

18.



Finding your fingerprint

The activities that follow are designed to help you explore facets of your being that distinguish you as unique. You can also use these exercises when you are coaching or mentoring others. It is important that you are clear about who you are, who you are not, and what you are ultimately about in order to live your life to the fullest and be able to offer all you are capable of. Once you have thought through and identified 'who you are', you can translate this knowledge to the frames you have in your life, and explore whether they are enabling you or impeding your growth.

Spend some time exploring the authentic you. And always remember: there has only ever been, and will always only be, one you. Would you dare deprive the world of that gift?

ACTIVITY 1

'SO, TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF'

At professional and social gatherings, it is not unusual for someone to say to you, 'So, tell me about yourself.' You probably get the opportunity to introduce yourself, formally or informally, hundreds of times in a given year. In most of these situations, it is another person's or group's initial exposure to you. With these opportunities to introduce yourself to others, how much do you really reveal about who you truly are? And in the past, how many times have you given in to the temptation to answer that question as safely as you possibly can? As you might imagine, an impostor hates being asked to answer that question.

In a professional or work context, people are far more inclined to define themselves by virtue of what they do rather than who they are. That is why it is not surprising that work colleagues often know very little about each other beyond the professional realm. Even in social scenarios, you are often inclined to define yourself by what you do rather than who you are. Often the safest and most comfortable way to break the ice with someone new is to focus on the 'what' rather than the 'who'. While both the what and the who are important, there is a tendency to gravitate toward the former if you are uncomfortable or uncertain about the latter. Keep this distinction in mind as you consider your own authenticity.

WHO I AM

These are the attributes of your persona, much like the whorls and ridges in your fingerprint. What you write here should capture the essence of you, the person.

EXAMPLE

Who I am	I am the third son of John and Sharon, the brother of David and Conor, the husband of Siobhan, the father of Ben and Corey, the best friend of Dan, the manager of my team. I am a part of many important relationships.
What I do	At this stage of my life, I spend most of my time at work, even when I'm at home. I'm an engineer, so my head is constantly in that space. I have routines that define my day and week, especially my weekend. Except for the occasional nap, my life feels pretty regimented.
Analysis	I define myself in terms of important relationships, but I don't really make the time for them, other than perhaps my team. All of these relationships are sources of energy for me, but they clearly aren't a priority. My work life is clearly the priority right now. I'm not sure I like writing that. I've got a major frame to change.