

To be or not to be... Me

That is the question

The saying 'fake it 'till you make it' is one that we've likely all heard, and putting this notion into practice can come in handy! Like that time your teacher asked you a question that you didn't know the answer to, but you gave a response with such confidence that you managed to sound as if you knew what you were talking about. We've all been there. But what happens if we fake it and make it worse?

Often, when we aren't confident in ourselves or we've bought into the idea that we aren't good enough, we start to wish we were different or 'better'. In an ideal world our inner sass-Queen/King would fly into action and hype us up; proclaiming "you're perfect the way you are, you don't need to look like the over-filtered Instagram clones, you're more than good enough, you're loved and fabulous!" However, all too often our inner bully rears their head and whispers all those horrible thoughts that keep us trapped in a dungeon of self-hatred: "you're not skinny/curvy enough, they only hang-out with you because they feel sorry for you, don't speak up - you'll sound stupid, follow the crowd or they'll think you're weird." The more we accept these negative thoughts, the more warped our 'conditions of self-worth' become, causing low self-esteem.

When we start to live our lives according to these toxic conditions of self-worth, we can start to play a character that we think other people would like more than our genuine self. We do this for a range of reasons but it's usually because we think it will make our lives better. We think we'll find it easier to fit in, make friends, perhaps to be less of a target for bullies and to help us feel more accepted. This can work, but often only for a short time, and the biggest downfall is how disconnected we can start to feel from the people around us, because they only get to know and connect with the character we're playing.

Imagine waking up every day and putting on a costume to play someone you're not. Someone who's a constant reminder of the imperfections that you believe you have and someone you think is 'better' in every way. If you're an actor, everyone knows the person they see isn't real; you get to remove the costume, go home and be your genuine self. How exhausting would it be to play that character 24/7, having to act the way you think this better 'you' should act all the time, in order to be more accepted and loved.

One day, you look around and realise that you're surrounded by people who love the character you've chosen to play, but don't know 'you'. You notice these 'friends', who you've always felt slightly disconnected from, have very little in common with the genuine you and soon you start to resent the character you've been playing - the person others think you are. You remove the costume, stand as your genuine self and realise that no one knows you. You don't even recognise yourself.

Self-love and appreciation of who you are makes you proud to be you. This pride nurtures confidence and draws people into your life who want to be around your genuine self. Therefore they complement your life as a whole, strengthen your best qualities and help you work on your not so great ones. Playing a character only cheats yourself out of making these true connections. So, start telling yourself that you ARE good enough. Stop trying to be someone you think is 'better', because you do you perfectly - better than anyone else in fact. Give your inner Queen/King a megaphone to shout self-love over the whispers of your inner bully. Be proud of who you are - unfiltered imperfections and all.

