



AU NATUREL

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Personal and Salon Updates

As the transition of Presidential power takes place in America, I am writing this missive. There are many thoughts that come to mind about the past four years. Much negative energy has been ignited by opposition to the past administration. I for one welcome the change. But now that the page has turned, I feel no ill will towards our former President. I'm ready to move on. Biden was not my first choice as the Democratic nominee, but I voted for him, I support his presidency and I wish him well. I pray for his success because the country is in an unprecedented place. Salons, restaurants and other businesses, particularly small businesses, are struggling. Churches remain closed. People employed by theater and the arts are surely at their wits end. Parts of the construction industry are on the decline, and schools remain a hodge-podge of muddling through based on the dictates of the respective localities. Over 400,000 lives have been lost to the Coronavirus under circumstances that could have been avoided, as other countries with re-opened economies have demonstrated. I am thankful for a vaccine and all of the hands and hearts that worked to create and expedite its availability and distribution. I have worked in the area of clinical trial research for 10 of my past 20 years of professional work, and I can attest to the fact that the pace of testing and approval of this vaccine is UNPRECEDENTED! I'm willing to give Trump credit for expediting the process to approve a vaccine. But that does not relieve him of the equal responsibility for creating the conditions which made it's need so dire. I pray that families are able to heal; I pray that the rate of mortality declines rapidly and soon. I pray that Biden's [100 day Coronavirus challenge](#) is a success. But I have deep concerns about the dissenters. It has baffled me for some time that people can scream "Re-open the State" in one breath and "I have the right NOT to wear a mask" in the other. It is illogical and counterproductive thus creating the impression that dissent is the end goal. Two weeks ago, I traveled to Alabama with my husband to accompany him on site visits for his job JUST TO GET OUT OF THE HOUSE! While speaking with one landowner who spoke to me while Lloyd took pictures of the property, he asked where my family was from in Alabama and followed with light banter. Then, he touched on Coronavirus. He spoke about how the virus is sweeping through Alabama and taking people away from here. "I personally know about 10-11 people who have died!" I was shocked. I then recounted how my husband and I traveled to the state back in April-May and saw people were not wearing masks. He said, "They weren't. It's true. But now, things are bad." He was wearing his mask as I spoke with him. And he looked SHOOK! He told me stories of some of the deaths. It was sobering. So upon reflection, I pray for this nation, I pray for the families of the deceased, I pray for our new President, I pray for my co-workers, I pray for my family, my business, my community. My life is a gift to be spent in service to God and at His discretion, so I will not pray for it. I only act in ways which demonstrate that I value it and will continue to serve until called home.

Grey Tresses Gone Wild: Highlights from Without, Strengthening from Within

In the last issue of Au Naturel, I wrote about ways to accentuate greying tresses. This issue provides my own personal testimony of the experience while also providing more tips about improving the structure of the hair. Per the last issue, one suggestion was the use of Shimmer Lights to correct yellowing and/or a dull hue to the hair. At the time, I had not yet tried the product, so my suggestion was simply based on general knowledge. Since my last issue, I decided to do a bit more research. I studied product pros and cons and made a decision accordingly. I decided NOT to use Shimmer Lights Shampoo for two primary reasons: 1) I don't shampoo my hair. I co-wash. 2) Some users spoke of the drying effect of the product and the strong need to condition after shampooing. Because my scalp tends to get really dry, I didn't want to possibly further exacerbate the problem. After additional research, I decided to use a purple conditioning treatment or mask rather than a shampoo. As such, I went to my local Sally's beauty supply and studied the purple products on the store shelf. After some time reading the labels and assessing their purpose, I finally decided on a product called [One-N-Only Shiny Silver Ultra Reconstructive Treatment](#). I chose this product because it has similar anti-yellowing properties as purple shampoo but it is also a keratin (protein) treatment. *(Note: This product looks bluer than purple which made me really nervous because blue shampoo can make yellow hued hair turn greenish. I'm definitely not down with THAT look, though I've seen some pretty gorgeous green tresses on others. But I studied the label extensively before placing it in my hair. The ingredients included the color "violet," so I took the plunge.)* I used the purple reconstructive treatment according to the manufacturer's suggestion. Below are before and after photos of the experience. **Full disclosure:** I decided to trim my ends, so I blow-dried it after co-washing. Because straighter hair reflects light more, my hair is shinier in the after photos. But, it's not the shine that's most noteworthy. It's the change from a yellower hue to silver. I don't abuse my hair or use chemical products on it, so I THOUGHT my grey was white. But after taking pictures of it up close, I realized it had some yellowing despite my naturalista lifestyle. Grey hair can yellow for different reasons, including sun exposure, use of non-white hair products or chlorine. After comparing it with the after photos, it's clear that it was due for a refresher. The purple shampoo REALLY does create a more alluring result! **My recommendation:** If you want to accentuate your grey hair, try purple shampoo and if you want added conditioning, use a reconstructive treatment like the one mentioned above. But regardless of the product used, don't leave it in too long. Purple products can stain the hair violet in excess.



