

Breaking my Own Stereotypes

From a very young age I always felt that I was “different”, I buried my heads in books and was labelled as “shy” by my teachers.

Growing up I was given various labels, “ditzy” and “spacey” which generally coincided with comments about my blonde hair, because I was always in a little world of my own. In my later years of primary school, not to many people’s surprise, the teachers recommended I get a diagnosis as they believed I had ADHD tendencies.



In sixth form I was called “intimidating” and “overpowering” by many people whom I did not speak to. And in University, although this one was not an insult to me, I was often referred to as that “political girl” or “feminist”.

There is a point in listing all my different qualities, I promise. Basically, for my Feminist Club I set up a Social Campaign and many people actually got involved. I challenged people to name their own stereotypes that they had picked up over the years and follow them up with positive affirmations. As much as I absolutely loved seeing people acknowledge that they are so much more than their labels, it really made me reflect on my own, and how they had impacted my life.

Why do we place so much of our own self-identity on what other people may think of us? For example, being called “intimidating” by a couple girls I had never even spoken to, proved to

be a poignant imprint on my own personality. I felt I needed to change so that I could be accepted by more people. But the other labels were just as damaging. I would hide books in primary school and tried to be less shy, only to be told I was hyperactive and probably had ADHD. I tried to be less overpowering in college and the result was having somebody say “yeah, she has a pretty face but she’s really boring” about me (to my best friend). In University I prevented myself getting into so many political situations, stopped sharing political posts on Facebook and the result was, which is a very common experience for women anyway, being shunned out of political conversations.

It’s only looking back like I have now that I realised just how much these opinions of other people have negatively shaped me. No matter how small they are, subconsciously I have started to view myself as every single label I have been given.

As humans, we are so complex and yet we quite literally get put into boxes. Now, I don’t expect society to just change its ways because of one little winey blog post. I’ll most likely be given hundreds more labels throughout my twenties, but instead of using them to restrict and upset myself, I’m going to look at them through rose tinted glasses. I’ve earned my descriptors and they’ll continue to shape me and my passions.

My shyness made me a very expressive, sensitive person.

My ditzy brain was really (and still continues) to be my imagination trailing off. These spaced-out moments are the times when I come up with the best ideas for my freelancing.

My intimidating nature is usually just a label given to successful women. Moreover, this confidence has been the trait I needed to start freelancing and set up a feminist club and my own news site.

My ADHD tendencies, although admittedly a pain, has allowed me to overcome many challenges and find the best ways for me to work and be productive. The impulsive side to me has actually led me to make some of the best decisions for myself. And the hyper focus moments can be extremely helpful (unless it’s when I’m online shopping)

My political, feminist side is something I am so proud of. It’s led me to set up a Feminist Club that has raised money for charity and raised awareness for various campaigns.

I might be all the things that people have labelled me over the years, but I’ll no longer view them as negative traits about myself.