

WELCOME TO TRANSITION HOUSE

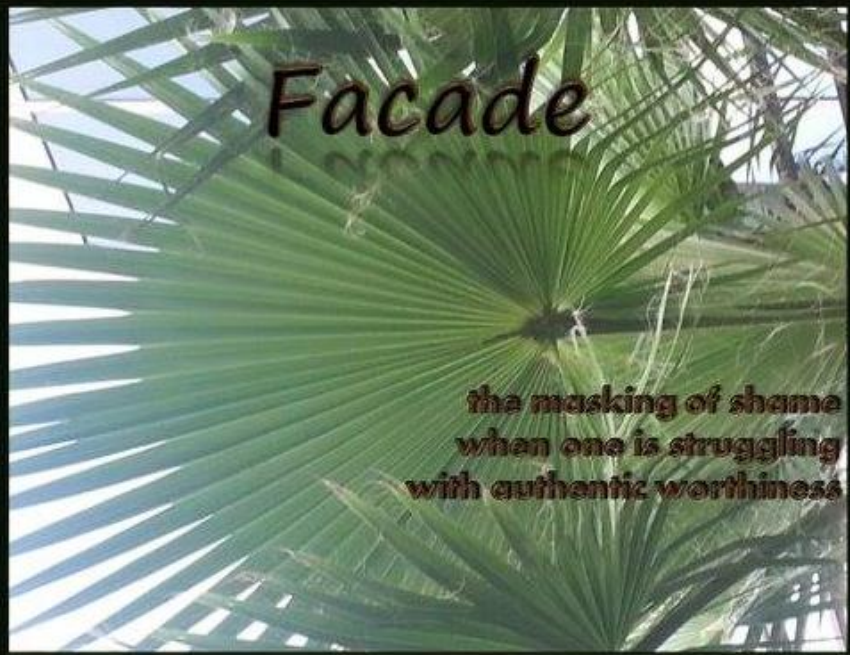
# STAYING TRUE TO OURSELVES

TRANSITION HOUSE  
Wellness Project




TH Wellness Project's Vision:  
to empower personal well-being, improve mental wellness and increase life joy.  
[www.thouse.org](http://www.thouse.org)

*"When someone says you've changed, it simply means you stopped living your life their way." unknown*  
*"Today you are you, that is truer than true. There is no one alive who is youer than you." — Dr. Seuss*



**Facade**  
the masking of shame  
when one is struggling  
with authentic worthiness



**TRANSITION HOUSE**  
Changing Lives by Creating Pathways for Mental Wellness  
[www.thouse.org](http://www.thouse.org)



*On your way up,  
is being Trendy more Important*  
**than being Authentic?**  
Stay true to you if you wish to be joy-filled!



**Transition House, Inc.**  
Hope and Opportunities for Recovery  
[www.thouse.org](http://www.thouse.org)



**Bold** **Authentic**  
**Be You**  
**Courageous** **Proud**



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Hope for Recovery  
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## Staying True to Ourselves

### Who Cares What People Think

- Being real is not something we are or aren't. It's a practice - a conscious choice of how we want to be.
- Often people attempt to live their lives backwards.
  - They believe having more things enables you to do more of what you want in order to be happier.
  - The reality is the reverse. You must first be who you really are, then do what you really need to do, in order to have what you want.
- Key points:
  - Be okay with the idea of being real
  - Be honest
  - Let others see our real selves
- The reality: There are people who practice being real (that doesn't mean perfect) and there are people who don't.
  - When are the days/situations that you are not so real? Are these times ever necessary?
  - If we are full of self-doubt or shame, we can sell ourselves out and be anybody others need or expect us to be.

