

Be True To Something Other Than Yourself

"In order to gain autonomy, paradoxically, you have to start by submitting to a reality beyond your own head." -Tiago Forte

Are you true to yourself?

For some people "true to myself" means "committed only to what I feel in the moment independently of any promises I've made, expectations I've created, or rituals I've bound myself to."

For these people, they can break promises, ignore agreements, abandon commitments, and contradict themselves in any manner possible without feeling the slightest bit of accountability to anything but their own impulses. Why? Because they did what they felt like doing. Hence, they were true to themselves.

This kind of "truthfulness" leads to flakiness, instability, a loss of credibility, eventual frustration, and loss of autonomy.

For others, "true to myself" means "I am committed to demanding consistency and coherence from the way I narrate my life and the way I respond to my emotions. I am determined to live in accordance with my core values, principles, and beliefs even when it's inconvenient and uncomfortable. It's what C.S. Lewis was referring to when he described "faith" as "the the art of holding on to things your reason has once accepted, in spite of your changing moods."

This kind of truthfulness leads to inner freedom and personal power.

Some are very good at keeping it real as long as they get to redefine reality at whim. Others know how to keep it real by submitting to a reality beyond their own head.

In what sense are you true to yourself?

If it's the former kind, I suggest being true to something other than yourself.