

Celebrity Worship Syndrome (CWS)

In a world of fantasy, boys dream of becoming a prince and girls likewise, of becoming a princess. So much so, celebrity watch for the Royals has become a must and age does not appear to limit the current wave of *celebrity worship*.¹

With the advent of technology the capacity to invent heroes and heroines has been stolen from the minds of the young. Today the social media, film industry, tabloids, reality television, paparazzi photographs, all capture and saturate the mind of the young to such an extent, that there is no room for natural creativity or imagination. A young person reads a book and the imagery that is created, is not that of their own doing but what has been created by the celluloid world previously.

Then there is peer pressure: a relentless attack on the individual to maintain a physical and mental façade that is in keeping with perceived norm. To will against such pressure is for the rarefied. And there are those who succumb to the pressure resulting in a precious life lost.

All children need a hero, all children need to be able to fantasise but in an environment that is healthy and natural: not in surroundings where fantasies and heroes are artificially injected.

As the young person learns to deal with the psychological, physiological and emotional vagaries, we see a sinister overhang envelope the parent in trying to juggle the too often, irrational behaviour. If too much authority is exercised there will be a demonstrable attitude of defiance expressed. Not enough and the external influence may have serious repercussion on the decision making of the young person. Either scenario is difficult. The danger lies in ignoring it altogether and exacerbating the already burgeoning problem and tacitly handing over control to the external forces.

It is very easy for parents to become a little patronising and say, "Been there, done that, so get over it!" The paradox in all this is that parents continue to eke out a fortune in providing the technology and opportunities for their child to becoming a victim of CWS.

What should parents then do? Firstly understand that what their teenager is doing is normal and secondly, set sufficient boundaries to protect the child. Boundaries if set responsibly allow the individual to address their feelings, make correct choices, stick to the family values and learn how to respect and love.

Boundaries teach the young person to take ownership of their given responsibility.

Lastly, love your child unconditionally without compromising your position as a parent.

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¹ Celebrity Worship Syndrome (CWS)