

## ‘ISPEAK

*Being yourself means different things to different people. Here’s taking a look at some common and not-so-common interpretations. By SAVIA RAJAGOPAL-SHAH*

### NO-DRAMA QUEEN

**Kejal Shah, Business Analyst**

**I am... normal, sensitive, caring, and possessive, with a mild temper — it’s a mixed bag!**

**Being yourself means...** You can’t keep others happy if you are not. And I can’t be happy if I am not myself. I hate pretence and just can’t behave differently from what I am to save my life!

**At work and play...** Professionally, it’s much more difficult to be yourself. Sometimes, I face a dilemma of my ideals contradicting with the demands of work. But it’s all about setting priorities.

### MISS COMPOSURE

**Batul Mister, Public Relations Executive**

**I am... friendly, talkative and easy-going.**

**Being yourself means...** believing in myself and the work I do. I am composed yet aggressive in my line of work. I do not ape anyone.

**At work and play...** It’s very important to be yourself in whatever you do, but it is not always possible, especially in PR. You can’t be a different person at work and your personal life because the long work hours do not allow you to do so.

### TEAM PLAYER

**Neha Raykar, PhD student in Economics**

**I am... a complex person. I think I am nicer to others than to myself!**

**Being yourself means...** standing up for my values. It’s easier said than done since others’ perceptions of you make you want to behave accordingly. **At work and play...** When you work in teams, you cannot always be yourself since you have to take the entire team’s strengths and weaknesses into account. Every team has some workers and some shirkers. You have to be diplomatic, streetsmart, display soft skills and be flexible to others’ style of functioning.

### THE IDEALIST

**Shivani Shah, writer and environmentalist**

**I am... simple. I like good music, humour and drama!**

**Being yourself means...** being comfortable in one’s own skin. To me, it means working for a cause; not people and organisations and standing by decisions.

**At work and play...** Perhaps, ethics play the most significant role for people dealing with environment and conservation-related issues. You can’t say one thing and do another. Standing by your beliefs is extremely important.

## **SELECTIVE SOCIALISER**

**Priyanka Khandhar, an associate at a back office**

**I am... straightforward, honest and hard working.**

**Being yourself means...** being the same person across all situations and people. I think an ideal way of being yourself is to interact with like-minded people on the same wavelength so that you can be comfortable and not have to resort to artificiality.

**At work and play...** Professionally, being yourself needs reasonable judgement and adjustment. For me, being passionate about my work and displaying the best of my potential is very important. Personally, you don’t have to pretend to be someone you’re not in order to gain acceptance. I do not believe in it and cannot do it.

