

Episode 25 - When We Wear the Cultural Costume Instead of Being Ourselves

Transcript

[00:00:00] Hello everybody. Coach Emily B coming back after the holiday weekend. I hope you all had a relaxing weekend. Maybe it was relaxing enough that it was even re-energizing. As you land into your fall routines and the season picks up pace, actually one season winds down and a new season picks up pace and picks up momentum.

Today we're going to talk about who you are. Are you operating from your authentic, essential self? Or are you operating from culture, from social standards, beauty standards, professional expectations, maybe even gender norms? Are you in culture's [00:01:00] costume? Oh, that's kind of catchy. Except that can't feel amazing, or are you in your own skin in the sense of I'm operating my own life from my own manual and I'm good with that.

This is a lot to talk about, and maybe you're thinking, what is she talking about? Let's get into it.

When you walk into a room or you meet somebody new, or maybe you post on social media, are you showing you or are you showing what culture has told you is acceptable? Think about that for a moment, especially if you wanna quickly say, no, I show me it's me. Rewind. Is it? When you walk into a room, when you meet someone new, when you post on social media, are you showing yourself?

Or are you showing what you believe will be accepted by the general [00:03:00] population? Most people will think, Hey, that's cool, or That's great, or, I like that. It's important to consider this question because. If you most often are showing a version of yourself that can just match external expectations, you're probably feeling pretty exhausted.

You might be feeling lonely. You might even be wondering, what's the point of all of this? This hustle, this bustle, this driving to work and parenting and being in a relationship. I mean, it's a lot of work. There's a lot, lot to do, a lot to show up for a lot of different roles that we all have. A lot of hats we wear is another way to say.

And if more often than not, we are shape shifting in a [00:04:00] sense to show a version of ourselves that's, we don't need to explain. In my opinion, that's no way to live. So let's get you back on to where you're on the tracks of your own life and you start to feel more energized in that momentum rather than keeping up with those other expectations.

So, okay, Emily, how do we do that? How do we do that? Well, first, let's identify. Where are you putting expectations on yourself that make you not be yourself? Right? So here's an example. When I was teaching in the classroom, it did not matter how tired I felt. It didn't matter if I had an argument before work.

It didn't matter if I was up all night [00:05:00] because I had a baby that was sick. When I greeted parents and I greeted kids, I put the cultural mask on. How are you today? Good morning. Oh, I'm good too. It's great to see you because it wouldn't be acceptable, right? To say, I'm exhausted. My baby was up all night last night, or would it be acceptable?

Could it be acceptable to say thank you for asking. I'm exhausted today 'cause my baby was up all night last night. But I'm looking forward to spending the day with your children. Could

we start tiptoeing into a more elaborate version of our answers? Maybe that's part of it too. We're in a hurry. We're always in a hurry.

So we say good or fine, or, that's nice. We don't elaborate. [00:06:00] Could we start to elaborate a little bit in our responses to others, and in that elaboration, share a little bit about ourselves perhaps. All right. Have you identified that spot where you do that or you put a mask on? No shame, no judgment. In some situations, maybe it's even necessary, right?

If you're a, let's say you're a 9 1 1 dispatcher. Yeah. You might find your brain wander to stress, or you might want to speed things up to help, right? You're not gonna do that. You're gonna present what's expected of you. You're gonna present calm and collected and ask questions and keep them engaged. I mean, I don't know the training, I'm just assuming that's part of it.

So there are situations where I'm going to [00:07:00] put the mask on 'cause it's going to be best for everybody involved. That's gonna get them the help that they need. But if you're doing it in a sense of protecting. From seeing who you really are, that's where we wanna look. I'll tell you the biggest changes that I've noticed in myself pre and post exposure, let's call it to the life coaching world, big changes.

And there are changes physically that yes you can see, but my biggest changes are in my mind. I am no longer fatigued after social situations. I actually feel quite energized after. And the difference is I go as myself now, and if I'm not invited to something, I don't question that. I just know that's not meant for me.

That's okay. And if I'm invited to something, I [00:08:00] genuinely consider it because perhaps this is meant for me and I just didn't know it. Another change is I do not feel invisible and I do not feel misunderstood at all. And in the situations where I feel like there is misunderstanding, I can see that I'm open to to hear information.

I'm open to ask questions. I can see that I'm not the one who shuts down anymore. That is growth for me, that's big growth. I also no longer go around thinking if they really knew me, gosh, I used to carry that one around like a heavy, heavy ankle weight if they really knew me. Well, guess what? Now what to see is what to get.

So if you're [00:09:00] wondering what's she really like? This is it. This is it.

And probably the other biggest change, gosh, maybe there's a longer list, but I'll stop here. I don't feel the need to over explain and apologize and say yes to everything. That's just not necessary. It's not fair to me. It's not fair to the other person. It's just not necessary. I need to understand what I'm doing and that's it.

