

happened to the hopes and dreams you had about life when you were a child? Where did you hide your sense of wonder and awe at the magnificence of life? Whatever your answer to these questions, if wonder and hope and awe and delight are no longer part of your life, go find them!

2. Trying to be like someone else, instead of being you. Developmentally there's a healthy stage of adolescence when you adopt the mannerisms, behaviors and norms of your peer group. You remember that time, don't you? For many it was a painful and awkward period of trying desperately to fit in. After that period, you're supposed to move on to a lifelong journey of individuation--a self-discovery of your unique qualities, talents and values. Most people I know still have a few places in their lives where they know they're trying to "fit in" with others, rather than honoring their unique direction. What's so interesting to me is that most of us are irresistibly attracted to people who decide to be different and original. Wouldn't it be an amazing world if we all decided to do that?

3. Lying and Self-Deception. I don't know anyone who's ever taken a class called "How To Lie and Effectively Deceive Everyone--Even Yourself!" So how did we all get so good at it? The antidote for this common sell out is a huge dose of self-confidence, a recognition of the awesome power we each have to effect change in the world, and an awareness of the beauty and divinity of our authentic selves. Once you see the real truth of who you are and what you are capable of accomplishing, lying becomes a second-rate replacement for authenticity.

4. Ignoring our bodies. The human body is one of the most incredible information and feedback systems ever devised. Most of us completely ignore the warning signs, both physical and emotional, we get from our physical being. We regularly override that information with our cognitive ability to rationalize, along with the many addictive behaviors that distract us from our feelings, our intuition and our physical health. Hey, if you mess up your body, where will you live?

5. Looking for success "out there." You will never enjoy any deep, lasting success in the physical world without a corresponding inner sense of satisfaction and success. Each of us knows people of seeming wealth and fame who are personally miserable. What's the point of doing it that way? Deep and lasting success is truly an inside job. If you're looking for success and satisfaction "out there," remember what Gertrude Stein said: "There is no there, there."

6. Taking care of others without taking care of yourself. I'm not suggesting that serving others, being generous and goodhearted isn't wonderful--it is! But we sometimes think that by giving to others, especially when there's a self-sacrifice, that we're helping them, when we're not. I see too many people helping from a sense of obligation (the "should" crowd), from a sense of barter (I'll help you and then I expect you'll help me), or from a sense of low self-worth (your needs are more important than mine). If we always considered our own well-being to be important, along with our desire to help others, we'd be a lot further along at really caring for each other.

7. Going for the money.

Money isn't good or bad, but people who are only out for financial gain miss a tremendous amount of life's true riches. Money is definitely a useful resource, but it's always a means to an end, not an end in itself. When we forget our reasons for working, when we forget the meaning, the pleasure and the joy we get from our work, we really lose much more than money could ever buy.

8. Respecting fear more than your inherent power or your desire. Marianne Williamson's quote about "Our Deepest Fear" captures this brilliantly. I've included a copy below. Any time we give fear more power than our ability to effect change, I believe we deny the reality of who we are and what we're capable of achieving. Why would you ever want to do that?

9. Tolerating discomfort to avoid the risk of change. Change can be scary and the unknown is, well...unknown. What most people don't realize is the exorbitant cost of tolerating things. Once you realize that every moment of your life involves risk and change (whether you like it or not), making conscious, intentional changes becomes easier. Tolerating what doesn't work is a prescription for a life of compromise, resentment and disappointment. Discomfort is usually a clear signal that you need to change something. Use your discomfort as a guide to the changes you need to make to have the life you really want.

10. Accepting "small talk" instead of taking opportunities to have deeper, more intimate conversations. How often do you get to have real, life-changing, heart-to-heart conversations? If your answer is "not often," you're missing out on a golden opportunity. I'm not just talking about having these kinds of conversations with your therapist, your coach, or your spouse. I'm talking about having important conversations whenever the opportunity arises. Why would you ever talk about the weather when you could touch someone's heart? Meaningful conversations can replace BS with depth and important opportunities for personal change and transformation.

THE ALTERNATIVE TO SELLING OUT is to make a powerful, personal decision to fill your life with your authentic presence. Even though this is not an easy decision to make consistently, when we do make it and we don't sell out, there is a natural ease, grace and power that we reclaim. As we begin the process of celebrating our uniqueness and our authentic direction, we become far more attractive, confident and effective in life. The struggle to succeed then becomes secondary to the challenge of remaining true to ourselves.

Ultimately, as we remain true to ourselves, success "discovers us" and we find ourselves enjoying life in a profound and deeply satisfying way.

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4) QUOTE: Our Greatest Fear
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Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.
Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.
It is our Light, not our Darkness, that most frightens us.
We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented,
fabulous?
Actually, who are you NOT to be?

You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the World.

There is nothing enlightening about shrinking so that other people won't feel unsure around you.

We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us.

It is not just in some of us; it is in everyone.

As we let our own Light shine; we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same.

As we are liberated from our own fear; our presence automatically liberates others.

--Marianne Williamson

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5) Action Steps
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--Set your watch or PDA to beep once an hour. Check in with yourself to see if you are doing what you truly want to be doing. If not, figure out why and check to be sure it's a good enough reason for you to be denying your own desire.

--Pay close attention to your physical information system--your body. Rather than putting up with pain or discomfort, use it as a signal to take corrective action.

--If you don't have the kind of support network you need to discover and live an authentic life, then seek the help/support of a therapist, a coach, or counselor to assist you in making changes.

--Notice peak experiences in your work and life. See if you can determine what you did differently to place yourself in that FLOW experience. Peak experiences and flow are usually good indicators of your authentic presence.

--Select a few people you know who exhibit traits of authenticity, personal courage, and self determination and talk with them about how they developed those traits. Believe me, very few of us come to a place of authentic presence without some personal struggle.

--Start to listen to people using your whole body, rather than just your ears. Use the magnificent intelligence of your body to give you clues about your own reaction to what you hear. Listen to your gut as well as your ears. Listen to your own sense of comfort when you hear someone speak. Listen to what you're aware of as you walk into a room. Stop denying the information you get, especially what's not conveyed in the words you hear.

--If you're a business leader with an interest in learning more about "Whole Body Listening" or any of the other issues/tips in this month's e-zine, let us know. We'll be holding a series of teleclasses and live workshops on these topics in the near future and will notify you of the content and schedule as soon as we've set the dates.

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