Photo of the Day | Winter wonderland



Freshly fallen snow on the west side of the UConn Storrs campus on Jan. 20, 2026. Many students have settled back in with the start of the spring semester.
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365 buttons and the power of saying no

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If your screen time skyrocketed over winter break (or if you're an avid SNL fan), you may be familiar with a girl named Tamara and her 365 buttons.

For those unfamiliar: a thirteen-year-old girl's TikTok comment about her New Year's resolution to "get 365 buttons, one for each day. . . to be more conscious of [time]" sparked mass confusion. Hundreds of replies to her original comment begged her to elaborate. She replied simply, "no". Tamara has since deleted her account and refused numerous interview requests, from People Magazine to the New York Times. The charm of 365 buttons lives in the fact that, rather than drag out her newfound popularity, Tamara is fighting against it.

In our digital age, it's nearly unheard of for someone (especially a teenage girl) to reject fame. Generations Z and Alpha thrive off being seen, especially as the internet increases fame's accessibility.

Typically, a person goes viral, spends a week or so capitalizing on their situation and then milks it for as long as possible before either fading into obscurity or cementing themself as an internet personality. Tamara had the chance to make a series explaining her vision for the buttons and demonstrating it in real time, as requested by replies to her comment. She could have had thousands of followers and a steady platform for the book reviews she originally intended on posting, but she dismissed the opportunity. Her decision to delete her account instead is a prime example of protecting one's peace.

It's inspiring to see a teenage girl with such a firm grasp on the word "no". At thirteen, I, like many of my peers, was a major people-pleaser. I overexplained myself and justified my actions even without thousands of people on the internet hounding me to do so. If put in Tamara's position, I would not have had the strength to tell so many people "no". I admire Tamara's decision to put her boundaries first and remove herself from the equation to protect her peace of mind. We can all learn a thing or two from the way she handled her circumstances: briefly, bluntly and with self-respect.

At the core of the situation, there's something to be said about the right to privacy. People on the internet feel all-too entitled to others' lives. With interactions occurring solely through a screen, internet personalities are perceived as entertainment instead of real people. I've dubbed this phenomenon The Digital Jester. In short, the masses on the internet shape the actions of content creators because catering to the whims of the crowd seems like the clearest path to lasting popularity. This is why so many influencers stray from their original intentions and authentic voice in favor of performing what their viewers demand from them. If you don't explain yourself enough, you're deemed "cold" or "a gatekeeper". The issue is further complicated when people begin to apply Digital Jester rules to those who never asked for attention in the first place.

Take a step back to reexamine the situation. You, a stranger, would not reasonably stalk and harass a teenage girl for an explanation of an offhand comment that you overheard her say on the street. People have no right to pry into others' lives simply because they shared a piece of themselves in a public space. Tamara did not want to be known for her buttons; she just wanted to be left alone.

My favorite part of the entire exchange is a declaration of Tamara's aforementioned disregard for attention: "hey so it actually only has to make sense to me for me to do it and I don't feel like explaining it to anyone else."

Despite her casual tone, this line read to me like an ancient Stoic philosopher had briefly inhabited a teenage girl to deliver a final message from beyond the grave. Perception is a powerful force. We (especially women) are taught to overexplain ourselves to make our actions acceptable and justifiable to others. We're taught to hedge our words, to carefully dance around true meanings through a socially acceptable code of rules and subtle cues. But this is Tamara's New Years' resolution. It only needs to make sense to her, and she doesn't have to waste time elaborating to a crowd of strangers (for the record, I saw her comment before the scandal, and it seemed perfectly straightforward to me).

When all is said and done, I will not be remembering Tamara for her 365 buttons. I'll remember her wise words, her rejection of fame and her exemplary use of "no" as a full sentence.

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