

TRESS Talk



Entrepreneur Shaily Kataruka speaks about her journey, and how it began when she realized the importance of scalp care



Shaily Kataruka, founder & CEO, The Earth Collective

BINDU GOPAL RAO

Growing up, Shaily Kataruka had two ambitions – becoming an entrepreneur and being a creative person. It was hard to choose between the two. And that conflict is key to understanding her story

FLASH BACK

Kataruka spent her first 10 years in

Nepal with her parents, then went to Mussoorie International School, a boarding school where she learned to be independent by the time she graduated when she was 18.

Trying to strike a balance between creativity and entrepreneurship, she learned fashion designing and information technology from NIFT, New Delhi. “My first job ... was as a lead designer with an

Ahmedabad-based firm,” Kataruka says. “However, I let it go when I married into a business family from Kolkata.” Her in-laws own a cosmetic manufacturing and exporting company.

While the family became her priority in the early years, Kataruka was determined to follow her ambitions.

“My husband and father-in-law paved the way for me to become an entrepreneur,” she says. “With their help, I got the opportunity to not just take my family’s legacy forward but also make it my own.” She then launched The Earth Collective, her hair care brand, in 2020.

WHY HAIR?

While Kataruka always had good hair and experimented with chemical treatments, haircuts, hairstyles and hair care routines, the same was not true of her husband, Ashish. Not much given to hair care, he began losing hair.

“Among my family and friends, I came across many who faced various issues regarding hair care and nourishment,” says Kataruka. “Ashish, based on his personal experience and industry insights, told me that there were some deficiencies in the Indian hair care

HAIR CARE TIPS

- Heat oil and apply hot oil to the scalp and ends.
- Rinse hair with cold water. Avoid warm water for hair washes.
- Dry hair naturally.
- Condition hair post-cleansing to seal the hair cuticles to avoid any dirt and bacteria to set in easily.
- Avoid combing hair when wet to avoid breakage.
- Use a wide-toothed comb.
- Style hair naturally, using hair serums and moisturizers as opposed to heating tools.
- Trim hair every six months for healthy, full hair length.
- Avoid sulfate-infused shampoos as they lead to hair dryness and damage.
- Oiling and pre-shampoo hair masking is a must once a week.
- Give hair the hydration and boost it requires with regular use of hair serums, hair moisturizers, enriching hair masks and, most importantly, oil shots

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sector. While people kept searching for good hair products, they hardly ever focused on scalp care. We wanted to make everyone appreciate that taking care of the scalp was essential for healthy, lustrous locks.”

The brand, which also calls itself The Hair Specialist, has a large selection of hair care products that bring together elements from nature and science.

A NEW WORLD

As a woman entrepreneur, she prefers not to focus on gender challenges as she believes capacity of an individual matters most. “The society is more accepting of a woman stepping out and carving out a path of her own,” Kataruka says. “I feel that liberation is more of a mindset. If a woman feels free in her mind, she can do what matters to her.”

Kataruka spends a lot of time understanding customers’ needs and addressing their hair concerns. When not working, she plays board games with her kids, checks out Netflix with her husband and goes on walks with her friends.

Her advice for wannabe young women entrepreneurs is simple: “Imagine, dream then decide what you want. It is your decision only which will make your dreams a possibility.”



The Earth Collective products help nourish your scalp.