

Honest Interest



Honest Interest Magazine

VOLUME 2

A volume edited on the topic of
"identity".

photography
& interview LÉANA INAN

Welcome to this special edition of the magazine, all about figuring out who we are. We're diving into the beautiful and sometimes confusing world of identity—what makes each of us unique and the same at the same time.

Think of identity like a big, colorful quilt. Each square is a piece of who we are, influenced by where we come from, the things that happens to us, and the elements we discover about ourselves.

In these pages, we've got stories that explore all kinds of identity adventures. From digging into our backgrounds to celebrating the little things that make us, well, us. It's all about sharing experiences and showing that even though we're different, we're all connected in this big, diverse world.

So, let's go on this journey together. I hope these stories make you see things a bit differently, appreciate the awesome mix of people around you, and maybe even learn something new about yourself.

Thanks for being here with me,

With honest interest,

LÉANA I.

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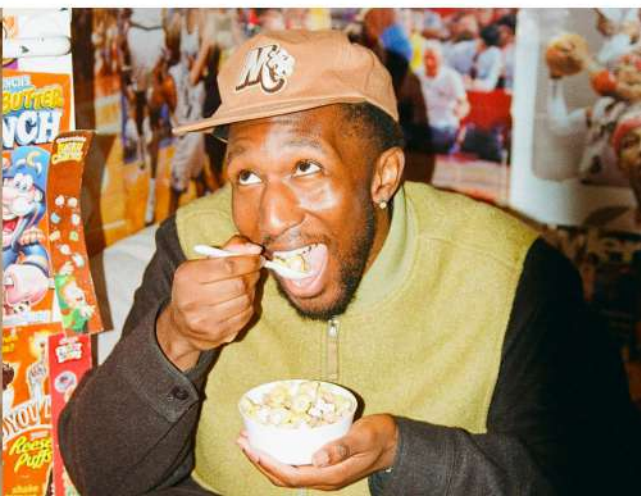
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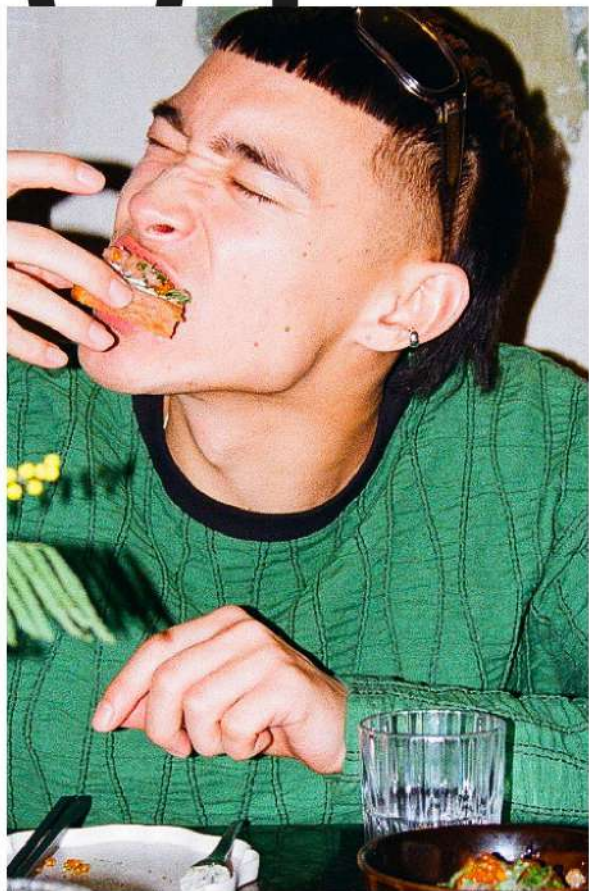


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identity

Jun ANDERSEN

introduction.

Jun Andersen: runner by day, creative by night.

Growing up in a supportive family, Jun found a passion for football early in life, which played a significant role in his development.

Today, Jun is known for his creativity and the drive to inspire others.

His story is one of embracing a multicultural identity, overcoming personal challenges, and continually seeking balance and creativity.

LI Can you please introduce yourself and share a bit about who you are and what makes you, you?

JA My name is Jun Andersen, I'm half Danish, half Japanese. I was born in Japan in 1997 and moved to Denmark when I was 1 years old.

I played football a lot of my life and that shaped me also to the person I am today. And I'd add that I'm a creative soul with something to say.

LI When you think about "identity", what does that word mean to you personally and how do you perceive and define your own identity?

JA That's a tough one because identity is who I see. It's me being truly **honest** with myself and who I want to become and who I am right now. It's about finding balance, peace, and acceptance within myself to create the identity I want.

LI Reflecting on your childhood, what was your most vivid dream or aspiration? How did that dream shape the person you are today?

JA So, there's a lot to it, but my childhood experiences definitely shaped the identity and person I am today. I was the youngest of three, which significantly influenced my growth because my parents gave me a lot of room to make my own mistakes, knowing it would all work out. They were perhaps less strict with me compared to my siblings.

I started playing football when I was three years old. Growing up with a Japanese mother and a Danish father, my dad and I bonded a lot over football. He supported me in everything I did. I really had a super supportive family that believed in me, providing a safety net that boosted my confidence and made me believe I could achieve whatever I set my mind to.

For many years, my dream was to become a professional football player. It was my only dream and the one talent I felt confident in. I played at a high level as a youth player and even went to England to play. There, I met someone who was customizing shoes, which opened a new door for me in the creative field. But for the longest time, football was my whole identity.

