

## DARE TO TELL THE TRUTH

Do you speak your truth? Do you reveal your own authenticity easily by letting others see the true you, or do shrink back not wanting to speak up for fear of rejection or disapproval? Do you sometimes stretch the truth ever so slightly, believing that the “little white lies” do not matter, when in fact; they make you feel terrible afterwards?

Telling the truth can be scary whether you are being who you are or using your voice to communicate your needs or observations. But if you do not speak up, what is the consequence of your own internal falsehood? Does the seemingly inconsequential bargaining that internally takes place outweigh the hurtful voice of self-deception and dishonesty? When you go against yourself, your self-esteem starts to diminish. It is like playing a bargaining game by trying to make choices that will hopefully empower you, but if that becomes too scary, you then choose the path of least resistance that minimizes the pain and discomfort.

I remember playing the game, “Truth or Dare” as a teenager. A group of my friends would gather at the home of my childhood friend, Christine, and someone would suggest we play this game. Afraid of appearing foolish, I would anxiously ponder which choice to make as I paid close attention to the questions asked and dares made. I tried to figure out which one put me in the best light while creating the least amount of embarrassment. Afraid of what my friends would think, I usually chose the dare in lieu of not having to reveal anything too personal. I worried would they still like me; would I be accepted; would I stay in the inner circle? Truth or Dare? Doing the dare was sometimes the easier solution, but I later learned that telling the truth created the intimacy, which has allowed those same friendships to still exist today.

Most people try to be forthright, but sometimes the whole truth is not revealed for fear of being judged, fear of not wanting to hurt another person’s feelings or having to sit with the pain of shame for not being better, much less perfect. Daring to tell your truth frees you to live an authentic lifestyle without constrictions. Being honest about what is important to you and deciding how to reveal that to others is courageous, especially when they may not agree, endorse, approve or like it. But when you use your voice, it is a starting point for stronger relationships with yourself and others, or perhaps, a separation from those who do not know how to support you. By speaking YOUR truth, you sanction your own birthright to be happy and fulfilled based on how you want to impact the world around you. So start telling the whole truth about yourself. One of my first mentor coaches, the late Cheryl Glassner would often say, “Tell the truth, and tell it quickly.” I dare you to speak up now. Here’s why...

### TELLING THE TRUTH ...

- Validates who you are and what you want.
- Invites you to be open, honest and vulnerable.
- Honors you, honors others.
- Asks you to stand up for yourself, and others to do the same.
- Insists you stop pleasing others.
- Frees other people from choosing for you.
- Alleviates anxiety and stress.
- Brings in the heart, not just the head.
- Opens the door to hear your inner wisdom or intuition.
- Sets you free from regrets, old behaviors and past patterns.
- Dismisses shame, co-dependency and negative self-talk.
- Teaches discernment and how to ask for the right help from others.
- Provokes personal growth and transformation.
- Imbues vitality, energy and empowerment.
- Makes decisions and clarifies the next step you must take.
- Builds self-confidence and self-worth.
- Ignites authentic action, propelling you towards your real goals and desires.

A Russian proverb states, “The bitter truth is better than a sweet lie.” I believe the beauty in truth telling is that it allows dignity to be present through respect, honesty, and integrity—important qualities needed for true intimacy and authentic connection. I am not suggesting you give unsolicited opinions or cause harm with your language. Rather, I am an advocate of mastering discernment by looking inward at your intent, being thoughtful with your words and actions and understanding the impact you want to make on others. A former teacher used to say, “The truth is always good for you and the other (person).” Dare to share your truth with those around you today.

### A DARING COACHING EXERCISE AROUND TRUTH:

Give yourself permission to examine your life and your relationships. Do you tell the truth to yourself first and then others? Consider this, if you can’t trust yourself to make choices that are in your best interest, then who can you trust? So, let’s shoot straight, defy your doubts and construct bravery and courage.

1. Answer the following questions truthfully:
  - Are you who you want to be?
  - In what ways does your outward life align, or not, with your values?
  - Do your words and actions meet?
  - When do you allow yourself not to be your word? Are there any areas where “little white lies” or bargaining shows up?
  - Do you feel strong physically, emotionally and spiritually?
  - What needs are getting met? If some are not, what can you do to ensure that they do?
  - What is kindness? To others, and to yourself?
2. Using your answers, dare to examine how truth shows up in all your life areas. Probe deeper to see if you are in integrity with who you are, what you do and how you engage in your relationships. What and where do you need to be forthright?
3. Now, create a new personal “Standards of Integrity” list to guide you on your path of truth.



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