

How not to look like your mama or daughter

Written by Marcia Humphrey
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I recently complimented a friend at church on her sassy, new haircut. She replied, “Oh thank you girl. I had to do something, because when I looked in the mirror, I was seeing my mama!” That led into a brief conversation about the surprising and sometimes disappointing realities of life after forty. (I need reading glasses more and more.) Please don’t get the wrong impression, friends. Overall, I embrace my age and the aging process as a gift from God, although I confess that I often forget the exact number of that gift, and have to do the math. My motto is, “when I stop getting older, then it means I’m dead!” (*Having said that, please don’t get mad at me if you hear me joking about being 29 and holding... I told you I have a hard time remembering the exact number!*) Just because you see your body changing and slowing, you don’t have to give in to the notion that the rest of life is downhill after forty or fifty. Aside from getting a new haircut, here are a few simple ways that you can make your mama stop staring back at you when you look in the mirror.

Check Your Attitude. Are you always complaining about getting old? Do you love telling everybody who’ll listen about your detailed list of aches and pains? If so, cut it out! Be like my Aunt Doris, a spry 86 year-old, who always says, “I’m fine, I’m fine, baby!” God’s grace and that kind of talk keep her vibrant. It is a proven fact, that if your conversation and thoughts are filled with negativity, you will be more likely to feel unhappy. Solution? Become appreciative. Begin each morning with prayer and name five things for which you can (and should) be grateful—revisit your list throughout the day as needed. Finally, my husband and I found a great solution to the mild aches and pains we were experiencing these days—it is a common, but manageable issue. We started taking an over-the-counter pill containing msm, glucosamine, and chondroitin. *As always, check with your physician before trying any new diet or supplement.*

Check Current Styles. Instead of dressing in clothes your mama would wear, keep your wardrobe updated with accessories (think fun bracelets), stylish (sale) shoes (the wedge bootie is still hot), and a stylish pair of jeans. Also, consider adding one of the new smoothing

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undergarments as a secret weapon. Finally, flip through a fashion magazine for a closer look spring trends.

Check Your Face. Have you been wearing the same make-up for the last twenty years? Yours could be aging you. Visit a department store make-up counter and get a fresh perspective with a makeover, and see what you (and your most honest girlfriend) think. Brighter smiles can be achieved in about 3 days with the at-home teeth whitening strips. Just don't overuse them.

The reality is that reaching mid-life does bring a special set of challenges; you may have just become an empty nester, newly single, or you may be adjusting to the fact that you do look more like your mama than the bright-eyed young woman you used to be. Yet, as with any challenge, you must acknowledge your feelings, but not allow yourself to get stuck there. Continue to reinvent yourself, and not just with a new outfit. Experiment with new interests, new volunteer opportunities, and new hobbies. Find joy and renewed excitement in doing something completely different. Keep experimenting with different activities until you find the thing that fits and then—Enjoy!

Marcia Humphrey is an interior decorator and home stager who specializes in achieving high style at low costs. A native of Michigan, she and her husband, Lonnie, have three children.