

I don't belong here.

Discover your true self in five simple steps.

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The external influence

The first mistake we often make is allowing others to decide where we belong. Society has created stereotypes and established "social groups" designed to categorize people. We have subconsciously accepted these labels, forcing ourselves to fit into spaces where we are told we belong. True freedom comes the day you realize that you don't belong where others place you, but where you are meant to be.

In this chapter, I will break down these stereotypes to help you step away from where you are now. Together, we will uncover your true self, guide you toward the direction you desire, and ultimately, where you are meant to be.

1. You will not find yourself in other people. In life, some people will inspire you to strive for success like theirs. Admiration is a natural part of human behavior and can be positive—until it turns into adoration. It's important to remember that you are not meant to be a replica of anyone else.

Every person has a unique story, shaped by a journey full of events that made them who they are today. Even if you tried to replicate their exact experiences, your life would still be distinct from theirs.

Admiration becomes problematic when it shifts to adoration—when your focus is so fixed on someone else’s light that you lose sight of your own. Each of us has a unique light to shine, but sometimes, we become so enamored with someone else’s brilliance that we forget to let our own light shine. Instead, we want their light to overshadow us.

Think of a tree: a tree provides shade, but that’s not its primary purpose. It was created to bear fruit. We may admire the tree’s beauty, but its true gift lies in the fruit it produces. Once we take that fruit, we can eat it, plant its seeds, and let it grow into something new. Similarly, the people we admire can offer us lessons, inspiration, and guidance. Take what they offer, learn from it, apply it to your own life, and then share the results with others.

2. You will not find yourself in human knowledge, philosophy, or science. If we ask a monkey who we are and our purpose in life, I am pretty sure they will not answer. If we ask a psychologist, they will probably point us to a direction to

seek better where we belong. If we look into science books, we will know more facts about ourselves and our capacity, abilities, and virtues. If we seek in a book like mine and it's my goal, I will give you hints to bring you light, but the **truth about yourself is inside you**. Only the Maker of a thing can say the purpose of that thing he created and that my friend, you must understand, will be found somewhere other than where you have been looking. Scientifically, your biological parents were a vehicle to bring you to earth. Your school or college teacher, your mentors, and spiritual guides such as pastor or teacher, will contribute to some of what you know. However, your true Maker is the great I am, the creator of the universe, the Alpha Omega, and he placed all you need inside of you. We will get back to this further on, but please keep an open mind and heart to receive the answer you are looking for. We cannot base our lives on philosophy. Human thinking is lower than the standard thought that we should stand on.

3. You will not find your true self in physical activities.

Physical activities, reflected through our talents and gifts, are tools that reveal only a portion of who we are. You are more than just your physical abilities. Many people pursue careers in sports or other fields based on their skills, but it's essential to recognize that every athlete or professional career has a beginning and an end. Certain roles, such as in sports, the

military, or government, often come with age limits, emphasizing that physical capabilities are temporary. What you *can* do does not define who you *are*.

Whether you excel in a particular talent or feel you lack any talent at all, you remain uniquely yourself. Some of us—and I include myself here—have multiple talents. While this abundance can sometimes make it difficult to pinpoint who we are, it's important to remember that the more we use our abilities, the more skills we uncover within ourselves.

Our talents are tools to help us fulfill the purpose we were brought into this life to accomplish. So, embrace your talents and gifts, but don't let them solely define you. Instead, let them serve as reminders of what you are capable of and as pointers toward your greater purpose.

4. You will not find yourself in Fashion. You might be drawn to fashion and even consider yourself a “fashionista”, with a flawless sense of style. However, remember that *fashion* is a trend, and trends are seasonal. You can't fully define yourself by something that constantly changes. Perhaps you are a trendsetter, someone capable of establishing new styles. While this is a talent and can help you identify your strengths, it doesn't encapsulate your entire identity.

As a model, I often admired the final picture, but I also remembered the effort behind it. What most people never see are the countless hours of preparation—the makeup, enduring extreme weather conditions, and the intensity of the photo-shoots. In the end, all of that hard work was to represent a brand owned by someone who didn't care about who I was or whether I was happy in my life.

