



DAWN O'PORTER

HONESTLY...

WARNING she always says what she thinks

Say HELLO to Dawn – author, presenter and our NEW columnist

“It’s all about me (and what’s wrong with that?)”

Narcissist – it’s an awful insult, scathing, vicious in fact. Dictionary.com defines it as “a person who is overly self-involved, and often vain and selfish”, yet it seems to have become acceptable when describing the kind of person who chooses to use social networking sites for pleasure (not *that* kind of pleasure). Well, I think it’s terrible that such a negative connotation has been

attached to people who like to share themselves with the rest of the world.

We live in a time when everyone can have an audience – what’s wrong with wanting a round of applause? The line where confidence ends and arrogance begins seems blurred, but we know the difference really, so why are we getting confused? Let’s break it down. Posting a photo of yourself in a sexy two-piece and writing, “I rub my own boobies when I look in the mirror

because I’m the sexiest person on Twitter. OH, and you’re all idiots.” I’d accept narcissism for that one. But snapping a selfie in a smashing bit of clobber and hoping a few people say you look alright, well that’s just a lovely thing to be able to do, isn’t it? It’s perfectly easy to have a high opinion of yourself, enjoy getting attention, and be a good person who does right by others. Can’t the modern woman be a fine amalgamation of both?

I recently had a month off Twitter. I did it because I had a book deadline and had to go on shut down, but I think it would have happened anyway, as my addiction was getting out of control. I wanted to break the habit I’d fallen into; having to tell people I’ve never met when I had ailments as trivial as a sore toe. I’d go to bed at night feeling over-exposed, and a bit like you feel the morning after a big night when you danced on tables and refused to get down – annoying, in other words.

The worry that there was TOO MUCH ME in the Twittersphere was encouraged by a few of those nasty types you get (who *choose* to follow you – I’ll never understand that) telling me to stop “spouting crap” as no one cared anyway. So I thought, alright, tough guys, let’s give abstinence a go.

So a friend blocked me out of Twitter and I also deactivated my Facebook account. Was I better off for it? Well, Facebook was hard as that left me feeling out of touch with ▶



BHDB

(Before Hair Dryer Brush)

AHDB

(After Hair Dryer Brush)

My hair falls into two categories. BHDB and AHDB – Before Hair Dryer Brush and After Hair Dryer Brush. I have a bob. People think that’s easy. I used to think it was, too, but then I saw photos of my hair when I thought it looked OK. IT DID NOT LOOK OK. A friend told me about hair dryer brushes, and how you can give yourself a salon blow-dry. Now I don’t know how I managed without it. I like the Nicky Clarke Smooth And Shine Frizz Control Hot Air Styler [£34.99 argos.co.uk]. It has two different brushes for varying levels of bouf. You’re welcome!

G OPINION

◀ friends and family, with a writing schedule that didn’t allow much time for phone calls. I realised how much I’ve come to rely on it to be a part of my best friend’s life – she lives in Australia. My cousin – Singapore. My sister – Bristol. I guess that was to be expected. It was the distance from the strangers in my life on Twitter that was to be the unexpected challenge.

Did the ban do me any good? In one way, maybe – I got my book done. I’m more talking about how it made me feel. Y’know, INSIDE. And you know what? Like any junkie, I hated it. I missed every stranger. I missed their sore toes as much as I missed telling them about mine. I’d eat lunch and think, they should know about this salad, they’d *like* this salad. I felt sad not to be able to tell them about it. Did I cave? Kind of. I developed an addiction to Instagram instead. I thought that was OK, it’s not a conversation, just a post. And like I said, IT WAS A GREAT SALAD.

“Get off Twitter and Facebook and get a life.” You hear that a lot. For me, getting off Twitter didn’t mean I went out more, it meant I was alone more. Social networking is a bonus in my life – posting updates and photos of myself and the things I consume doesn’t make me full of myself, it makes me feel involved. And that’s all I ever wanted – to be really, really involved.

As a voyeur, I spend hours trawling through people’s pictures and updates. I love the insight into their lives. I’m grateful for the 21st-century obsession with over-sharing. Why live on this planet full of people and sit quietly behind closed doors? If you want to be noticed, get noticed, sod it.

So that sets the tone for my new column. It knows the difference between self-confidence and arrogance. And if the new definition of narcissism is promoting your life directly into the timelines of strangers and hoping to get some appreciation for a great salad, then so be it, I am a narcissist. Maybe it isn’t so bad. ☺

Tell me what you think @hotpatooties #GlamourMagUK

AUNTIE TWIT

Dawn solves your problems (well, sort of) in 140 characters

@hotpatooties Where can I find skinny jeans I don’t have to keep pulling up every 3 minutes?
@cakeyshoo Urban Outfitters! Their skinny jeans are quite high-waisted but not in a “mum jeansy” kind of way!

@hotpatooties should I feel guilty about leaving a job for a better one?
@rosamonday NEVER. You can be loyal in life whilst doing what is right for you. Quit, move on, be brilliant somewhere else.

@hotpatooties How in the hell can I stop craving (and subsequently eating) cakes for the next 2 weeks? My wedding is on the 5th. HEELPPPP :(
@rinnywe GET A BIGGER DRESS!

HEY, LADY

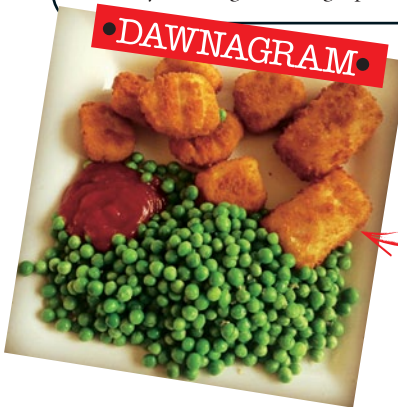


Each month, I’m going to pick a woman in the public eye who deserves a shout-out. I’m kicking off with poet, author, illustrator, singer-songwriter and vintage goddess, Laura Dockrill. On stage, she’s a master of the spoken word. On paper, she’s equally as spectacular. I whipped through her hilarious book, *Mistakes In The Background*, with tears running down my face. As the writer in residence for Booktrust, a charity empowering kids and adults through reading and writing, she’s on a mission to remind people about the importance of strong female leads in literature. The only thing I don’t like about Laura is that I’m not her. lauradockrill.co.uk

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Tell PERVERTS where to get off

A few years ago a friend was on the Tube and felt something wet land on her back. I’ll leave it to your imagination to work out what that substance was and go on to say how delighted I am that a campaign has been launched to stop sexual harassment and assault on Tubes, trains and buses. Expect posters encouraging people to speak up, and 2,000 London police officers specifically trained to handle it. Outside the capital? You can text 61016 or call 0800 405 040 for a hotline to the British Transport Police anywhere in the UK. A woman should be able to get herself home from work without the worry of being flashed, groped or, um, splashed. #ProjGuardian



I’m having peas and nuggets. You?

love Dawn XXX