

Does anyone truly know what they enjoy nowadays? Books, movies, fashion? I haven't a clue. When I was young, without even knowing it, I was unapologetically myself. My yellow Princess Belle dress doesn't match my bright red Dr. Marten boots? I'm wearing it anyway (to my mum's dismay). This is one of my last memories of choosing what to wear without thinking about what others would like or what would draw the least attention to me.

Nowadays, with the constant content fed to us via apps like TikTok and Instagram, how can anyone possibly know who they truly are and what they enjoy? Daily, we are being bombarded with new fashion, makeup, food and even water bottle trends. It is relentless. It is natural to want to follow what everyone else is doing, but I feel that a big part of identity is liking our own things. "Each to their own", people say. However, we are getting further and further away from that. The fact you don't like cottage cheese with carrots and mustard doesn't make you "different" or "uncool".

With endless videos on why you need a butter yellow top, an Owala water bottle with cats on it (even though you have a perfectly good water bottle in your cupboard) and ballet flats with a slit down the middle that makes your big toe look funny it's no wonder we have become such consumers. I have found myself wanting things I simply do not need. I already have three pairs of black trousers. Why am I debating buying another identical pair except with pinstripes because a girl on Instagram looked good in them? Would those trousers fix all my problems? Maybe...for the first two minutes of having them. Then instantly my mind is on what else I "need." The individuality we all used to have as children is being lost in the floods of content we consume.

Anahi Pellathy, a writer for The Standard, stated, "Trends create culture conformity; if one doesn't stay up to date with what's 'in', they are quickly categorised as 'other'." We all, often unknowingly, conform to trends as a way to fit in. When people do express their personal style, music taste or other interests that don't necessarily fit in with what we deem "normal", they are judged. Difference should be celebrated not condemned. "It wouldn't do if we all liked the same things, would it?" my mum used to say.

But with the ever-rising world of social media, we are actually beginning to all like the same things. Not because we truly like it (and if you do, I apologise), but because we think that's what other people will like on us. I think, as hypocritical as this may sound, we should create a trend to just be ourselves, if we even know who we are anymore. Wear that Disney Princess dress! Only if that's your thing, of course.