The dreams I had as a child and growing up were always centered around football. It defined me back then.

LI Considering the journey from childhood to now, can you pinpoint a specific moment or experience when you became aware of the significance and power of your own identity?

JA So I grew up in a small town in Denmark, surrounded by mostly white kids with Danish names. I remember a time when I wanted to change my name to something very Danish. There was a guy in my older sister's class named Matthias, who was really good at football and very popular. All the girls liked him, and I wanted to be like him. I hated that my name was different, that the teachers couldn't pronounce it, and that I looked different.

At that time in my life, I was not comfortable in my own skin. I was angry about looking different and not fitting in. But that period was crucial for shaping who I am today.

I eventually realized that if people were going to see me as different because of my eyes, skin color, hair, and name, it didn't matter what I wore.

They would still see me as different.

This realization was a turning point for me. I began to understand that my differences were actually my superpower. If people were going to judge me regardless, I might as

well embrace my uniqueness fully. This mindset gave me the strength to be myself 100% and to stop caring about others' opinions.



This realization came at a relatively young age, and ever since

then, I've become more grateful for my differences. I've grown to appreciate my Japanese heritage and to be proud of my name, my mother, and the Japanese culture. Being of mixed race, I see the positives in both the Japanese and Danish cultures and consider it a blessing to mix these perspectives.

Understanding the beauty in being different helped me believe in myself and explore more of who I am. That period was a significant turning point in becoming the person I am today.



Have there been any challenges or obstacles in your life that have played a role in shaping your sense of self and identity? How did you navigate those experiences?

I would say one period that was really tough was when I had this identity crisis. I had been working on JKA, my old brand, for many years. That brand emerged organically when I stopped playing football. At the end of my football career, I started being creative and working on JKA.

It's funny that you're asking me this because I actually wrote down in my journal another word for identity crisis. Identity crisis didn't feel like the right term for me during that period because it wasn't a crisis.

It was more of a renewal. Yes, an identity renewal. It wasn't a crisis because a crisis is something bad. This was a transformation, a renewal of my identity.

Building JKA and being creative within that space allowed me to establish a name and gain clients. It created a new identity that I was really happy with. I had a space where my creative ideas could live and be respected by people.

It was like a new dream coming true that I didn't even know I had. For four years, working on JKA built up this whole identity. When I met people in the city, they would recognize me and my brand, and it became a significant part of who I was.

But about two and a half years ago, I started feeling uneasy about where I was with JKA. I didn't know what was wrong, but something felt off. We had a pop-up event where we released a collection. It was a fantastic event with a beautiful space, many attendees, live music, a DJ set, a big party. Everything was how I wanted it to be. But when the party started, I found myself sitting alone in a car for an hour, not wanting to be at my own event. At that moment, I realized something was not right.

Figuring out what was wrong and what I needed to do was a tough phase. I had never experienced such an identity crisis. I questioned who I wanted to become if I stopped JKA.

My ego was conflicted, telling me I had built this identity and stopping would be a failure. But my true self knew it wasn't right, and I had to stop.

I started opening up to my friends and family about how I felt. They were my safety net, and when I told them, they all supported my decision to stop. That shifted my identity again. I realized I could choose whatever I wanted to become if people no longer knew me from JKA.

From that moment, I aimed to become free from others' expectations of who I am. I wanted to be happy to be alive, excited for today and tomorrow. Whenever I wasn't feeling that spark of being alive, I knew something was wrong. This experience changed my direction. Now, I do many different things that I love, and it's been a transformative journey.



Who has played the most significant role in shaping your sense of identity and helping you navigate your journey of self-discovery?

I had a beautiful conversation with my mother last night. When I was in 9th grade, she told me I had to watch a movie called *The Secret*, which is about manifesting your dreams. At that age, it was quite unheard of, especially in Denmark. In Japan, with Shintoism and Buddhism, these concepts are more common and easier to tap into. But my mother introduced me to these ideas early on.

I watched the movie with her, and the main takeaway for me was to visualize my dreams. I remember printing out pictures of my dream house, a dog, a car—everything I wanted. I made a vision board and put it in front of my bed so I could see it every morning and night.

My mother has been a huge influence on my ability to manifest my goals and dreams. The life I have now is the result of manifestations I made two or three years ago.

She has been pivotal in shaping my journey, instilling in me the desire for balance and peace. She's the calmest person I know, adept at accepting what is and moving on with her life. In terms of finding inspiration for peace and balance, I always think of her.

As a kid, I couldn't see beyond myself, especially being good at football where you need a big ego. But looking back now, I see how much my mother has influenced who I am today. The Japanese side of me, the culture, the work ethic, and the emphasis on quality in everything I do—these are all seeds planted by her.

My mother has played a significant role in shaping my identity and my approach to life.







“I’m grateful for every-
thing. I’m *grateful* for the
worst parts of my life, for
the best parts, and for
the mediocre things.”

Looking back, are there any key milestones or events that have had a profound impact on your understanding of who you are?

I would say everything—every good thing, every bad thing—has led me to where I am today, or where I was a year ago. It's hard for me to pinpoint specific moments because it's really about the totality of experiences.

When I write in my journal, trying to pinpoint what I'm grateful for, I'm grateful for everything.

I'm grateful for the worst parts of my life, for the best parts, and for the mediocre things. I'm grateful for the relationships that broke and for every life event that has shaped me into who I am today.

