

MUSIC'S OTHER BOSS SPEAKS

RICK ROSS IS A "MASTERMIND." PAGES 20-21



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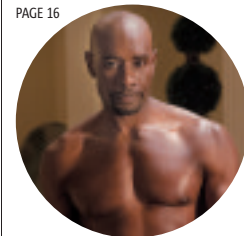
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MTA seeks to slash coming fare hikes

Wallet relief. The MTA said on Wednesday that it wants to reduce two upcoming fare hikes by almost half. **Mixed reaction.** Transit groups applauded the decision while the MTA's main union blasted the move. PAGE 02

Morris Chestnut on 'Holiday'

PAGE 16



Marant designs new H&M line

PAGE 23



Going out: Eat more, help more

PAGE 26



JUSTICE FROM THE ASHES

PAGE 04

Stacey Cornelius is one of the success stories of the Red Hook Community Justice Center. The group was built out of a neighborhood tragedy. / BESS ADLER, METRO

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He loves his children, but his relationship with his wife is suffering — a problem that is all too familiar to parents. / PIXLAND

HELP, MY MARRIAGE IS NOW A 'PSEUDO-FRIENDSHIP'

I'm a 36-year-old man, married eight years to a woman who is basically the Belgian version of me. We have two girls who are 4 and 7. Our youngest child has special needs. I love my children, but my wife and I simply tolerate each other because of our shared interests and, of course, the kids. We never have sex and our relationship has devolved into a pseudo-friendship. We have talked about getting things on track, but there never seem to be any results. I would really appreciate any advice you might have with this situation.

If you want to keep your current relationship or are seeking a new one, please understand you will screw it up. Repeatedly. Without meaning to, you will say things to hurt your partner. You will be inconsiderate. You may even grow bored in the long run.

Maintaining a good relationship is less about getting everything right and more about realizing that you and your partner are both perfectly flawed human beings. Sometimes a little advice goes a long way.

You understand the situation at hand, and you gave no indication that you want out. It sounds like you feel restless and trapped by your wife, and want to be heard, validated, excited and get laid on a regular basis. This is my advice:

Open up

Don't be afraid of your differences and be ready to talk them out

Seeing someone as a copy of yourself is an attempt to dodge challenges. You avoid each other's vulnerabilities because neither wants the confrontation. This ultimately stunts your growth as an individual and partner. Learning to value your differences — and getting them out in the open — is a step in the right direction.

Look at your conversations

To speak is to take action. Be mindful about who initiates your discussions about how things are going. Who speaks loudest or the most? Are both parties listening? Do either of you see progress? Be purposeful.

Define concrete terms

Don't passively talk about "getting things on track." Explain what "better" looks like to you: at least X days of one-on-one time without the children, and sex Y times a month. When I moved out of a Manhattan studio,

I didn't want a better apartment — I wanted a one-bedroom place with a dining area for parties. Apply this same level of specificity and focus when expressing how you need to be loved.

Get to know your partner before having children

If you've been married eight years and the oldest child is 7, it is possible the two of you were together less than a year before getting pregnant. While this is not independently problematic, kids make it very difficult to leave — so think hard first.

Commit to change

If it's over for you, don't drag your partner through indecision. Want out? To end your relationship, say when and why you are leaving. Alternately, if you wish to keep and strengthen what you have, voice your concerns, listen to your partner's needs, show up, seek counseling or do whatever else it takes to make things better in the short term. Check in and reevaluate as time goes on.

Feeling puzzled, scared or frustrated in love or lust? Email questions@funkybrownchick.com and we'll talk it out. (You can remain anonymous.)

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