

Exaggerated Sense of Entitlement

There is a relatively new word being bandied around. A word that strikes terror in the hearts of those who have ever faced one; a word used to describe a phenomena which is common enough to deserve its own name: Bridezilla.

What is a bridezilla? They are the nightmare-made-flesh of wedding planners and maids of honour alike. They are the brides who, feeling that their special day gives them 'special' status, behave like demanding, tantrum-prone brats. They are the brides who create huge dramas when things don't go exactly their way, who want the biggest, bestest of everything no matter how realistic or unrealistic it is to want it, who cry, tap their little feet, moan, scream, boss around and attack those around them in order to get their way.



They do behave like spoilt, horrible little girls, and why? Because they are *The Bride* of course. In their mind, this simple fact is reason enough to expect their every want and need fulfilled by the letter.

Dysfunctional? Certainly. Unfortunately, it is also an example, albeit extreme, of an ill that is all too common: having an exaggerated sense of entitlement. What is exaggerated sense of entitlement? It is when you feel you deserve something, simply because you want it.

We live in an age of instant gratification and free lunches.

The marketing people who direct us to adopt a certain standard of living encourage us to want more, always more, and to get it now! They persuade us that we are entitled to have this endless list of needs and wants fulfilled without further delay and that there is always some way, somehow, to get it without paying... well, not now anyway. You want it now but can't pay for it? Get it on credit. If you can't get credit, then maybe steal it... why not! We want the buzz of getting what we want without having to work for it. Why? Simply because we want it! Getting a sense of something seriously offtrack anyone?

The marketing gurus play on our need to feel special.

They play on our lack of self-esteem and our lack of genuine fulfillment to convince us to overcompensate by indulging our every desire... just 'because I'm worth it'. But worth what exactly?

More and more I see our society developing a demanding expectation that they deserve to get anything they want right now, without paying for it, without working for it, without developing any skill or proving deserving of it. Or maybe because, poor little me, my life is so much harder than anyone else so I deserve greater indulgence.

We are spiraling down and down the egoic spiral of exaggerated sense of entitlement and are spoiling ourselves more and more with every generation.

Of course, it is not to say that sometimes credit may not come in handy, or that we necessarily need to work hard and suffer for every single thing we get. No of course, let us not make things harder than they need to be. Neither does it mean that we are not, each of us, valuable and special in a way. But where we get lost is when we start to feel, consciously or not, that we are *more* special than others, for whatever strange self-justified reason.

As with anything in life, and on the spiritual path, it is a matter of balance.

It is walking the fine line between extremes and also a matter of remaining clear on our motives and attitude. Acting out of an exaggerated sense of entitlement is not about valuing yourself, it is about being full of yourself and behaving like a complete little ego.

For most people, an exaggerated sense of entitlement won't be bridezilla-scale. It will be more subtle like simply having high expectations of others doing you favours or always being available for you, wanting to be treated in a 'special' way, having each of your little achievements made a big fuss over, wanting recognition that is not necessarily in proportion to what you did (although you may believe otherwise). A little centre-of-the-universe syndrome maybe?

Although these behaviours may seem arrogant (and they can be signs of someone who really feels they are better than the rest of us/them), they can often be a sign of low self-esteem.

Someone with a low sense of self-worth and self-esteem will compensate by demanding special treatment, constant attention and reinforcement from others in order to get their 'fix' of feeling okay about themselves, feeling loved, feeling like they matter.

But having your special treatment for the day is not necessarily a sign of being loved. For some, an exaggerated sense of entitlement may be based on expectations from what they have experience in the past. If a person has been spoilt and overindulged their whole life, they will tend to firmly believe that this is how it should be for them. They expect what they have always got before.

For people on the spiritual path, it can also play out in other ways mostly through the mechanism of spiritual pride.

People who have spiritual pride can start to feel that they are better than the 'average' punter simply because they are working on themselves and are engaged with spirituality. These people sit in self-righteous pride and may demand special treatment and special lifestyle indulgence simply for being spiritual.

In more extreme cases, some may even get carried away into believing that they are holy and therefore are owed to be treated like the second coming. They may start to believe that the world owes them an existence and so the universe itself should bend over backwards to accommodate their needs and make their life easy. Why? Simply because they are spiritual. Simply because they believe they are special enough that the rest of humanity, maybe even the planet and the universe itself owes them endless gratitude and appreciation.

