

Is Donald Trump Authentic?

If you were to ask Mr Trump if he thinks he is authentic you would probably receive an overbearing response, such as; 'Of course, I am authentic.'

But to answer this question properly, we need to define what we actually mean by authentic.

This question completely captured my attention a few years ago, when authenticity was launched as one of the new company values at the organisation where I was working as the Chief Financial Officer. It was a global multi-national organisation, where I spent more than 16 years of my life, mostly as a senior executive board director. I was captivated and inspired by this new quest and the subsequent research into the topic, which I wrote a book about to define clearly for myself and other people interested in the topic about what authenticity truly meant. The result was an unexpected journey to the birth of the [Authenticity Power Model®](#) and my first published book, [The Authenticity Dilemma Resolved®](#).

The definition I concluded with was as follows. Authenticity *equals* consciousness *plus* connectedness (emotional and social intelligence) where consciousness and connectedness collide, and intuition and purpose-driven collaboration permeates what we do, everywhere, with everyone, all the time.

But what is consciousness? Consciousness is a deep understanding and awareness of ourselves; what drives us; what motivates us; and an understanding of our behaviours, thoughts, values and what is at our core. In other words, it is what defines us as a person. A part of understanding what is at our core is to understand our purpose and what makes our hearts sing. It appears that Mr Trump is doing what makes his heart sing. One example is his passion for dismantling Obamacare and making a difference to the US medical system.

Core to self-awareness and the understanding of our behaviours is to know when we are being triggered; meaning when we experience an emotional response to an external factor in our lives. For example, it appears that often Mr Trump is triggered by the media. The question is whether he recognises and identifies this trigger as his emotional response.

After many years in corporate life, I recognised that when we have repeated emotional responses to something or someone, it normally indicates that a personal value is being crossed or one of our limiting self-beliefs is showing up. We might not be aware of this happening. But if we trace the emotion back to the value or the limiting belief, it becomes more understandable. The question is, whether Mr Trump is self-aware enough to recognise when his buttons are being pushed?

The next part of the definition is connectedness, which is even more interesting in regard to Mr Trump. A prerequisite for connecting to other people, is to have a deep understanding of ourselves first. Without self-awareness, we cannot start the journey to have connected relationships or purpose-driven collaboration with other people. For deeper, meaningful relationships to occur several crucial ingredients need to be in place, including:

- trust fostered through an unconditional respect for difference;
- not being afraid to show vulnerability (after all, it is a sign of strength); and

- learning to suspend judgement of other people.

I am not quite sure that an unconditional respect for difference is being demonstrated by building a wall between the US and Mexico and using every opportunity possible to discredit the former US president in social media. I am on thin ice here, because I truly believe that deeper connected relationships are only forged when we learn to suspend judgement.

The last element of connectedness is purpose-driven collaboration. We are only able to create new purpose-driven relationships and partnerships once we are able to do away with ego-driven, competitive behaviour based on fear and limiting self-beliefs.

When we live a more connected and conscious life, we are able to unlock our authentic **POWER**, an acronym for:

- **P**resence;
- **O**vercoming fears;
- **W**hole integrated being;
- **E**ffortless flow; and
- **R**esonance.

I walk my talk and therefore, I suggest leaving the final assessment to answer this question to you, the reader. I have an opinion. However, I will focus on my own authentic growth journey, learning to suspend judgement and unconditionally respecting difference, when I believe there is injustice, unfairness or mistreatment involved.

If you are interested in taking your **Authenticity Pulse®** or attending a workshop to learn more, please visit the link below.

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