

Aging Hair

Obed Ladiny

BEFORE YOU READ: How do you feel about gray hair?

Volunteer Hair-Plucker for My Stepfather

I remember back in the early 80s, my stepfather used to have us children pull out white hairs from his head. I didn't like the idea of standing on

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my feet to pull them out while he sat. As I pulled, he would check for more with a small mirror. I couldn't care less if his head turned white or stayed black.

I personally thought it was a waste of my valuable teenage time. It was a miserable job with no allowance.

Will I Be So Insecure?

Doing this made me wonder about my own day when I, too, would start to age. Would I accept the inevitable with dignity or would I worry to the point of dyeing my hair black or even calling my own kids to help remove them. These thoughts forced me to confront what we humans dread, that is — getting old and losing our youthful looks. We try to hide old age, but it shows in our features, especially our hair.

There are different ways people deal with aging hair: some change the color of their hair; some

wear wigs; some wear hats or other head coverings; some make their head bald; and some simply leave it alone and give it positive names such as wisdom hair.

Interestingly, there are people who actually adore their white hairs. Even the young are making fashion statements by dyeing their hair white or silver. Nowadays there are just as many people who accept and even flaunt their white hair as there are those who do all they can to hide it.

Aging Isn't the End of the World

Hearing both positive and negative opinions has somewhat calmed my own insecurities; besides, there's nothing any of us can do to prevent old age. How we think of old age and white hair is only in our minds. Aging isn't the end of the world — at least for me.

AFTER YOU READ: What job did Obed do for his stepfather and how did it affect him? How does Obed feel now about aging and white hair?

Obed Ladiny is a student at the Brooklyn Public Library's Pre-HSE Program in Brooklyn, NY. Born in Haiti and raised in Brooklyn, NY, he understands French and is fluent in Creole and English. He likes to read, and he is a budding poet. He is also a novice theologian and wants to be a teacher.



Portraits of Older People

What adjectives would you use to describe these people?

