



Happy Tuesday!

Some people think authenticity means saying whatever comes to mind.

That is not authenticity.

That is poor impulse control with a microphone.

Authenticity is not about being loud, dramatic, unfiltered, or telling all your business. It is not walking into every room saying, “Well, this is just who I am,” while everybody else starts checking for the exits.

Authenticity has responsibility attached to it.

It is about alignment.

It is the connection between who you are, what you believe, what you say, and how you actually show up.

And in leadership, that matters more than we like to admit.

A Leadership Thought

People can feel when a leader is performing.

They may not call it that. They may not say it in the meeting. They may not put it in the employee engagement survey using those exact words.

But they know.

They know when the words sound polished, but the behavior does not match.

They know when a leader says, “My door is always open,” but every conversation feels rushed, defensive, or inconvenient.

They know when someone says they value feedback but only welcomes praise.

They know when a leader is trying to sound confident but is actually avoiding clarity.

They know when decisions are being delayed because someone does not want to disappoint anyone.

They know.

And once people start sensing a gap between what is said and what is lived, trust begins to crack.

Not always loudly.

Sometimes trust leaves quietly.

It stops speaking up.

It stops offering ideas.

It stops asking hard questions.

It stops believing the message.

That is why authentic leadership is not about being perfect. Thank goodness, because none of us would qualify.

Authentic leadership is about being honest, consistent, grounded, and clear.

It is not performance.

It is practice.

From the Book

In Show Up Like You Mean It, I talk about authenticity as something deeper than image.

It is not just how people see you.

*It is how honestly you are willing to **see yourself**.*

*Chapter 1, **Unapologetically Me**, is about owning who you are without constantly editing yourself to make other people comfortable.*

*Chapter 2, **Leading with Authenticity**, moves that same idea into leadership.*

Because let's be honest: it is one thing to say, “I want to be authentic.” It is another thing to lead that way when there are deadlines, politics, expectations, personalities, pressure, and somebody in the meeting doing the absolute most before 9:00 a.m.

Authenticity gets tested in real life.

- It gets tested when you need to give feedback.*
- It gets tested when you need to say, “I don't know yet.”*
- It gets tested when you need to apologize.*
- It gets tested when you need to make a decision that is right, but not popular.*
- It gets tested when you realize the version of you that people are applauding is not the version of you that is aligned.*

That is where the work begins.

The Difference Between Performing and Leading

Performing says:

“Let me look like I have it all together.”

Leading says:

“Let me be clear, honest, and responsible with what I know.”

Performing says:

“Let me keep everyone comfortable.”

Leading says:

“Let me tell the truth with care.”

Performing says:

“Let me avoid this conversation so nobody gets upset.”

Leading says:

“Let me address this before silence creates more confusion.”

Performing says:

“Let me be who they expect.”

Leading says:

“Let me be who this moment requires.”

That is a very different kind of leadership.

And it requires emotional intelligence.

Because authenticity without self-awareness can become chaos.

Authenticity without empathy can cause harm.

Authenticity without discipline can become an excuse.

But authenticity with emotional intelligence?

That becomes trust.

That becomes clarity.

That becomes leadership that people can actually follow.

This Week's Reflection

This week, I want you to sit with this question:

Where am I performing instead of leading?

- *Maybe you are performing with confidence when you really need to ask for support.*
- *Maybe you are performing peace while avoiding a hard conversation.*
- *Maybe you are performing busyness because stillness would force you to deal with what is not working.*
- *Maybe you are performing agreement because saying what you really think feels risky.*
- *Maybe you are performing strength when what you actually need is rest.*

No judgment.

Just notice it.

Because awareness is where alignment begins.

If this resonates, hit reply and tell me where you've noticed yourself performing instead of leading. I read the responses, and I'd love to hear what this brings up for you.

Action Step

Choose one area this week where you can stop performing and start aligning.

That may sound like:

- *"I need more time to think about this."*
- *"I don't have the full answer yet, but here is what I do know."*
- *"I should have communicated that more clearly."*
- *"I need to revisit that decision."*
- *"I said yes too quickly."*
- *"I want to have an honest conversation about what is not working."*

That is authentic leadership.

Not dramatic.

Not performative.

Not perfect.

Just honest, responsible, and grounded.

Conversations I'm Having

Over the past few months, I have had the opportunity to join several podcast conversations about leadership, authenticity, communication, and what it means to show up like you mean it.

I will be sharing more of those conversations over the next few weeks because they connect directly to the work I care about: helping people lead with more clarity, courage, and self-awareness.

This week's reminder from those conversations:

Your voice matters, but so does your alignment.

I will be adding more of these interviews to my YouTube page and sharing clips soon. Stay tuned — because apparently I had quite a bit to say. Shocking, I know.

Visual Reminder



Post-launch reflection in Napa — thinking about the difference between performing confidence and leading from alignment.

Book Note

If this message is speaking to you, Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 of Show Up Like You Mean It: Living, Leading, and Speaking Your Truth are a good place to spend some time this week.

Don't just read them.

Ask yourself where you are editing, shrinking, performing, or leading from expectation instead of alignment.

That is the work.

Show up. Do you.

With appreciation,
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"Everything Begins and Ends with Communication."

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