

JAMES SCHRAMKO

5 Tips for Achieving Authenticity

- 1. Balancing your truth with success** - People are often told to change aspects of themselves in a bid to achieve success, whether in business, relationships, school, what have you. In such cases, you need to determine what's constructive and valid, and what is a deal-breaker. Some compromise may be necessary to achieve a happy medium. And sometimes, if you probe enough, you may find some things you're told you "have to" do aren't really necessary.
- 2. Some dragons don't need vanquishing** - "Dragons" refer to your personal flaws, weaknesses, or traumas that you might think detract from your worth or potential. While these perceived flaws can make you uncomfortable, they are often integral to your identity, and trying to vanquish them completely may result in losing an essential part of oneself. This is not to apply to harmful habits such as smoking, or to condone being rude because one feels like it. It's okay to recognize that one gets angry easily; this doesn't give them a free pass to be hurtful. Your response to the world should come from good personal values, not from instinctual urges.
- 3. You get somewhere by acknowledging where you are** - When you set a goal for improvement, you have to be realistic about what you're starting with. You won't achieve your vision by denying the gap between your current and ideal situation. Have realistic expectations about the journey and the work it will entail, and whether it is a viable aim to begin with.
- 4. Beware of perfectionism and imposter syndrome** - Have a healthy appreciation of your strengths, but don't expect perfection of yourself. Allow for possible failure, but don't let the fear of failing keep you from trying at all. And when you do fail, take it in stride - don't allow it to crush you. Failure is just a learning opportunity. The praise that comes with success is not the equivalent of real love and respect, and failing does not deprive you of these same rewards.
- 5. Love yourself** - One might argue that self-love is the only love that truly matters. No one is obliged to love anyone else, including close family and friends. The only love you can reasonably expect is self-love, and while difficult to accept, this realization is vital for personal growth and happiness. So love yourself, flaws and all, and take responsibility for your own joy and fulfillment.

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