After doing more research about the structure and the changing condition of aging hair, I got some answers to my own questions about why my hair is thinner and shorter than it used to be. Hair gets thinner because the actual

hair follicle shrinks over time. As such, the individual hairs emerging from the follicle are thinner than in your youth. The hair gets shorter because, the hair spends more time in the telogen or resting phase of hair growth than in the past. So if your hair growth cycle is 5 years for each individual strand and it spends more time in the resting stage (which is a non-growth phase) as you get older, it is only logical that it will be shorter over time.

Aging hair is also characterized by dryness and brittleness. Hair that is overly dry or brittle is prone to split ends and/or breakage. Mine is no exception. This happens to aging hair largely due to a loss of elasticity as well as reduced production of sebum (natural hair oil). So, I find that I need to use oil a bit more than usual. I recommend using Jojoba Oil but when my hair feels really dry, I use Castor Oil. It's a lot heavier than Jojoba oil though, so if you want your hair to move with the wind, you'll feel more comfortable with Jojoba.

All of these effects of aging are indicative of structural changes deep within our DNA. While we cannot prevent the reality of aging, we can work to strengthen and nourish the hair for optimal outcomes. One strategy is to take vitamin supplements designed to strengthen hair and nails. These often include biotin, vitamin E and zinc. The scientific proof that these vitamins make a difference is not strong, but many people swear by them. Others take collagen supplements to provide their hair with added protein, as hair and nails are made of protein. While I have started to take biotin in addition to my regular daily vitamin, I do not take collagen supplements. The primary reason why I don't is that they are made from cows. As a vegetarian, I don't consume anything that requires that animals be killed to produce it. So, I'm not willing to compromise on my personal ideals. I understand that the wellness industry is working on the creation of a vegan collagen supplement. But it doesn't appear to be readily available. So, I opt for obtaining my protein through a balanced diet. Because I am a vegetarian, I DO have to work a bit to get adequate amounts of protein as well as key amino acids. Some days I work harder than others; but I don't stress about whether my diet is healthy. I opted a long time ago to live and eat for optimal health. I figure that God will take care of the rest.

All in all, aging is a reality of life that cannot be avoided. In our youth, we take MUCH for granted. If we're lucky, we're able to live somewhat carefree up until our 40s. I sure did! But once we reach our 50s, it becomes imperative that we work harder to maintain the assets that we have accepted as a given for so long. I'm not suggesting that we should obsess about the changes that our bodies naturally experience to the point of becoming fretful or worried. Because at the end of the day, we MUST accept the inevitability of time. But, we can always take small steps to maintain optimal hair and physical health and vitality. Hair vitamins, hair oils and purple protein treatments are the tools that are now in my own personal arsenal to achieve optimal outcomes. I encourage you to research what works for your lifestyle and make choices that will gain the best results. Embrace the greying beauty of you.