

Living life with a **RESTING WITCH FACE**

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Living life with a resting witch [witch, because we can't print the *actual* word] face has not been easy. When I was a kid, I used to sit with the grownups, because my expressions would make most mothers keep their babies away from me. Now that I am old enough to hang out with the elders without it being awkward, I have an easier time with babies. My face is pretty offensive to the adult society.

A resting witch face makes you look perpetually judgemental and annoyed. Sometimes it means you look older for your age because mostly, you look too serious. It also leads people to believe that you are without a sense of humour and that you mean business like all the time. They are surprised when something doesn't offend you because behind that 'witch face' is a nice and silly person who can function normally. Surprise.

Resting witch face drives people away and keeps them away even on the bus or a crowded walkway. It's very unlikely that you will get asked out (whatever your gender is) if you have a NO written all over your face always. You can be feeling a resounding YES inside but who cares. People close to you, however, know that you are approachable and your room is Barbie pink.

Growing up with a witch face also has its perks. Most people do not want

to mess with you and maintain safe distance. Once my best friend and I went out for lunch and this girl approached us. Her mother was on the phone and she wanted one of us to talk to her mom and convince her she was out with her female friends, whereas she was actually out on a date. My face being what it is terrified her and she handed the phone to my friend, for she looked kinder and more willing to lie for a complete stranger.

My life falls apart like all the time and I hit rock bottom almost once a week but people don't get it unless of course I tell them or they read my tweets. So more or less, I always get complimented for holding it together like a pro. It's just my face that doesn't give away much. People do not even make eye contact or look closely at me because it's, well, disturbing.

My mother thinks my pictures are dismal because I do not smile. Look, I do. I mean I feel happy inside but it's not up to me to show it. But when I do crack a smile, everyone knows I really mean it. So, if you know me personally or don't know, but want to know or not, please understand that I am not mad at you nor am I depressed. It's just my face.

You know what complements a resting witch face though? Sarcasm.

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SOCIALLY AWKWARD *not* Anti-social

ADIT HASAN

Avoidant Personality and Social Anxiety Disorders are major problems afflicting an ever-increasing portion of the population. But although not all of us meet the behavioral parameters to be clinically diagnosed, most teenagers these days are socially awkward in some way or other.

Public perception of social ineptness is misguided. The labels "socially awkward" and "anti-social" are being used interchangeably. A lot of us suffer from social ineptness, with "suffer" being the operative word here because contrary to popular belief, we do not choose to be introverted and awkward during social interactions. Yes we prefer to be alone with our thoughts sometimes but we seek companionship in others. Being deemed undisciplined, impolite rebels by elders because of our inability to conform to the social custom of greeting guests with a smile and asking about their gouts only serves to stress the issue.

We rarely talk unless spoken to or refrain from speaking up in a conversation involving more than two people – not because we don't like your company or that we suffer from anthropophobia, it's because we are simply unable. The fractured image of an angry social recluse abhorring the world and everything in it is not exaggerated, it is completely inaccurate. And we couldn't pull off the mysterious, brooding persona, in an effort to be attractive, even if we wanted to. We shy away from human contact not because we dislike it, but because after repeated failed attempts at social interaction, we need to recuperate before trying again. We feel safe in solitude. We recede into

our daydreams, high-fantasy novels and minecraft and ruminate on our mistakes, revise our strategy, gathering up our courage before stepping out once again.

The larger the group, the more isolated we tend to become. We rarely speak up because we are petrified of how our opinions would be received and even then we think, rethink and overthink before finally deciding to open our mouths. Interrupting us would be the worst thing to do at that point since it would throw all that practice and planning out the window, and leave us flustered and discouraged.

Small talk is the bane of our existence. Initiating a conversation was never our strong suit, but that doesn't mean we don't try. You remember the awkward silences? We notice them too. And the scowl you mistake for annoyance during the pauses? That's us frantically searching for something to talk about. So when we finally do manage to bring something up, know that it is the product of much effort and concentration and you just witnessed something special. Carrying a conversation isn't our forte either. After we have said our fill, we hope for you to pick up the ball. It'll take time for us to get comfortable with you, so we'd like you to make the effort of continuing the conversation. Do that though, and eventually you'll find that we have a plethora of ideas waiting to be heard, a cacophony of opinions waiting to be voiced, and a tangle of emotions waiting to be expressed.

So, be patient with us. Understand that we are trying. And most importantly, *listen*. Because chances are we will surprise you.

THE CLASSIC CASE OF RESTING WITCH FACE

