**What is the hardest part of being a teenager now? What’s the best part? What advice would you give younger siblings or friends (assuming they would listen to you)?**

Teenage is not exactly how the movies like “High School Musical” show, kids out of nowhere come out sing and dance. Not even close to “Mean Girls”, where all girls worry about is clothes and gossip about other students. In real life there is no singing and dancing in corridors and there is no “Burn Book”

While I was in my mid-teens I had too many insecurities and a constant fear that I’ll be judged. Most importantly “what would people think?” was running in my mind all time. Before I do simple task, I usually had multiple questions running in my mind like “wait, what would they think about me?”, “Would they like me after this?”, “Will they talk to me or ostracize me?”. Now when I look back I see how my younger self has struggled trying to fit amongst people, trying to get an identity for herself, trying to maintain good grades. Not just that she was undergoing peer pressure, she underwent body shaming and different physiological strains. That 15 year old teen had too much pent up anger and had no clue how to use it. As dramatic as sounds she was fighting her demons. She used to wake up with dreading to go to school- a place where she had handful of friends and dozens of obstacles she needed to face. Emotions mixed up like cocktails and clueless how to deal with them. Now when I’m 18, I still have my insecurities, but I’ve learnt to deal with them. Not that I am free from problems but I understood that I need to accept the way I am, I should work for myself rather than trying to impress others with my work.

Ironically, the worst things got the best out of me. These circumstances made me a strong independent young adult, who is emotionally and mentally self-sufficient and finally I don’t think of what others think of me. I have learnt this over time that everything is going to be alright.

Given a chance, I would advise my younger siblings, its okay to let loose. Its okay that not everyone around are accepting you. You shouldn’t expect that everybody should accept you. DONOT change yourself for pleasing others, all you achieve by changing yourself is losing yourself. And finally embrace the way you. This is you. If you can’t accept yourself, no one can accept you.