

The Luminous Mind WEEKLY AUDIOBLOG #12

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Authenticity, that is my weekly audioblog for this week, something I've been pondering, wondering how "real" to be with people. Or if my intention are really authentic? Am I living my life true to my core and presenting that side to others? How many of us live a double life? Who knows, I may be ALL OVER the place with this post....but let us jump right in!

What does that word mean, authenticity means? The online dictionary defines it as:

- 1 the quality of being authentic; genuineness.

Another definition of just the word authentic:

- 1 not false or copied; genuine; real: *an authentic antique*.
- 2 having the origin supported by unquestionable evidence; trustworthy
- I love that I found that word in the dictionary under this heading!

For this audioblog, I took some information from a article from Gaiam Life written by Polly Campbell , but Polly says this:

“At its root, authenticity requires self-knowledge and self-awareness. Authentic people accept their strengths and weaknesses. They are accountable. They are connected to their values and desires and act deliberately in ways that are consistent with those qualities.

Authenticity is about being genuine and real, says Mike Robbins, a corporate trainer and the author of *Be Yourself, Everyone Else Is Already Taken*. It allows us to connect deeply with others because it requires us to be transparent and vulnerable.

“It is important because it liberates us from the pressures of always trying to be something else, always trying to be perfect,” Robbins says.”

We all love authentic people, people who we can totally be ourselves around, people that we don't have to put on airs for, people who are "real" or people we feel like we aren't competing with...that sounds so "high schoolish". But yes, People we ultimately trust and find trustworthy.

Speaking of high school- It was such a fake time for me, (did anyone else feel that way?) trying to meet everyone else's exceptions. Following the

crowd and living a false life just to fit in. So sad, when you spend adolescence like that!

However, sadly it carries into adulthood sometimes with a bigger vengeance. I think many of us call that "keeping up with the Joneses" or "keeping up appearances" either way, how exhausting it is on a person! I'll admit, I've lived that life! Probably the best benefit to homeschooling is just by the title, somehow that disqualified me in the fruitless, exhausting competition. My cool status was blown just by saying those words, "we homeschool". Oh, I tried to hang on to that desire to be accepted but try as I might people just looked at me differently. But my sense to carry on with our home education was too strong to continue the fight, so I relented. It sounds silly but at first I was resentful, I felt the need to justify my decision but the more I justify the less I felt "understood". Who cares what those people thought of me anyway? Who is to decide who is cool? I think when I gave up caring, I found my true self and friends who were true. I found courage as well as unbelievable strength.

I really love what Ms. Campbell says about being able to recognize when your being Authentic, she says:

“Authentic people feel better, according to research by Kernis, Goldman and others. They are more resilient, less likely to turn to self-destructive habits for solace. They tend to be purposeful in their choices and more likely to follow through on their goals.

If, instead, you find yourself feeling fragmented, unhappy, bored, stressed, stuck or uninspired, it could be a sign that you aren't acting authentically. That's something you can change right now.”

How do we create that change not only for ourselves but how do we create authenticity in our homes? Children who are authentic and true to the core of their being, passionate about who they are or want to be?

So first, going back to starting with ourselves, being a good mentor, so I'm going back to the Gaiam Article they share their 5 steps:

Here are five ways to get started:

- 1. Redefine your values.** It's hard to behave in an authentic way if you do not know what you value and desire. Often, we hold tight to the same values we grew up with, when we need to reevaluate what feels right to us now and align our actions around those things. Get clear on what you care about and authenticity will take hold.

2. Foster an open mind. Authenticity flourishes when we experience the world wholly, from every perspective. Rigid, good/bad thinking keeps us trapped in judgment and limitation, which causes us to shut down our vulnerable, authentic self. Challenge yourself to look at all sides of the situation. Be open.

3. Fill in the blank: If you really knew me you'd know this:

_____. This is a prompt Robbins gives to seminar participants.

Not only does it prompt introspection and allow people to reveal essential aspects of themselves, it also builds trust, credibility and confidence with the person you are sharing it with. Authenticity does sometimes feel scary and vulnerable, but it also builds intimacy.

4. Notice when you are being inauthentic. Robbins suggests that you pay attention to those times when you are insincere in your speech, or when you are acting in a way that doesn't align with your core values. Then explore the fears and beliefs that may create those barriers to your authenticity.

5. Trust your intuition. Often, we feel out of sync when we are acting inauthentic. Things just don't feel right. Pay attention to those hunches, physical sensations and impressions. They can be your instincts telling you that you are not being genuine. When you are on track and authentic, you'll feel that too."

