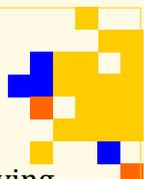


# Find yourself. It's not just an ego trip!



It's a Monday morning. You are back at work after a wonderful weekend. You're studying for next week's exams. Or maybe you are just bored, wondering what you *should* be doing.

No matter what you're doing (or not), you're online. But of course. You have at least three Gmail accounts that you need to check every few minutes, you are on Facebook, you tweet.... every day, you interact online with dozens of people, some whom you consider friends, others whom you've never met and a few you hope you'll never meet.

So, if I were to ask:

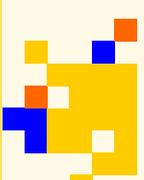
## WHERE IN CYBERSPACE ARE YOU?

Your answer will most likely be, in one word: everywhere. That's the truth. You're everywhere. And that's great. Who doesn't want visibility and maybe a teeny bit of (temporary) fame?

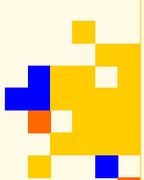
There's just one ~~tiny little~~ problem. Sometimes, your answer could be: 'I don't really know'. Because, let's face it, we really have no clue what's out there about ourselves. Because sometimes, the truth is, we have no control over what's out there.

### It's time to fix this. In FIVE simple steps.

- Step 1:* Google yourself (assuming you don't already do this regularly!). Remember to also search in Google images. Or any search engine, for that matter. Make sure you sign out of all email/social media accounts first.
- Step 2:* Scan the results carefully (and not just the first page, keep going for a few pages!). Say you find a plethora of information about yourself including some praising your professional expertise. You also stumble across flattering photos that you authorized. Great! Skip to Step 5. *But*. Say you find photos of yourself you didn't know existed in cyberspace. Or your personal mobile number (and you have no clue how it got there). Or worse, your postal address.
- Step 3:* If you find something about yourself that you don't want out there, don't just shrug and move on. Write to the website that lists your phone number without your permission. Or to your friend who has uploaded photos of yourself that you want removed. You can say it nicely, but say it.
- Step 4:* Be persistent. Keep at it until the information is removed.
- Step 5:* Remember to repeat this every few months. **After all, it's not just an ego trip. It's an exercise in looking out for yourself.**



*This is an initiative of the  
2012 Prajnya 16 Days Campaign against Gender Violence.  
To find out more, visit [www.prajnya.in](http://www.prajnya.in), follow @prajnya on Twitter  
or email [prajnya.16days@gmail.com](mailto:prajnya.16days@gmail.com).*



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