

What If?

What would your life be like if you truly accepted yourself as you are right now -- warts, pimples, pudge around the gut, scrawny arms, farts, awkward social moments, painful memories of junior high and all? Would you spend as much time busting your butt at the gym trying to shrink your gut and build your abs? Would you feel the need to spend so much of your hard earned cash buying clothes, lipstick, makeup, deodorant, and hair products? Would you have to spend so much of your time and energy working at a job that pays the bills but doesn't feed your soul? Or would you have time to do something to really make a significant difference in the world? Would you have more time and resources to put into a social cause that seems significant to you? Would you have more time and energy to spend with your child, your partner, and/or close friends? Would you have more time to do something that doesn't cost much but feeds your soul like yoga, playing guitar, playing soccer, or painting?

What would your life be like if you didn't constantly doubt yourself? Would you work in a job that bored you to tears because you didn't believe you could do any better? Would you settle for having friends who stay stuck in a cesspool of negativity, constantly complaining about their lot in life but doing little, if anything, to change? Or would you hang out with people who took responsibility for where they were at this point in life and worked to make changes? Would you invest time, energy and/or money into people who don't give back emotionally? Or would you move on when you realized that those people weren't willing or able to give back to you? Would you stay with a partner who takes you for granted, doesn't invest time or energy into the relationship, can't commit to you, cheats on you, puts you down, or abuses you? Or would you trust that you were enough of a catch that someone out there would love and respect you if you gave them the chance? Would you work so hard to impress other people or to live up to your parent's expectations? Would you constantly beat yourself up for not being "good enough," "smart enough," "successful enough," "attractive enough," "wealthy enough," or "strong enough?" Would you constrain your life's choices and actions out of fear of what others might think? Or would you live out your boldness and follow your bliss, without relying on drugs, alcohol, or other "quick fix" habits to get you there?

What would happen if you saw yourself as being an integral part of the world you/we live in? Would you constantly find ways push people away? Or would you find ways to let people into your heart without fear or shame? Would you feel a need to reject others before they rejected you? Or would you simply assume that you were acceptable and therefore find ways to accept others? Would you take rejection personally? Or would you understand that at a deeper level, rejection is never about the rejected but is instead about the limitations, fears, and time constraints of the rejecter? Would you believe that it wouldn't matter if you were dead? Or would you understand that you matter and that the universe would miss the tiny spark of energy you provide with your own amazing uniqueness?

Finally, what would happen if you accepted everyone else as they are right now? Would you constantly feel the need to judge others? Or would you be able to respond to them with compassion and understanding? Would you feel a constant need to change them, fix them or control them? Or would you simply allow yourself to be in their presence in a way that was both honest and kind?

If these questions seem even remotely novel or challenging to you, take a moment to sit still, take a breath, and imagine what it would be like to totally and completely love yourself as you are, right now, in this moment. Do this again and again and again until it feels like home.

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