I believe that acceptance is key. The bad things are worthy and important for growth and development, just as much as the good things are. When I'm feeling low, I understand it's okay and that something beneficial will come from it. And when I'm feeling good and flying high, I know to enjoy the moment.

So, it's about accepting what is—seeing whatever situation you're in, accepting it for what it is, and then finding something beneficial to help you grow even more. It's difficult to pinpoint specific moments because it's really the sum of all experiences that matter.









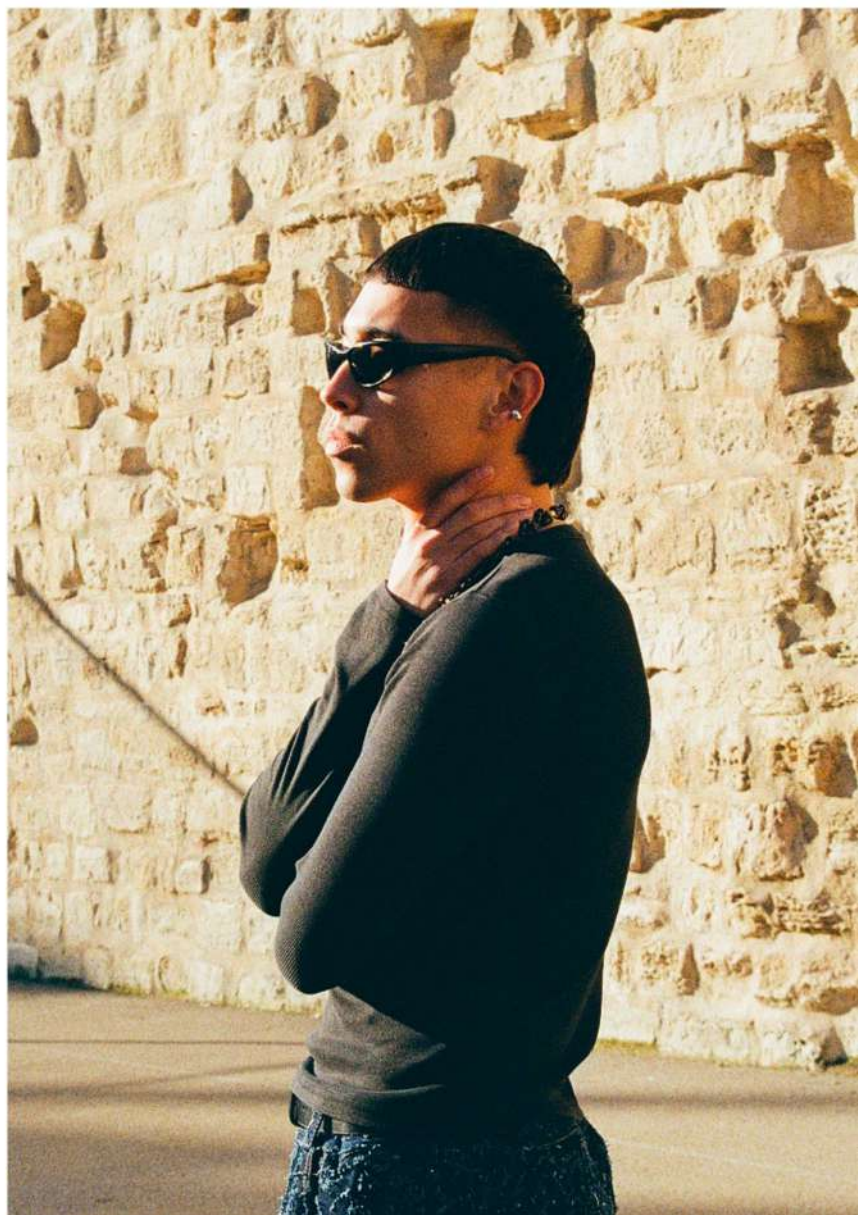


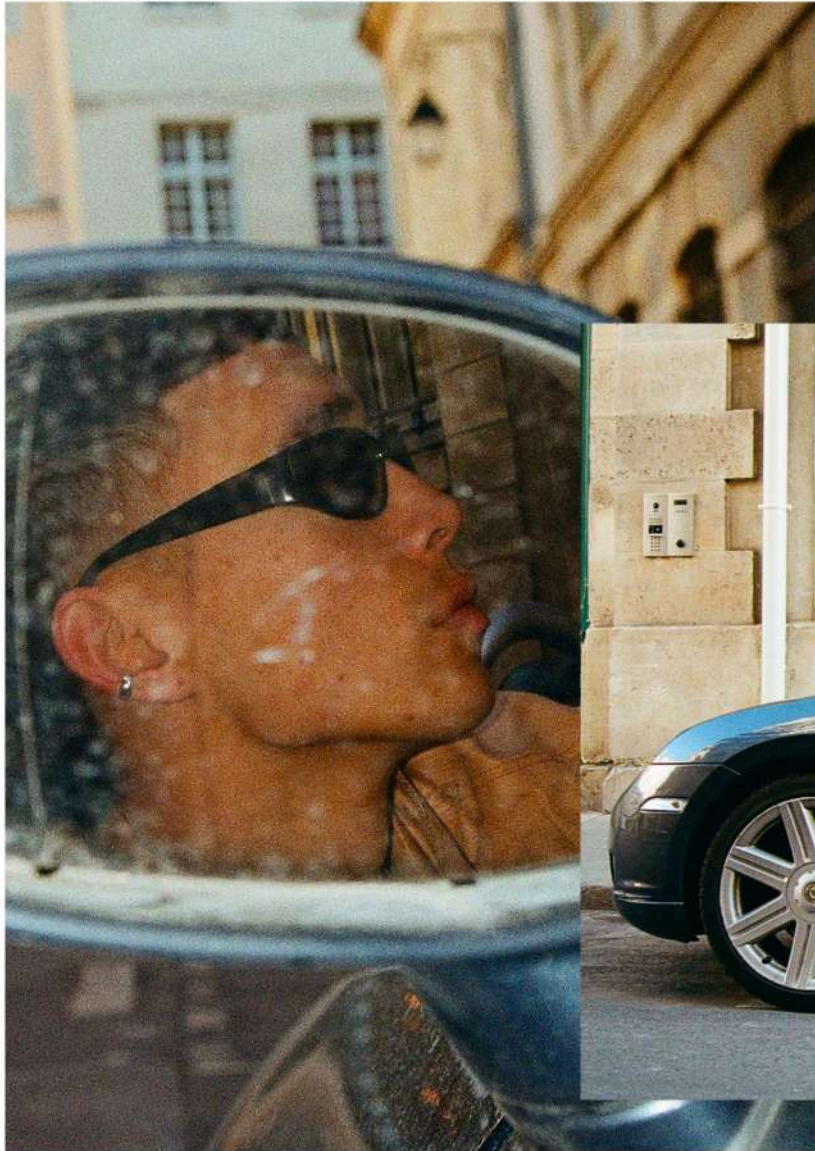














MANFREDI BETTONI

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identity

Ginney NOA

introduction.

Amsterdam's brightest sunray, Ginney Noa, is a multifaceted content creator and podcast host.

Over time, she has evolved into a figure known for her mental health advocacy, often regarded as a big sister and advisor to her community.

Ginney's unique talent lies in her ability to bring people together, make them feel safe, and be an empathetic listener.

Her work strikes a delicate balance between inspiring others through fashion and encouraging them to embrace their true selves.

LI Can you please introduce yourself and share a bit about who you are and what makes you, you?

GN My name is Ginney, most people know me as Ginney Noa. I'm a full time content creator and pod-cast creator. I started as a sneaker content creator but now I grow more like a mental health big sister/advisor on instagram haha.

I think what makes me unique is that I'm very good at bringing people together. I'm very good at making someone feel safe and I think I'm a very good listener. I don't know if that's what makes me unique, but I think I found a good balance between inspiring people with fashion and also inspire them with who they are to the core.

LI When you think about identity, what does that word mean to you personally? How do you perceive and define your own identity?

GN Honestly, I think I still struggle a bit with finding my identity. When it comes to personal style, it's easier for me to find my identity because I mix and match a lot of femininity with masculinity. But when it comes to my background, my mom is from Indonesia and my dad is Dutch. So I'm in between two identities, you know what I mean? Growing up, I identified more as a Dutch girl, but now that I'm older, I'm leaning more into being an Indonesian girl.

So I'm still struggling with my identity, but I feel like it's important to allow yourself the space to find out who you are. It's still a process, and I don't think I fully understand who I am yet. But I think the most important thing is to embrace who you are, even when you aren't sure who you really are.

