

Ageless Beauty Label-less Mind



An Unexpected Encounter...

The young woman taking my lunch order at a local cafe suddenly stopped what she was doing; a pressing question had entered her mind and soon progressed to her lips.

She looked at me and then at the woman sitting at the table behind us: "Is that your mum?"

I nodded and replied, "Yes."

Then with a warm smile that reached up to her eyes, she exclaimed: "She is beautiful!"

I looked at the woman who had captivated our attention: she possessed a poise, grace and elegance. Her silver-streaked dark hair had been casually pulled into a ponytail and her face was naturally bare with gentle creases and soft lines; a moving picture of a life well-lived.

I turned back to the young woman and simply said, "Yes, she is beautiful."

This experience struck me on a few levels: Firstly, I really appreciated someone voicing and expressing such a heartfelt compliment in such an unexpected setting; secondly, I loved the fact this youthful twenty-something had such an expanded sense of beauty.

All Kinds of Beauty

The following day, I came across a quote from popular American singer Pink (a highly unusual occurrence considering my disinterest in celebrity talk) and it too reflected on the importance of boundary-less beauty.

At the MTV Video Music Awards on 27 August 2017, Pink gave a speech inspired by a time when her six-year-old daughter told her mum, "I'm the ugliest girl I know" and "I look like a boy with long hair."

Pink recalled replying: "You're incredible. I made you! You can't say that. When people make fun of me they say I look like a boy or I'm too masculine or I'm too outspoken. Do you see me growing my hair? Do you see me changing my body? Baby girl, we don't change. We help other people to change, so they can see all kinds of beauty."

Multi-Billion Dollar Industries

Even as I write this article, there is a part of me who wants to reject this conversation about beauty, thinking to myself: Aren't we well past all this superficial stuff? In short: No.

To remind myself of the importance of this conversation, all I need to do is browse online, pass a magazine stand or walk through a shopping centre. We are constantly bombarded with images and advertisements espousing the latest trends, the cult-like following of celebrities or the obsession with retaining youth.

Jane Caro, Australian social commentator and writer, summed it up perfectly: "If every woman woke-up tomorrow morning and realised they were perfect as they are, then multi-billion dollar industries would collapse." (This also extends to boys and men.)

The Power of Collective Consciousness

The conflicting concepts we have around beauty are mirroring the polarity in collective consciousness at this time. Never before has there been such undue emphasis on our external appearance and superficial self, and yet simultaneously, we are rediscovering our eternal essence and the sacredness of the human vessel.

Mac Fulfer, face reader and researcher in human potential, said: "If you don't like the way you look, rather than considering plastic surgery perhaps a more effective solution would be to change your environment."

Our environment being the people we surround ourselves with, or on a much larger scale, society itself. We alone not only shape our physical bodies, as our sense of self-identity often depends on the feedback of those around us.

Oftentimes we treat society as this homogenous entity to which we are powerless to change, but society is not outside of ourselves; we are society! We are all a fractal aspect of awareness that contributes to the collective consciousness as a whole. What you think and feel about yourself - and others - matters.

A Revealing Experiment

A few years ago, I thought I'd try a personal experiment: one year, no make-up.

Wow, was that revealing!

I vividly remember that first month without make-up; I felt vulnerable, naked even, as though I'd left the house with no underwear. And as a person who had previously suffered from a skin condition, the thought of not wearing make-up filled me with dread and fear.

I realised this: Although make-up had sometimes been a playful and fun form of self-expression, it was largely about camouflage for me, adopting a social mask and conceding to adolescent insecurities that I'd unknowingly carried into adulthood.

That one-year experiment has now turned into three years. Being bare-faced reminds me of being a kid again; I feel less self-conscious, more spontaneous and unrestrained. (I can jump into the creek - or cry - with no running mascara!)

But this is not about over-simplifying the discussion (i.e. if you wear make-up then you're under-confident or insecure). Rather, I'd love for people to reflect on whether they are truly expressing themselves, or whether they are conforming to others' expectations of beauty and feeding insecurities often formed in adolescence.



Be a Reference Point

Regardless of our age or stage, we can all be a vital reference point for our respective generations, and for the younger generations too; leading by example, challenging pre-conceptions and creating precedents for beauty in all its varied forms. Let us celebrate individual beauty that is based on an inner confidence, not an external mirage.

The importance of this was highlighted when my mum decided to stop colouring her hair. Initially, her grandkids (aged between 8 and 12 at the time) didn't like seeing her physical appearance change. They'd screw-up their faces and incessantly ask, "But why? I like your hair dark." But as my mum became more comfortable in her new appearance, so too did the grandkids. Now they tell her how "cool" her hair looks!

True Beauty

As a bodyworker, I've seen bodies of all shapes and sizes with varying traits and attributes. And I can truthfully say this: every single body I see is beautiful. I'm in awe of the human body's profound capacity to heal and regenerate, and through my work, I'm regularly reminded of the body's multi-faceted dimensions.

In essence, true beauty is lit from within; it's an inner warmth and an energetic radiance that transcends and defies any singular definition.

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