

#HEALTH & FITNESS

BTS: Unorthodox advocates of self-love and mental health

Bangtan Sonyeondan (Korean for Bulletproof Boy Scouts), more commonly known as BTS (Behind the Scene), is undoubtedly a household name amongst the young generation. This South Korean boy band that debuted in 2013 has not only become the most popular boy band in the world, but also earned its position as one of the biggest faces in the global music industry. From selling record-breaking albums to getting nominations including the Grammys, to receiving prestigious awards like American Music Award, BTS has managed to carve their spot in history.

The biggest fan base in the world currently is the BTS ARMY (the fans/supporters of BTS). There are a number of reasons that make BTS so deeply loved and acknowledged—the ‘magical’ visuals they create on stage and in their music videos, the utterly exceptional dance moves and choreography, their heart-touching story of struggle and how they rose from almost nothing. But perhaps their most unique feature is their motto: self-love. Yes, they produce music that we groove to, but hidden among the lyrics are messages that teach us how to love ourselves, and why it is important. BTS strongly believes that you can only be the best version of yourself once you learn to love yourself and they want their fans to feel the same way.

Songs that beautifully portray and

depict self-love and positivity

Their song ‘Answer: Love Myself’ is perhaps the best example for self-love in the best possible way, through a song’s lyrics. “It’s harder loving yourself than loving someone else, let’s admit it, the standards you made are more strict (sic) for yourself,” teaches us to not be too hard on ourselves and that it is okay to cut ourselves some slack. “Why do you keep wanting to hide inside your mask,” show that there is no need to be scared of who you really are, just because of what others may think or say. Most importantly, the chorus of the song, “You’ve shown me I have reasons, I should love myself,” literally plays with our sub-consciousness and causes us to put one step forward in learning to love ourselves.

‘Epiphany,’ which is a solo song by one of the members, Kim Seok-jin (Jin), is no different. “I am the one I should love in this world, the shining me, the precious soul of mine, I finally realized, so I love me, not so perfect but so beautiful,” talks about how it is okay to prioritize yourself without always having to put others before you. “Why did I want to hide my precious self, what made me so afraid that I hid my true self,” acts like a rhetoric question to tell us to never change our identity for someone else’s sake.

“Somebody call me right one, somebody call me wrong, I don’t want to care, so what about you too?” from ‘So

What’ promotes believing in yourself, the decisions you make and the path you choose. “Even if they say it’s dangerous beyond the borders, let’s go with the wind” encourages people to follow their dreams despite the countless obstacles put forward by society.

A band that does their bit towards social messages/services

In addition to their marvelously meaningful songs, BTS tries to deliver social messages and fight social stigma. In most of their interviews, they ask their fans to never stop loving themselves and to give ample importance to their mental health. BTS urges everyone to come forward with their troubles without bottling them up.

In 2017, BTS teamed up with UNICEF to launch their ‘Love Myself’ campaign. The objective behind is to spread the power and true meaning of love and to prevent activities like bullying in schools. After more than four years of its initiation, the ‘Love Myself’ campaign has seen tremendous success through the various events and donations. It has evidently brought about positive impacts in the lives of countless students worldwide.

In 2018, BTS was invited to speak at the United Nations’ 73rd General Assembly, for the launch of UNICEF’s Generation Unlimited. “Tell me your story. I want to hear your voice, and I want to hear your conviction. No matter who you are, where you’re

from, your skin color, gender identity: speak yourself. Find your name, find your voice by speaking yourself,” were some of the words of the band leader, Kim Namjoon. Through his speech, he requested young people to be brave enough to listen to their own heart’s desire and be willing to be their true selves without putting up any facade.

BTS’s swarm side as seen by their contributions during the COVID-19 pandemic

BTS stood by the side of their fans throughout the difficult time the COVID-19 pandemic brought. They remained virtually connected with ARMY, regularly sharing encouraging posts and tweets. They even came up with their song ‘Life Goes On,’ whose lyric and music were meant to lift the spirits of their fans.

Not only that, they donated money to many countries that had been severely affected by the pandemic. And it is not only the band that helped during this trying time. The BTS army organized a fundraiser to assist India as it was one of the most adversely affected countries. They were able to raise nearly USD 27,000 in 24 hours. This goes on to show the power of love and positivity BTS has been able to shower among their fans, and also the unity of their fans.

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Photo: Collected

