

## HOW TO LOSE 'YOU' IN THE WRONG CROWD

by Margaret Rose

They say that being with no one is better than being with the wrong one. I believe the same goes for being in the "wrong crowd". What makes a crowd wrong for you and how do you lose yourself?

When we are amongst people who are like-minded; we are intrigued, interested and inspired. We come alive, almost as if time stands still as we connect and share who we are and excitedly embrace them for who they are. We relate to these people and walk away charged, even refreshed. When we feel comfortable and experience a sense of belonging, we have found our tribe and we fit in.

Quite the opposite happens in the wrong crowd. When we are with people who differ from us, who do not share the same passions, thoughts and lifestyles, we struggle to find a connection and we feel out of place. Being amongst unlike-minded people who do not understand us will most likely leave us feeling lost and unimportant or even silly for being the way we are.

Thinking back a few months, I attended a dinner party where I disappeared into the background. Every conversation seemed to spiral into an awkward ending, polite but disconnected. Nothing about these people interested me, and nothing about what I had to contribute resonated with them. We were worlds apart.

I thought about my own insecurities and how they could be adding to the sinking feeling that something may be wrong with me. I thought about judgments, mine and others. And after much thought, I realized why it is that people may lose themselves in the wrong crowd.

When one feels lonely or insecure it is easy to open yourself up to others, trying to seek acceptance or to fill a void. Often it means having to change who you are in order to fit in and win the approval of the group. Without even realizing it, you have lost your identity.

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(more follows)

You shouldn't have to fight for a spot and lose 'you' in the process. Don't shy away from who you are. If the people you are surrounded by are not making you come alive but are rather suppressing your passion, the chances are, you are in the wrong crowd. Don't change yourself to suit them, rather keep searching for your tribe, the ones who get you.

Author/educator, Ken Robinson had the following to say: "Connecting with people who share the same passions affirms that you're not alone; that there are others like you and that while many might not understand your passion, some do."

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