order to deal with him? I would think not. We need to deal with what we need to deal with and not be taken for granted."

Moments earlier, Obama representative Candice Tolliver had explained to the group that Obama did not attend because he was campaigning in Pennsylvania on

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