It's important to recognize—and I will elaborate on this later—that every experience we have is valuable for building ourselves and gaining wisdom. Even when we face struggles or discomfort in our journey, every step contributes to our growth. However, we must also acknowledge when it's time to move on. Careers and jobs are often temporary, and while they may seem significant in the moment, we should not lose sight of the bigger vision for our lives. Looks can be deceiving, and what seems “perfect” on the surface often pales in comparison to the purpose we're meant to pursue.

When I was younger, I sang at my church, and it was my passion. I didn't think I was an extraordinary singer, but I felt I was in the right place at the time and fulfilling my purpose. One day, a well-known Christian singer told me, “You'd have a better career as a model.” Perhaps she thought my voice wasn't exceptional or didn't align with her personal preferences. Maybe

she compared her years of experience in the music industry to my limited exposure and assumed I wouldn't go far.

At that moment, she was probably right. But what she didn't realize is that her opinion of me then had no bearing on who I would become. Today, I am more than a model or a singer. I am myself, and I have accomplished more by embracing my true self than I ever would have by following her suggestion. I modeled for a few years, and I still sing today, but those roles don't define me.

What matters most is having a clear vision of who I am. The fun I had modeling or singing in the past till this day, cannot compare to the joy I feel now as I write this book for you.

5. You will not find yourself in social groups. Please don't make this mistake: you are not *just* Black or White; you are not only Gothic or a "non-binary"; you are not merely Latino, Christian or Catholic. Social groups often focus on one specific characteristic of a person's life, such as race, religion, political affiliation, profession, career, or sexuality. However, none of these things should define where you belong.

You are a person with unique and valuable characteristics, traits, and attributes that contribute meaningfully to this world.

Acknowledge that about yourself first. Some aspects of your identity are private and don't need to be shared with everyone unless you choose to. If you decide to share, do so thoughtfully—but don't tether your identity to a social group unless it's part of making a meaningful stand.

For instance, some people may feel compelled to publicly declare they are a specific gender. While that choice is theirs to make, it's important to remember that being ray or shay, or any other singular characteristic, doesn't define the entirety of who you are. You are a person with virtues, talents, and much more. Your identity isn't solely rooted in race, religion, culture, or any social group. It stands on the foundation of your unique individuality and the purpose you are here to fulfill.

Some people join sororities, brotherhoods, or even secret societies in search of belonging. While I'm not against these groups, it's important to keep perspective. Life is a journey of learning and growth. As you progress through different stages and seasons of your life, you'll realize that these groups are simply environments where you learn to interact, show kindness, and coexist harmoniously with others.

Many of these groups will also teach their own philosophies, which may influence you. However, belonging to these groups should not be your ultimate goal. Your true goal is to become

fully yourself—embracing all your talents and unique qualities—and to fulfill the purpose for which you were created.

6. You will not find yourself in a relationship. Some people feel they need a companion to become someone—to find meaning or worth in life. However, to have a truly great relationship, you must first find yourself. Jumping from one relationship to another in search of fulfillment will never fill the emptiness of not knowing who you are. No one else can give you a sense of belonging until you discover it within yourself.

Knowing yourself is essential to understanding what fits you in a relationship. For example, I've seen women who rely on their partners to tell them how great they are. They live with constant insecurity because they've never figured out their own worth. A healthy relationship starts with self-awareness and confidence, not dependency.

At this point, you might be thinking, *"If none of these groups or roles define my true identity, then where do I fit? Who am I?"* If that's the question on your mind, then good—you're exactly where you need to be: at the point of *nowhere*. Why? Because when you detach yourself from the stereotypes and categories that have boxed you in, you create the space to establish a true connection with your purpose.

Think of it this way: to reach a destination—let's call it “Point B”—you first need to know your current location, or “Point A.” Once you're clear on where you are, you can chart a path to where you want to go. But before you can identify “Point B,” you must ask yourself: *Where am I?* and *What is Point B for me?*

In this book, “Point B” represents the place where you truly belong. Through my own experiences and by listening to wise mentors, I've learned that to find where you belong, you must: **know yourself, see yourself, build yourself, show yourself, and ultimately, be yourself.**

In the following chapters, I will delve deeper into each of these steps. By the end of this journey, my hope is that you will walk away with clarity about who you are and exactly where you belong.

*“The truth about yourself is
inside you”.*