

Outgrowing the version of you, people are comfortable with
14.11.2025, Zurich

Nives
in motion



Outgrowing the old you doesn't always come with drama. It often arrives quietly, in moments where your growth makes others subtly uncomfortable. There's a very specific kind of pushback that appears when you start to change - and it's almost never dramatic. No confrontations. No grand speeches. Instead, it shows up disguised as nostalgia.

“You're different lately.”

“I miss the old you.”

Someone once said this to me at a moment when I was visibly stepping into more confidence. Not just internally - it showed. In how I dressed, how I moved, how I spoke without cushioning every sentence. The comment wasn't hostile, rather tender, but still somehow toxic and it landed with clarity: the version of me they missed was the one who took up less space and asked for less in return. That's the thing about outgrowing the version of you people are comfortable with - it's

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rarely explosive. It's subtle, incremental and oddly quiet. Which can make it more disorienting. There's no clear ending, just a slow awareness that something has shifted. And it feels good to yourself; it certainly felt good to me. What makes it uncomfortable isn't the growth itself. It's the realization that certain relationships were built around who you used to be. Your availability. Your predictability. Your habit of accommodating before asserting. When that version evolves, the dynamic has to change too - and not everyone is interested in renegotiating.

At some point, you notice it: this person wasn't necessarily invested in me, but in the version of me that fit neatly into their expectations. Helpful. Agreeable. Easy to place.

Why Outgrowing the Old You Triggers People

Comfort loves consistency. It likes people legible and roles clearly assigned. And for a long time, many of us play along without realizing it. We edit ourselves just enough to be accepted, but not enough to disrupt the ecosystem we're part of. Until one day, the editing starts to feel more exhausting than the risk of being misunderstood. And this is where everything changes.

Outgrowing people doesn't always mean dramatic exits or burned bridges. Often, it looks much quieter. You stop softening your opinions. You stop over-explaining your choices. You stop shrinking to keep things pleasant. And that's usually when the tension appears - not because you've done something wrong, but because the script has changed.

Growth, inconveniently, asks something of others. Attention. Adjustment. A willingness to meet you where you are, rather than where you were most comfortable to deal with. Not all relationships are built for that kind of flexibility - and that's not a failure, it's information.

There's also a surprising amount of grief involved. Even when growth feels right, there's something bittersweet about being less familiar, less immediately liked, less easily understood. You mourn the simplicity of the old version of yourself - even if that simplicity came at your expense. This naturally takes time.

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But here's the reframe: comfort is not the same as connection.

Real connection can stretch. It can hold nuance. It doesn't require you to stay recognizable at the cost of being real. It allows for evolution without taking it personally. Outgrowing a familiar version of yourself doesn't make you difficult, distant or ungrateful. It makes you honest. And honesty, while occasionally inconvenient, tends to filter your life in ways that are surprisingly efficient, also in terms of who stays and who doesn't.

Sometimes growth doesn't look like becoming more.

It looks like finally stopping the performance.

And honestly? That's when things start to get interesting.

