

Question: What factors cause someone to want to be an animal, and how do they implement it?

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“Meet the Lizard Man National Geographics.” YouTube, uploaded by National Geographic, January 13th, 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=toAzd1Fps2>

“Meet the Lizard Man National Geographic” is an educational video from National Geographic. National Geographic is a paid television Network that focuses on illuminating and protecting the wonders of the world. They support researchers and explorers and even fund a proportion of them. Their main goal is to educate people, especially the youth, through magazines, articles, and television programs. Because of this well-established organization of National Geographic, and through the interview style, and seeing his day in the life style of recording aspects of his life, like his work events, builds this sense of credibility. This is because it feels like a first-hand account of his daily life, as we too are taken with him on these experiences through a video. This is not only an interview with him, but also of the attendees of the event, and adds credibility as we see his daily experience, rather than just reading about it.

This source focused on the day-to-day life of Erik Sprague and his motives for transforming into a lizard. It was discussed through a personal interview where he said he was an “outcast by design,” and that he designed himself. He did this through various aesthetic treatments, one being a dental treatment he invented where he had his tongue split. Some other aesthetic modifications include: pointy teeth, Teflon implants, and green tattooed scaly skin. The video focused on his mentality, and reasoning behind it, discussing this is how he feels his true self, but also how he no longer wants to play by society’s rules and through this feels freer. His transformation has created a real movement. People join the ranks and tattoo themselves, or tattoo Erik on their skin.

This connects to my research question about the varying factors that cause someone to be an animal, as well as how they implement it because it is a first-hand interview of Erik Sprague describing the mentality of the transformations being more about aesthetics it is a mentality. Like many, he felt comforted to society, and pressured into acting a certain way. Eventually, he started thinking about who he was, and he resonated with the lizard. By being a lizard, and transforming himself, he felt as if he was breaking the molds of society, and freeing himself from the shackles of society’s judgements and limitations. This answers the question about “the why” because it is a mentality, and through this mentality, it connects various people of “outcasts” together into a greater movement of focusing on their most authentic self and going against societal pressures.

This information overlaps with another source I researched: “I spent 30 years turning into a Lizard,” on the news Network this morning, because it answers more of his motives of

specifically, choosing a lizard. In this news interview, Sprague explains that he has seen lizards as something important to humans throughout history, and enjoyed the folklore that lizards created. As well, as a designer, lizards were a very symmetrical, beautiful thing, something as a designer he wanted to recreate. This is an interesting perspective because it provides more than just why someone wants to be an animal, and dives into the specificity of why he chose to be a lizard, and why that spoke to him.