

I'm a Good Person Because I Have Digital Flair!

Shôn Ellerton, July 5, 2022

Every good person needs at least 37 pieces of digital flair.



Back in 1999, Mike Judge came out with [Office Space](#), one of my all-time favourite films. From beginning to end, it is packed with satire about everything which is wrong in America's working and social society. But, unlike [Falling Down](#), an equally impressive movie hailing from 1993 starring Michael Douglas, this movie is light-hearted and extremely funny.

In short, it follows the working life of a young IT worker in suburban Austin who sits in a cubicle all day who's given a daily running commentary by several different managers on 'mission statements' while being told that a talk needs to be had about the *cover* of the so-called TPS report. After being threatened by his girlfriend that she's going to leave him, he seeks counselling and in the middle of hypnotherapy, his therapist dies from a heart attack. Our young enslaved IT worker had been rendered a somewhat changed and liberated man. Meanwhile, he summons up enough courage to ask out Joanna, the waitress in a nearby diner, played by Jennifer Aniston, who works at Chotchkies, a diner meant to portray [TGI Fridays](#), the well-known franchise known for its red and white stripe branding. They get it together and watch Kung Fu movies. He seldom bothers to get to work on time if at all despite numerous attempts by his gormless manager with permanently-attached coffee mug to do so, but when the management consultants are brought in to assess the company's performance, his nonchalance, aloofness and confidence is seen as refreshing and he rises up the corporate ladder much to the disgust and humiliation of his immediate manager.

As for Joanna, she throws in the towel, when her cringeworthy manager—and he looks the part—accuses her of not displaying enough ‘flair’ on her red and white striped staff uniform. ‘Flair’ are those big round buttons which you wear on your uniform meant to support and represent some kind of thing or initiative or furry animal or whatever it is to express who you are or what you like or what you support. In the real world, the senior staff at the top of the chain seem to be reliably informed that their customers take genuine interest and amusement when the food servers at the bottom of the chain are wearing bright red and white shirts, green suspenders and a myriad of brightly coloured flair buttons. I’d nearly have my life in indigence than be humiliated in this fashion given the choice.

The movie gets this right, bang on the nail. She is reproached on several occasions by her manager on not wearing enough flair and gives her an earnest speech that we take this seriously and by wearing only the minimum number of flair, we are not properly expressing ourselves. Meanwhile, he points approvingly to a nearby food server called Brian, a young guy with short clean-cut hair and an oversized smile, serving customers in an over-ebullient and happy display of shallowness, a common trait that much of America’s service industry likes to push on its staff.

The immortal lines from Joanna are as follows when she throws in the towel after just been recently told off.

“You know what Stan, if you want me to wear 37 pieces of flair, like your pretty boy over there, Brian, why don’t you just make the minimum, 37 pieces of flair?”

She then says she would like to express herself, which she cordially gives with her middle finger.

Back to the present, I was thinking about those pieces of flair and wondering what goes in the minds of those who *like* to wear them.

MAGA hats, black squares, Ukrainian flags, nuclear disarmament badges, Greta badges, syringe badges, peace badges, the green and black hourglass Extinction Rebellion badges, ‘Jesus Loves’ badges, rainbow flags (and lots of other colour combos representing hundreds of genders and transgender rights), fraternity club badges, not to mention all the hobby stuff like train badges, Cthulhu mythos madges, and dog-lovers badges.

I get it and I've been guilty of doing just that. Although subtle, I wore a small blue forget-me-not lapel pin at a networking event, in remembrance of those Freemasons who were exterminated in Nazi Germany for their political beliefs. I'm glad I did when a fellow Mason spotted it and we had something common to talk about before commencing to other topics to hand. Wearing the compasses and square lapel could attract the Illuminati theory conspiracists, or those who have this strange notion that the Freemasons are taking over the world.

However, it has taken a darker turn with, in particular, to those causes which we are told we should all support or abhor. The aforementioned MAGA hats, syringes, Ukrainian flags, and black squares are excellent examples of these. If you choose to wear these *because* you believe you *must* or *should* wear them, this is no longer a signal to express something you like and want to share with a stranger a conversation in which you have something in common. These have become symbols to express to others that *they* should also be supporting the initiative or cause just like you, and if *they* do not, they are actively not with you.

