



The Coach's Time Out

with Shandel Slaten



THE NYC ADVENTURE... Catch some cool pics and the detailed story at <http://home.earthlink.net/~shandel/> - if you would rather have it in a word document - just e me!

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I - Huddle Up

Last month I had the privilege of spending two weeks listening to the people of New York City. My personal story has been recorded as noted above, but for this month's newsletter I want to share a few lessons learned on authenticity. While in New York, I talked to hundreds of people, but the group that impacted me the most, and consequently I was able to impact, were those individuals who were real, honest, and open from their heart. Conversely, I also met people who were unable to be honest with themselves or me about what was going on inside them. For example, I had a lively exchange with Jim about the Yankees and M's. As we connected, he shared the horrific facts about his 9-11 experience. However, when it got down to "how are you really doing," all I got was a nearly convincing "fine" and a charming persona of the "I've dealt with it" attitude. Yet, all I could see was a hurting, insecure man struggling to suppress his feelings. He was like a person trying to hold a beach ball under the water. Envisioning the energy and strength needed to wrestle with that ball, not to mention the force and unpredictability when the ball finally does escape the grasp, I found myself sadly walking away from this man. Cringing at the thought of how it will manifest itself "this time" I wondered, will it be anger, alcohol, drugs, affairs, divorce, adrenaline rush, or just drowning himself in more work?

It is one thing to be in shock feeling numb after a disaster, but it is quite another to habitually wear the mask of a "self-reliant" person, one who has it "all together." Take a moment and think about the types of people in your life. Isn't it a breath of fresh air, and truly rewarding, to associate with an authentic person? When others are real with me, I can lay down my guard and be real with them too. So then, what does it mean to be authentic?

First, an example of what it is to be inauthentic. While on the streets of NYC, my traveling buddy bought a darling purse with an engraved silver label reading, "PRADA - Made in Italy." Such a steal at only \$22! Are you clueing in? That's what it said on the outside, but on the inside a tag stated clearly and boldly, "Made in China." Of course, the fake branding and imitation leather didn't fool her, because she looked inside and examined it. But hey, as long as she keeps her purse neatly tucked under her arm, and people remain at a safe distance, no one will know it's a plastic counterfeit. *

Being authentic means that you are what you claim to be. Authenticity is who you really are. Your persona is the person you want others to think you are. Ahhh, we think that if we are neatly tucked away and safely distanced from others, no one will know that our persona is only a cover for the unmet needs and insecurities held inside. This helps explain our lack of intimacy, and our internal longing for a connection with others that is never quite satisfied. With one arm we are holding the ball under water, and with the other we keep people at arms length to ensure our image is never questioned or examined. Our persona reinforces the belief that if no one gets close then we won't be found out and the crowds will keep "ooing" and "aahing" at the successful person we project.

Let's come up for air. Okay maybe you will just keep faking the world out - it has gotten you this far hasn't it? Well, has it? Let's return to the purse theme. While in Hong Kong last February, I bought a cool knock-off Guess purse for \$20 and loved it...for about 2 weeks. However, by Easter, the zipper broke, the lining detached and ripped out, ultimately the purse was basically

useless except for acting as a constant irritation to me! I could have continued to use it as it was perfect on the outside, but every time I reached inside for any useful contents, I'd be irritated, inconvenience and burdened. The point being that fake purses, like fake people, don't last. Fake people may "survive" well, and fake people may even "cope" well - but they don't "live" well because imitation stuff doesn't last - it's not meant to.

Just like authentic items cost more at the time of the initial investment, becoming an authentic person initially requires a greater psychological investment as well. Admitting and abandoning your lifelong "shtick" or persona is hard, especially when you must replace the falseness with honesty, integrity, and sincerity. However, becoming authentic is invaluable. Aligning your life so that the person you portray to others really is the person who you are on the inside is worth the initial costs related to abandoning the comfort of living within your persona.

