

Coping With Alterhuman Identity Dysphoria

Written by: Crowley + Mike + Vince (Interstellar System)

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This is a list of tips we've compiled, to hopefully help you cope with dysphoria relating to your alterhuman identities. This isn't exclusive to species dysphoria and can relate to any sort of dysphoria you feel as a result of your alterhumanity–nonhumanity related or not! This is also not exclusive to otherkin–any alterhuman with identity dysphoria may benefit from this and we've specifically tried to avoid otherkin-centric wording. "Identity" will be used in place of "kintype/hearttype/fictive identity/theriotype/factive identity/nonhuman identity/etc" to save space and be wholly inclusive.

The tips will be organised into sections of things that may cause dysphoria such as body parts (wings, snouts, fins) and location (missing the forest, living in another country), as opposed to species like cat/bird/rabbit in order to be more inclusive and make it easier to find your specific *source* of dysphoria.

This list is not extensive, and some tips may seem basic, but we've included as many as we could think of in order to help people who might not have thought of even some of the more common tips.

This post will be updated on our website from time to time, the tumblr version of this will not be edited to include new additions.

General Appearance

- Wear clothing that reflects your identity. This could be in the colours of your identities skin/fur/feathers/scales/etc, something similar to the clothes they would have worn, something in a style that reminds you of your identity, or anything that makes you feel more "you".

- Wear pins/badges of your identity or something relating to it. You can find plenty on Etsy and similar places online—some places even do custom pins you can upload your own image to!
- Get a fursuit, partial fursuit, cosplay gear, cosplay props or anything similar that might reflect your identity. You can wear it around the house or to conventions (where you'd most likely be able to be treated somewhat closer to the thing you're dressed up as). Maybe even get together with a local furry or cosplayer group and go out together.
- If you want a "if you know, you know" sort of thing for people to know of your alterhumanity, try wearing something with a symbol on it such as the otherkin/elven star, a theta-delta, plural rings or the alt key symbol. You can just explain them as pretty designs if you get asked by someone you don't want to tell. You could make/buy pins, patches, shirts, etc.

Diet/Feeding Habits

- Research what your identity (or closest thing to it) in this world eats, and try looking up recipes involving those ingredients or the closest things you can get to it. Get creative, and if you have multiple then mix them all together if you think it'd taste good—sometimes soups are good for that. If it's safe to eat raw and that's what your identity would do, you can do that too for a more authentic feeling.
- Grow your own food, even just a small pot of herbs if you don't have much space. It could replicate the feeling of foraging for things to eat or living in a farm community, if those were things your identity did. You'd be surprised how nice a small planter can be!
- If your food of choice doesn't exist here, try making something that tastes, feels or looks similar. If you can't get it exact, you can try just focusing on the aspect of it that's most important to you, such as texture, taste, colour or shape. Make it out of materials that are similar in texture to things you would've eaten if that's most important, or find something with a similar texture. Trying to make it look outwardly the same as you remember with food colouring, cake making or candy molds (which novelty ice cube trays can also work for) could also help, depending on what you're making.
- Get food you can eat in the way your identity would. Food you don't need cutlery for if it's not normal for you to use, food you can scavenge for yourself (via safely growing/finding them or other safe methods), using cutlery your identity would use as opposed to your regular ones, etc.
- Check out alterhuman recipe blogs. Most are otherkin-centric but might be able to help anyway. Even if they're inactive, try searching the tags for something related to you.
- Go (legally) hunting/fishing if that's something your identity would do and if it's accessible to you! Make sure to be aware of local laws and conservation efforts.
- For gemstone/rock eaters, rock/crystal candy is amazing and you can even make it at home. You can buy the kind on the stick that looks like crystals, or chocolate rocks, or even come up with your own recipe.
- For meat eaters, get some more meat into your diet! If your identity would eat meat raw, there's some cuts of meat that are actually safe to eat raw—though they're expensive in some locations. You could also try having steak as rare as you can get it. If you're

someone whose preferred type of meat doesn't exist on this planet, try as many types of meat as you can here and see what's closest!

- Make your own recipe book based on things you would eat as your identity! Foods people on your planet made, or dishes involving ingredients you would've foraged or hunted for. Save it somewhere personal or even share it online for others to see—maybe they'd have feedback.

