



INTEGRATE TO LIVE

Restore Resilience. Cultivate Community. Impact your World

Week 36 Transcript: Adapted Identity

This week, we continue our discovery of the layers of identity and take a look at our Adapted Identity. In review, Our Idealized Identity is the unattainable projection of perfection we want people to believe is who we are so we can receive love.

Our Adapted Identity is the layer that supports our Idealized Identity. It's the expression of how we've adjusted to defend ourselves in an unsafe world.

Frederick Buechner said that: "[Our] original shimmering self gets buried so deep we hardly live out of it at all...rather, we learn to live out of all the other selves which we are constantly putting on and taking off like coats and hats against the world's weather."

You can think of our Adapted Identity as these "coats and hats" that protect us from the harsh elements that come against us in life. Most of us spend the majority of our time living out of this layer of our identity.

These are the patterns of behaving that are most familiar, even if they're not the most authentic, because they are within our comfort zone. In Module 1 and 2, we explored many of the ways these patterns are established.

Primarily, when we experience fear and shame, we respond with ways of protecting ourselves from feeling these uncomfortable sensations. We create a layer of armor to protect ourselves.

We do this through a myriad of ways, including numbing behaviors, staying busy, isolation, self-reliance or independence, people pleasing, playing small, over-working, etc. just to name a few.

When we look at the model, we see the Adapted Self covering the vulnerable layer called the Wounded Self. It's how we innately adapt to survive the world's weather.

Because this layer of identity protects our tender, wounded Self, it is where we employ our survival strategies of disconnection including our shame shields of moving away, moving against and moving toward.



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These are the ways we shield ourselves from the pain of rejection and abandonment. It's where all of our self-defensive reactions of fight, flight and freeze are played out.

The Adapted Identity also works relentlessly to do all the things we need to do to keep up the appearance of our Idealized Identity. It's how we attempt to control our environment to ensure we don't get hurt, bad things don't happen and people will believe that we are loveable.

With our Adapted Self sandwiched between our Wounded Self and our Idealized Self, we hustle to make sure no one sees the unwanted and broken parts of who we are while killing ourselves to perform perfectly so we can receive approval. No wonder we feel disconnected and unknown, even from those closest to us.

Integrating this Layer of Identity requires courage to let go of our coping mechanisms, unhealthy behaviors and all the ways we override the uncomfortable sensations and emotions we so desperately don't want to feel.

We've spent much of our life incorporating very developed management strategies so we can navigate the challenges of life. Throughout this entire program, you've been equipped with what you need to let those defense mechanisms go, become healthy and resilient, and live the life you were created to live.

Next week we continue our discovery of the layers of identity and take a look at our Wounded Identity. For now, increase awareness around this 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.