

# Poem: Who am I you ask?

By Kellie Thompson

Who am I you ask,  
Well, who do you think I am?  
What version of me have I projected onto you?  
In what context do we relate?  
There are of course boundaries of how much of me you are able to know,  
And how much I let you in or want you to know.  
But who are you I hear you ask?

Like an archaeologist on an excavation, I dig deep to answer the question,  
About me and who I really am.  
The truth is I only know from the 'truths' of others who tell me who I am.  
My truth is I do not want to be limited by labels or affiliated categories in becoming something meaningful to you,  
I want the description of possibilities about me to be varied, exciting and endless,  
Not to be fixed like a TV on a bracket on the wall, but to be free like a bird of peace,  
To be seen I do not want your offerings of who you think I am to come from a place of Critical Parent,  
For I do not want my injunctions and script to stifle or limit this sense of freedom that I am only taken to in my imagination.  
Yesterday I was...?  
Today I am...?  
Tomorrow I will be...?  
And all these versions bound by uncertainty are ok.  
In all my guises and presentations to the world these are all for a reason.  
I am ok. You are ok.  
But can I still hear you ask with the need for a definition of sorts, but who are you?

I am a patchwork quilt made up of cacophonous and calibrating experiences,  
My ancestors' imprinted voices written in their scripts and in the scripts of those written before them,  
I am made up of people I love that walk the earth, and those that do not,  
People I have loved and lost but nonetheless hold close in my fragile heart,  
I am places I have seen and the things I have experienced through the senses at different times, places and spaces,  
At 47, I continue to be on a journey of discovering me and all that that might mean,  
Is your question answered yet as to who you think I am?

I am a kaleidoscope made up of broken pieces but not without their beauty.  
Depending on perspective and the number of twists and turns made,  
I am seen and experienced in a myriad of ways,  
In adapted Child I am an anxious social construct,  
Configured by other people's needs and expectations of me,

This is to avoid shame and opportune moments of humiliation to rear its ugly head.

I am a biographical collection of how others construct me,  
But there is a wanting for connection, belonging and acceptance in this relational catalogue of old, new, adapted, and revised 'me's'  
For my authenticity to flourish my 'Please Others' driver has to be set free,  
Like a chameleon adapting to her environment, I may retreat or withdraw confronted with harsh judgement,  
Making myself invisible by blending in neatly to what is around me,  
But in those moments my inner child cries out so desperately in response to the song that she is so used to hearing.  
But like a bird how can I take flight and be ok to be me?  
Without the weight of shame that lay heavy round my neck,  
That which strangles me and silences the words of my unique song that I am so desperate to sing,  
Do you know who I am now?

I am a living dichotomy.  
A contradiction of sorts.  
I am a co-creation of my relationships with human and non-human others in various contexts,  
My identity and how I see myself will depend on which ego state I am responding from in the moment,  
Moving out of script I would say I am a small piece of treasure that is beyond measure,  
Unique with all my idiosyncrasies despite commonalities,  
But what purpose does it serve to know who I am?  
Does it give me and my place in the world value?  
My authentic self is not convinced it does, but my adapted selves are screaming 'yes',  
I nonetheless come back to question for whose purpose is this need for a definition for?  
Is it for me or is it for you?  
To provide a formula for simplifying the 'noise' of complexity and ambiguity that stands before you?  
Is it an outropsychic or intrapsychic process of identity making, or both?  
To be honest, this does not concern me as I sit here right now,  
Whatever it is and said with no apology in no uncertain terms,  
I am me which I shout proud.  
This is who I am.

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