

AUTHENTICITY PRACTICE #1

Chart a conversation

If you want a gripping short course in what obscures and frees the truth, watch *12 Angry Men*, a brilliant 1957 movie co-produced by Henry Fonda and directed by Sidney Lumet.

The movie centers on a murder trial. With a young man's life at stake, the jury of twelve votes 11 to 1 for conviction. Most are surprised that Juror No. 8, played by Fonda, doesn't go along.

“What do we do now?” says one juror. No. 8 responds, “I guess we talk.” So, in a search for truth, they do.

At times, the way they talked decelerated the trip to truth, and other times the way they engaged quickened the trip. We think it is important to recognize the decelerators and the accelerators in conversations, and watching *12 Angry Men* will put you in the visceral presence of everything you just read and reflected on.

We think the movie presents a great, fun way to practice authenticity through the power of the Conversation Meter.

1. Print a Conversation Meter on paper big enough to write notes on. (see next page)
2. Watch the movie and put check marks in the quadrant of the meter that fits the conversation on the screen.

3. At the end, count up how many examples of pretense, sincerity, accuracy, and authenticity you noted.

4. What did the quality of the conversation have to do with the story?

You can pick any movie or TV show and do the same chart-a-conversation exercise. Do it once a week for eight weeks, and you will have seared the elements of the meter into your consciousness forever.

If you are feeling bold, have someone you trust observe a real-life movie: one of your meetings! Have them chart the conversation on the meter, debrief with you, and discuss what there is to learn.

