

AUTHENTICITY PRACTICE #2

From self-deceived to self-aware

The human mind is self-affirming. We tend to gather evidence for our own point of view and fail to notice when our own behavior is derailing the conversation. If you are up for elevating self-awareness, do the exercise below. As you become reliable for the following rhythm you will be able to lead others to do the same:

Notice your own sincere, strongly held opinion: Pick an opinion you know others around you do not all endorse.

- *Notice stress, and then breathe consciously.* To notice conversation stress, consider either of these signals:
 - When it feels like too much effort for too little impact, or
 - Resistance or disagreement is increasing with no improvement in sight.

Now breathe and note the shift from inhale to exhale. Relax your points of tension.

- *Notice your influence:* How are your thoughts, emotions, or physical signals contributing to the stress? Ask yourself and another person.

- *Make an opposite move:* Change a thought, emotion, or physical expression to its opposite. Some examples:
 - “He needs to change,” to “I need to change my approach.”
 - “Impatient anger” to “relaxed respect”
 - “Rolling my eyes” to “focused, interested eyes”
- *Notice the impact, and remember the lesson:* How was my mindset, emotions, or physical actions undermining my best interests? What new possibilities are emerging?

Authenticity is won, not simply desired. In the midst of life we are seduced, distracted, and sometimes confused. Are we learning to be true to ourselves? Are we true more often than not? It's a worthy fight.