Environment/Location

- Decorate your living space to reflect what reminds you of home to the best of your ability. It doesn't have to be exact, but anything that might remind you of a place that feels like home to you might help. Add more plants for a forest, add more lights for a city/futuristic look, place gemstones and fossils around for a cavey vibe, hang pictures that remind you of home. Depending on where you work, you might be able to have a plant or a picture or something else around your workspace to make it feel more homey there too.
- Listen to ambiance that reminds you of home. <https://mynoise.net> has a lot of different ones (and they're very adjustable). Music that you might have liked as your identity could also help, if you can find a similar style or the same thing here. Look up playlists for your identity and see if there are any, or make one yourself.
- Add art or photos of your identity or something relating to that (a friend, a similar species, your home, your habitat, something else related) somewhere in your living space or workspace.
- Find somewhere physical that reminds you of home and plan a trip. The ocean, a forest, mountains and things like that are obvious, but to get vibes of less this-world-centric environments, you might need to be creative. An empty desert might be close to a barren planet you were from, certain events like carnivals might be closer to places you lived. Anything that is "close enough" might help—mix and match!

Now for some more specific environments...

Darkness/Nocturnal

- Darken the area you're in. Close curtains, turn the lights off, maybe light some candles so you can still see.
- Turn your devices to night mode! This might not seem like a big one but having them on night mode means you can still use them while it's dark without straining your eyes or entirely ruining any lightless vibes you have going on.
- Open a window once night falls if you're able, and just listen to the regular night sounds—maybe even sleep with it like that. Try nighttime ambiance instead if your local area doesn't sound the way you'd like it to.
- Keep your area cool and quiet. Having it feel a bit colder than normal can make it feel more like nighttime.
- If possible.. Have a nocturnal sleeping schedule! Not everyone can achieve this, but you can absolutely get jobs where you work the night shift instead of having to be up in the

day—just keep shop, doctor, and other building closing times in mind. In the end, it's your life and you can choose how to live it.

- Get blackout curtains! Great for people with migraines, and great for hiding the sun.
- Decorate your room with darker coloured things—dark wallpaper/paint, dark shelving and dark bed sheets. You could also add little glow in the dark stars to the roof/walls if seeing the sky above you is important to you. Adds to the overall nightish atmosphere!
- Go camping, and sit outside after dark. Maybe go for a little walk. Focus on the sounds you can hear, look at the sky and your surroundings, really take it all in. Make sure you're following all the safety procedures for your local area.

Aquatic/Water-Loving

- Bathe and shower! Sure, you might do this anyway, but keeping your alterhumanity in mind while doing so may prove euphoric. If it wouldn't be detrimental, do it more often! Take some focus out of cleaning occasionally and focus more on the water and your alterhumanity.
- Go out in the rain or swim in a lake/stream/ocean whenever you can. Splash in puddles, search for cool rocks in streams, enjoy the water in general! Having some friends to go with you could be cool as well—friends into nature might be easier to drag along to a random lake than others.
- If you don't live near water, plan a trip. Maybe a trip to the beach, or camping to a nice lakeside, or next to a big river. Make a holiday out of it.
- Some slime stim toys might feel liquid enough that playing with them can be nice and species affirming!
- If it feels right, get a fish tank! Be sure to thoroughly research how to care for a tank, and what fish would be best for you. Though they don't have to be fish either! You could simply have aquatic plants, or other kinds of aquatic animals. Bring the water to your home.
- Decorate your living space with watery colours or watery decor! Photos of the ocean, blues and greens, waterbased animal plushies, etc.
- Go (legally) fishing! If it's similar to something you would've done before, why not? It gets you near water, and engaged in something connected to your identity.

Arctic/Cold Climates

- Keep your environment colder. Make sure you don't get colder than your body can handle, though.
- Go skiing, snowboarding, ice skating or anything similar! Maybe make a routine of going out to winter-related sports/events.
- Eat colder food, if it gives you a sense of home. Ice cream, popsicles (which you can make yourself in species-affirming flavours, colours and shapes), frozen fruits/vegetables, cold smoothies, refrigerated food such as leftovers from a warm meal, etc.
- Eat foods that might be sourced from climates similar to where your identity is from! Fish, certain types of berries, other meats, etc!

- Make sure you're cozy when it *is* cold outside! Wear clothes that might remind you of how you would've survived the cold before—thermal jackets, warm fluffy scarves, gloves, hats, etc! Lots of creatures from colder climates have certain ways to stay warm, try to see if you can mimic those in some way!
- If your identity lived around hot springs or might have used them, have a nice hot bath when it's cold out!

Arid/Warm Climates

- Keep your environment warmer! Maybe even wear an extra layer to feel a bit more cozy. Keep to a safe level though!
- Eat foods that might be sourced from where your identity is from!
- Get a dry-loving plant that might be similar to something your identity would see in their environment. Maybe get multiple!
- Make sure you're cool when it is hot outside. Go swimming, stay inside in the cool, wear particular clothes, etc. Creatures from warmer climates tend to have ways to keep cool and survive, see if you can mimic some of those! If your identity sheds their winter coat, so can you!
- Spend time in the sun! Go on hikes, explore nature, just be outside in the warmth! Maybe bask on a nice warm rock if you'd like. Remember to wear sunscreen and other sun protection!
- If you would've taken mud/dust baths, do that (somewhere safe). Great way to keep cool while connecting with your identity.