So back to my previous question:

How do we create authenticity in our homes? Children who are authentic and true to the core of their being, passionate about who they are or want to be? Personally, I'm not really sure but one thing comes to mind. I mentioned trustworthy. When people trust us, they tend to not put a guard up. They feel safe, they can make mistakes and know we won't laugh. They can share true feelings and know we won't condemn. At least that is what I think, maybe share your thoughts, tell me what you think. But I digress, how can I teach values and ideas and share virtues as well as keep my children feeling safe? For me, I think it comes to be careful not to condemn the mistakes of others too strongly. I think too, sharing my imperfections so my children realize I make mistakes too. Talking about what I learned from those mistakes. I don't know, I just want children who feel like they can share, be true and not be judged. What is the culture of our homes? My home? Hummmmm.... Does it feel safe? I guess, I find out day by day, I think of parents who get broadsided by some flaw in their children like a habit of stealing, or drug use or sexual promiscuity. I've seen families totally shattered by this, when children or

a spouse finally reveal who they are authentically. I'm not saying people can't change but that first initial blow can knock the wind out of you. I feel for those people, I've felt that before, that disappointment realizing someone is not who you thought they were. Anyway, I digress again, how do we create a family culture of safety maybe where our children feel grace (for a better word) again I like to define that word "Grace":
WOW SO MANY GREAT DEFINITIONS for "grace" I strongly recommend looking them up - some of my favorites include -
1 favor or goodwill. Synonyms: kindness, kindliness, love, benignity; condescension
2 mercy; clemency; pardon: *He was saved by an act of grace from the governor.* Synonyms: lenity, leniency, reprieve.

Sometimes creating that safe environment seems daunting to me as I'm so full of emotion. Anger or frustration, the need to lash out when people around me don't fill my expectations.

However, sharing those feelings in the wrong way can create an unsafe feeling. A place where people aren't allowed to be authentic for fear of it causing...I don't know?!? That Anger in us to flare...

Really learning to be effective communicators is key. Learning to share our expectations with kindness, love and joy! Laughing at ourselves when we make mistakes.

In some ways, doing this podcast has felt unsafe for me. It is scary to be authentic! Not that I poll people or care about polls but I certainly don't want this to be a waste of my time! I want to help someone out there so it isn't totally fruitless. So in an effort to be authentic, here it goes...To be honest, summer wasn't that hot for The Luminous Mind Podcast. I really wondered if it would be like that. I remember in the Spring, I even told my husband, well if I can just make it through summer, we might survive. He has been fantastic on the encouragement side BTW...but as a podcaster you can't help but look at the numbers. They were climbing every month, even June was pretty good but July was horrible, half the downloads of June. August started out well and then the last two weeks- horrible. We continued to interview people, so that is good, but even that dropped off. So it causes for some reflection,

Where am I headed - personally, who am I authentically? Where is the Luminous Mind headed? What about our weekly audioblogs?

So let's answer the 1st question - where am I headed and who am I authentically? Well, I'm a person who loves to learn, a person who believes that the process of becoming is more important than accumulating things. Honestly, a favorite quote that has been on my email signature FOR YEARS is: "This life is not so much a time for getting and accumulating as it is a time for giving and becoming" - Elder Lance B. Wickman

So this leads to an answer to the second question, "Where is the Luminous Mind headed?" The opportunity for ME to become more is what this podcast is to me or better, has become to me...a process of becoming, personal learning and growth and opportunity to learn from others. I have learned so much from ALL of our contributors!! What an awesome, amazing blessing!!

So here is the deal, I don't care how many listen, it might help for booking guests and amazing mentors, but this is for me with the hopes it is helping others out there. So I'm trying to be authentic, I want to study and learn more, spend more time pondering my contributors' words and advice. This week, if you noticed we changed the publishing schedule to 2 contributor interviews to Tues. / Thursday with the more personal weekly audioblog showing up on Saturday. People may hate the audioblog but it is a time for my own personal growth and becoming.

Also, starting next week, my family and I are diving into the world schooling life with a life-long dream coming to fruition with a big trip planned to Italy that I hope to share with you all on The Luminous Mind YouTube channel. Anyhow, back to authenticity; it is a process of becoming and really challenging what your values are, living by those and striving to live up to that desire regardless of what others thinks. So be authentic, like Ms. Campbell says authentic people feel better, they are more resilient, they have purpose in their choices and more likely to follow through on their goals. I'm saying it is mostly for myself but you can do it! Be happy and get inspired! So until next week, here is to lighting that spark and being authentic...