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Keep Grounded in Your Authentic Nature

As we're moving into this segment, which is all about intuition, emotion, and some valuable tools to keep you grounded in your authentic nature, I hope you've completed and implemented some of the steps we've discussed in previous weeks:

- Maintaining supportive, self-encouraging thought patterns
- Me Now exercise, a Perfect Day in the Life of Your Authentic Self
- Identifying some authentic dreams, desired changes
- Commitment to staying in the thriving zone
- Making and honoring commitments to your support team, WW circle

Remember the story about the guy who stole my billfold from my purse when I went into the back room of the store against my better judgment? That was my Inner Voice/Intuitive Nature (IVIN) at work. Don't ignore yours like I did that day; rather honor the IVIN, or what Martha Beck calls the "essential self" vs. the "social self."

Allow me to give you an example from Martha's book, **FINDING YOUR OWN NORTH STAR**, Three Rivers Press, NY 2001.

Melvin worked as a middle manager at IBM, and a miserable middle manager Melvin made. If clinical depression had a phone voice, it would sound just like Melvin's did the morning he called me to see if I could take him on as a client. He'd been feeling sort of flat and listless for a while, he said—no big deal, just the past couple of decades. Lately, things had reached the point where Melvin's work performance and marriage were both showing signs of strain. He thought the problem might be his job, and for the past month or two he'd been surreptitiously checking upscale want ads and sending his resume to friends at other companies. He'd gotten a few nibbles, but nothing that really interested him. Melvin said all this in dull but fluent Executese, rich in words like 'incentivize' and 'satisfice'.

I decided to give Melvin the little verbal phone quiz I sometimes use to evaluate potential clients before they spend time and money in my office. I asked him his age (forty-five), his marital status (separated, no children), and job history (a Big Blue man since the day he left college.) Then we got to the questions that really interest me.

“So, Melvin,” I said. “When you were a little kid, did you have an imaginary friend?”

“Excuse me?” said Melvin.

I repeated the question.

“I really don’t remember,” said Melvin stiffly.

“Okay,” I said. “Is there anything you do regularly that makes you forget what time it is?”

“Time?” Melvin echoed.

“Yes,” I said, “do you ever look up from something you’re doing to find that hours and hours have gone by without your noticing?”

“Wait,” said Melvin. “I have to write this down.”

“No, no,” I said, “you really don’t. Do you laugh more in some situations than in others?”

“Listen,” said Melvin tensely, “I didn’t know I was going to have to answer these kinds of questions. I thought you could tell me a little about midcareer job changes, that’s all. I’ve had no time to prepare.”

I had a mental image of Melvin calling in the marketing department to measure his laughter rates and interview family members about his favorite childhood fantasies. “Melvin,” I said, “relax. I don’t grade on a curve. Just tell me everything you can remember about the best meal you ever had in your life.”

There was a very long silence. Then he said, “I’m sorry, but I’ll have to put together some data and get back to you on these questions. Will next week be soon enough?”

I never heard from Melvin again.

Actually, I never heard from Melvin in the first place—at least not all of him. As a matter of fact, I don't think Melvin had ever heard from all of Melvin. The conversation I had was with Melvin's "social self," the part of him that had learned to value the things that were valued by the people around him. This "social self" couldn't tell me what Melvin loved, enjoyed, or wanted, because it literally didn't know. Those facts did not fall in its area of experience, let alone expertise. It didn't remember Melvin's preferences or his childhood, because it had spent years telling him to ignore what he preferred and stop acting like a child.

*There was, of course, a part of Melvin that knew the answer to every question I'd asked him. I call this the "essential self." –Martha Beck, **FINDING YOUR OWN NORTH STAR***

There are three videos in this week's segment.

- 1) Ideas and tools to help keep you in touch with your IVIN and emotions.
- 2) How to start a guided writing practice using Sara Wiseman's **Writing the Divine**.
- 3) Utilizing the Ho'oponopono Prayer to incorporate forgiveness and conflict reduction into your authentic life.

The Ho'oponopono Prayer:

I love you

I am sorry

Please forgive me

Thank you

Your action steps:

-If you haven't already, find a walking route and begin a regular Godwalk practice. Commit to this practice for at least a month, minimum two or three days a week. And then don't ever stop! 😊

-Consider incorporating some of the tools in the video to keep you in touch with your authentic nature / essential self.

-Consider starting a guided writing practice.

- Utilize the Ho'oponopono Prayer when you are feeling powerless, frustrated or in conflict.

Two corrections on videos:

*Kwan Yin, or Guanyin, Goddess of Compassion, is related with Buddhist spiritual traditions rather than Hindi.

*Corrie ten Boom's family housed Jews in the era of the Nazi Holocaust, in Amsterdam, Netherlands, not in Germany.