

Are you weird?

By Steven L. Anderson, Ph.D., MBA

Are you weird? I sure hope so. I know I am. Let me explain what I am talking about. Many of us spend our lives trying to be normal, whatever that is. In the process of trying to be normal, we suppress that very thing that makes us most special, and if we did it would make us most happy. I urge you to embrace what is different, or weird, about you instead of suppressing it.

A great example of embracing weirdness was a special on Weird Al Yankovich on A&E recently. Heck, even his name says he's weird! What is interesting is that as a child, Al realized he was different than other kids, but instead of trying to be like them, he embraced what was different about himself. For example, a traveling salesman sold his parents an accordion when he was around seven years old so that he could learn to play it. I don't know about you, but I would have rather died at that age than to be the only kid in the neighborhood who played an accordion. Not Al. He loved playing it no matter what the other kids said. Interestingly, this discovery by Weird Al was the beginning of his wildly successful career parodying songs by other artists.

So the next time someone tells you that you are weird, look them straight in the eye and say, "Thanks!" Expect others not to understand what is deeply special about you. And don't try to bury those extraordinary talents, develop them, because you deserve to be really happy doing what you love most, even if it seems weird to other people.