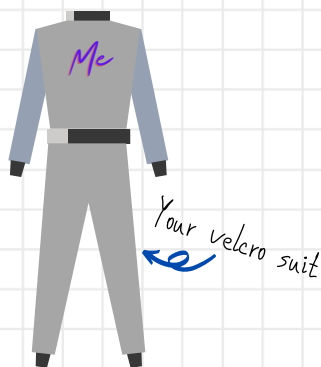


Your Velcro Suit

Imagine that everyone is born wearing an invisible velcro suit.



As we go through life, who we are and what we believe changes and develops based on:

- Our experiences
- The people we're around and who we meet (family, friends and teachers)
- The choices we make about who we want to be

From these, every aspect of what makes you 'you' (positive and negative) becomes a patch on your velcro suit.



Think about how you describe yourself: your personality, likes, dislikes and beliefs.

Now think about why you are the way you are and the patches you've collected. Did you agree to have all those patches stuck to your velcro suit?

It's very likely that there will be some aspects of who you are that have been made into patches and stuck to your suit without you agreeing to them being there. Here's an example:

Alfie was taught by his parents that black people aren't kind, so he grew up with this belief. As a result, Alfie had a patch on his velcro suit that read 'black people are mean'.

When Alfie went to Primary School he met Sophia - a black girl in his class. Sophia was kind to Alfie; she made him laugh and shared her fruit with him when he didn't have a snack at break time. This experience taught Alfie that black people can be just as kind as everyone else.

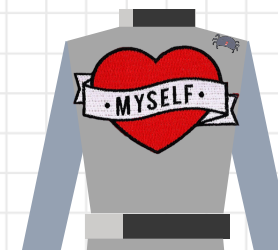
Learning and understanding that his parents were wrong was confusing for Alfie, but he made the choice to throw away the 'black people aren't kind' patch and replace it with a patch that read 'I don't judge people based on their appearance'.

Patch Transformation

So, how can you work out what patches are there because you want them on your suit and which ones are there because someone else has stuck them onto your suit, without you agreeing? It's simple! Just ask yourself if you've had an experience that created that patch.



Sometimes it's hard to take off a patch when people around you seem happy to wear theirs or they don't like the patches you choose, that make up who you're proud to be. It takes courage and determination to sort through your patches but there are people who can help you through your patch transformation: teachers, family, friends and counsellors to name but a few.



The most important thing is that you are comfortable with the patches you choose to wear.