LI Reflecting on your childhood, what was your most vivid dream or aspiration? How did that dream shape the person you are today?

GN Interesting question, I think it's beautiful. I have a good answer to that, actually. When I was younger, we had a little "friends" book in school. We used to pass it around in class, and everyone could answer questions. One of the questions was, "What do you want to become when you're older?"

My answer was always, "a big sister." It's funny because I have an older sister and two brothers, but I was missing someone younger than me.

My sister and I have a ten-year age gap. She was already going out and having her own friends, so I often felt left alone at home. That always made me feel like the outsider of the family.

So, my big dream was to be a big sister, to have someone to take care of at home. Now, with the work I do, people see me as an online big sister!



What I wished for when I was younger, I actually manifested without even knowing it. It's really beautiful that I got to dream about being something important to someone, and now I am.

It's a fun story to tell—I actually still have some of those friends' books at home. When I visited my parents a couple of months ago, I found a box

with all my childhood drawings and letters I wrote to myself because I loved writing when I was younger.

Then I found the friends' book, opened it, and saw my quote saying, "When I'm older, I want to become a big sister," in Dutch.

I never really dreamed of being famous or an influencer; my one and only dream was to become a big sister.

LI You mentioned writing, was it part of your development, and was it helpful ?

GN I think so, because I'd often write letters to myself and encourage myself. I'd go like, "Hey Ginney, you're now twelve years old, and this is what you're doing at this very moment. When I'm older, I want to achieve this and that." It was really cute how I encouraged the older version of me. Reading all these letters now makes me emotional because I think, "Oh, this little girl had a dream!" And now she's living that dream.

It's really nice to read those letters because I believe every kid has a dream. It's wonderful to see that a dream can become something real when you're older, even if it's just a small part.


LI Considering the journey from childhood to now, can you pinpoint a specific moment or experience when you became aware of the significance and power of your own identity?

GN When I was younger, I was always insecure about my body and who I was as a person because I got bullied a lot between the ages of twelve and sixteen. It was really hard for me because people were constantly perceiving me in a certain way, and I started to believe them.

I was always too thin, too young, always trying to find out who I really was without realizing that the only thing I needed to do was accept myself because I was already enough.

