

Ep #192: Where Authenticity Begins: Inside You



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Kristi Angevine

[Habits On Purpose](#) with Kristi Angevine

Ep #192: Where Authenticity Begins: Inside You

All of us want to feel at home in the world. But the truth is, you can't feel at home out there if you don't feel at home in here, inside yourself. And that's what today's episode is about: the foundation of authenticity, which is a sense of internal belonging. Let's dive in.

Welcome to *Habits On Purpose*, I'm Kristi Angevine, a physician, Master Certified Coach, Internal Family Systems informed practitioner, and host of this podcast, where we explore the deeper psychology behind why we do what we do.

Hello, hello, everybody. So as I record this, there is a shift in the seasons from summer to fall. It's 2025, and here's just a little snapshot of what's going on for me in my life. I returned from a bit over a month or so in Europe with my kids, mostly spent in Portugal. And we came home to school starting within about 24 hours because I opted to maximize our travel experience over easing into our transition back to school.

And then I left town about 5 days later for a work trip, which was this really amazing retreat where I was lucky enough to be able to experience it as a participant and not just be in my usual work mode. I had all sorts of insights on that trip, despite struggling a bit with the close proximity of leaving town right when I came home from a big trip. Then it kind of felt like I blinked and I was on my next work trip about 2 weeks later. And this time, it was to speak at a conference, and there were about 250 women or so. And it was a mix of physicians and other people in different clinical roles: entrepreneurs, attorneys, basically professionals in general.

And back on the home front, our kids are back in their fall sports mode, which is mostly soccer, and then back into some instruments and kind of figuring out the new school year. And my husband and I are in what I call the great figuring out. And it's kind of this time of year where we are in the middle of the process of transitioning from one school year to the next, where we are figuring out a new rhythm. There's school, activities, groceries, dinners, how to fit in all the things, the chores, the white space, the time for connection as a couple, the time for connection as a family.

Ep #192: Where Authenticity Begins: Inside You

And just in the last few days, I'm getting a hint that there's this crisp air that's here for the season. And then, for me personally, what's surfaced lately has been this idea of authenticity. And how we can show up with more of it. And not just when we're on vacation, but how we can have more authenticity in the middle of ordinary everyday stuff. So my own personal great figuring out is currently focused on this idea, and that's where the focus of today's episode is: authenticity and internal belonging. How you can figure out what it's like to come home to yourself without going on vacation.

So when I say the word authenticity, what comes up for you? I've been reflecting a lot on what it means to me and what makes it easy and what makes it difficult. So for me, reflection often starts with these sort of vague musings. But my reflection becomes much more just efficient and effective and concrete when I anchor my reflection to questions that I make myself slow down and answer. Because when my mind swirls in these rapid questions that I don't answer, while I sometimes can just experience the sense of awe, I can also just be left feeling a bit topsy-turvy without a stable foundation. And when I methodically consider questions one by one, it helps keep my musings much more anchored.

So I'm going to pose to you some of the things that I've been asking myself. What does it mean to be more authentic? What comes to mind when you consider showing up with authenticity in different areas of your life? Professionally, in your community, with acquaintances, with your friends, with your ride-or-die inner circle, with your family, with your partner, with your kids, with yourself? When is authenticity easy? When and where is it difficult? What makes it easy? What makes it difficult? Where do you want more of it? And finally, what would be possible if you were more at ease with being most authentic?

So let's start this exploration by defining authenticity and then consider some of the interesting ideas around it. Authenticity, as I understand it, is a state of being genuine, not fabricated or fake. It's where there's a congruence between your inner values, inner feelings, and your behaviors.

Ep #192: Where Authenticity Begins: Inside You

There's an honesty about what's present, which can mean an integrity with yourself as well as with how you express yourself.

Now, many philosophers and psychologists, they've described authenticity as living from your own inner truth, as opposed to conforming to social scripts or acting primarily for external approval.

Now, quick side note, authenticity as it pertains to your public-facing behavior doesn't mean that you must bare your soul and be the rawest version of yourself everywhere, all the time to everyone. It's more so about making sure that what you do share is real.

