

Influence with Integrity: How to Create Engagement with Heart

Is our romance with the social media influencer over? Or are we simply shying away from accounts that don't "feel" real?

The pursuit of fame for fame's sake has been one of the Internet's hallmarks, but in the era of "the influencer", are we becoming tired of being sold to at every turn? According to author, thought leader and mindset coach Maria Boznovska, audiences are awakening to their need for authenticity in order to engage beyond one or two interactions with online personalities, regardless of how many followers they have amassed. "It is no longer about following the crowd and taking someone's word as gospel, just because they have been labelled an influencer," Maria says. "An authentic influencer doesn't aim to tell people how to think, rather it is in their beingness of who they really are—on and off camera—that demonstrates an energy of authenticity that people naturally become attracted to. The audience can then determine their own truth." Maria says an authentic influencer does not become "obsessed" with how many followers they have accrued, or with suggesting others should think the way they do. They encourage people to want to think for their own selves and tap into their own truth about any given situation.

How to Create Social Engagement with Heart

Maria's tips for creating authentic relationships online:

- Awareness of your relationship with yourself is key. Are you coming from a place of love, acceptance and embracing who YOU are with compassion and understanding? This is key. The relationship with yourself is what you project to the world. It's how you see others and how you see the world, and in turn, how others see you.
- Clarify your top three values in life and in business. Are they aligned? These govern decisions you make and are what makes you live in alignment with your authentic self. Ask yourself: "In the context of my business, what are my three highest values?" "In the context of my life, what are my three highest values?" Then, sit back and observe. Are they aligned or profoundly opposite?
- Understand your message—your why—and then be fully self expressed in everything you do, say, write, and even how you dress. Your message and presence is then consistent. State: "This is who I am. How can I share who I am and be of service to others?" Most people ask: "This is who I am, do you like me?" and then twist and contort themselves to fit in and please the market. Thus, they lose the message they authentically want to share. Understand you are not for everyone. When you try to be someone you're not, there is a huge disconnect. Who you are authentically "being" is the message to the world.
- Own your vulnerability. Shine a light on where you feel vulnerable. By doing this way you heal yourself, and in the process heal others. This is our greatest equalizer—our commonality—that we all share: we have the same emotions, even though our stories may differ. It's what connects us and makes us feel seen, heard and validated for our experiences.
- Listen to understand, rather than merely listening to respond.
- Be interested, rather than interesting. Too often we think as an influencer we must be interesting and constantly make it about us. Without an audience you are not an influencer. Very quickly you realise it's not about you and necessarily your journey, rather it's about others and how your journey and experiences and message can unite others and bring oneness.
- Don't aim for perfection - Trying to be perfect is the exact opposite of being authentic. However many people are afraid that if they make mistakes then they won't be seen as an expert. This is what makes you relate-able and how we gain experience and evolve to be and become.

An authentic influencer doesn't aim to tell people how to think rather in "being" demonstrates a thought system of how to live congruently aligned. People can then determine their own truth. I do not want people to think the way I do, I merely want people to think: Empowered to think differently about themselves and about others. ENDS

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