When I got depressed at the age of 25, it really hit me. That's why I tattooed that number on my neck because 25 was a really important age for me.

25 was the hardest year of my life, but also the year I learned a lot about myself. Depression is really confusing; it messes with your mind because you genuinely feel unhappy. However, it also drives and motivates you to find out who you are at your core and to heal the parts of you that need healing. At that age, I reached such a low point that the only option I had left was to rise back up.



Have there been any challenges or obstacles in your life that have played a role in shaping your sense of self and identity? How did you navigate those experiences?

GN To be honest, overall, I've had a beautiful childhood and a beautiful life in general, so I didn't face too many obstacles. Two things come to mind, though. The first obstacle was my own insecurity. I kept telling myself that I couldn't do anything, so in a way, I was my own obstacle. I also listened to what other people said and believed them. Going to school was an obstacle because I didn't want to be there and people kept saying things to me.

The second challenge was trying to understand my background. I grew up in the Netherlands, mostly experiencing the Dutch part of me. My mom cooked Indonesian food and played Indonesian music, but my environment was very Dutch. The best step for me was visiting Indonesia in 2019 to see my mom's birthplace and experience it all.

My mom and I went to the place where she grew up, and she suddenly started to cry because she left Indonesia when she was around six. It was really hard for her to move to the Netherlands. At that moment, I felt really connected to her. I realized that the traumas she carried were also inside me—generational trauma. The challenge was to find the connection between my mom and me, my Indonesian roots, and to balance my Dutch and Indonesian sides.





LI You mentioned your mom cooking traditional food for you, was this a way for you to commit to this part of your identity?

GN When I was younger, I was always insecure about my body and who I was as a person because I got bullied a lot between the ages of twelve and sixteen. It was really hard for me because people were constantly perceiving me in a certain way, and I started to believe them.

LI So your mom really helped through this process

GN Well not always. I feel like asian parents are not the best at communicating, so every time I'd question my mom about something she'd shuffle it under the table and avoid the question. She rarely talked about her family for instance. But now that I'm older, she understands the importance of keeping the story alive. So she was not always helpful but it's okay because deep down it stays a trauma. At the age of 6 she really didn't want to leave Indonesia, so I totally get how hard it might be to dig deep in her memory and share about her past.





With what type of people do you connect best ?

I connect the best with people who have a brain that works differently, so people with autism, ADHD, highly sensitive people. They just always feel like family. Most of the time, there's a connection, because we go through very similar things like not being accepted or understood as kids for instance, you know ?

So most people I'll connect with are either creative people or neurodivergent people.

How much does your ADHD take place in your life ?

ADHD is a significant part of who I am. I'm not on medication, so about 80% of me is influenced by it. My brain is always focused on a thousand details, which can be really challenging. Despite the constant struggle, I'm learning to embrace myself because there's simply nothing else I can do.

These patterns are something I can't just break. As humans, we often have patterns that we can choose to break, whether it's generational trauma or past experiences. But ADHD is intrinsic to who we are, and all we can do is find ways to navigate through it.

Speaking of ADHD, how was it for your parents to understand what it is ?

You know, there's a significant difference between hearing and truly understanding something. If I were to tell my mom about my ADHD, she wouldn't know how to react because she simply doesn't understand what it feels like. So, I usually just leave it at that.

She might say something like, «Oh, that's annoying, can I make you some tea?» because she'd probably feel uncomfortable. That's why I don't really talk about my ADHD with them. I know they would accept me for sure, but knowing they won't fully understand makes me avoid the conversation about my ADHD.

When did you know about it and how did it feel like ?

Unconsciously, I always felt like there was something wrong with me, especially as a kid. I was constantly distracted and felt misunderstood. Making and maintaining friendships was challenging, so I often found myself playing alone.

But the moment I truly realized something was different was when I experienced depression. I was forgetting things, trying to juggle multiple tasks at once, and never feeling fulfilled. When you have ADHD or autism, you're really good at starting many things, but you often do them at only 25% and struggle to finish them. Every day, I wake up with a new idea, which is exciting but also frustrating.

Looking back, are there any key milestones or events that have had a profound impact on your understanding of who you are?

I think my depression and my current relationship have taught me a lot. He showed me different ways to love myself.

For example, when we started dating, he went to Japan for five weeks. I once told him that my mother would leave me little notes when I was younger, like «There's food in the fridge» or «I'll be home at five.» These notes were a big part of my childhood. So when he left for Japan, he left me a note, hiding it in a book. He told me before his flight that there was a note for me somewhere.

When I found the note, everything he wrote was proof of the love I needed to show myself. He ended the note with "I love you" and I got it tattooed on my arm as a reminder. It's a reminder to myself and my inner child that it's possible to give and receive so much love. The way he loves me is how I should have always loved myself.

Through him, I've learned to love myself better and to show up for myself more. Some people might not say their relationship changed them, but I can proudly say that my partner has changed me in many good ways. He also taught me to spend more time on my own and to accept myself for who I am.