Such symbols are not about if you *like* what it's about or if you're a *part* of it, but rather if you *support* it. You don't wear a Ukrainian badge if you like Ukraine. You wear it because you want Russia to be defeated, support the build-up of NATO and the continued haemorrhage of funding to support the already profit-rich oil companies whilst providing more weaponry to ordinary citizens. You don't wear a syringe because you like being protected against the vaccine. You wear it to show that you've done the 'right thing', hate anti-vaxxers and that *you* also need to be vaccinated because if you are not, you are responsible for the mutating longevity of the virus and for killing grandma. Those who wear transgender rights badges tend to do so because they want to point out so-called injustices aimed against the LGBT community and if you're not one of them and insist that sex is purely biological, you're deemed a [TERF](#). As for MAGA hats, those who wear them, primarily the hardened 'faith and flag' lot, do so primarily because they want to show their disgust with the other party rather than keeping their vote to themselves. Which leads to the crazy way that masks have often been worn to show support of the Democrats. It's all virtue signalling at the end of the day. You must do this, otherwise you are *them* and I don't want to talk to *you*.

Enter digital flair. I'll say upfront now, I do not 'do' digital flair, a typical example of being a Tweet I came across by a woman (assuming the photo is of her), anonymously called KG sporting no less than seven pieces of digital flair: a Ukraine flag, a US flag, a transgender rights flag, a rainbow flag, a white fist punch, a 'long live and prosper' gesture and a black fist. These are, of course, emoticons, but I'll refer to them as digital flair, because digital flair also includes avatars, logos, and banners across social media pages.

Judging by her digital flair, her anonymous title and her handle, @TakeMyRabbit, it's not beyond the realm of reason to suggest that the photo in the profile is not hers, but in fact, some angry person locked away in a bedroom who consumes mainstream news as the utter truth, believes everything the politicians say as genuine intent, and wants everyone else to be on the same page or else be cast into the cauldron of the despised and the conspiratorial. Although, that said, the 'live long and prosper' flair means she could be a fan of *Star Trek*, ... maybe, possibly.



As I say, you won't find me posting digital flair on my social media homepages for the simple reason that doing so potentially limits me to discuss with anyone holding a differing view. The act of posting digital flair for political, social, or religious reasons is a clear message that differing views are not invited for debate nor discussion. I remember when Ukraine was first invaded and not long after; literally, in a few hours, Ukraine flag flair started to materialise from social media feeds, many by those who previously would never have been able to identify Ukraine on a map.

Loosely, one could equate the 'blue pillers' of us, as taken from [The Matrix](#) movie, as being those who display such digital flair, where the 'red pillers' are not. Taking the theatre of US politics, lest there be any confusion on red Trump MAGA hat wearers, I will point out that they are most certainly taking the blue pill as well as those who religiously support Biden simply for no other reason than the hatred of Trump. The red-pilled among us will observe the best and worst of both sides and are the most likely to advocate alternative forms of government in the form of independent parties, whom, as of late, have been

nearly quashed out of existence through the highly undemocratic actions of the Democratic and the Republican parties by consorting with big tech and the media to suppress them.

Many take offence to neutrality and often reserve suspicion and judgment to those who do not take a side or undertake considerable research before taking sides, if there is any to take. If you say that you want to be 'Switzerland' in a discussion, you are either often left to fend for yourself or you are simply ignored, and your opinion doesn't count. Well, that's fine with me. I wrote an article discussing this very topic back in June 2020 [connecting neutrality, politics and football](#).

There's a myriad of things which I certainly agree and disagree with and I will always try to the best of my abilities to back them up with logic and reasoning. This is what critical and free thinking is about, but to be a 'good' person by exhibiting digital flair representing a popular narrative doesn't really mean that much to me. It just means that person is not open to debate or discussion on that topic or that his or her mind has already been made up and looking for an argument.