

## BECOMING YOURSELF

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Catherine of Sienna

It is the hardest thing in the world.  
To become yourself.  
It involves more than simply being.

You learned quickly to hide your self away.  
The knocks of childhood and the taunts of adolescence  
Pushed your self into a shell that calcified and cocooned.

Becoming yourself is a conscious uncovering that leaves you vulnerable;  
Emerging from your shell of self-preservation to stand naked in the world.

Becoming yourself is active resistance;  
Breaking the chains of others' expectations that hold you captive.

Becoming yourself is an act of courageous stepping up;  
Grasping that you alone can do the work you are called to do.

Becoming yourself requires you to  
know yourself,  
love yourself ,  
embrace yourself.

Becoming yourself is to become tinder for another;  
You are not becoming yourself for your own self's sake.

As you become yourself  
You may never feel the heat of the fire you leave in your wake.

As you become yourself  
You may never see the sparks left behind by your authenticity.

As you become yourself  
You may see only sad, smouldering ashes where you thought there would be a blaze.

To become yourself is to take a risk:  
You risk finding nothing inside your shell.  
You risk stripping everything away to be left ashamedly exposed.  
You risk fizzling out before you set the world on fire.

As you become yourself, may you come to know your precious complexity.  
Beneath your precious complexity, may you find quiet simplicity.  
In your quiet simplicity, may you find still pools of peace.

And bathed in peace, may you set the world alight.  
Be who God meant you to be, and you will set the world on fire.

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TAKEN FROM, [CATHERINE OF SIENA, LETTER T368.](#)