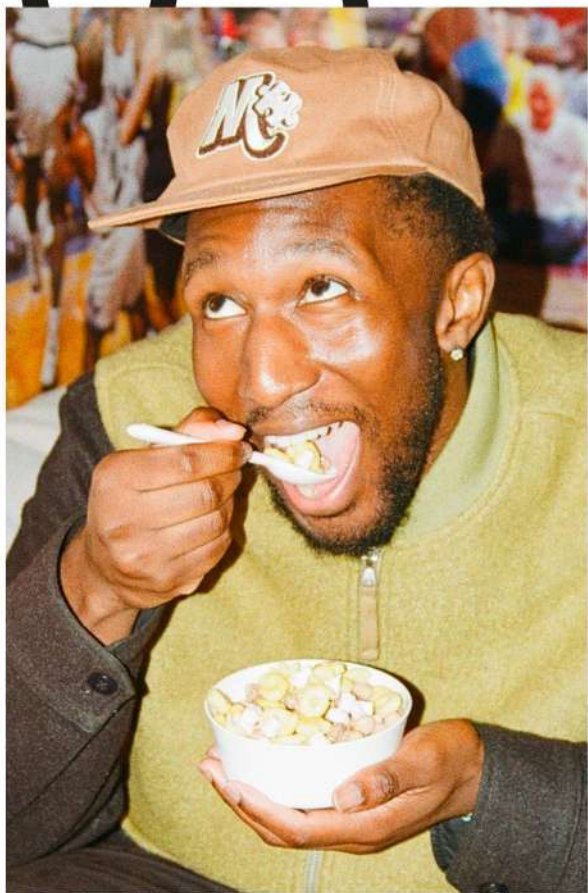








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PARIS
APR 2024

Henelder RODRIGUES SANCA

introduction.

The could-have-been paleontologist Henelder Rodrigues Sanca is a creative from Portugal. Founder of a brand that he named Moblinks, Henelder's journey is a testament to the power of cultural diversity, resilience, and the pursuit of excellence. His story highlights the importance of embracing one's uniqueness, learning from challenges, and continuously evolving. Henelder aims to inspire others to be true to themselves and to approach life with curiosity and passion.

INTRODUCTION

"I consider myself more like a scientist"

My name is Henelder, I'm 25 years old. It's crazy, I'm 25 years old. I was born in Portugal, and went to Guinea at the age of 2 because my mother was working as a radio host and journalist.

But then the civil war broke. So we had to flee Guinea to go back to Portugal. I arrived in France when I was 12 years old. I consider myself a creative, or what people would call a creative.

But for me, I consider myself more like a scientist, let's say. I explore things, I dig, I geek out, I test and learn... Like a scientist, actually, I conduct experiments.

I love art in general. I love culture. What I love most in life is culture.

It's all these, let's say, all these converging points that lead, I don't know, social behaviors to a culture.

What makes me unique ? I think it is the fact that I always aim for excellence, **honestly**.

What makes me unique is that when I do something, I do it to do it, but I do it to do it well and with love.





LI What do you think about when you think about identity?

HR When I think about identity, I think about a lot of mixed things. I think about childhood, I think about my older cousins, I think about my family, I think about where I come from. Actually, it's a mix, let's say, of everything I've seen, heard or experienced. It's all the things that has sparked our interest and became a part of us.

And I believe that's what really creates people's identity, I think. I'd personally define mine as a big mix of what I loved in Portugal, what I saw on TV, etc

I define myself as someone bubbly, colorful, very deep because I love things deeply. I never do things superficially.

I would define myself as determined. And my name !
Henelder. Actually, yeah, that too is important to mention, my name is Henelder. I don't know if there's any other one in the world. My mother would often tell me, you're not like everyone else, you're Henelder. And so, I always kept that phrase in mind to build myself by remembering that whatever I do, it must imprint my name or my name must be imprinted in what I do.

LI Reflecting on your childhood, what was your most vivid dream or aspiration? How did that dream shape the person you are today?

HR For me, in terms of my childhood, it's very funny because the first memory I have, is me drawing. Back when I was little, we used to live in a house with my mother in Lisbon and we had that massive TV stand. There was place to put a few books. But I would go in there, and I would draw in it with my chalk. And at first, my mom used to yell at me a little the first times. But then after that, she took everything out of the TV stand and told me, this is your room, do whatever you want.

And so, she let me draw on it, she let me express myself in it. You had to see, it's a shame I didn't have a phone at that time because you would get to see how it looked like nothing. But it was amazing, because it looked like everything I had in mind.

And I think my identity, it started at that moment, when I expressed myself. I used colors, I put them everywhere, it didn't look like anything, but anyway.

Years later after dreaming of becoming a paleontologist, I dreamed of becoming a pro basketball player. It didn't work out, but this dream opened me a lot of doors.

That's how I met Benoît and how I started wanting to make videos. That's how I started thinking, that in reality, it's not that impossible to convey emotions through a video. So it made me grow. My childhood too, my friends too with whom I grew up influenced me a lot because they were always there and always protected me.

I was this shy little guy. But I was good at soccer, so they protected me, they always wanted me on their team.

It's all those moments, all those crazy times of being protected by my friends, dreaming of being a paleontologist

or a basketball player, that opened my eyes to the world. That's when I realized I was nothing without my friends.

The world is wide, it needs to be explored. I need to help my mom live in better conditions, at all costs. Basketball was not really my passion, it was never something where I loved it so much that I could train for hours and hours. No, it was more like, I train because thanks to this sport, I can make millions of euros and get my mom out of misery. That was my main focus and it made me grow up that way.



“Henelder”

THE ONLY RESULT ON GOOGLE

What makes you different ?

I realized I was different as soon as I realized my name was Henelder, and people don't know how to spell it, it made me different. Just that.

Even physically, there were many things. When I was little, I had pointy ears. I really liked that.

I liked the idea that... When people talk about Henelder, they can say, he has a weird name and pointy ears. I liked that.