Forests/Woodland

- Have lots of plants, if possible! Get some that are easy to grow in your house, plant some outside, just have plants! Bonus points if they produce something edible.
- Get native grasses, shrubs or plants in general, plant them in your yard to fill it out more. Research what should be growing where you live and plant it! You'll attract more native wildlife which is great for the environment, and it'll make you feel more in tune with nature.
- Listen to forest ambiance, go to a park with lots of nature, or go sit out in the woods if possible—and listen to the sounds! Try to pick apart all the different sounds you can hear. Maybe learning how to identify different bird calls or bug noises could help you feel more connected?
- Go camping in a forest! Campgrounds are generally in forests and if you have a nice place near you, plan a trip! Research what's around you—some places have cabins if you need those, and some have areas you can place a tent.
- Get plushies or pictures of animals that would be around in your identity's habitat, and decorate your house with them!
- Decorate your living space with homey things. Vine decorations, potted plants, photos of forests or trees, sometimes those little string lights can feel like sun shining through leaves.. Get creative with it!

Underground

- Make a blanket/pillow fort resembling a den or cave! Maybe even have a permanent little area or room in your house that's dark and comfortable, reminding you of home. Reading nooks can be great for this!
- Keep your environment cooler if your habitat was cold, or keep it warmer if it was hot! Cold, damp cave? Get a humidifier, maybe sit in a cold shower for a bit. Hot, dry cave? Get a dehumidifier and turn on the heater.
- Turn off the lights, keep your environment dark and quiet. Maybe have some very faint ambiance—slight dripping/running water, quiet birdsong, soft wind, etc.
- Keep lava lamps and similar things around if you were near underground magma or something similar—might be a bit silly, but it could add to the atmosphere!
- Decorate with low-light thriving plants!
- Digging in the dirt outside for any purpose might give you species affirming feelings of digging underground. If you can, maybe go to a site where you can dig safely in an established digsite!
- Visit local caves, or plan a trip to go see some! There's a lot of cave tours and some caves are even open to the public without a tour needed.
- Get a loft bed and drape blankets or something similar over the edges so you can hide under it and do whatever you want! Make it dark and quiet and cozy. Similar to a pillow fort but more solid and usually a lot more room.

Cities/Societies/Other Cultures

- As a long-term goal, move to somewhere that feels more homey. Maybe your home feels like a town in the mountains, or a big city, or a village in the desert. Find somewhere like that and see how feasible it is to plan a move.
- If you're unable to move to a location like that... Plan a trip! Book a hotel, fly, drive or catch a train over there, and enjoy!
- If the place your identity is from has certain traditions and customs, follow them. Maybe your society had certain superstitions, or ways of interacting with others, or habits and other little social things. (If your identity is from somewhere that has a this-world equivalent, make sure you're being respectful of any cultures that may be connected to it.)
- Make or buy foods you would have eaten before, or something close to it. Eat it in the way you would have before too, if possible!
- Decorate your living space as you would have before. Plants, furniture, colours, imagery, decor... Take all those things into account!

Specific Body Features

Wings/Flight

- Wear unzippable hoodies with pockets, have it unzipped and put your hands in the pockets. Discount wings! Capes and cloaks might also give a similar feeling, as would clothing with long, loose sleeves.
- For the feeling of weight on your back, wear a backpack instead of using other types of bags. If you have money to spare, you can also get “wing backpacks” that are made to look like 3D wings! They mainly have feathered wing designs but there’s also insect-like and bat-like ones. You could try modifying your own backpack too!
- Cosplay wings of various designs and complexities could help. If you have the money, you can get mechanical ones but they do cost a lot of money.
- If you want a flying-like feeling, driving or riding with someone on a motorbike feels similar with all the wind rushing at you, just on the ground. Some places actually do rides where they have you on a bike of some kind with them and they do a drive around, so you don’t need to own one yourself or have a license. Regular bicycles could also work for a similar feeling!
- Skydiving, paragliding, hang gliding, bungee jumping and anything similar might be helpful, you just need to get a professional on board and be aware of the risks.

