

Remember to Present Yourself Honestly.

Previously, you learned some strategies to show the world your personality and express your feelings. However, authenticity is more than being honest with the world. It's also about being honest with yourself.

There are many advantages to being truly authentic. ***Most importantly, you'll no longer feel the need to change your words and actions to impress others.*** You can relax and be yourself.

Embrace authenticity and present yourself honestly:

1. **Give up the need to appear perfect.** Excellent is good enough. But seriously, when you don't need to appear perfect, you're in the position to be honest. No one can be perfect and honest at the same time. Avoid putting on a show for the rest of the world. You'll only feel bad about yourself later.
 - It's okay to be less than spectacular. ***Be the best at being yourself.***
2. **Know your values and live by them.** If you know your values and live by them consistently, you're already doing well in the authentic department.
 - Make a list of your values and determine the five that are most important to you. Are you living your life according to these values? Would it be obvious to others that you hold these values?
 - Decide to make your decisions based upon your values. Be willing to share your values with others.
3. **Notice when you're not being authentic.** It's not easy to be authentic all the time. ***You might find yourself transforming based on the situation.*** A first date is a good example. Are you being authentic or pretending to be

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someone you're not?

- Take note of those times your authenticity starts to wane
4. **Know your goals.** What do you want out of life? Do you know? Are you willing to let others know? By knowing your goals, you can live your life accordingly.
 - Make a list of your short-term and long-term goals. How well do they align with your values?
 5. **What are your defining characteristics?** Describe yourself honestly. Now ask yourself if a casual acquaintance would describe you the same way? How about someone that knows you well? How about your closest friend?
 - How many people know you well? If there aren't many, ask yourself why. If you're living authentically, it should be easy for someone to develop an accurate opinion of you.
 - What are your "negative" characteristics? Are you impatient or messy? Are you willing to allow others to see these characteristics or do you attempt to hide them?
 6. **Tell the truth. *If you're being authentic, why would you need to lie?*** This pertains especially to anything you say about yourself. Admit your mistakes, weaknesses, and frailties. Share your opinions honestly and freely.
 7. **Simplify your life.** Get rid of everything that's extraneous. What you choose to keep will be representative of your preferences and your true self. Find your true essence by stripping away the non-essential. Start with the clothes you never wear, the things you never use, and the activities you don't enjoy. Only keep the things that mean the most to you.
 8. **Do what you say you'll do.** Keep your word and follow through on your promises. You'll feel more congruent, and others will view you as more congruent. When your words and actions match, you're demonstrating authenticity.

Life becomes easier when you're living authentically. ***You'll no longer feel the exhaustion that comes with constantly changing your opinions, attitudes, and personality to please others.*** You'll no longer feel the need to protect

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yourself from others. Be authentic with your thoughts, words, and actions. Invest the time in yourself and learn to be free.

Trusting in yourself also makes it easier to be authentic. The next lesson shares ideas for trusting yourself.

Here's what you need to do today:

What are your defining characteristics? In your journal, describe yourself honestly. Now ask yourself if a casual acquaintance would describe you the same way? How about someone that knows you well? How about your closest friend?

If your descriptions from the various people are different, why is that? Are you presenting yourself honestly?