My mom always told me, you're not everyone, you're Henelder. Actually, that made me, me... I became aware early on the fact that I didn't have to blend in. I didn't want to.

And besides that, without bragging, I've always been an excellent student. Always.

Then, I started to... Go a bit off the rails. But since I was little, until high school, until senior year, I was always good. And my teachers often said things like “Focus, you can definitely achieve something. You'll definitely be something, become something. Please stop chatting because you have so much potential.”

But I thrived on that. I told myself, that means, I'm special, I'm black and yet the teachers come to me to say that I'm a smart black kid. I thrived on, there “you have a lot of potential”. I started to tell myself, that that was my identity. I have a lot of potential. My name is Henelder. At that moment, I became aware of my identity, of who I was.

When I was in fifth grade, I was named the best science student in the whole department.

I was number one, I had the best grades. And that made me say, oh, actually, I can be number one at something. So, it created my identity. To be number one, you have to win.







CHALLENGES

Honestly, I've never had too many challenges. But that's what's dangerous, I've never had too many challenges related to my identity. People knew how I was, and they accepted everything.

If I showed up in skinny jeans at school tomorrow, no one else would do that. But since it's Henelder doing it, it was never a challenge, no one really made fun of me.

Even when I was little, there was this thing of... I wore high-water pants. But it wasn't because I wanted to.

It was later, as I grew up, that I understood you always need to question yourself.

Actually, your victories are trophies, they're in the past. Today, you're a new person based on your failures. And that's why I did, for example, the video with Benoît, where I explain the importance of translating failure, etc.

For me, that was a key moment. It's a moment where I had to navigate. Like, when I was doing an apprenticeship and there was a time when I didn't get paid. I didn't get paid, I couldn't create. So I asked myself, what am I going to do?

Have there been any challenges or obstacles in your life that have played a role in shaping your sense of self and identity?

My mother used to tell me about going 20 years without money, and after experiencing some success, it was hard to go back to having nothing. Being unable to depend on my mother and feeling creatively blocked due to lack of resources was tough. I had already tasted success, like launching a product that sold out in minutes. But now, I felt my paycheck didn't match my value because I wasn't getting paid, and without money, I felt worthless. For me, that was a key moment. It's a moment where I had to navigate. Like, when I was doing an apprenticeship and there was a time when I didn't get paid. I didn't get paid, I couldn't create. So I asked myself, what am I going to do?

And that's when I learned to lose, I learned to tell myself, it's okay to fail, it's okay to face challenges, just take it as a lesson and bounce back and create a new identity from what you have now. Forget all the past trophies, leave all past achievements behind. Today, translate failure, translate your discomfort. And that... That's the new Henelder of the new era.

For a few years, I had nothing because I was still in school. But by the time I was 20 and started making money, I promised myself I wouldn't ask my mother for anything again.

But by the time I was 20 and started making money, I promised myself I wouldn't ask my mother for anything again. I also had the role of an older brother since my father wasn't around. When I had money, I felt I had the power to provide stability. But without it, I lost that power, and if my mother needed help, I couldn't assist her.

This was a huge difficulty for me. Not being able to create or help my mother felt like I was back to square one. It was very frustrating, especially since we were already poor, and now, I couldn't help my family either.

Anyway, this experience really marked me.

How do you express your identity?

I express my identity through the way I dress. I try to be bubbly like my personality. I try to be colorful, I try to be joyful. Because that, in reality, influences your state, how you are, your posture with people. So, I try to take care of myself.

But also to create things that resemble me, that's mostly how I express myself. When I create clothes or campaigns, I go back to my childhood. Everything I do today, I draw from what I've already experienced.

For example, making pink caps might seem silly, but the idea was to recreate an ice cream I used to eat as a child. I loved it, and it was a luxury when I got it. So, I recreated it.

It's all these little details. The next collection is coming up, and it's about dreams because I've always dreamed a lot.

Today, I try to translate that into clothing. For example, here's a big scoop: there will be pajamas. Because to dream well, you need good pajamas. There will be pajamas with clothes inspired by a child's dream world.

That's how I express it, through creations and videos. A lot through videos because I watched many cartoons as a child. I bring those cartoon inspirations up to date, in today's style. And through my relationships, there's no secret.

It's real. Being true. Being real. So, I'm with genuine people. I tell the truth, and people tell me the truth. I love people with all my heart, and I feel that people love me too.

It's amazing to feel that people love you for nothing. In reality, I do nothing extraordinary for them. But they don't love me because I create. That's what's beautiful. They don't love me because I create. They love me because I am myself. And that makes me feel good. I'm comfortable with that. I attract what I am.























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PARIS
MAR 2024

identity

Nady MIRIAN

introduction.

Nady Mirian is a psychotherapist, author, and lecturer from Cologne.

Nady's journey is marked by a continuous evolution of self, resilience, and the profound impact of experiences and relationships. Her story highlights the importance of staying true to oneself while navigating the complexities of societal expectations and personal growth. Through her work and personal reflections, Nady embodies the dynamic and ever-evolving nature of identity.

LI Can you please introduce yourself and share a bit about who you are and what makes you, you?

NM Hi, my name is Nady Mirian. We skip my age, please. I'm mid 30. I'm currently living in Cologne and moving to Paris soon to open my practice, my psychotherapy practice. I'm a psychotherapist, author and lecturer at the University of Cologne. I'm teaching students in psychology, historical education, science and social philosophy. Oh and I love to take pictures. I always wanted to become a photographer. And I'm not. Still not.