This may manifest by: expecting others to provide for your material needs, having expectations that things should come to you served on a silver platter simply because you want or need it, that the universe should take care of life for you, so you can simply sit there and be spiritual.

For others, it may play out as expecting others to treat you in a special way because of your spiritual-ness. Some may even expect reverence.

While it is healthy to expect respect, it is certainly not healthy to expect reverence, worship or to use this in order to manipulate others to fulfill your needs.

Most people on the spiritual path have an interest, to some degree or another, in being of service, making a difference in the world. Some feel that because they are contributing or trying to help, whether through healing or teaching in some way, that it entitles them to be treated in a special way, or have special recognition and adoration in exchange for all their hard work.

Some may get carried away with their service and have a false sense of 'important work', which is another form of spiritual pride whereby they believe that 'my spiritual work is so important, much more important than yours', which all contribute to feeding the downward spiral of ego and exaggerated sense of entitlement.

Then there are those who feel like they have served selflessly over lifetimes, who have played the martyr by suffering greatly in their attempts to serve 'God' in whatever form. They may also feel that because of that they are now owed an existence by God and should be taken care of because of their past service and work, as if they were magnanimous to God/The Universe because they went through the inconvenience of doing something for the higher good and making the effort to play their part in the greater plan that we are all a part of. "Why God aren't you taking care of all my needs and challenges, after all I've done for you?"

Two wrongs don't make a right and over-compensating the martyr with a princess-syndrome isn't going to bring balance to anyone or anything.

In any case, expectation and superiority/inferiority dynamics seem to be part of the picture. Expectation is a powerful manifestor and a powerful prison. Placing expectations on others is about control and manipulation and can be a great burden to them, if not a restriction.

Expectations can also be a great way to be disappointed, and all the demands and tantrums in the world may not change the outcome! Your expectations don't always manifest as you expect. The universe has your greater good in mind and will send you what you need to learn, grow and overcome the limitations of your negative ego; not what your negative ego considers it deserves!

In any case, having an exaggerated sense of entitlement is a sure sign that what you are lacking is humility, gratitude and appreciation.

Humility is about acknowledging, accepting and appreciating where you are at, no more no less. You don't make yourself any grander than you are, and you don't make yourself any smaller than you are. You can see how far you've come, and acknowledge your gains and successes as well as you perceived mistakes, and you can see how much further you have to go. And you are okay with that.

With humility comes a great understanding and compassion about the fact that we are all, each of us, on our unique journey and that no one is better than another just all at different stages in our evolution.

Learning to appreciate and be grateful for what you do have is also a key to overcoming an exaggerated sense of entitlement. Learning to appreciate the learning that comes from each experience, whether it is what you want and expect or not, is also an important aspect.

Another key is learning to practice the holy encounter.

Namaste - acknowledging the Divine spark that is within everyone and everything.

With this practice, you can start to experience that sense of humility, gratitude, feeling part of something greater than yourself. You start to really perceive the benevolence of this universe, who is trying to look after you, assist and support, if you would only stop tapping your little feet saying 'I want' and simply receive what is right there for you, hidden behind each simple experience.



Segolene King was born in France and studied at various Universities in France, Spain and Northern Ireland, graduating with degree in Modern Languages Applied to International Business.

Segolene's spiritual search started some number of years ago, gradually becoming an overwhelming passion. She attended various courses and workshops, and took initiations to become a certified Reiki and Sekhem Healer. In the Spring of 2004, Segolene left her job and home, and embarked on a journey of shamanic retreats, travels, intensive workshops, and deep spiritual awakenings, culminating in the VEA Ascension Gathering in the United Kingdom in July/August, 2004.

She joined the IF Life Coaching Program straight away and moved to Australia for nine months to actively focus on self-development and mastery, experiencing ineffable transformation. She then returned to Scotland, where she ran a series of ascension classes and coaching sessions before returning to Australia.

Segolene loves simple living and simple pleasures, like walking in nature, singing, and dancing. "I am passionate about restoring harmony and unconditional love in this world, between individuals, societies and the various kingdoms of nature. I work very much with feminine energies, and through this channel hope to contribute to helping Gaia and all her kingdoms break free of the ring of fear into becoming more love and more truth."

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