



# INTEGRATE TO LIVE

Restore Resilience. Cultivate Community. Impact your World

## Week 35 Transcript: Idealized Identity

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This week marks the transition into the final module of the program. In Module 1 we practiced how to regulate our nervous system for increased resiliency.

Module 2 was all about bringing this newly developed resiliency into the realm of our relationships. Now, in Module 3 we discover our true identity and unique mission to impact the world for the better.

Identities are complicated and often misunderstood. Our deepest desire is to be seen; to be acknowledged for who we truly are. And not only seen, but accepted and valued.

We long to know that we are worthy of love and belonging by just being who we are, not by what we do. We also want to live out our higher purpose which is expressed through us truly being ourselves. All of who we are – the good, the bad and the ugly.

But, early in life we have experiences that tell us something different. These moments may let us know that we're not seen, that we're invisible. Or, that what is seen is not what was expected nor wanted, and therefore we are flawed and unworthy of love and belonging.

This rejection may cause us to create layers of protection around our true selves. We self-protect and use our survival strategies to guard the most vulnerable parts of who we are. We form so many layers around our true identity, we no longer express the unique creation we were designed to be.

Through my personal journey, alongside years of working with individuals to heal and integrate their stories, I've developed a unique model that identifies these distinct layers of identity. Recognizing these layers, and how they hide our unique individuality, is essential to incorporating all the aspects of who we are.

Let's look together at these layers of identity that cover our True Identity, and bring awareness as we journey to our deeper selves. When you look at the model, you'll see our Original Self at the core of who we are. Just outside it is our Wounded Self. Covering and protecting this vulnerable layer is our Adapted Self.



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And, projecting out for all the world to see, is our Idealized Self. You'll notice that all of these layers are surrounded by our Whole Self. This acknowledges that the goal is to integrate all of the aspects of who we are so we can become whole and resilient.

Let's start with the outer layer. Our Idealized Identity is the unattainable projection of perfection we want people to believe is who we are. All the time, without fail.

In our culture, we worship the mythology of perfection. It's a myth because it doesn't exist. Perfection is a false reality that keeps us operating in a false identity, reaching harder and further in an effort to hit the mark.

But, this layer of identity is unreachable. It is the fantasy of who we want others to believe we are. Often, this is who we perceive we need to be in order to be loveable. The definition of loveable is different for each person, and holds pieces of our unique story.

We think, "If I'm always \_\_\_\_\_, people will love and accept me". For instance, if I'm always kind, selfless, wise, strong, in control, have it together, invulnerable, etc. It can look a lot like the Power Identity.

We work really hard to be perceived as this perfect, Idealized Self because we want so desperately to be seen as loveable. We can't control how others experience us, yet we spend our time and energy trying to manage their perceptions. This is exhausting and limits peoples' ability to know us as we truly are.

This layer is sometimes confusing to take an honest look at because, let's face it, it looks really good. Who doesn't want to ALWAYS be amazing and NEVER be annoying?

It also holds some of the beauty of our Original Identity that we've not fully owned yet, and are trying to hold up as a perfect reflection to those around us. That's why integrating this Layer of Identity requires courage to embrace our imperfection and vulnerabilities.



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I'm not saying that this unattainable projection of our perfect Self doesn't hold some truths about who we really are. I am saying that hustling to be that in every way, in all circumstances, isn't possible.

When we embrace our imperfection we let the pressure off. We get to be brilliant one moment, and kinda mundane in another, knowing that neither one is the measurement of our worthiness. We give ourselves permission to be human...just like everybody else.

Next week we continue our discovery of the layers of identity and take a look at our Adapted Identity. For now, increase awareness around this outer layer of your identity and how it might be keeping you from authentic connection - the pathway to truly being known. Download the action guide and share what you are learning on our group page.