

# Embrace YOUR WEIRDNESS



Why Being Weird Makes You  
Interesting and Can Give You an  
Unfair Advantage

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# Introduction



## Introduction

Let's face it, high school is challenging. Not so much the lessons, which tend to be pretty simple. The most difficult aspect of high school is negotiating the norms and expectations of an opinionated adolescent micro-society, and doing everything possible, including tremendous leaps of energy and inventiveness, to avoid doing or doing anything that would earn the unshakeable label of being odd. Being labeled as unusual in high school is a death sentence. So most people try to appear like everyone else. However, in the end, we are all hiding.

We're still figuring out who we are and where we fit on the social interaction spectrum. Mistakes are unavoidable, but they should be committed in secret, away from the limelight of the halls, lunchroom, or special events. High school students are permitted to be nervous wrecks, fearful that their own shadow would mock them if they slip and fall. However, it should have stopped there.

Shouldn't the crushing desire for peer acceptance go away after we graduate from high school and become well-adjusted adults? The high school years are long gone, yet the social pressure to adhere to others' expectations remains as powerful as it has ever been. Everyone, young and old, it seemed, is still terrified of seeming odd. This widespread sense of unease overlooks a

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fundamental fact. It's OK to be eccentric. Weirdness is frequently a sign of latent power waiting to be unlocked.

Throughout history, the finest and brightest among us, the great inventors and innovators, have been those who have been ready to stand out and risk being viewed as strange. We are free to harness and expand the power of our various differences when I allow you to be you and you let me to be me, without judgement or criticism. Nobody is normal because everyone is strange.

And it's okay to be strange! It's okay to be unique! It's okay to be different! In fact, it's natural. And, really, it's the only way to be. Why?

Personality occurs on a continuum. There is no correct or incorrect position on the spectrum. The concept of being objectively normal was invented in order to sell things and advance political goals. What I consider to be normal may not be normal for you. We lose sight of the natural when we seek the conventional. The new normal is natural.

We all have characteristics that distinguish us from one another, whether they be physical, intellectual, emotional, or other. The

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Ego believes that differences are defects that should be concealed. The fact is that your superpower is what distinguishes you. You simply haven't figured out how to use it yet. Instead of concealing your oddness, figure out how to make it work for you. For example, your timidity may make you a better listener. Your uncomfortable chuckle may charm you to others. When we conquer our peculiarities, we gain immense power.

When you strive to fit into the mold of someone else, the outcomes will be substandard. Nobody pays to see the predictable; they pay to see the intriguing. By definition, your actual self is enticing. People will remember the thing you did that only you can do, not the thing you did that everyone can do.

Authenticity is in great demand in a society where conformity is the easy choice. Everyone wants to be more authentic, but we're all frightened of being the first. When you start living as your actual self, quirks and all, you offer others permission to do the same. We may not say it out, but everyone wants to see your authentic self. We yearn for authenticity.

Every good artistic breakthrough – artistic, musical, scientific, etc. – is strange by definition because it provides a solution that is outside of the established paradigm. It necessitates a shift in



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thinking. Embracing your oddness provides you with a fresh viewpoint, and the world desperately needs a new perspective. The status quo does not foster innovation. When outsiders challenge the established quo with unusual ideas, this is when innovation occurs.

Everyone has their own qualities. Allowing ourselves to display these distinct features makes us happy. However, suppressing our distinctive features and denying our natural selves makes us feel bad and darkens our identities. Resistance to our distinctive features, however strange, results in a dark and inverted projection of self, much as a black hole emerges from the absence of a star.

Many individuals who conform do so because they are afraid of being alone. Standing out, on the other hand, will not make you lonely - far from it. By living honestly, you will meet others who share your oddness. This is your clan. When you step up and live your mission, you will discover those who have gone before you, and you will be an inspiration to those who will come after you.

On the surface, new notions, such as biological mutations, seem to be out of place. However, biological mutations, like new ideas, evolve through time and serve unexpected purposes. The

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mutation is eventually reproduced and contributes to the evolution of the species. Ideas are the evolutionary force that propels civilization forward. What is strange now may not be understood tomorrow, but it may become the new normal.

Others will perceive you as competent if you consider yourself as capable. Others will perceive you as incapable if you see yourself as unable. Self-perception has a lot of clout. It might be unsettling at first to stop fitting in and start sticking out. However, if you accept responsibility for your activities and disregard your fear of criticism, the world will conform to your vision of yourself to the extent of your conviction.

### **Embrace YOU**

If you just remember one thing from this book, make it this: being a quirky oddball is a hidden benefit.

People fall in love with your eccentricities rather than your sameness, and they frequently don't recognize it. Your eccentricity serves as a differentiation. It's what piques people's interest and makes them want to learn more about you.