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Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!

IN YOUR SHADOW

By Arleen M. Kaptur

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There is an old saying: You can choose your friends but not your family. Everyone has certain choices to make in their lives, except for that one initial launch into this world. We are born and we are who we are – no decision on our part – not even the chance at some suggestions.

Your entire being – the color of your skin, your grandparents' homeland, your entire genetic make-up is right there – and now you have a choice – you can do what you believe you can, or you can carry your sense of pride or shame with you your entire life and never reach the goals and reap the benefits you could have.

Writing is a career where the choices from the very beginning are yours. In a sense, you create your character, give him all his genetic qualities, and then even write the history for his ancestry. You are in control of who, what, where, and when. However, as with any choice, there are drawbacks as well as advantages. If your character is not a member of your particular ethnic, religious, or race group, your ability to relate and to transmit ideas run into a brick wall, so to speak. Sure, you can put yourself in their place, but it would be according to your standards, and your beliefs. This ingrained system of standards and beliefs were taught to you by your parents, relatives, environment. and the world itself. Now that you have decided to write, how do you overcome this stumbling block?

The literary piece you give birth to should be as factual as possible, even though it is a fictional piece. If you feel you can, just in your own mind, place yourself in someone else's soul, forget it. You can't because the only person you can reach into and enter their very being is yourself. Now what do you do? The answer is reach out, network, and include everything in your research work. Listen to both sides of the coin, and if you don't agree, the notion to state your carved in stone moral or otherwise statements are irrelevant. Your reader needs to place themselves in your character's heart and see the world through his/her eyes. A slight remark made

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to one person may be a monumental insult to an individual of another genre. Don't

judge, or build up or belittle the circumstances. State them exactly, as best you can, from that literary person's inherited background and make-up.

Don't ever feel that you will be able to disseminate exactly what it feels like to be someone else. We all have trouble just trying to be ourselves. However, with your character, you will have to step back and let what is the truth come forward. Then you can create the situations, the plots, and the reactions.

Every group of human beings have their particular quirks, beliefs, and moral systems. Try not to place one group's issues and relate them through your own eyes.

Every great literary masterpiece gave credibility to their characters through writing

about them as they are. Write about their individuality, their values, and their history. Give them the opportunity to voice their contradictions and their acknowledgements. Let them be themselves and you will be on your way to a masterpiece that the entire world will cherish.

Trace historical aspects for your character and take into account the evolving changes to his/her particular heritage. Check items such as foods, livelihoods, and statistics. Once you have a volume of information, you will have the grounds for a great novel or article. As writers, we are so tempted to always give our opinions, our views. You are creating this character and your story's success will be on who he/she is. Readers will agree or disagree with your character but they will learn to respect and value his/her reactions, and choices. They will, in turn, take into account the circumstances that brought your character to this particular point in life. The most enduring characters are those that are real, life-like, and not clones of the writer. Give your characters room to breathe, and be themselves.

I believe God does not need help in creating people. He gives writers the fertile ground of diversity and the ability to relate to readers. Give your readers reliability, authenticity, and an opportunity to decide for themselves,

and you are on your way to successful writing.

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Shadow Fun

By Deborah Shelton

Are you looking for fun projects to do, but are short on supplies? The answer is simple: Shadows!

Shadow Tag

Turn an ordinary walk to the mailbox into a lively game of shadow tag. It's played much the same way as regular tag, except that instead of tagging a person, you tag the person's shadow.

Silhouettes

Use the combination of light and shadow to create frameable works of art. Use tacks or tape to hang a sheet of white construction paper or poster board to the wall. Sit or stand next to the paper so that the shadow of your profile shows up when a light (flashlights work well) is shined on you. While you sit very still, have someone trace the outline of your shadow on the paper with a pencil. Once the tracing is complete, cut the silhouette out with a pair of scissors and mount it on a sheet of black paper. Make several silhouettes of your family members and display them together.

Shadow Puppets

Who doesn't love shadow puppets? This is the perfect almost–no–materials–required activity for guaranteed fun. Simply direct light onto a wall (again, flashlights work great) and make shadows with your hands. Try some easy favorites such as a barking dog and a turkey with a droopy, dangly neck. Then invent shadow puppets you've never seen before just by moving and bending your fingers and hands in different positions.

Shadow Town

Imagination is a wonderful thing—especially when there is lots of sunshine around! Make your own shadow town by arranging small boxes, cans, and other small items into a straight line in direct sunlight. Try doing this activity on a concrete driveway or on a large piece of paper or cardboard. Once the objects are lined up and casting a shadow, trace the outline of the shadow with sidewalk chalk to form your city's "skyline." When the skyline is finished, invite your friends to bring their toy cars over to play in your shadow town.

Deborah Shelton is a mother, freelance writer, and author of the brand new book, "The Five Minute Parent: Fun & Fast Activities for You and Your Little Ones." Visit Deborah's website for more family-friendly ideas:

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