

Are you secure in your own skin?

Everyone experiences insecurity in some way, shape or form - everyone. Our insecurity leaks out at home, at work, at play and in relationship. Think, for a moment, about times, events or circumstance in which you feel, or have felt, that tinge of insecurity - holding a newborn, wondering about committing to a relationship, making a speech, speaking up, or out, thinking about growing old, buying a first house, re-marrying, divorcing, reflecting on your managing ability or technical skills, playing a sport or musical instrument, considering your educational background, your family or social standing and the like.

Insecurity is fear-based.

As a coach, my experience tells me most folks are, or have been, dealing with their insecurities without becoming paralyzed. During their life's journey, they've taken steps to either overcome their insecurities or not allow their insecurities to be incapacitating.

On the other hand, there are those who succumb to their fear, their insecurity. They allow themselves to be taken over by their negative, self-limiting, and self-defeating, internal scripts. These folks make a habit of feeling like a victim, blaming everyone and everything for their insecurities - their bosses, co-workers, families, the weather, politicians, their spouses, partners, friends and neighbors.

A major downside of this latter group, the negative folks, is how they impact and infect others. Consider the following:

Insecure folks want and need control.

Feeling insecure and thus, "small" and "invisible," they search for and seek out opportunities that will show them to be brilliant, significant, and important, i.e., be "somebody." They refuse to collaborate, delegate or support others to grow and develop. They cannot bring themselves to coach or mentor others. Their ego is driving.

Insecure folks are afraid of change.

These individuals prefer the status quo to trying something new. They live in the "not invented here" part of their life's landscape. Taking risks, stretching or exploring new ways of being, or doing things is threatening and fear-making. Risk or change is not a part of the equation.

Insecure folks avoid embarrassment.

They just "cannot fail." How would they be perceived if they did fail? Insecure folks avoid failing or the appearance of failing in any way. They abhor being seen as stupid or "incompetent" in front of anyone.

Insecure folks are "silent" folks.

They play it close to the vest, or blouse. They fear disclosing anything personal about themselves. They prefer small talk, gossip, and conversation that is desultory, superficial and not very deep.

Insecure folks often associate with others who are not a threat.

Insecure folks need to feel wanted and needed, to feel important and superior. They prefer to hang around the less-talented so they don't have to compete or be threatened or embarrassed by someone "smarter or better."

Insecure folks perpetuate insecurity.

Insecure folks view others in their world according to the mantra, "I need you to be like me." They thrive on insecurity and so create an environment of fear, over-thinking and over-analyzing, being constantly suspicious and vigilant creating an environment that is characterized by a low-grade-fever-type of agitation that permeates their home, work and social environments.

While insecure individuals are often successful in the short term, they usually wind up derailing or stalling, but not before they damage and seriously affect their relationships at home at work and at play.

So, some questions for self-reflection are:

- Reflecting honestly, sincerely and self-responsibly, do you sense you have one or more insecurities that affect your relationship or behaviors with your spouse/partner, parents, children, co-workers, bosses, or friends?
- What might be a good first (baby) step to explore and deal with your insecurity?
- Do you have a trusted friend with whom you can open up and talk about your deepest insecurities?
- Would your colleagues, your friends, your spouse or partner say you have a need for control, recognition or security that results in your usually being in some state of insecurity?
- Have others tugged on your sleeve about your insecurity? How did that make you feel?

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