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HOW TO FIND YOUR AUTHENTIC WILD SELF AND STOP FEELING LIKE AN IMPOSTER IN YOUR OWN LIFE

Women wear a lot of masks.

There is the mask of perfection, the mask of “I have it all together,” the mask of being a “good mom,” the mask of being thin when your body is

really meant for curves, and more. Pleasing other people to fit in and feel accepted, while repressing, hiding and masking our authentic self, requires a lot of work and energy that—over time—leads to exhaustion, depression and physical illness.

Sometimes we must wear masks to blend into various situations and maintain a certain rapport with people we encounter in our everyday life. But when those personas accumulate and hide who we really are, what we believe, and what we desire, suddenly we can feel like an imposter in our own lives.

How have you used masks in your life? Maybe you're wearing a mask for a job you don't like, groups you've had to join for your kids, or to be around family members who don't share your personal beliefs and values. Do those personas require you to be agreeable—with a sort of smile and nod behaviour—in order to fit in? If so, over time, you may feel dulled by the rote of daily living.

Wildness is the antidote, inherent in your authentic self. But revealing authenticity is scary, because it requires vulnerability. You may wonder “What will people think?” or “What if nobody likes the real me?” But the truth is that your genuine personality is the best version of you, because it will allow you to bring forth far more gifts than a false persona ever could. And you'll find that people who resonate with you will be attracted to those parts of yourself you've kept hidden. Best of all, you will feel enlivened and liberated!

Reclaiming lost parts of yourself and returning to authenticity is a transformative process. Be gentle and courageous as you begin to explore your own nature, personality, beliefs, emotions, needs and desires that are buried underneath the facades of social and cultural conditioning.

Here are a few simple ways to get you started on your journey of reconnecting with your authentically wild self:

Journaling in a private notebook is a great way to know your true self better. It's helpful to free write daily streams of consciousness to feel and know what comes through. Don't judge your words or writing style. Let your feelings and observations flow freely to release what you've bottled up.

Physical movement can help you to connect with and release the emotions that are likely to arise as you shed layers of these alternate personas. Free form dancing and other somatic movement therapies are wonderful healing modalities to try.

Make a habit of **spending time in nature** with all of your senses open—sight, sound, touch, smell, taste and intuition. As you receive through your sensory conduits, you will attune to the rhythms of nature and coax out your inner wildness.

Creating personas to fit in or hide how you're feeling is depleting and takes a toll on your physical, emotional and spiritual well-being. While life does require us to wear masks at times, underneath them is a tamed soul that wants to be spontaneous, child-like and free. Your authenticity carries

unique gifts that are meant to be shared with the world. Take the risk to be honest with yourself about your original nature. By fully embracing and expressing your authentic wildness, you will feel healthier, happier and more at peace. When this happens you will learn to become your own authority—self-defined from the inside out—living an authentic life filled with higher purpose and deeper meaning.

Lucinda Bakken White is the author of the memoir *Confessions of a Bone Woman: Realizing Authentic Wildness in a Civilized World*. White is also an Inner Wildness Guide, helping women through the process of self-discovery and personal transformation. For more information click [here](#) and connect with her on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Pinterest](#) and [Goodreads](#).