



Copycat

By Wayne and Tamara

I have been friends with a female for eight years. At first everything was good as we share the same hobbies and lifestyle choices. Over the years I've noticed she is selfish and competitive, especially with my girlfriend. She is the type who will see an article of clothing on a friend, then run out and buy the same thing. Once she overheard a friend talking, then bought the car her friend wanted and proclaimed she had always wanted one. Common courtesy is less important than her need to stay on a par with her friends' fashion. I find this extremely irritating. If you have bad style it may be a problem, but the fix isn't to copy everything your friends do.

Which leads to my present problem. Recently, she wants me to dump my entire music library onto her device. Is it easy to do? Yes. But it has taken me 10 years to compile my music collection, researching music from movies and magazines, buying CDs, downloading songs, and spending days organizing the software. She has the nerve to ask for it as if it is no big deal. She does very little work for something, but somehow gets what she wants because she has no scruples about asking for it. Am I the selfish one?

David

David, people say imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, but that isn't correct. Imitation is the sincerest form of identity theft. Your music is your soul. Like a diary, it is the story of your life, and like a diary, it is not for publication. Tell her that, and then tell her you know she will understand. People often put nice ahead of no. To their own detriment. No means no. It doesn't call for discussion, debate or reasoning from the other party. If you let her engage you in a discussion, you will be on the defensive and you will forget what is best for you. Your answer is your answer.

Wayne & Tamara

A Cliffhanger

I have been involved with a married woman for six months. I know her husband through an organization he runs, and I began speaking to his wife online. She is very outgoing, and we began instant messaging. Most of the talks were friendly and comical, and I told her I liked her. Eventually we met and upon being alone, ended up making out. Neither of us can be blamed for what happened because we both kind of pushed the issue. I am a very realistic person, and I'm guessing she doesn't love me like I love her.

With her husband she has two children. I know she's not stupid enough to diminish her self-interest because her situation now is far better than it would be with me. I'm looking into justification for my next action. I love her. I know she doesn't want to be caught, and I'm wondering if it's best to walk away, or to increase the chances she will be caught.

Martin

Martin, you say she is not to blame and you are not to blame. We agree. You are both to blame. Look at what's going on. She's the one with the power, and she's not going to leave her husband. The only power you have is the power to punish her. You think, if her husband catches her, he will divorce her. Then she will come to you. That's not likely. If you expose her, she will blame you.

You are counting on divorce as the recognized penalty for adultery, rather than thinking, "I should not be doing this and neither should she." You created this imbroglio. Rather than looking for someone free to be with you, you took a shortcut through a back alley. Now you've hit upon a spiteful solution so distant from love it is hair-raising.

Wayne & Tamara



The Uniform of Popularity

The Teenage Pressure to Fit In and its Consequences on Mental Health

By Camryn Bland
Youth Columnist

Every individual is unique in their own, interesting way. Through our appearances, talents, and personalities, each human is a snowflake, distinct from one another. Yet, we often hide our differences in order to appear similar to others. This behavior is most prominent in high school, where popularity and acceptance feels most prominent. Teenage years are often the height of insecurity, when we feel isolated, disliked, and misunderstood. To feel more popular, teens decide to change themselves in whichever way necessary to fit in; they may alter their clothes, hair, or even passions. Although this may seem socially beneficial, in reality it causes more issues for the individual and can significantly damage their mental health. When teens compress their individuality, trends begin to surface in practically every teenager.

There seems to be a self-inflicted uniform for those who are "likeable." Boys wear all-black, baggy clothes and have identical hairstyles. Most girls straightened their hair, wear similar clothes, and do the same makeup style. High schools seem void of unique personalities, instead filled with cookie-cutter students mimicking popularity. This constriction applies to more than popular students. Secondary education is commonly known for its challenging social life and complicated cliques, which makes finding trustworthy friends a laborious task for any individual. A student may not feel smart enough to befriend traditional nerds, or athletic enough to play with classic jocks. No matter where one goes and who they choose to associate with, they may always feel misplaced; this again leads to a shift in identity. It's a system of change and stress, one that feels impossible to overcome.

