

Exercise: Identifying Your Standards of Integrity

Have at least four clean pieces of paper handy. This process required you to be quiet and contemplative, going deep within yourself for the greatest accuracy. In doing so you are giving yourself the gift of discovering what empowers you. You will see the pattern of your potential.

You will need about forty minutes for this process. Doing it all at once is fine, or you can divide the time over two sessions of about 20 minutes each. Make sure you are not distracted during your work periods.

First, take out a clean piece of paper.

1. On the left side of the page list all of the people who have qualities you admire. Write their names, using the checklist below to spur your memory. Take your time and reach back into the past. The list of possibilities include:
 - Your family, such as your mother, father, sister, brother, aunt, uncle, grandfather, grandmother
 - School. Such as teachers, principals, janitors, and classmates
 - Religious teachers and leaders, ministers, priests, Sunday school teachers
 - Friends from school, work, home, social clubs, or any other source.
 - People in the healing professions, such as doctors, therapists, alternative-medicine professionals
 - Sports figures, whether from professional or armature sports and the Olympics.
 - World leaders, spiritual or political
 - People in the arts and entertainment industry, such as actors, directors, singers, dancers artists, musicians, and composers
 - Biblical figures, people important to your religion
 - Mythical characters, from Greek, Native American, East Indian, African, Egyptian, or other cultures' myths
 - Anyone you have ever read about, whether real or fictional
2. Survey your list. Look at each name, starting with the first and working down. On the right side of the paper, record the qualities or traits that you admire about the person. A quality is something that inspires you, such as loyal, intelligent, adventurous, courageous, creative, truthful, and so on. Go to the next person on the list. If that person shares qualities with the first, simply put a check mark next to that attribute. List any additional traits not found in the first person. As you proceed you will develop a list of qualities, with check marks that indicate when that quality was noted more than once.

Mother	Loyal ✓✓
Dad	Courageous ✓✓✓
Aunt Gloria	Truthful ✓✓
Uncle Arnold	Compassionate ✓✓
Father O'Rourke (priest)	Intelligent ✓
James Taylor	Musically talented ✓
Jack (my neighbor)	Friendly ✓✓✓✓
Buddha	Wise ✓✓

Bear in mind that your lists can be as long or as short as you like. However, give yourself enough time to compose an inventory that is as complete as possible. Remember, this process is vital to the rest of your work.

3. Now we are going to revisit your list of qualities. Take out a clean piece of paper. Starting from the top, look at each trait. Spend a few moments contemplating each attribute. Ask yourself:
 - Does reading this word, aloud or to myself, warm my heart, if only for a moment?
 - Do I like being in the presence of people who have this quality?

You could think of your heart area as a little lantern that lights up when it encounters certain traits. If that warmth, light, or sense of well-being is present, write that word on this new piece of paper.

Repeat this process until you have contemplated each word on your original list. You may find you have transferred all or just a few of them. Quantity is not important. What matters is that you are willing to see what touches your heart. If one or two other traits occur to you as you do this, write them down as well.

4. Take the new list and place it in front of you. Each trait has significance and meaning to you. That is because you possess the receptor site for it in your heart. If you didn't know what each quality meant; it would not have the power to evoke a response from you. To put this another way: If you see these qualities in others, and if your heart resonates with them, then they exist inside you. If not, you would not be able to see them in others.
5. Take this list and print it on two three-by-five inch cards. One will be for you and the other for your coach. At the top of this list, write: "These are my Standards of Integrity." At the bottom of the list write: "I know these are mine because I see them in others." Keep this card with you and look at it often. Many people have found it useful to laminate their lists.

What you have before you- the list of your Standards of Integrity - is the blueprint for your personal power. You possess the qualities you listed. They are part of your nature. You can't get ride of them no matter what you do.

What do you feel as you read the words you wrote on the list? This can be an emotional moment, as you begin to realize you really do possess these qualities. While you read these Standards of Integrity you will notice that you are describing yourself! You are listing precisely the traits people can or will see in you.

Take your integrity card with you and read it at least once a day for one week. Become familiar with your Standards of Integrity. Get used to the possibility that they really do describe your authentic nature. After a week, ask yourself if you have noticed any changes in your relationships with others. You may see a subtle shift in your behavior, mood and conversations.

Begin to notice: When you are aware of your Standards of Integrity, is it easier to communicate with others? Do you think before you speak? Do you let people 'in' a little closer? Observe yourself. If you do, you will be practicing a skill that is essential skill to your inner balance and sense of fulfillment.