### Choosing To Be Real

- It can make us feel Hopeful & Exhausted
  - We feel hopeful because being real is an exercise in authenticity. What are some characteristics in people that we are drawn to? Do we aspire to be like that in our own lives?
  - We feel exhausted because choosing to be authentic in a culture that dictates everything, from how much we're supposed to weigh to what our career path should be, is a huge undertaking.
- Choosing to be real means:
  - Finding the courage to be imperfect, to set boundaries, to allow ourselves to be vulnerable, and to be who we truly want to be.
  - Exercising the empathy that comes from knowing that we are all imperfect.
  - Nurturing the sense of belonging that can only happen when we believe that we are enough.
- Being real demands living in Wellness even when:
  - It's hard, and/or we're wrestling with the shame and fear of not being good enough or who other expects us to be.
  - We're experiencing intense positive emotions – we can be afraid to let ourselves feel those because of the anticipation of them going away.
- Mindfully practicing being real during our most soul-searching struggles is how we invite peace, joy and gratitude into our lives.
- Choosing to be real is not an easy choice! E.E. Cummings wrote: "To be nobody-but-yourself in a world which is doing its best, night and day, to make you everybody but yourself- means to fight the hardest battle which any human being can fight- and never stop fighting." Staying real is one of the most courageous battles that we'll ever fight.
- When we choose to be our true selves, the people around us will struggle to make sense of how and why we are changing. They might feel fearful and unsure about these changes. They may worry about how our authenticity practice impacts them and our relationships with them.



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## Will People Embrace our Real Self?

- Sometimes, when we push the system, it pushes back. This can be everything from eye rolls and whispers to relationship struggles and feelings of isolation. There can also be cruel and shaming responses to our true self.
- Being real is rarely the safe option. It means stepping out of our comfort zone.

## The Struggle

- Don't make people feel uncomfortable but be honest.
- Sound informed and educated but not like a know-it-all.
- Don't say anything unpopular or controversial but have the courage to speak your mind.
- It's easy to attack and criticize someone while he/she is risk-taking. Cruelty is cheap, easy and rampant.
- As we struggle to be authentic and brave, it's important to remember that cruelty hurts, even when untrue. When we go against the grain some people will feel threatened and they will go after what hurts the most. The problem is when we don't care at all what people think and we're immune to hurt, we're also numbing feelings of joy and happiness.

## Gender Differences

- Men and women both struggle with our culture's gender expectations.
  - Women: What are some qualities that society tells us are important for us to feel feminine?
  - Men: What are some qualities that society tells us are important for us to feel masculine?

## Courage

- Courage is telling our story, not being immune to criticism.
- Staying vulnerable is a risk we have to take if we want to experience connection.
- There's risk involved in putting your true self out in the world, but there's even more risk in hiding yourself and your gifts from the world. Our true selves don't just go away. They are likely to fester and eat away at our worthiness.

## Caution

- If you trade in your real self for safety, you may experience the following: anxiety, depression, eating disorders, addiction, rage, blame, resentment, and unexplainable grief.
- Sacrificing who we are for the sake of what other people think we should be isn't worth it. Being ourselves is the best gift we can give ourselves and the people we love. When we let go of trying to be everything to everyone, we have much more time, attention, love, and connection for the important people in our lives.

## Time for Real Connecting

- Partner with someone you don't know. Let's start building new, healthy connections!
  - As you are sharing with each other, talk about the differences between the You that you present to the public and/or in professional settings and how that differs from your true self.
  - Be respectful – be mindful of sharing 'enough' with healthy limits.
  - If you are comfortable, talk about what "Support" looks like for you.

## Wrap Up

*"This above all: to thine own self be true." – William Shakespeare*



## Facilitator's Guide:

### FOLLOW UP ON HOMEWORK:

- Questionnaire that would provide yourself and facilitators with useful information to help make this a more meaningful learning experience.
- Start developing your Worthiness List.
- Be mindful... Record the times over the next week when you've been able to be more authentic. How did that impact your sense of well-being?
- Be mindful... When your Perfectionism button is 'pushed,' try a new behavior. Record how it works.
- Develop your own list of Hope Energizing Activities and note how it impacts you.
- Monitor your rest and play. How are you doing? Where can you improve? What changes have you made/are making?
- Create Something!
- Find a new way to practice intentional mindfulness
- Become aware of the role drama triangles play in your social circles

### BREAK UP INTO GROUPS OF 2-3:

1. How does what people think about you impact you?
2. What happens when you are your real self?
3. In what situations is authenticity difficult?
4. How do you change/do you change when building connections with others?
5. Time to share our messages in writing and on our hands.

### HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT: WORK ON WELLNESS PLAN