Now, in my cursory research into where the word authenticity comes from, and if there's any etymology experts listening who know differently, please just let me know. But what I came up with and learned was that the word authentic comes from a Greek word meaning original and genuine. And the root of the word means "one action on one's own authority." Now, over time, in old French and later in Middle English, the word described things that were reliable, trustworthy, and genuine. And later also came to include this idea of something being real or fake as it related to documents and artifacts and signatures.

Now, in more modern centuries, psychology and philosophy began applying the word authentic to people, as in people whose behavior and identity are congruent with their deeper values, not just a shell for how they appear in public. And the element of this that resonates with me is the idea of authenticity being living in alignment with who you really are, not who you think you should be. And that can be a little tricky if you don't yet realize there's the difference between the two.

As I've considered this topic, I really appreciate seeing authenticity as a practice, a practice where we choose truth over performance. A process where we progressively work at aligning our words, actions, choices, decisions with our actual core values and our actual inner experience and who we really are. It helps me to think about it as this process of unlearning

Ep #192: Where Authenticity Begins: Inside You

the habit of pretending, conforming, and performing solely to fit in or solely to gain approval from others at the expense of our own values.

So consider, what in your life might shift if you practice more authenticity, more honesty, and less polished performance? Now, the main thing that's really helped me as I reflected on this was to consider authenticity with myself distinct from authenticity in my relationships and how I showed up in the world. Now, most of the time, before you can show up real with the world and people, you have to be able to show up real with yourself. Internal authenticity comes first. And it downstream makes everything else from your relationships to leadership to family life flow more easily.

Now, sometimes this internal authenticity can flow when you have been with a trusted person who facilitates this inner sense of belonging for yourself. But even in that case, the ideas for internal authenticity are still applicable compared to how you show up globally with the public. So when I think about authenticity with myself, it means knowing myself, being honest about what I'm feeling. And I found that if you've spent decades where you're not quite aware of your own internal experience, maybe you've compartmentalized things just to survive or you've avoided messy emotions because you didn't know what to do with them, you might not know yourself very well.

And a natural consequence of that is being accidentally less authentic, simply because you're internally out of alignment and you're not even aware that's the case. And this is extremely common.

The way I see this show up in my clients is they will say things like they don't even know themselves anymore. They might not be 100% clear on what they like, what their preferences are, what their dreams are. They might wonder who the real them is or wonder how it is that they blinked and they went from being 20 years old to 40 years old, or how they landed in this particular job doing this particular thing.

They might notice this internal nagging feeling of an incongruence where much of the things that they worked so hard for seem to just not make any

Ep #192: Where Authenticity Begins: Inside You

sense. Or they have a sense that something's missing, something is off, but they can't quite put their finger on it or name it. Or maybe they notice that they are extra reactive or irritable, or they feel much more bothered than makes sense for the situation, particularly when it comes to things that involve mystery or unpredictability or uncertainty. And these types of things, they can be signals that there's a mismatch between the way you're living and the values that you're serving with your actions in contrast to what actually matters most to you.

And if this is you, this is not a problem. It's not a sign that you've screwed up or you've lost years of your life. It's just a signal to evaluate what's in the way of being authentic on the inside. Once there's clarity with internal authenticity, you feel like you know and understand yourself. And this isn't to say that there aren't infinite fascinating things still to learn, but you have a good solid sense of who you are and what matters to you. And whether you're externally expressing this or not, it's not so murky on the inside.

So today I want to invite you to explore your internal authenticity. And in a future episode, we'll get into the ways authenticity looks externally as it pertains to relationships, your professional roles, and boundaries.

So internal authenticity is a state where you are aware of and honest about your values, your feelings, your thoughts, your beliefs, and your contradictions. So how do you do this?

Internal authenticity requires a curiosity about yourself and a commitment to paying close attention to what's really present for you. Now, most of us were never taught this or given tools for how to do this, but it's really not very hard to learn. There's something important about the awareness I'm talking about that I want to really emphasize. The type of awareness that can lead to internal authenticity must include awareness of any tendencies you have to criticize yourself or tendencies to skirt away from things you find uncomfortable or that you don't like about yourself. And this is a bit advanced.

