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Be true to who you are

RECENTLY #CallMeCaitlyn was trending worldwide, not just on social media but in the media in general, in conversations and everywhere else.

It has really made me stop and think about the person I 'really' am. #CallMeCaitlyn was, of course, about the fact that former Olympic gold medallist and step-father of the Kardashian clan, Bruce Jenner, underwent a sex change to become a woman and will now be known as Caitlyn.

She stated that all her life she felt she was born in the wrong body and had been dressing up as a woman in secret from a young age. Okay, so Bruce/Caitlyn may have been criticised by some, yet others have applauded her for her brave step and not hiding who she really is on the inside from the world. All over the world, transgender people are either called brave or mocked, but I think they should be applauded. It is an absolutely brave step to transition.

However, Bollywood films, for as long as I can remember, have portrayed 'eunuchs' as comic characters or beggars – and this isn't right. I haven't seen it, but the only film I have heard that portrays transgender characters positively is the 1996 film *Daayraa*, starring Nirmal Pandey. Since then, I can't think of anyone who has done anything to portray people who are 'being themselves' positively. Bollywood needs to do a lot more to change perceptions of women and men. For example, in *Kuch Kuch Hota Hai* (one of my favourite films), Shah Rukh Khan only falls in love with Kajol 10 years later, after seeing her in a sari with a full face of make-up, but not when she was a tomboy.

It led me to thinking about how we always somehow change ourselves for others, by dressing in a way that our parents approve of, or being a more girly version of yourself when really you just want to dress in combats and trainers. A girl once asked me if it was suitable to put on her Converse shoes on a date. I said no – the guy was tall and taking her someplace nice so she needed to dress up. But what if that just wasn't her? What if inside she wanted not to wear any make up, tie her hair in a bun and be herself. There isn't anything wrong with this at all – because she is being herself.

I suppose it is easy for us to say be yourself, but in a world where we are judged on the way we look, dress, how straight our teeth are, whether we have a six-pack or not, it is sometimes really hard to be yourself.

So I'm going to leave you with this thought which fellow columnist Mita Mistry shared with me, 'be the best version of yourself.' If you want to be a tomboy then be one, if you are gay, don't be afraid to embrace that, if you want to chop your hair off, do it and do it proudly. Don't let anyone dull your sparkle. The world is going to be full of haters, but until you love yourself for who you are, no one else will.

med to be festive

BES THE CORE CONCEPT BEHIND HER EID COLLECTION

