

Many faces of the Contemporary Woman

As a successful landscape designer today, when I took back, without hesitation, I can say, my best period was the time I spent with my husband and my two sons living in different cities and as members of Waltair Club, Delhi Gymkhana, Secunderabad Club, Bangalore & Century Club, Ooty Golf Club, growing along with my kids in my husband's loving care, protection and guidance.

A woman's first priority should be, to be her husband's and children's support, to be with them when they need her the most in sharing their triumphs and tears without indulging in self pity and then do something on her own for her satisfaction or to support the family or to make them proud of her.

"The essence of being a Woman is, that a Woman shows a Man what loving, sharing and caring is all about". This answer brought 'Sushmita Sen' the Miss Universe Crown.

'Balya, Kaumarya, Yavvana and Vriddhapyā' a woman should experience all these phases and live up to the expectation of her parents, in-laws and then her husband and children who should feel proud of her. A woman who is a creator of life itself, should be able to give a lot more to others than what she gets in return.

Today, however independent, intelligent, successful and dynamic a woman may be if she cannot respect her parents, husbands, in-laws and children's needs and priorities and her ambition for an identity makes her selfish enough to walk over her family, she doesn't deserve or command any respect or sympathy. No man would allow his wife, daughter or sister and no woman would allow her husband, son or brother to be in such a woman's company.

I recall an advertisement for the promotion of a woman's magazine. The enigma of the Indian woman lies in the fact that she lives a few centuries in one lifetime. She blends our pre-vedic cultural heritage with high tech work environment with ease. She is wife, mother, daughter and sister at the same time. If she has shattered the chains of superstition, she has

also amalgamated the strength of "Indianness" in her self. If at home she cares and loves, at work place she is independent, efficient and decisive. She combines style with substance and has a mind of her own. She has her ambitions and aspirations, her dreams and desires. She is smart and bright and she is the new woman - she has many faces.

I remember my grandmother saying that a woman has many important roles to play simultaneously, in her husband's life as the well known sanskrit sloka goes, "Mother while feeding, counsellor while in doubt, forgiving and patient like mother earth, serve like a servant and finally a mistress in bed".

We have come a long way from that and today the new woman has stepped out of the inner courtyard. She is a work of art and inspires awe. She has not forgotten her roots. She is always a giver and is as transparent as her prayers. She is the woman of love and sacrifice. At the same time, she is independent. Her freedom is like a song of the sky. Her touch has the romance of joy. Her blissful love breaks the cocoon of bondage and shatters dark illusions to liberate the soul. At the end of a dogday, with the calmness of dew, her love comes to her husband and family. She is the woman of pride.

She is no longer a doormat. She is confident, sure, intelligent and industrious. With a sure stride, she walks tall. She is fashion conscious and she is aware of her body and beauty. There is no schism of the self. Her "Voyage without" is in perfect harmony with her "Voyage within". She is the woman of confidence.

She is magic and lives and relives several lives in one life time. Independently, she takes her own decisions and thus has carved a niche for herself.

She can conduct herself with dignity and poise chairing board meetings or make presentations to elite audience or successfully bag crores worth of contracts in the midst of fierce competition. She at the same time has no qualms about bargaining endlessly with the grocer, laundry man or the milkman to save a few rupees as a housewife. She is the woman of substance.

is enchanting and creative. She captures her beauty on the Canvas as paintings and designs her own wardrobe. She knits, writes, sings and dances expressing her very own statement in hues and colours. Her creativity soars high - happy and free like the wind in her hair. She is the new woman.

At religious functions, weddings and at temples, she looks coy and feminine in traditional sarees wearing gold, diamonds and jasmines. At work place, she wears crisp salwar suits and switches to casual jeans, skirts and shirts in the evenings to look hip and smart.

She has taste and loves to be noticed and does not hesitate to show off in her stunning and glittering outfits on special occasions. She is the woman of style. For her loved ones, if she is forgiving, sensitive, compassionate and vulnerable - she is tough, ruthless, shrewd and uncompromising and a real taskmaster at work place. She is the complete woman.

I admire Kiranbedi, Shahnaz Hussain, Sonia Gandhi, Reena Ramchandran, Sharmila Tagore, P.T.Usha, Shobha De, Jaya Bacchan and many more

whose lives are best examples of multifaceted women working in different scenario.

Perhaps, people don't understand that sometimes a woman likes to be left alone and does not want to share those moments with others. Can't she sit alone when she likes, that too in the Club, which is considered the second home? She is no more inferior to a man as the new woman has a mind of her own and she is multi dimensional and woman of guts, honour and principles.

Today whatever I have achieved, it is no doubt because of my secure and disciplined upbringing I had from my parents, and grandparents along with my sisters and brothers at Hyderabad.

Ambition doesn't mean you should throwaway what you have or run away from your responsibilities to achieve something blindly and such women are inconsistent and incomplete.

- By J.Manjula Jagannath Rao,
Landscape Architect



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