

## **Judging A Book by Its Cover**

Do you know the amount of courage it takes to let your guard down and be yourself with someone? When was the last time you did something without thinking twice about it? As much as we try to convince ourselves to believe that we live in modern society and you can fearlessly be what you are, we have to admit that this is not one hundred per cent true. The fear of being judged is always constantly at the back of our minds. The urge to look perfectly beautiful in your Instagram post or you retyping the entire text just before hitting send or the time you changed your outfit more than twice? That is the fear reminding you of the what-ifs. What if people think I am not good enough? What if I don't look pretty enough? What is he or she going to think of me? What if I say this? The idea of being perfect according to the world's view is what is holding us back. We have reached the point where the world fears death less than it fears of being judged.

Have we all not been taught to live fearlessly and be brave and grow up to become what one wants to be? As children we were never bothered by what the world wants from us but as we grew up, it has changed. The cost of not following your dream could be a lifetime of guilt. The pressure of living up to the standards of perfect as per the expectations of the society can make one's life miserable. Being happy or being healthy is not anybody's priority anymore, all people desire for is wealth and being something that you can brag about in society. There is nothing wrong in being perfect but what is important is to be one's idea of perfect and most importantly not lose our essence.

Since the internet became an integral part of everyday life, it has become the most important to portray that, one is living the best life. Every story on Instagram shows where a person is hanging out, not whether the person is happy, who a person is with and not if they are really in good terms? Social media has become a platform for showing off. People have forgotten that there might be a person out there who is sipping on their tea and reading a book they love quietly and having the most peaceful time of their life. Humans have different interests, choices, and opinions. Judging someone based on your views is unacceptable. You might judge someone by what you assume they are but nobody understands the situations that have turned a person into what they have become.

Judgments need not come from a stranger, sometimes your close ones might jump to a conclusion about your actions without giving a thought about your feelings. The world is so fast-moving and turning into a place where humans are becoming selfish and inhumane.

Bullying, body shaming, and hate comments do not surprise anyone anymore. We have all become resistant to such things. Ignorance is a bliss to hatred and judgemental people but when will this end? It might seem very easy to tell someone to ignore things that people say or not let such things bother them but don't you believe that these things still have an impact on every individual. Such things make people a paranoid about their self-worth and lead to an existential crisis at times.

We have seen people who have starved to death just to get accepted to the world's idea of being beautiful which is having a perfect figure and on the other hand we watch people dying to put on weight to look pretty. What about being healthy and confident? Does that not matter anymore? How do you expect someone else to find you appealing if you do not have the confidence to love yourself for your appearance? People hesitate to talk in front of a crowd for the fear of being judged. The irony is that the whole crowd feels just the same way. We all are vulnerable deep at one point or the other. The proof of this is the list of phobias that we humans have that never ends. Feeling scared might not be a choice but overcoming it, is.

The one major reason for us to judge a person is when they do not match your mindset of ideal and normal. At times we end up judging people with or without our consciousness. Forming opinions is a human tendency but keeping your opinions to ourselves and making sure they are not affecting anyone is our responsibility. Remember the phrase "Not everyone's cup of tea"? Why should it be as well? What if someone is a coffee person? What we need to understand exactly is that we all cannot pioneer the art of everything.

The other major influence that makes us form a permanent judgment about a person is their past. We form firm opinions on the mistakes they have made. What we fail to understand is that mistakes can be a way of learning and help us to change for the better. Just like the famous words "Every saint has a past and every sinner has a future" we need to try and give people a chance to change our opinion on the mistakes made by others. We also tend to associate personality with their habits and choices. Habits do not define a character. Habits could have been an influence and sometimes not even a choice. And each choice is attributed to various factors in the journey of life. Judging a book by its cover does not infer how good or bad the story is, it upholds your perspective of the story.

Flaws and failures make us different and there is nothing wrong about it. Accept who you are and reveal it. Standing out from the crowd sometimes might give you the courage to lead the crowd. Swallow the lump in your throat that holds you back from voicing your mind and

learn to express yourself as you are and get comfortable in your skin. Never fit and adjust to the norms of the society that stops you from being the unique version of you instead make the society get used to the idea of you. Judging a book by its cover does not infer how good or bad the story is, it upholds your perspective of the story.

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