

Freedom Isn't Always Adorable

Whenever someone tells me how much they adore me because of some thing I said or did that they happen to agree with, I smile and think to myself “Enjoy it while it lasts” because I know I’m going to disappoint them or break their heart at some point in the future when I evolve or express myself along less agreeable lines.

One of the healthiest practices I’ve adopted is that of not being too attached to anyone’s image of me as a “cool guy” or a “good guy” or a “nice guy” or any of those seductive and soothing titles that an audience can strip from you at whim. Those kinds of compliments are flattering to the ego, but they are the death of self-autonomy and personal development for anyone who lets that kind of talk get to their head.

I’ve met many people who couldn’t make the tough or risky choices necessary to achieve new levels of understanding, mastery, or success simply because they didn’t want to lose the adoration that came from some individual or clique saying “Yay. We love him. He’s our guy. He represents us.”

Affirmation is a beautiful thing if you can appreciate it without becoming addicted to it. Otherwise, it’s nothing more than a slave chain woven with rhetoric. If you want to be free, stay free, and become even more free, I can find no better prescription than Alice Walker’s famous three words: “Be nobody’s darling.”