

Don't call me "honey"!
by Sherlea Dony, VP, RSWNY

Ever been on the phone when the woman on the other end addresses you as "honey"? Ever been in, say, Bonton's, and the female sales associate, young enough to be your granddaughter, calls you "honey"? Isn't there some other way of showing friendliness or interest without patronizing me? What about a nice, warm, "How can I assist you?" without tacking on the dreaded endearment? You don't even know me! Heck, I'd rather be called "sir" than "honey" if it has to come to that. I'd even love to hear the old Lily Tomlin line, "How may I, in all humble servitude, be of assistance to you?!! snort snort"

I call my friends "honey," "babe," "girlfriend," "Mary," etc., but they're my family, and I and feel entitled to use any term of endearment I want to. But total strangers?

Dear goddess, maybe I'm sounding like Andy Rooney, a guy who really annoys me, even though I often agree with his point of view! Am I really becoming a curmudgeon at 55?

I remember light years ago when I was just a pup-single and going to the bars. If a PYT called me "babe," I'd be at her side to check her out. I didn't know her, but yet *that* was OK. Hey, it didn't happen all that often, but it did happen. Once.

Hmm, maybe I need to rethink this. In my early days as a feminist, farbeit for a man to call me "honey" or "babe"! "Could you make some coffee for the meeting, honey," a male attorney made the mistake of asking me. Bite me! I let him know in the blink of an eye that I was definitely not his "honey," and he could get his own damn coffee. (No, I didn't get fired!) Now women are talking like that too! What's the 411 on a woman addressing another woman this way? I don't like it, have I told mentioned that?

Nursing home employees are notorious for calling residents "honey" or "dear." "Let me help you with your dinner, dear," "Here, honey, you need to drink this water." Come on, these residents have names and deserve some respect! Whatever happened to "Mr. Smith" or the ever-popular "Ms. Smith," or a first name *only* if the resident says that's what s/he prefers? Imagine addressing your boss as "honey." Wouldn't work, would it?? It has to do with respect. Don't people see how patronizing it is? Geez.

So don't call me honey unless you are a friend! Thanks for listening....

On a totally different note, Rainbow Seniors' potlucks are every third Sunday of the month at the 1st Universalist Church, 150 S. Clinton Ave. Our Thanksgiving and December holiday celebrations draw large and festive crowds. Please bring a dish to pass and come make new friends and catch up with people you know. We also have a weekly yoga class and a monthly Euchre Club. Check out our Web site—www.rainbowseniorswny.org—for more details, or give us a call at 585-442-6369.