

It's OK to Feel Like This...! Suppressed Thoughts of an Introvert

Monique Worgess

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It's OK to Feel Like This...! is a wrenching memoir about moving past traumatic experiences toward authenticity and freedom.

Monique Worgess's affirming memoir *It's OK to Feel Like This...!* celebrates her decision to be true to herself through difficult circumstances.

Worgess, a self-proclaimed introverted Jamaican woman (an "antisocial queen"), experienced the frustrations of living in a world that privileges people who are more outgoing and willing to express themselves. In time, she decided to take a break from her career to come to grips with her past experiences and future plans. She realized that she was reticent to share her inner world in part because of the abuse she suffered at the hands of a "dark figure" in her childhood. Additional details about how the "dark figure" abused her are shared as the memoir progresses, culminating in an indictment—powerful proof of the pain she endured and its lasting impact.

In the end, Worgess also found the "survivor" mindset limiting. It led her to second-guess herself at work, limiting her successes. In time, she learned to love the hidden parts of herself, not to let her past define her future, and to prioritize being free. Herein, she draws on her past mistakes to share general lessons—tools to help other people come to grips with their own traumatic experiences.

The book's progression mimics Worgess's growing personal awareness. Its early chapters are light on specific details about the abuse, and it does not name the industry she worked in beyond calling her place of employment a store. This remove from Worgess's immediate reality has a somewhat distancing effect. However, it also complements the book's main encouragement: not to linger on the past.

Here, change is possible, and choosing the parts of the past that define you can feel powerful (Worgess expresses specific pride in her Jamaican heritage, for example). Further, Worgess is a warm narrator; even in addressing grim topics like losing her hair, her tone remains hopeful. Final encouragements to accept oneself broaden the book's scope, suggesting that those who follow Worgess's lead can alter their inner and outer worlds too. Actionable advice concludes the book and rounds this work out, including the suggestion to take time to get outside and get lost in the beauty of the natural world.

Poor self-esteem is not an excuse to avoid living according to *It's OK to Feel Like This...!*, a wrenching memoir about moving past traumatic experiences toward authenticity and freedom.

JEREMIAH ROOD (March 4, 2024)

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