

BY JOAN LINCOLN

Connect with your individual style and wardrobe ... at almost any age.

Here's my take on ageless chic and age appropriate style. I'm talking women of style and personality, women who are aware that wearing miniskirts over their knee at 50 is not a good idea, unless of course you have a tennis racket or golf club in hand. Wouldn't you rather look great, than great for your age?

Let's Talk Hair.

Where is it written that women of a "certain age" should cut her hair short?

I am often asked about my head full of long, curly locks—"Why don't you wear your hair curly all the time?" Another often asked question, mostly by women who have chosen to wear their hair in a short easy care style, "When are you going to cut your long hair short?" My responses to these two questions are: first, I don't wear my hair curly all the time because it's a lot of work to get those curls to cooperate. Curly hair girls are considered "lucky" to have all that volume and bounce, it's a full-time job to try and control those curls and frizz in our Upstate NY weather. Second, my answer to the question about cutting my hair is "never". I tell my daughters I am going to be the "Grandmother" who wears her gray hair braided down the middle of her back as long as it will grow. My mother still sports a lovely shoulder length silver-blonde hair style and I celebrate this as she enjoys her 81st birthday this year. This apple did not fall far from the tree...but, just far enough. I look at my Mom as an ageless style mentor.

Entertaining Fashion Lessons: A Good Read

In her book *The Threads of Time, The Fabric of History: 38 Profiles of African American Designers and Dressmakers from 1850-Present*, one of the designers author Rosemary E. Reed Miller profiles is Anne Cole Lowe (1898—1981) the earliest African American designer to become part of the New York fashion establishment in 1950. Lowe is best known for designing Jacqueline Kennedy's wedding dress which featured 50 yards of silk taffeta, with a very full circular skirt tucked and pleated (Lowe's specialty). The wedding dress was shown to the world on September 12, 1953 and became the most photographed in history. It is housed in the Kennedy Library in Boston.

For all those who are sick and tired of seeing style and fashion presented solely as a young woman's game, behold *Advanced Style* by Ari Seth Cohen. I received a signed copy of this masterpiece from a client friend who embraces her look every day. She treats the streets as her own personal runway. *Advanced Style* inspires all of us who dabble in the world of fashion to create our own personal style and remember that age is just a number. The book and documentary by Cohen are a fun refreshing display of images and interviews of women who haven't thrown in the fashion towel. Their stories and individual styles will lift your spirits and perhaps your eyebrows.

I didn't choose to be an "ageless style mentor", as one of my clients affectionately calls me, I grew into it. I embrace my individual style every day. One day is very different from the next for me. At the age of 55, I have come to realize that fashion is a tool of expression, it allows me extraordinary opportunities to express my personal emotions through my wardrobe, outfit with style and flair. I would have to say that my style ranges from a great pair of jeans and cowboy boots, to a free-spirited layered look or a more conservative classic Chanel look. When I approach dressing for the day I take three things into consideration: the day's activities, weather and the "party" at Panache!

Taking care of you is a daily deal you make with yourself. You can decide to fall prey to fleece, sweaters and stretchy, shapeless pants or you can "rock what you've got" out of the house.

Dare to embrace your "advanced style"!

Joan Lincoln owns Panache Vintage and Finer Consignment in Brighton Commons. Her Fashion Forward segment can also be heard every Thursday morning during Wake Up With Tony on WARM 101.5 exploring all of the latest fashion trends and styles.

For The Love of Fashion: *Style vs. Trends*

