

HOW TO AUTHENTICATE INAUTHENTIC FEELINGS

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In order to survive you may have adopted inauthentic feelings from a parent or other authority figure, or from a political, financial, cultural or religious belief system. Feelings from others are *emotions*, not feelings. By taking on the feelings of an external authority you take on their authority, but that authority is inauthentic. *Authenticity starts when you take responsibility for abandoning your authenticity.* This is a five to fifty minute partner-process, depending on the skills and maturity of the partners to feel and communicate with feelings, and also depending on the significance of the issues being addressed.

HOW TO AUTHENTICATE INAUTHENTIC FEELINGS

1. The most critical step in authenticating a feeling is to *test if it is your feeling or not*. The test is to apply this question: *What is the purpose?* Use part of your attention to stay in the feeling and use another part of your attention to find the purpose of the feeling. Where is this going? What is its intention? If the purpose is anything other than *being in relationship through vulnerably sharing yourself*, it is probably not *your* feeling, but a foreign feeling with a purpose like:
 - a. Surviving by re-enacting familiar family patterns (physical / psychological / emotional / or sexual abuse, family order, stories).
 - b. Surviving through using the authority of someone else's identity (father, mother, boss, teacher, movie/rock star, political leader).
 - c. Surviving through the authority of an institutional identity (police, soldier, believer, political party, company-man, professional title).
 - d. Proving that you are hurt so as to validate being a victim, thereby justifying taking revenge.
 - e. Proving that you are right and the other person is wrong, thereby validating your superiority, and so on.
2. In the instant you detect that your feeling is not about sharing yourself responsibly, STOP the conversation, mid-sentence.
3. Say, *Excuse me. I just noticed that what I am feeling is not authentic. It is an emotion, not a feeling. It does not actually come from me. I adopted it from someone else* (specifically name the person). OR *I adopted it from an institution* (specifically name the institution). *The purpose of this emotion is...* (specifically name the purpose, perhaps one of the five purposes listed above).
4. The way out of inauthenticity is being authentic about your inauthenticity. Start an entirely new conversation, an adult responsible conversation. For example, even if the source and purpose of your emotions are not immediately clear to you, be as clear as you can be and then admit what is not clear. Say, *I feel angry about the ecologists because that is my political party's dogma. But I don't know why I need to follow their dogma. I don't know what I actually feel about environmental issues. Probably scared.*
5. This is not psychotherapy. This is becoming authentic at a new level. You do not have to process everything. Simply say, *This is not my authentic purpose. My real purpose is to provide value in this relationship.*
6. Then create a new future for yourself by taking on a new practice. Say, *I vow never to empower that rage again.* The vow means new behavior for you. Practice your new behavior with fierce diligence.