



Oh the
DRAMA!

Individual or Impersonation

Christopher GATES

Oh the DRAMA! Individual or Impersonation?

FOREWORD

Oh the Drama! Individual or Impersonation? is a series that explores character, characterization, and how peer pressure contributes to the drama of being the individual or impersonation. Drama transforms attitudes, but do you have what it takes to maintain your character and be who you are?, or will you be an impersonation of what others want you to be in order to fit in.

OH THE DRAMA!

Throughout the year, the challenges of everyday life has been the topic of conversations, and the hard choices on how to deal with them. Albeit a challenge, you made the choices that ultimately lead to your success. Conquering over these challenges has given you an opportunity to rejoice in the victory of a promising future, then, something else happens that takes away the blast of euphoria- Oh the Drama!

One of life's tough issues, and one you face everyday, is peer pressure. As youth, you encounter pressures from who you hang out with, drugs, alcohol, and so much more. Peer pressure or influence can be positive, like a friend who wants you to support a canned food drive or charitable organization. Now let's be realistic, that's not always the case. Peer pressure can be bad as well. Pressure pushes you into making a choice. What choice? It's all up to you.

How do you handle the drama? Does it change who you are (character)?, or do you conform to your surroundings to fit in?
Oh the Drama! Individual or Impersonation? How do you handle it?

Don't let your _____ be _____, and don't let _____ of the future be your _____.

INDIVIDUAL OR IMPERSONATION?

PRINCIPLE 1: Peer pressure - Oh the Drama! - can force you into accepting an impersonation in the way you act, company you keep, the way you talk, dress... However you deal with drama, think about it, then consider: Is this really me? (Individual), or am I pretending to be someone I'm not (Impersonation)?

Whether you're impersonation (being who you're not) for popularity or acceptance, stop the masquerade, and be who you are! You have the greatest power over the entire situation whether you know it or not - THE POWER TO WALK AWAY.

Oh the drama is ever-present, and it's something that not just you face as youth, everyone deals with it at some level and to some extent. It's a place we've all been. The drama that is pervasive, doesn't have to be overwhelming. The drama that we all face only controls us if we allow it to. Remember, we have the power to walk away.

Changing your behavior to take on a role, sometimes unbeknownst, to make yourself apart of a group, crowd... takes a lot out of you, why not be yourself? Steeping into another character or role?, where's your character? Where is the quality of who you are?, your individuality?



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Individual or Impersonation?: (continued)

Keep your character, there's no need to impersonate someone else. You're fine just the way you are. It takes a lot of concentration and energy to be someone you're not. _____ and _____ the _____. Show your _____, don't be _____ into being _____.

"To _____ you were _____ is to _____ the _____." - Unknown

SELF-ASSESSMENT

PRINCIPLE 2: Have you ever been amazed at how others are quick to notice the quirks, habits, and differences of others. Whether it's the notice of how you dress, to how you react in social situations - Oh the Drama! When it comes to peer pressure, just because everyone else is involved, does not mean you have to be! Be who you are (individual) not impersonation.

You may feel uncomfortable, or left out of conversations, but ask yourself if you would rather be comfortable being who you are, or uncomfortable holding up a masquerade or persona to fit in? Be courageous in the struggles of peer pressure. We are all individuals, and with our individuality comes our uniqueness.

The way we dress, talk, what we read, and how we interact is reflective of that uniqueness. The drama will happen, so be ready, but follow your instincts to do the right thing, not what someone else feels should be "your" thing. In the lyrics of Michael Jackson's famous song, Man In The Mirror (below), He starts out in the first verse by singing, "Gotta make a change...", use this opportunity for a self-assessment. When it comes to peer pressure, are you an impersonator? If this is you-and you know best, the words of the first verse can help you when it continues to say, "Gonna make a difference, Gonna make it right." Make it right! Reassess your attitude. The power to

choose, that decision making process separates the individual from the impersonation. There are those who will be your convenient friends, but:

Man in the Mirror - Michael Jackson

Songwriters: Ballard, Glen;Garrett, Siedah

I'm gonna make a change for once in my life
It's gonna feel real good, gonna make a difference
Gonna make it right

I'm starting with the man in the mirror
I'm asking him to change his ways
And no message could have been any clearer

If you wanna make the world a better place
Take a look at yourself and then make a change

True _____ is based on those who _____,
those who are there in _____,
from the _____ to the _____
moments that life has to offer.

"If you wanna make the world a better place, take a look at yourself, and then make a change." Move forward determined to reach your goal - your true self. I am convinced that you respect your individuality and will dismiss the drama and represent the true you- The Man In The Mirror.



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RENEW YOUR ACQUAINTANCE

PRINCIPLE 3: For many, if you aren't apart of the crowd, you face the fear of ridicule ,and the drama of unsolicited opinions and judgements against you - Oh the Drama! Being what your peers expect you to be is one of the greatest disheartening transgressions; but you know who you are, and your individuality, the innate ability you have that pauses to think before acting, is one of the indicators that even though you face the drama around you, you know the difference between the drama, from individual (being who you are) or interpretation (being someone you're not).

Putting on a person (impersonation) when you reach a certain group of people/ settings, your attitude or expression changes in order to comply or be liked (fit in). The impression you are trying to make in that situation is not the real you and devalues your character. I wanted to share the poem, *Myself*, by Edgar Guest (right) to help you when it comes to dealing with the struggles of peer pressure. Use it as a reference to "refresh" your individuality when you come in contact with the option to "fit in" or be who you are. Be unwilling to concede, and BE WHO YOU ARE!

Don't become _____ in the drama and _____. It will render both a sentiment of _____ and a lost _____.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

(use your Academic Notes sheet for this exercise)

1. Create a Play/Skit or Comic Strip demonstrating a situation involving Peer Pressure. Create characters that are overly dramatic to the situation, and create the main character as one who stands out from the crowd.
2. You will then present your final projects to the class on Drama Day.

Peer pressure can change your persona, or personality, and discard your character (honesty, respect, responsibility...) all in an effort to be apart of the "in crowd". Don't loose focus! At this point, wherever you are in life, find individuals that will influence positive behavior. If someone says you're "weird" because you choose not to be apart of the "in crowd", express to them that your individuality makes you unique and that uniqueness is something new to them. Let them know that they should consider getting to know you, rather labeling you. For some it's easier to address it as weird, rather then attempting to get to know you - the true you, the real you. Weird doesn't define you, uncommon is who we all are in one way or another. Seek your individuality over someone else's interpretation of who they think you should be. Be proud of who you are. Accept who you are.

"The only _____ I'm under is the _____ I've _____." - Mark Messler

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Myself, by Edgar Guest

I have to live with myself, and so,
I want to be fit for myself to know;
I want to be able as days go by,
Always to look myself straight in the eye;
I don't want to stand with the setting sun
And hate myself for the things I've done.

I don't want to keep on a closet shelf
A lot of secrets about myself,
And fool myself as I come and go
Into thinking that nobody else will know
The kind of man I really am;
I don't want to dress myself up in sham.

I want to go out with my head erect,
I want to deserve all men's respect;
But here in this struggle for fame and pelf,
I want to be able to like myself.
I don't want to think as I come and go
That I'm bluster and bluff and empty show.

I never can hide myself from me,
I see what others may never see,
I know what others may never know,
I never can fool myself- and so,
Whatever happens, I want to be
Self-respecting and conscience free.



