

I am not a problem to be solved

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I am not something you can put sticky tape on, in a vague attempt to paper over the cracks in a /broken/ system.

I am not a conundrum, something interesting for you to discuss in your team meeting, something 'unusual', different to the others, but merely that: not one to offer support to, just one for 'the books' or to write a research paper on one day.

I am not someone with "insight", whereby insight means no pain
no REAL need –
just someone you can pass on or fob off, to another service to mop up messes that you made in the first place.

So what am I?

I have no answers for that, but what

I *do* know is that

I am not alone, for

"I am me and you are me and we are me
and we are all together"

I "shine bright like a diamond",

I am "all that jazz"

I am "defying gravity, and you can't pull me down".

survival guide (finding a therapist)

don't google "find the best therapist" and choose the first one on the page

don't expect your mum to be happy that you need to borrow £50 a week to talk to a stranger about her

don't waste energy arguing with your GP about how 6 sessions of NHS therapy will not even begin to scratch the surface of all of your "stuff"

don't stop yourself from judging a book by its cover (interested therapists often have interesting faces)

don't reach for the heavy stuff first session, but
don't avoid the heavy stuff for more than one session —

don't apologize

don't spoon-feed

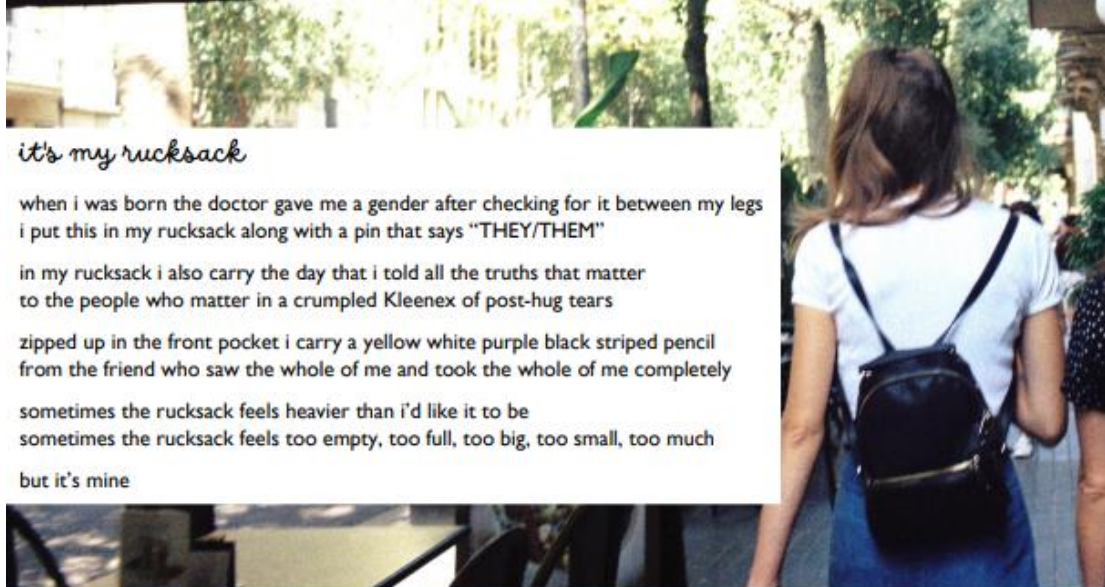
don't hide

don't hold back

don't be afraid to test

don't be afraid to deserve

don't be afraid to demand unconditional care and compassion



it's my rucksack

when i was born the doctor gave me a gender after checking for it between my legs
i put this in my rucksack along with a pin that says "THEY/THEM"

in my rucksack i also carry the day that i told all the truths that matter
to the people who matter in a crumpled Kleenex of post-hug tears

zipped up in the front pocket i carry a yellow white purple black striped pencil
from the friend who saw the whole of me and took the whole of me completely

sometimes the rucksack feels heavier than i'd like it to be
sometimes the rucksack feels too empty, too full, too big, too small, too much

but it's mine



What every Catholic should carry

"My mother gave me the prayer to Saint Theresa",
one for every St Theresa there ever was.

She also gave me other things,

Things to carry with me at all times:

Not to pick-and-choose like those "cafeteria Catholics",

To put down and pick up at leisure.

These are things for all eternity.

Childhood hymns emblazoned across my brain

Like a Harry Potter scar in its

Simultaneous benignity and trauma legacy.

A lifetime's worth of Catholic guilt,

Passed down generation-to-generation since

Time immemorial,

Never ceasing, never fading.

The suspicion of those who consider themselves "good Catholics":

Those don't exist, or at least they shouldn't

If the "Church" is true.

A lifelong love of candles and incense -

the "smells and bells" -

Midnight Mass at Christmas even though you've been atheist for years,

And every other female cousin being called Elizabeth or Mary.

These are the hallmarks of our faith,

What all cradle Catholics should carry.