Although these patterns may seem like an insignificant scene from Mean Girls, (2004), it is a much larger issue than you'd originally expect. Today's youth are no longer choosing to express themselves, instead conforming with others. This significantly harms mental health, as adolescents lack confidence and experience a misunderstood sense of identity. How many changes do we need to make until we realize there's a stranger in the mirror? How long until we notice the individual with a different style, different morals, and different identity?

For the entirety of high school, fitting in seems to be the most significant aspect of life; however, this is far from the truth. The all-consuming stress of popularity and social acceptance begins to fade once graduation arrives. In the adult world, your true character is far more important than the friends you had in high school or the attention you received in a crowded hallway. What once felt like the center of your life is revealed to be a temporary distraction when compared to the opportunities and challenges that come after graduation.

As simple and elementary as it may seem, the solution to this dilemma is to be yourself. Wear what you feel confident in, and spend your time doing what makes you happy. Work hard towards personal goals and act aligned with your morals. Popularity may reward similarity, but life beyond it celebrates difference. Genuine relationships, opportunities, and individuality come once you stand out in a way that feels true to who you are. Only through this uniqueness can you be accepted for your true self.

Clarington celebrates summer's end at Mayor & Council BBQ

On Sunday, August 24, Orono Park welcomed over 500 Clarington residents for the first-ever Mayor & Council BBQ, giving the summer of 2025 a proper send-off at one of the community's beloved rural spots. "We want to make it easy for everyone in Clarington to get involved by creating relaxed opportunities to connect with your Council team. The bonus? Bringing people together with good food and lively celebrations is what makes getting involved fun and unforgettable for everyone," said Clarington Mayor Adrian Foster.

Under sunny skies, the Orono Park (also known as Buttercup Hollow Park) was a hub of summer play and community spirit. Families spent the afternoon enjoying a delicious BBQ lunch and fun activities, including inflatable bouncy castles, swimming in the outdoor pool, games, and a playful scavenger hunt that encouraged kids to explore the large park. Newcastle Lions Club volunteers worked the grill. Sponsorships from Metro, Loblaws and Foodland, made the event possible. Thanks to the involvement of local groups like Marigold Hospice Care, Orono Crown Lands, Clarington firefighters, and Orono Library staff, residents could leave the event feeling more connected and informed about their community.

"What an awesome way for people to meet their Council, make special memories with their families, and get ready to welcome the fall," said Mayor Foster.

Councillor Anderson, Mayor Council Community BBQ in Orono Park. The Mayor & Council BBQ grew out of the community conversations held as part of Clarington's 2024-27 Strategic Plan. This event is one way Clarington is creating more opportunities for residents to connect with Council, share their ideas, and get involved in community life –

7 a.m. for all fall swimming lessons, group fitness classes, 55+ Active Adult programs and recreation programs for all ages. They encourage you to set aside some time for registration due to the high demand. If you can't complete your registration right away, stay in the online queue. Remaining in the queue will hold your spot with new 55+ seasonal programming! From art and music to dancing, cooking and storytelling, connect with our welcoming community and explore inspiring new experiences.

Signing up for shinny hockey just got easier! Pre-registration is expanding to include youth, adult, women's, 55+, 65+, and 70+ drop-in sessions. Book your spot for the week of September 1. Love pickleball or basketball? Starting September 15, you'll be able to pre-register for your favourite drop-in sessions too — making it faster and more convenient to get to the game you love. Simply, reserve your spot for the upcoming week using your online account. Speak with a Customer Service Representative at one of our recreation facilities for details.

Get ready to register

You can browse our spring programs where you can sign up for an account, add your favourites to your wish list, update your profile and find more information.

Steps to get ready

Choose the correct swimming level. If you're interested in swimming lessons, use our Learn-to-Swim guide to find the right level for your child. Alternatively, drop by the pool during a Public Swim and get assessed by a lifeguard. In-person registration is available during regular hours at:

Alan Strike Aquatic and Squash Centre
Courtice Community Complex
Diane Hamre Recreation Complex
Garnet B. Rickard Recreation Complex
South Courtice Arena

New this fall

Celebrate cultural heritage and allow you to complete your payment when it's your turn.



Foster, Councillor Elhajjeh, Councillor Zwart, Councillor Rang and Councillor Woo Clarington Council members hanging out at the Mayor & Council BBQ.

Registration opens on Wednesday, September 3, at

both in formal meetings and informal gatherings.

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