

Idea Sheet

When we look at the questions in the text above, we must dig deep into ourselves to uncover our truths and then grow from them. The exercises may be a little bit uncomfortable but you can do this!

Read each question and the following context and then get jump into the exercises!

Let your voice be heard!

“Be willing to be uncomfortable. Be comfortable being uncomfortable. It may get tough, but it's a small price to pay for living a dream.”

-Peter McWilliams

1. What does your voice sound like?

In today's digital age it is possible to not only record our voice, but to video tape yourself. Usually when the camera goes on, though, we change. Take out your smartphone, or have a trusted friend do it. (You will need this trusted friend later also, keep them on hand!)

Begin a conversation, let the smart phone roll on video mode and see if you can capture your voice and your style. That's right! You, on camera.

What did you see?

How does your face move or look as you talk?
(Is your forehead twisted up? what are your eyes doing?)

What did you hear?

What did you like? (there has to be something here!)

Play with this and record different ways of speaking, we will use this video selfie again, keep the camera close by.

I know this feels strange and sort of self-centered. Hang in there, this exercise will reveal so much to you.

2. Does it portray who you are?

Now that you have your selfie speaking. Does the outcome match who you are? Does what you see on the screen show you? Ask your trusted friend. Ask people around you to give you (soft) feedback about your voice, your tone, the speed of your speech. We are usually the same.

Does the feedback work for you? Is there something you are hearing that does not feel good or right?

Have courage with this exercise and play a bit with it. Resist the “I am who I am” statement. You are committed to having your MOST

LIFE, perhaps there is something in your voice or speech patterns that can empower you MORE! You want to make a statement in the world, you need a voice that helps you do so!

I hear and am told the following in my speech patterns:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Be careful not to be overly sensitive here. Listen, as this is one of life's greatest gifts. You can own more settings in your voice, but perhaps no one mentioned this to you before now.

Thank every and ANYONE who provides you feedback. They are messengers for you in your quest to be better and do better.

A fun exercise would be to video yourself EXAGGERATING the feedback. If someone says, "you have a high pitched voice and after awhile, I can't really listen to what you are saying."

Well, video yourself playing that up! Exaggerate the pitch and spend 30-45 seconds giving it your all. You will then feel it more and know it better. So, when you are getting a bit high in your pitch, you will be able to make a correction. Try it!!

3. Does your voice have one setting?

Just like every outfit you wear doesn't fit each occasion, so too with your voice. You may have one setting on your voice. You need to have many settings and many tonalities. You want to project feelings and emotional power in your voice. The connections we get with others start with our voice. There are many non-verbal gestures as well that impact how you connect and how people hear you. Play around with your voice a bit.

1. How does your voice change when you greet someone?

2. How does your voice change when you are happy?

3. How does your voice change when you are sad?

4. How does your voice change when you are deep in thought?

There are numerous resources on body language and use of your face and body to communicate. For purposes of this section. Make some notes about your "habits" in the regard and create a self-awareness.

If you want more on this topic and to dive in a bit, look up resources for Neuro-linguistic Programming (NLP). This is a fascinating study into, not only how WE communicate, but how our speech patterns, use of key words (I feel versus I think) and the use of our body and face to express ourselves.

Ask that trusted friend to give you some feedback on your face, eyes and body while you speak.

Helpful tips:

1. When speaking to someone, mimic their body position. Just, gradually assume the EXACT same body position they have. Legs crossed? which one over which one? Arms open or closed? Body leaning forward or back? Mimic this and you will instantly connect better with that person.
2. Listen to the words another person uses in their language patterns. Do they say, “you know what I mean?” do they say, “I feel...” OR “I think...”
If they use thinking as an introducing word, don't respond back with, well I FEEL... Respond back with “I THINK...” If you use the same key words and phrases as the person you are communicating with you will be surprised at the level of connection you will get.

Again, read and study more with NLP.

4. Can you alter your speaking patterns to meet the situation?

As above we started to talk about altering your speaking to meet the “audiences” style. So we can alter our speaking/ communication style to meet another's, but we can also alter our speaking to meet a situation.

Obviously, if we are in a larger room we need to speak up. But how about if we are talking about an idea for the first time? We might need to speak slowly, have many pauses, look at who we are speaking to and observe their non-verbal reactions.

Speed up our speaking, slow it down, get more excited, lose some excitement. Your voice and speaking is just like the volume on a television (or computer). You can adjust the volume, but also the

bass, treble and which speakers it comes out of. Adjust your style when it is called for. You might notice amazing results.

If you are speaking to someone who has a slower speaking pattern, match it. If you are someone who always speaks fast and high energy, consider that you may be shutting people down without realizing it. Not everyone wants to listen to hyper excitement. Maybe you tend to get monotone?

Again, ask your trusted friend and work with your video selfie to assess your natural style and to play with other styles.

5. Are you sure about that?

You may have not liked everything that you heard or saw about your speaking.

What preconceived ideas were broken down?

What new ideas about your approach and style have you learned?

What new practices will you begin?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Start using these valuable self-awareness tools to enhance your connections to others.

That smartphone is your best friend when it comes to enhancing how you present yourself to the world.

If you have an important talk/ speech to give, practice with your phone. The mirror has become obsolete, on the phone you can play back and repeat and practice and try things.

HAVE FUN!!

Life is to enjoy and have fun, this may have been a bit intense, relax, drink water, go for a walk. Talk to yourself! You want to be heard!