



Three Aspects to Confidence

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What makes someone confident? What do you see in someone when they seem confident? We all want confidence, but until we can articulate what it means to us, there's no path to getting it. Eleanor Roosevelt said, "No one can make you feel inferior without your consent." Your degree of confidence is within your control. Ultimately, confidence is the feeling that we believe in ourselves enough to be authentic.

There are three aspects to confidence that create a cycle towards building more of it. Responsibility is about trusting ourselves to handle any situation we come across. Authenticity is about knowing who we are and being willing to operate in accordance with that. Consciousness is how we become more of who we are.

1. Responsibility

Responsibility, in this context, is self-trust. This is "the trait of being answerable to someone for something." In this case, I am talking about being answerable to yourself. Do you see yourself as being *able to respond* in any situation? No matter how scary, embarrassing, or difficult a situation in which you may find yourself, can you see yourself as capable of making it through?

You can increase your sense of responsibility by improving your relationship to yourself. This is the relationship upon which all others are founded. How much time do you spend honoring yourself? Enjoying yourself? Applauding, validating, and giving feedback to yourself? Start to think of your relationship with yourself as the most important relationship you can foster.

When you trust yourself to respond, you're more likely to actually respond as you said or thought you would. Then, others trust you more, and you trust in yourself more as a result. The next time around, you'll trust yourself even more, and the cycle continues to deepen and deepen.

2. Authenticity

Authenticity is about embracing who you already know you are. It builds on the sense that you trust yourself to respond, and informs *how* you respond.

The words *authenticity* and *author* have the same root. You are in the driver's seat, writing the script. You are the authority over yourself. When you abdicate your authority to someone else (your employer, spouse, spiritual community, etc.) you give up the authorship on your life.

Increase your ability to be authentic by noticing your own symptoms of in-authenticity. When are you not being yourself, and how do you know? What are the circumstances that create this? When you can identify how you tend to get to an inauthentic place, then you'll know how to prevent it in the future.

3. Consciousness

Consciousness is about becoming more of who you are. Become aware of why you operate the way that you do so that you can become a better (more whole) version of yourself.

If you stop to think about the people in your life whom you deeply admire, what is it about them that appeals to you? The qualities you describe are actually parts of yourself that you see in them. Think about it – if we took that same person and asked someone else they know to describe them, chances are their list would be different from yours. You are seeing parts of yourself in this person.

Now, maybe you didn't know that this quality about someone else that moved you was a part of yourself. When I first tried this exercise, I described my sister as "charming". When my coach told me that I was also charming, I wrinkled up my nose and dismissively said, "I am nowhere near as charming as her!"

The things you see in others which deeply affect you (positive or negative) are parts of your unconscious self that we project onto those other people. By reclaiming these qualities as parts of who you are, you raise your consciousness. Using the world as a mirror like this is a difficult and rewarding way to live. You deepen your relationship with yourself by being open to learning more about who you are.

"As you become more clear about who you really are, you'll be better able to decide what is best for you - the first time around." Oprah articulates here the benefit of being responsible, authentic, and conscious: more of your choices and actions will align with who you are, resulting in a more confident human experience.

Liz works with individuals and organizations in technical fields needing tailored leadership development that speaks their language. Liz has logged hundreds of hours coaching individuals from companies such as Jet Propulsion Laboratories, Google, HP, SETI, Lockheed Martin, VNUS and Sun Microsystems. Her background includes experience in adult education, team facilitation, and public speaking. She offers complimentary coaching consultations – call or email today to schedule yours.