

## What Do Our Clothes Say About Us?



The old saying that clothes make the person may be true. Certainly, many people judge us just based on how we dress and look. They know nothing about us. But they react to who they think we are and we, in return, may do the same.

Additionally, we see ourselves differently based on what we wear and how it makes us feel. We may feel confident, powerful, or sexy — or insecure, embarrassed or uncomfortable — just based on our clothes or shoes — and for no other reason.

**There are many factors that go into the dressing decisions of most adults, including:**

- \* Are the clothes comfortable and easy to wear?
- \* Appropriate to the setting or event?
- \* Weather friendly?
- \* How will they match with accessories?
- \* Cost appropriate?
- \* Trendy?

We take into consideration what others may be wearing, what we wore the day before, if our outfit is old or new, or if we violate unwritten rules such as “No white pants after Labor Day.”

But for children, clothing may also become a reason to bully or ridicule others.

Kids’ clothing may have an even greater impact on their peers and selves than amongst adults. The clothing of youth often expresses feelings, allegiances, political views, and moods. It may also reflect diverse body types, gender, sexuality, and ethnicity. Or it may reflect societal status and wealth — or a lack of.

A lot of clothing expresses a message, often with slogans and images, or expressed devotion to a city, school, or sports team. We wear our clothes not just out of utilitarian function, but because we want to express who we are.

Sometimes a brand label or logo defines us. When I launched a lifestyle company, a message was attached to the clothes, dolls, and books that we created. At Nanducket, one doesn’t just get a quality product or in some cases, a handmade item, but a chance to join a community of like-minded consumers who want to support an important message of belonging and friendship.

There should be nothing controversial about standing up for inclusivity, self-love, expressing our uniqueness, and to accepting one’s differences as being the norm. Society can only be stronger when it sees people for who they are and embraces them as such.

There should be nothing unusual about standing united against bullying or prejudice. But the world, as awesome and vibrant as it is, needs more encouragement to help raise the next generation with healthy values.

My hope is that just as clothes can help define who we are, they can also encourage others to do the right thing. Our clothes can not only say who we are, but they can help others see and express themselves.

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