

Sixteen Tools of Authenticity

By Jeremiah Gruenberg

1. **Know and practice your values.** Your values are the measuring stick of your authenticity. Align every decision you make to your values. You will be authentic only to the degree you understand and practice what is important to you.
2. **Practice self-honesty and self-reflection.** Don't kid yourself. You will think more clearly about everything when you can be honest with yourself. Ask yourself questions. Speak with an advisor or counselor or trusted friend. In difficult situations, write out your thoughts.
3. **Hold convictions.** Be passionate about what you believe. A milquetoast attitude is the archenemy of authenticity.
4. **Practice humility.** Never forget that your perception and knowledge can be insufficient or flawed, just like everyone else.
5. **Recognize and act according to priorities.** Have integrity to do what matters, when it matters.
6. **Be decisive.** Authentic people do not refuse to make decisions. Commit to the course of action dictated by your values, priorities, and integrity, then course correct if you must.
7. **Patience.** With yourself and with others.
8. **Examine your reactions.** You can't control your reactions, but you can control what you do with them. Understand what motivates you.
9. **Be willing.** Cultivate a willingness to try new things, attempt different solutions, and put on new perspectives. The new or different is not a threat to the authentic.
10. **Active listening.** Hear with the intention to truly understand the communicator.
11. **Don't be afraid of "I don't know."** Admit when you need more information or more time. Authentic people have nothing to prove.
12. **Look for and rely on the strengths of others.** You can't do everything yourself.
13. **Don't be afraid of "No."** Don't commit to things you can't deliver. If you must do something you don't agree with, be honest about your perspective first.
14. **Put aside your opinion without a grudge.** When you need to do something according to the dictates of someone else, do not do it begrudgingly. Embrace it and you will find creative value in it.
15. **Keep your ego in check.** Don't make choices out of the desire to make yourself look good. It never ends well.
16. **Be courageously vulnerable.** Speak the truth, even when it is difficult. Listen to others, even when it hurts.

Need consulting, coaching, or speaking on this topic?

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