

Breaking Free: Reclaiming Authenticity in a Capitalist World

Description

The AutoEthnographer

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Authorâ??s Memo

Iâ??m Laura, a self-reflexive Anthropologist. In this four-part series, Iâ??ll take you back through my journey from the beginning. To explore how the conditioning of the Western environment I was born into served in disconnecting me from my own inner authenticity. Leaving me feeling lost and trapped in the perils of capitalist mentality. Chasing the ideals of what society wanted me to become. Iâ??ll then reveal how I overcame my mental health challenges and reconnected with my true self. Discovering the benefits of holistic therapies and shamanic healing. With the aim of highlighting the importance of maintaining your connection to your true self and your intuition. An empowered inner authenticity that supersedes the pressures faced by twenty-first century generations â?? striving for an unattainable false perfect â??selfâ??.


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Taking My Power Back

During my period of depression, I was signed off work for a month by the doctor. He classified my symptoms as an â??adjustment disorderâ??. The shifting demands of market forces pushed me to change so much of myself that I did not know who I was anymore. Whilst taking time out from work, I was able to slow down â?? reflecting on my life and my emotions. Within this space, I sensed a deep longing to meaningfully connect with myself and the world around me. A spiritual urge that I previously neglected since abandoning my true self when I was 14.

So, I began to explore holistic therapies â?? including yoga, mindfulness and new age self-help books. The yoga helped me to sooth the emotional tension in my muscles. Giving me an awareness of how the stresses of life impacted my body. I felt more relaxed within myself and would practice every morning. Furthermore, the mindfulness techniques encouraged me to slow down my thoughts. I was able to connect with a deep sense of peace and stillness whilst meditating through the day.

Spirituality Reconfigured in Western Culture

When I read the new age self-help books, it sparked a feeling of excitement I hadnâ??t experienced in years. Because the subject of spirituality and holistic healing resonated with my authentic interests. Such narratives enabled me to experiment with my creativity again. Reconnecting with nature, learning a new musical instrument and travelling to new places. This inspired me to read more and more books. Where I was exposed to content that offered quick-fix solutions and unrealistic outcomes. Learning about the principles of â??manifestationâ?? outlined by â??spiritual gurusâ??â?¦

*â??You are the most powerful magnet in the Universe. You can have, do, or be anything you want. Happiness, health and wealth. I donâ??t care how big it is. What kind of house do you want to live in? Do you want to be a millionaire? What kind of business do you want? Do you want more success?*â?• (The Secret, Rhonda Byrne).

I started to believe that I could instantly heal myself by pursuing the principles outlined by â??spiritual gurusâ??. A marketed state of fulfillment reconfigured to conform with Western ideals of success. Where I eventually became overwhelmed and stressed again â?? propelling me straight back into a capitalist mindset. It was only when I had a chance encounter with a Shaman, that I was able to

develop a meaningful spiritual practiceâ?¦ One that permanently transforming my life for the better.

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Shamanism: Meaningful Healing

When I first met Emma â?? the Shaman. I was half expecting to be greeted by an out of this world, somewhat bohemian character. A prejudice misinformed by the stereotypes of New Age discourse. I actually encountered a grounded, intelligent and emotionally attuned woman. Emma made me feel comfortable enough to open up about the stresses in my life. There was never any mention of my eating disorder, which made me feel seen as a person.

â??I see a girl, a very smart and intelligent girl. But very insecure. Right now, thatâ??s what Iâ??m feeling. Thereâ??s a deep insecurity.â?¦and so much responsibility! Thatâ??s a heavy weight you are carrying. I know recently, you have been through a really tough timeâ?¦ and we will we go there, okâ?¦ as I do see some imbalances there. Wow, my chest is really tightening up. I feel that you are anxious, ok, but try to relax now. You need to open up your body, thatâ??s it, so I can go in and read to youâ?¦ (Emma).

Reconnecting with My Inner Authenticity

We continued to meet fortnightly for therapeutic sessions, where she proceeded to psychically read to me. Recalling my suppressed authentic needs and desires, as well as my emotions and fears. I was able to detach from a false â??perfectâ?? self created by the ideals of Capitalist Western society. The shaman would take me back, experientially, into my past. Bringing unhealthy attachments to ideals

about beauty, success and happiness into my awareness. We would spend time critically reflecting upon how these ideals were working against my growth. This enabled me to be to release unconscious beliefs that werenâ??t in alignment with my true values and true creativity.

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Alongside of this, Emma was also teaching me how to reconnect with my authenticity. The abandoned part of myself that once evoked meaning, creativity and enjoyment to my life. This involved regularly practicing guided meditations and channelling sessions together. Spiritual exercises that required me to reawaken my intuition and learn how to trust myself again. Providing time and space to consistently intuit my true needs and creative desires. I was able to channel images, words and feelings to reconstruct healthy ideals empowered by my authentic self. Trusting my instincts enabled a way of self-relating that was emotionally supportive, as opposed to critically obstructive.

Throughout my healing experience, I never had to improve or change myself. But only to allow my inner authenticity to unfold and grow stronger. Within six months, my anorexia nervosa and body dysmorphia had completely healed. By the end of a year, my sense of identity began to stabilize. This deeply cathartic process revealed how being disconnected to my inner authenticity left me vulnerable to societal pressures. Capitalist power dynamics that forced me down a pathway against who I really wasâ?¦ and what I really needed in life.

Empowered Inner Authenticity: Freedom to *B*e Me Again

Ultimately, this process of release and reconnection helped me to shift my consciousness inwards. To discover, nourish and empower my uniqueness. A sense of self-love that superseded the need for external validation. I felt empowered to focus on creating a life that worked in harmony with my inner authenticity. Even if my choices went against what was considered popular or successful â?? according to capitalist ideals and media trends. In doing so, I was able to heal, release and grow by trusting my truth and meaningfully relating to the world around me.

The healing work I did with the Shaman was by no means easy â?? it wasnâ??t a quick fix solution. I had to really trust myself and turn away from everything I thought was â??normalâ??â?¦ Beliefs that were engrained within me for my whole my life. I still struggle with my self-worth and perfectionism. As

well as the practicalities of remaining true to my authentic values. But I continue to connect with my intuition and work on self-love by engaging in spiritual exercises. And I have never relapsed back into my old capitalist mentality.

-I am freeâ?¦on a healing pathway towards discovering my true self.

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Credits

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3. Volume 4, Issue 4 (2024)

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