

Keala Settle

Keala Settle is an American actress and singer. She was born on November 5, 1975, in Laie, Hawaii. Her mom is a New Zealand woman of native Māori descent while her dad was born in England. While growing up, she felt like she did not quite fit in with her peers due to the mix of cultures she experienced in her home.

As a child, she sang at church and performed in local theater productions. Settle struggled with self-doubt and a lack of confidence in her abilities. In college, she studied voice at Southern Utah University. After graduating, she worked a variety of jobs, including as a backup singer and a performer on cruise ships.

Settle first performed on Broadway in the musical *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* in 2011. She went on to earn numerous roles in musicals. Her role as Lettie Lutz, the bearded lady in *The Greatest Showman*, is what brought her widespread recognition. The song "This Is Me" became an anthem of self-acceptance and empowerment.

Despite her success, Settle has faced significant challenges. Just days before performing "This is Me" at the 2018 Oscars, she had a stroke. Two months later, she had brain surgery followed by therapy where she had to relearn how to walk, talk, and write again. She has since spoken about how this experience changed her life. Despite the message of the song she became famous for, she had spent much of her life being someone who she was not. At the same time, the energy she put into the making of the movie, led to increased anxiety and then health problems.

Settle has learned to focus on self-care and to become more resilient. She has recovered and believes that she has emerged stronger. She has openly shared her struggles with anxiety. It has been challenging for her to accept herself as she is in a profession that often emphasizes conformity. Settle has become a powerful advocate for accepting who you are.

I've always been the biggest bully to myself.

I used to not walk out the door; I was so afraid. Everything from, 'You shouldn't be here,' down to, 'Girl, don't wear those pants.' I was so sad. I tried my best to not even look in a mirror!

Name: _____

Character Traits: Keala Settle

After reading, make a list of 3 character traits you can use to describe Keala Settle.

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Why do you think these character traits fit what you have read about her? List the character traits. Below each, share why you chose the trait.

Trait 1:

What text evidence supports this trait?

Trait 2:

What text evidence supports this trait?

Trait 3:

What text evidence supports this trait?