LI When you think about "identity", what does that word mean to you personally and how do you perceive and define your own identity?

NM I think identity is like, I mean, in psychological term, it's like a never ending process of developing yourself through your developing tasks and your experiences, the positive and negative ones. And identity is something that has a lot in common with your values.

Because I think next to culture and your education and the school you were in, the peers you were with. That identity has a lot to do with yourself and how established your core values are.

I believe that if you have stable values and beliefs, positive beliefs, then you can create your own identity without being pressured by society's expectations.

And to me, identity, I still haven't defined my identity, I think I'm in the middle of the road. And identity is like, as I already said, I'm taking distance from the definitions of psychology because it's too black and white.

I think it is something that has a lot to do with how I adapt myself to this society and deal with the ups and downs and stay true to myself.

LI Reflecting on your childhood, what was your most vivid dream or aspiration? How did that dream shape the person you are today?

NM When I was a child, it was super interesting. My father was living in Paris because I think, therefore, I have this deep connection to the city, and they always had these big “dèjeuners”.

And I remember when I was three years old, they were all sitting together, drinking wine and being already half drunk at night and I was coming from my bed to them, and they were always asking me, “Nady, what do you want to become when you’re older?”.

I was three, four years old, and I always screamed at them, yelled at them and would say, “Why should I do something to be a person?” And I think this little child always wanted to be free.



LI Considering the journey from childhood to now, can you pinpoint a specific moment or experience when you became aware of the significance and power of your own identity?

I think it was last year in 2023. I didn't want to fit in, so this was not welcomed in our society. So when I

did fit in, I didn't like it, and this truly impacted me.

Yeah... I think last year was a very special moment, I was in Brazil, my first travel after I freed myself of so many years of education.

I realized during this trip that I never, ever wanted anyone to shape my identity and my personality.

When you think about “identity”, what does that word mean to you personally and how do you perceive and define your own identity?

When I was, I think, in a 6th grade, I was in a very prestigious school as my parents wanted the best for their children. Looking back, I would never go there again. The school system of fitting in shaped me so badly. Two girls completely shaped my experience there.

I remember assisting to a scene where two girls started bullying two others girls. So I stood up, and started asking them why they are doing so. After this event, I got bullied too. Its the first time I am talking public about it. It happened from 6th to 8th grade. And no one talked to me anymore. None of these girls.

This was the time, when I unfortunately had to learn not to be myself anymore. My identity had to fit in again. I tried quite early to have my own one, yet they punished me for that. So this was the toughest experience as a young girl in a school, which felt like living in a panopticon. It shaped my identity a lot.

Who has played the most significant role in shaping your sense of identity and helping you navigate your journey of self-discovery?

So I grew up with a father who's a feminist. My father is a very famous woman rights fighter and journalist. Every woman's day, my father would get me a rose. So he never showed me anything negative. My father is mentally so stable that sometimes I wonder if I'm his girl because I'm not 1% that stable. So this is a big part of my identity, growing up with a father like that. I grew up with very strong parents. This helped me a lot to shape this resilience I have as a woman. There was never a situation where I allowed someone, man or a woman to embarrass me or like, not treat me nice without any reason. And this has a lot to do with my identity.

My parents were born in Iran and came before the islamic revolution of Iran in 1979.

My mom is familiar with Mossadegh, my father was a lot with Farah, the Shah's wife. So what I mean is that freedom was a big part of my education.





“2023 was, I think, I believe there is a energetic circle. They say. I mean, I’m not that spiritual, but people say that you have this kind of circle. And I remember in 2013, when I was living in LA, I was a bit lost. In 2023, I was in the same state of mind, but with other problems in 2023 really shaped my identity. Like, if you surf, you have, like, waves which are like, I mean, in Brazil from 1 meter to 2 meters, and sometimes you take them and you’re like, oh, it’s so easy. But then out of nowhere, there comes a wave and it really hits your head and you. I had one situation where I was really vomiting in the water because it really hit my back, and fell.

As Louise Bourgeois said, I’ve been to hell and back, and let me tell you, it was wonderful.

I can copy that. I’ve been to hell and back, and let me tell you, it was wonderful, because today, now, I’m really resilient and dealing with that. And my identity is very strict now.”

“I think real identity is built on experiences.”

Do you think your experiences influence who you are now and who you will become in the future?

I think real identity is built on experiences.

This is what I see with my clients, all of my clients. There's this one client that I deeply love. He was very, very antisocial and was doing very bad. He came to my therapy, hated it. And to make a long story short, these experiences he had and with the relationship we built, he developed like, his own identity. Now he's very successful, living in a very posh city, getting money, is doing something social.

So I think without his experiences of his mother and friends and also doing all this illegal stuff, he would never be like he is today. But the turning point with experiences is always relationships. You can never underestimate the importance of relationships.

Relationship is not your mom and your dad. This is also a lie. The best relationship can be someone you never met.

And I really think, yes, I would never be Nady Mirian without my most hurtful relationships. Like, really hurtful.











RE MER CIMENT (s)*

After a year of work, countless hours of laughter, lots of tears, and many meaningful interviews, I have released the second edition of Honest Interest. None of this would have been possible without the precious help of my loved ones.

To all of you involved, I am sincerely grateful.

Ley



see you on the *next*
chapter.



Honest Interest Magazine

Edition on “identity”

whatever you **do**, do it with Honest Interest