



“No one is bulletproof, so be kind. Always”

There's a motto kicking about online that I can't stop thinking about. It's such a simple statement, such an obvious thought, but it's been favoured on my Instagram like it's a massive revelation. It simply says, 'Everyone you meet is fighting a battle you know nothing about. Be kind. Always.'

Some of you will be the type to pour out your feelings and

problems to those around you, and others will keep your issues much closer to your chest. But we all have personal battles in life that bother us and make us sad, that we don't share. And the way that other people behave towards you can make it much, much worse. I've experienced this myself on many occasions, but let me give you one example.

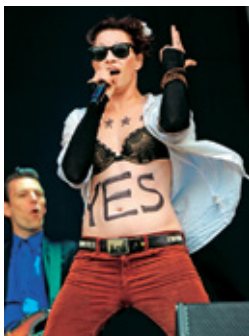
A few years ago, I became a Twitter target for a small group

of women, mostly journalists, who were very nasty about me on a regular basis. I'd wake up most days to some insult about my writing ability, my boyfriend's decision to stay with me, or my general personality defects. Stuff along the lines of, 'When is he going to dump her?'

I wasn't strong enough at the time not to look, and it kept me up at night. I took every word to heart, and let it consume me. It made me feel like shit for months. I became paranoid that I was really hated and that my work was crap. I felt nervous putting any writing out there when I knew there were people so willing to slate it. I took it particularly badly because my career wasn't going well at the time and my future seemed unsure. I was struggling in all sorts of ways and I couldn't handle the humiliation that they were ►

HEY, LADY

The love goes out to performance artist and musician Amanda Palmer. I first heard of her because her doting husband, author Neil Gaiman, talks about her in interviews. I looked her up, and she's amazing. She gets naked in the name of art, writes fab songs and is the queen of crowd funding. In her book, *The Art Of Asking*, she discusses why asking for what you need connects you to strangers and your own life. Huge inspiration.



◀ throwing at me. My public persona, however, said nothing of the sort. I didn't want the world to know I was having a hard time, so I kept up the chipper Tweets and people presumed life was, for me, chipper. It was not.

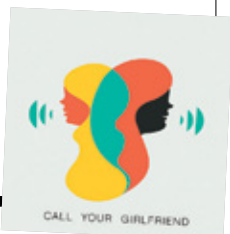
The bitching finally stopped after I snapped back at one of them publicly, telling her to stop. And when another wrote a vile piece about me, the backlash proved things had gone far enough. But the insecurity it instilled in me lived on.

Then, out of the blue a few months ago, one of those involved emailed me and apologised. She told me she was sorry for what she had said; that it was cruel and unnecessary and that it shouldn't have escalated in the way that it did.

I couldn't believe the email. It felt so good to get confirmation that what happened was real enough to be acknowledged by her all this time later. I replied straight away and accepted the apology, of course. It took guts for her to do that, and to act like I was still angry or hurt would have been dumb when really I appreciated her writing to me. In my reply I told her that it had particularly affected me because of the personal mess I was in at the time. To which she admitted that

I'm LOVING

I like to listen to words whenever possible. So it's mostly audio books, Radio 4 and podcasts for me. I've just discovered *Call Your Girlfriend*, a brilliant podcast for 'long distance besties everywhere'. Hosted by Ann Friedman and Aminatou Sow, it's American, candid and varied girl talk. Not fluffy and often very funny!



Auntie Twit

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



@hotpatooties Is it possible to raise a daughter with a positive body image or will outside influences always outweigh family?

@AByrne I was raised by my auntie who was a bit hippy. She instilled good body image into me. You're the biggest influence, feel assured in that.

@hotpatooties I need your advice on making new friends at uni :D

@erinllwyd Don't feel stressed that you have to find them straight away. Enjoy each day and your circle of mates will happen over time.

@hotpatooties Been with my boyfriend 10 yrs. We both want to get married but he hasn't asked. Don't want to ask him. What do I do?

@sammi_crouch TALK ABOUT IT. It's the biggest decision of your life. I hate that women wait for the man. Break the rules. Discuss it!

@hotpatooties What clothes should I wear when suffering an IBS bloot? I look pregnant and my trousers hurt.

@makemineavodka 60s empire line dresses to fall over your belly... gorgeous! Then get to your GP to talk beating the bloot.

In the NEWS

There is a café in China that uses robots instead of people to make basic meals and serve food.



Apparently this is the future. Right, I have something to say about this. We cannot encourage this. Unemployment is a problem as it is. So please, if a robot offers you beans on toast, say no and go ask a human to make it for you.



the presumption with bitching about someone in the public eye is that the subject of it is bulletproof, when of course no one actually is.

I meet a lot of well-known people through my job, most of whom have suffered multiple online attacks or vicious press campaigns, and let me assure you, it scars them. But the same goes for everyone. Attacks hurt, we've all experienced it. So we should give each other a break and stop doing it.

I wish I had heard my new motto 30 years ago, so I could have taken it through life and spared more of a thought for people who I wasn't as kind to as I should have been. And I wish people had considered it towards me too, because it would have saved me a lot of pain. But empathy comes with age, I guess. And being kind isn't always easy. But it is a choice, and one that I plan to make as often as possible from now on. We *are* all in battle with something that we don't want to talk about. So consider that before you treat someone badly. Always. ☺

What do you reckon? Tweet me @hotpatooties #GlamourMagUK

Love Dawn

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