Ep #192: Where Authenticity Begins: Inside You

For me, it means I have to really be onto myself when it comes to stealthy things like self-judgment, which for me can sound just like, ah, what's my problem? And I have to be aware of times where I'm veering away from my to-do list and starting to do maybe less critically important things. And what this looks like for me is, say I've got something that I'm worried about doing because it feels a little uncomfortable or feels a little bit risky. One thing that I will sort of subconsciously do is I will look at the thing on the list, and then conveniently, I will realize that I need to go to the restroom or I'm thirsty. Or all of a sudden, I will be wondering, did I reply to that email from the other day? And I'll open my phone, and I'll scroll my inbox. And then an hour later, I will have avoided that less desirable thing, but I won't even realize that I sidestepped it.

So the route to being more authentic includes being aware of things that you might easily overlook, particularly criticism and sidestepping things or avoiding things. And this is built upon a foundation of being curious and really committed to comprehensive awareness. I think of it as a practice of paying attention to thinking, feelings, impulses, actions, struggles, interpretations, and conclusions.

Now, for most of us, this kind of awareness is not something that comes naturally, but I want to emphasize it is simply a skill you can learn and that you can practice it. So now let's move from these concepts into a tangible practice. The best way to start exploring and building internal authenticity is to ask yourself simple but powerful questions and then answer them.

So I'm going to give you some prompts that you can use, and you can use these just to think, you can use them as prompts for meditation, or if you like to write like I do, you can use them as questions that you write down and then you answer in your journal.

So for awareness of your thoughts, what are the recurring thoughts that run in the background of my day? When I make a mistake, what's the very first thought I have about myself? Do I notice any mental scripts that I replay often? For awareness of feelings, what emotions do I let myself feel the most easily, and which ones do I push away? When I'm uncomfortable, do I

Ep #192: Where Authenticity Begins: Inside You

distract? Do I try to numb? Do I overanalyze or overexplain instead of letting myself feel? If I pause right now, what do I actually feel in my heart, in my body, in my mind?

For awareness of impulses and actions, when I feel stressed, what is my go-to impulse, even if I don't act on it? What automatic habits do I notice when I'm bored, anxious, or tired? How do I usually respond to discomfort with action, avoidance, or some version of shutting down?

Now for awareness of inaction. What am I procrastinating or staying silent about? And what am I telling myself about why I'm doing that? What have I wanted to do or say but haven't? What am I not doing that I know matters deeply to me? For awareness of beliefs and the natural conclusions and interpretations that come really easily to you, what beliefs about myself feel so true that it wouldn't occur to me to question them? Is there a particular story I tell myself about why I am the way I am? What conclusions do I jump to when something doesn't go my way? How do I most commonly interpret other people's tone, silence, or disagreement?

And then here are a few prompts to pull everything together. If I were to be completely honest with myself, what would I admit right now? What am I scared to say? What feels incongruent between who I am inside and how I'm living day to day? And the last one, what's the cost of not being honest with myself?

So with these prompts, you can take some of these ideas and explore your own system. So today we've kind of skimmed the surface of how to start developing internal authenticity and how to start being more honest about what you feel and think and believe and want, so that you can feel like you're coming home to yourself and like you're being really real with who you are internally.

Now, keep in mind, increasing internal authenticity, it's not about perfection. There's not a perfect way or one way to do this. It's simply about practicing awareness, practicing honesty, and being really mindful of criticism and avoidance. If you can cultivate this internal belonging, showing up

Ep #192: Where Authenticity Begins: Inside You

authentically in the world then becomes so much more natural. And in a future episode, we'll take this foundation of internal authenticity and expand it outward and explore how authenticity can look in your relationships, your work, your boundaries, your goals, your family life.

And if you want to keep reflecting on these ideas between episodes, I want to invite you to join the email list. You can go to habitsonpurpose.com and you'll see a little join the email list for getting the newsletters that I send out. And these are where I will share with you extra tools, offer extra prompts and questions, and give you some stories that you might not hear elsewhere.

So if you enjoyed this episode, please join the email list. And if you feel so moved to share this episode with a friend or leave a rating or review, that would be amazing. I hope this was really valuable for you, and I look forward to talking to you next week.

Thanks for listening to *Habits On Purpose*. If you want more information on Kristi Angevine or the resources from the podcast, visit HabitsOnPurpose.com. Tune in next week for another episode.