

Authentic or Merely Surviving?

We all have moments in life where we switch into survival mode, where our "survivor self" takes the lead.

This part of us is crafted through past traumas, difficult experiences, and learned behaviors meant to protect us.

And while the survivor self is crucial during times of crisis, it can hinder us from living authentically and experiencing true fulfillment.

Understanding the Survivor Self

The survivor self manifests in various ways, ***often as a defense mechanism***. Here are some common forms it takes:

1. The People-Pleaser: This aspect seeks validation and approval from others, often at the expense of personal needs and desires. It's driven by fear of rejection and abandonment.
2. The Perfectionist: Here, the focus is on controlling outcomes and avoiding failure. This can lead to chronic stress, burnout, and a relentless pursuit of unattainable standards.

3. The Avoider: This form avoids confrontation, difficult emotions, and challenging situations. It may lead to procrastination and missed opportunities for growth.

4. The Over-Achiever: This part equates worth with accomplishments, constantly striving for more to prove their value. It often results in neglecting personal well-being and relationships.

Dismantling the Survivor Self

To dismantle the survivor self, we must first recognize its presence and understand its origin. Here's how you can start:

1. Self-Awareness: Reflect on your behaviors and identify patterns that align with the survivor self. Journaling can help uncover these patterns and their triggers.

2. Acceptance: Accept that these behaviors served a purpose during challenging times. Acknowledge their role without judgment or shame.

3. Mindfulness: Practice mindfulness to stay present and aware of when the survivor self takes over. This awareness allows you to choose more authentic responses.

4. Therapeutic Support: Working with a therapist can provide deeper insights and strategies to heal past traumas and foster authentic living.

Embracing Your Authentic Self

Authenticity involves living in alignment with your true values, beliefs, and desires. It's about embracing vulnerability, expressing your true self, and finding joy in the present moment. Here's how authenticity leads to a fulfilling life:

1. **Genuine Connections:** When you are authentic, you attract people who resonate with your true self, leading to deeper and more meaningful relationships.
2. **Inner Peace:** Living authentically reduces internal conflict and promotes a sense of peace and self-acceptance.
3. **Purpose and Passion:** Authenticity allows you to pursue your true passions and purpose, making your life more vibrant and fulfilling.

Examples of Rising to Authenticity

1. **Setting Boundaries:** An authentic person sets healthy boundaries, saying no to things that drain them and yes to opportunities that align with their values.
2. **Pursuing Passions:** Choosing a career or hobby that truly excites you, even if it doesn't align with societal expectations, is a hallmark of authenticity.

3. Embracing Vulnerability: Sharing your true thoughts and feelings with others, even when it's uncomfortable, fosters genuine connections and personal growth.

4. Prioritizing Self-Care: Taking care of your physical, emotional, and mental well-being shows self-respect and authenticity.

Living Authentically

Imagine a woman who has always sought approval by overworking and never saying no.

By recognizing this as her survivor self in action, she begins to set boundaries and prioritizes activities that bring her joy, like painting and hiking.

She notices a shift in her energy and the quality of her relationships. She feels more connected and alive, experiencing the life she truly desires.

This is what happens when you transition from your survivor self to your authentic self. It's not an overnight fix, it is a journey.

The requirement is courage, patience, and self-compassion. And remember, courage, patience, and self-compassion are all learned skills! You can do this!

If you choose this path, the reward is a life filled with genuine happiness, deeper connections, and true fulfillment. That is living your life vibrantly and in FULL BLOOM!