The image of being .....

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"I am not what I think I am."
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-- Charles Horton Cooley's "Looking Glass Self" -- a person's self develops in three steps: 1)we imagine how others see us, 2)we imagine how others judge what they see in us (e.g., our appearance, our personality), 3) we develop a self concept in response to1&2 Ever wondered what it would feel like to step out of your body and take a GOOD look at yourself instead of just compromising it all in front of a mirror? There must have been a time (at least once) when you probably wondered who the hell you are. Really what is an individual anyway? Yes, we are more expressive than animals and surely there's more cognitive vive in us compared to other mammals! But what are we really? Perhaps: A person undergoing processes just to fulfil a mere survival? A spirit experiencing human activities and awaiting to become a spirit again? Or in a much accepted sense: A mere reflection of what our society has slapped and punched us to be.

One fine day you push your way out into a world filled with all kinds of noise and colour. You later realise that some of these moving colours (who are otherwise blabbering nonsense) happen to be your parents who for the next two decades decide what your life is going to look like! Birth Preschool School University Job Family Retirement Death. Quite simple actually. Very organised if you ask me! But who has decided it all? And then there is your personality checklist. You are either sweet like your dad, hot tempered like your mum, understanding like your great great grandaunt! And so it goes.

Oh but remember in most cases it's the outside world constructing you. You are born into a religion, you study like everyone else to get a job like everyone else to find love like everyone else to get marri....you know what I mean. Sure there are the rebels who want to change the system, but they only get far when their ideas are put into paper and a dominant political force allows future generations to take a look at it. Of course by then the rebels are highly analyzed and discussed and hopefully they will be smiling down at the critics from Heaven and not screaming up at them from Hell.

"I believe that heredity (the genes that you inherit) have some part in forming attitudes", says Craig, this writer. "However, most important in shaping them, is the family environment, especially in your early childhood: And there are three areas of life in which your attitudes are formed according to him. There is a sense of BELONGING which is picked up before birth, your sense of WORTH will be determined by your immediate family in your early childhood and your sense of COMPETENCE will also originate in the family environment.

The sense of belonging comes naturally and it is most prominent in the university years! It's when you look ahead for an all rounded livelihood at the same time you want to have fun. There are circle of friends that you stick to or there are the break ups of it! You get romantically involved with someone who has some similarities with you and appreciate you for who you are and the vice versa.

Really, the other day I just entered the canteen and could immediately identify the various groups! They talked in similar style, they laughed at common jokes and after sometime it got blurry and I felt that they even started to look like each other! Don't get what I am saying? Well you may only assume that it exists in the movies alone but there is the 'groupie' at every corner idealizing some kind of teen movie character!

The high-nosed, thick-goggled, teacher's- pet close to the teachers room reading upon complex technology in the multifaceted neo-colonial culture (I meant new mobile phones in Bangladesh) are always talking about political jokes that the rest of us never get!

Then there is, *like*, this group of girls that *like* has to always claw through their super ironed hair that *like* always stays prim. It's *like* they never wash themselves because their coal eyes and the glitzy *like* short kameez or fotua (whatever u call it) seems to stay *like* intact EVERYDAY! Seriously, these are the ones that start looking and shrieking just like each other! If that doesn't stop to amaze you then there are the guys who tend to do pretty much the same thing except that their hair, wrist bands and fotuas look even more superficial! It's like a competition with each other!

And if all else (brains and artificial looks) fails then there are the ones that assume the position of a western upper class elite! No no, I am sure back in Europe students like us are always smoking, drinking, partying, passing out, cracking perverted jokes and getting involved physically just to look cool. No doubt there, so why not just mimic them and assume that we too have turned ultra white! If only I knew a single of my foreign friends who actually have the time to get all immorally fired up in between their studies, work, relationships and household chores! But alas, the media never fails to mirror the image and we never fail to take that image seriously!

And so it happens that with every step we take, we want to take it with someone else. Someone who will tell us that we are okay just the way we are. The quote "I am what I think you think I am" has its flaws because we do choose certain aspects of our lives like wanting to become an atheist or something. But the broader picture is that we want to fit in. We want to be able to depend on something that's going to lead us somewhere but we don't really know where. In the end we are just trying to satisfy our needs, our emotions and our lives with whatever the society has to offer and as long as we filling up the empty vessels, we are successful becoming more and more the whole 'image of being'.