Over 2 years ago, my friend gave me a \$300 leather purse. While it was initially a costly purchase, it looks as good today as the day she gave it to me (minus the nail polish stain.) Authenticity remains while false imitations become useless, leaving you only with regret and wasted time. So what is keeping you from being the person you really are? Are you holding your insecurities under the surface like a beach ball? Are you settling for "coping" as an imitation because you are fearful to open up and see what's really inside? I have good news; you can be real and be who you were created to be. It is a choice and a process.

Usually, I give you your coaching challenge and leave you to think. However, this subject so energizes me that I am inviting you to become a part of my New Year's campaign - BE YOU IN 2002. Join me in the journey toward authenticity this year. Find someone, or a group of supportive people, to discuss this with, and work on just one area in your life that is blocking you from being the true you. If you want to jumpstart this process, you are invited to join me as I am assembling two to three "BE YOU IN 2002" teams this winter. Currently, we have 3 spaces left in the first team made up of a great mix of business owners/entrepreneurs and professionals - there is room for homemakers or students to jump in as well. Childcare will be available as needed. Alternatively, there will be a teleclass where you can call in from wherever you are and join the call with 8 others who want to embrace the challenge to BE YOU IN 2002. See below for more detail. If you've been considering hiring a personal coach, I am offering one free session this month to anyone who wants to map out a strategy to achieve your business/personal goals. If you're serious, ready, willing, and able to change, please contact me for your Thanksgiving present.

*By the way, my friend said the silver Prada tag fell off yesterday - how ironic.

II - Pep Talk - quotes on authenticity

There are three core qualities to leadership: authenticity, self-expression, and value creation. "Authenticity" refers to the link between the inner and outer person. Truly authentic leaders are open both to their gifts and to their undeveloped qualities. People who understand who they are tend to have a more powerful voice—and to make a more profound contribution to an enterprise. ~ Kevin Cashman, "How to be a Real Leader" in Fast Company

Great impressions can be made from a distance, but reality can only be tested up close. ~ Howard G. Hendricks

The unexamined life is not worth living. ~ Plato

Adolescence is when girls experience social pressure to put aside their authentic selves and to display only a small portion of their gifts. ~ Mary Pipher

The more authentic you are, the more you tend to let go of trying hard. ~ David Burnet

III - Next Play

Upcoming events.

Please feel free to email ss@truelifecoaching.com for more information.

BE YOU IN 2002 - As stated above, BE YOU will consist of small group teams that will meet every other week for three months with the goal of authenticity. This is not group therapy, so don't come ready to complain. Instead, come ready to share, learn, and change as you remove the obstacles that imprison you. I am really serious about this, and I am passionate about seeing people be WHO they want to be. Like the movie character, Stuart Smalley said, "Face it, trace it, and erase it." So if you're ready, willing, and able to join this team, but scared to death to do it - this is for you. If you're ready to BE YOU, email me to sign-up and get the details on cost, time, day, and location.

BE YOU TELECLASS - Same as above but with a telecasts you can call in from wherever you are to join the team. It works really well and once you do the telecasts one time you'll be hooked - it's great and its \$50 cheaper! You will join the call with 8 others who want to embrace the challenge to BE YOU IN 2002 from all over the country.

Free classes

Holiday Blues – Are the holidays with your family typically a nightmare? Aiming to cut your co-dependency in half? Are you facing a particularly sad time this holiday season? Consider joining this free telecasts where we will discuss a few strategies on how to survive, and perhaps even rise above the family chaos. Arm yourself with a few communication techniques and waltz into the season with confidence and joyfulness.

Women's Study in Seattle – meets every 2nd and 4th Tuesday Night of the month. Currently, we are studying the life of Ruth. This is free and open to those ladies in their 20's and 30's living in the Seattle area.

On 3 - Ready...1,2,3 - BREAK

Thank you for taking the time to read this sixth edition of TIME OUT. I truly appreciate you forwarding this newsletter to those whom may find it beneficial. Once again, if they desire to subscribe, they can send a blank email to ss@truelifecoaching.com with the word SUBSCRIBE or "I'm in".

Life's a blast - go for the 2 points!

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