Tails

- Buy cosplay tails online—they come in all different types, and you can get custom ones from some fursuit makers without the rest of the suit. You can get ones that are made to wiggle when you walk, and you can also get mechanical ones that you can control with a remote or gestures.
- Make a yarn tail. There’s plenty of tutorials for these online, they’re not too hard to get the hang of, and you can make them in any colour you want. They might be a lot of work, but they’re worth it.
- If it’s your style, tailcoats and similar things can have similar wedge-shapes at the back that if you squint can resemble feathered birdlike tails.
- To replicate tail movement, maybe try moving your foot a little bit instead. It’s by no means the same, but a lot of alterhumans do this on instinct and it may prove helpful.

Claws

- Let your nails grow out! You can shape them to be pointier and paint them the colour you’d prefer them to be. You could also wear fake nails over the top of your regular nails—some of them come deliberately designed like animal claws.
- Make claw gloves—we personally took gardening glove claw tips and glued them onto black gloves so the colours matched the way we wanted. You can buy the gardening gloves themselves or buy just the plastic bits to glue onto other things. They’re hard to pick things up with, but they’re definitely sturdy enough to dig around with.

- Get claw rings—you can find these in various types online. They generally won't be usable but they might give the visual vibe you're looking for.

Teeth/Chewing

- Get cosmetic fangs. They should be available in multiple types at halloween and costume stores—ones that you can use denture glue to put on, ones that you can shape yourself, etc. Make sure to read the product description and make sure you're using them safely.
- For biting urges, get things that your human teeth can chew through but give similar satisfaction to what your identity has. Beef jerky, certain types of candy, fruits, etc. Anything that has the texture that would satisfy you.
- If you need to chew something that doesn't break, chewelry comes in different hardness levels and lots of different designs! Pick out one you'd like—some stores offer tester pieces to test what their chewelry firmness scale is like.
- If you don't want chewelry, having a pack of gum on hand to chew can also come in handy! Eat a few pieces at once if you need something bigger to chew on.

Ears

- Buy cosplay ears online. Elf or animal ears that hook onto your existing ears can be customised, you can buy ear headbands/hair clips in lots of shapes and sizes, and you can learn to make your own (try using fursuit tutorials!).
- Hide your current bodily ears if they're dysphoria inducing. Wear headphones, grow your hair out to cover them, wear hats and hoods.
- There are several types of body mods you can do to your ears that might be for you! Ear pointing, several types of piercings, etc—look into them and see if any would be good!
- Headphones with ears of different animal types might be species affirming.

Horns/Antlers

- Horn/antler headbands! You could even buy some of those cheap christmas ones and reshape the horns to your liking. Using cardboard, wire, clay, or paper mache could achieve the shapes you'd want!
- Headphones may help with the feeling of needing something hard on your head. Maybe even certain types of hats! Experiment with what gives the right coverage. Hats could also be great for hiding the lack of antlers on your head too.
- Antler/horn hair clips exist! They might be a little hard to find and may be smaller than you'd like, but they are out there and you could even make your own! This could also help with it feeling more natural and less like a bulky headpiece that you just sat on there.
- Horn/antler hairpins also are a thing, though slightly different to hairclips in how they're usually positioned. You can get them made from real horns/antlers too depending on where you look (but remember to source animal parts ethically).

- Going a bit more extreme, but you can get body mod implants such as subdermal horns that can help you feel more like you have horns on your head. I've also heard of people getting subdermal magnetic implants so they can safely attach a horn to the outside of their skin without the worry of it snagging on something. Be sure to research before you commit to anything in particular—there are risks with any body mod procedure, and these are intense mods.

Digitigrade Legs

- Digilegs are a pricey investment, but they might be worth looking into! They're essentially stilts that make your legs look digitigrade—though a learning curve to walk in, and they do cost a fair chunk of change.
- Wearing heels can give more of a digitigrade feel for some people—just be careful walking in them if you don't normally wear heels, as you would with digileg stilts.
- Get padding to put into your pants, or make a custom pair of padded pants yourself—similar to how fursuit makers will shape the legs of their suits!
- Walk on your toes—a thing a lot of people already do, but worth a mention. Remember to stretch and make sure you give your legs the full angles of motion and you don't only walk on your toes, though.

Fins

- Webbed gloves are actually a thing you can buy! Not exactly the same, but they're a start.
- Mermaid suits/mermaid tails are available in kinds where they're actually able to be used for swimming. Prices vary, but worth checking out. Get one in your colours!
- Flippers are basically a type of fins people strap to themselves anyway, give em a try. You could always customise them to make them feel more like your identity.

Snouts/Muzzles

- Wear a mask! You can make your own in all sorts of ways—cardboard, foam, beads, etc! Sometimes, even wearing a regular medical mask can give your face enough shape to be dysphoria relieving.
- Paint your face to match the patterns you'd have as your identity—makeup can really define and also hide certain features, try it out to see how you can change the shape of your face.