I don't need to apologize. I can thank people when I feel like they've needed to offer me grace, whether they've called it out or not. I can thank people and I can be proud of saying no instead of feeling like I'm the worst. They wanted me to do something and here I am saying, no, I don't want to, or no, I can't.

I have something else on my calendar. I'm not worried about what are they thinking that I [00:10:00] didn't say? Yes. I have the confidence in knowing the circle of people I'm building around me have enough respect for themselves and for me to just ask. Ask a question. We

can have open communication. So if any of those are you right now, like, man, I do feel pretty fatigued after social situations or, yeah, I think that a lot, if they really knew me or that's not who I am, or they're misjudging me, or you're somebody who does feel invisible or misunderstood, or maybe you're the one out there saying yes to everything wanting to be seen.

Let's get you back in alignment with your essential self, with your inner voice. We don't need to be polished for approval. We really don't. I mean, I don't think we just need to get you looking in the mirror [00:11:00] in a figurative sense. To see who you really are and what do you have to offer, because it might be pretty great.

It might even be better than what you think society is expecting of you. There's a difference, you know, between that social self and the essential self. There is, it's, it's the same as the like who you are versus the cultural costume that we put on.

I think the reason we can get so tangled up or caught up in the idea of that social self is because it seems like that'd be a safe version to go out into the world with. If we can look just so, or we can fit in in, in just a certain way, we'll be liked and we'll be included. But you all, that's that.

Safety is false. It's false [00:12:00] security when we're actually ourselves, in my opinion, that's the most direct route to feeling that safety. When we operate from our own manuals, we attract other people who are like-minded. Then when we're surrounded by other people that are like-minded, we create these opportunities for shared experiences, which comes with a deep feeling of inclusion and connection, which is what we really want to begin with.

So you see, we should just be ourselves. And I know that's a lot easier said than done because, well, what will they think? And what if they find out this about me? This is where I think we need to give other people a little bit, at least the benefit of the doubt. Give other people a chance to show up [00:13:00] to accept you.

Yes, there might be confusion at first. There has been for me, as I've gone through this transition of, I guess really, let's call it, going through this transition of being a cultural representation of what I think is right to just being myself. There's been confusion. People who have known me as the cultural version of Emily are like, what?

Who's this? Or that's not you. Well, plot twist. This is me actually, that other version. Uh, I mean, she tried something wicked. She did, and I'm so thankful that eventually she stumbled on just the right voice and just the right words that helped her see that. Hold on a minute. What you wanna do is actually over here.

Like imagine this culture is the stage. [00:14:00] The social self is the costume that we put on to be accepted, and the essential self is the actor inside. It's who's doing all the, the carrying you around and, and using the voice. So any of us that are on, and I don't know which is better or worse, so you know, maybe they're the same.

Any of us that are on stage left saying, wow, it's exhausting over here. Let's try stage right. Let's get out of that costume and just be in what you wore. Be you for a day. Try it out. In small steps, of course. So when you notice you're performing, let's say, and this is not it, it might not even be on purpose, but now that you've heard it, you'll know when you are, you'll know.

It's like, oh, that's, that was exhausting it. When you catch [00:15:00] yourself in that place, see if you can ask yourself, whose role was I just following there? Was it mine? Would I set that rule for myself or am I doing it for some type of acceptance? And if you notice it's not yours, maybe try practicing revealing one authentic piece of yourself in a safe space.

That same rule if you could, but your own version of it.

Let's do a practice prompt. Why not this week? Maybe you could identify one moment where you'll just maybe blur the costume a little bit. Maybe when someone asks, how are you, you give something a little more expansive than good. Keep [00:16:00] it honest. You don't need to bring them down if you're not doing well.

But you can offer yourself at least the gift of truth, honesty, vulnerability. See what that's like to connect with another human.

Or if that feels, mm, that's, that's a big ask Emily. Okay. Maybe you try wearing something this week that feels right to you instead of what you think looks right to others. How about that? Wear something that feels right to you this week instead of looks right to others. I know some of you're like, wait, what was that other one?

I think I'll do the other one. And no matter your answer, I love you because this work is not easy, but we can have fun with it. If you do [00:17:00] practice it, tag me or share it on our birch and stone public page on Facebook.

The more of us that are doing this work, the more contagious this work becomes. Let's get out there. Let's do it. And you know, for the sake of consistency, I'm gonna start telling you, you are not too late for your goals. They're yours to get. So go get them. And a quote I have for you today by John Mason, you were born an original.

Don't die a copy. Thank you all for being here, listening for another week. Next week. We have a guest on the show, actually two guests at one time. I'm really excited for that to share the conversation, so I hope you'll tune in. If this resonated with you, if you learned something, if you had an aha or it just made you smile, share it with a friend or leave us a review.

It helps us [00:18:00] find more people and spread the work. Thank you for being you. We'll see you next time.