

SOCIAL MEDIA & IDENTITY

Who Am I, Really?

A journal for finding your real self,
not the one that shows up in your feed.

“The profile is not the person.
But it can start to feel like one.”

— Thrive Offline

Who Am I, Really?

A journal for checking in with yourself - not your feed.

Every time you post, you make a split-second decision: is this the real me, or the me I want people to see? Over time, those small decisions can quietly shape how you actually feel about yourself.

Research shows that teens who show up authentically online — posting what genuinely reflects who they are — develop a stronger, clearer sense of identity.¹ This journal helps you figure out who that person actually is.

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Authenticity on social media, not idealized self-presentation, was correlated with higher self-concept clarity.

Adolescent Research Review, 2024

THE 4-STEP MIRROR CHECK

01 PAUSE

Before you post anything this week, stop for 3 seconds.

Ask: Does this actually represent me? Or just a version of me I think will get likes?

02 COMPARE

Think about who you are offline, with your closest friends, your family, when no one is watching. How close is that to the you that shows up online?

03 ANCHOR

Write down three things that are true about you that no follower count could change: Your values, your strengths, things you love that have nothing to do with your phone.

04 CHOOSE

This week, post or share one thing that honestly reflects who you are (not what you think will perform). Then notice how it feels.

1. Adolescent Research Review, 2024 — [pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC12084248/](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC12084248/)



Your Journal

Honest questions. Your own answers. No audience.

1 If none of your followers could ever see it, what would you post?

2 Does the you online feel like the you your closest people know? Where are the gaps?

3 When you scroll through other people's profiles, how do you feel about yourself afterward? Why?

4 What three words would the people who love you most use to describe you - offline?

YOUR THREE ANCHORS

Three things that are true about you that no number of likes or followers could change:

VALUE

STRENGTH

WHAT I LOVE



A conversation to have this week:

"If social media disappeared tomorrow - how would you know who you are?"

One thing to try this week:

Post or share something that honestly reflects who you are - not what you think will perform well. Notice how it feels to show up as yourself.

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You are more than what you post. More than your follower count. More than how you look in a photo. The realest version of you doesn't need an audience to exist.

Thrive Offline

WANT TO GO DEEPER?

Our Identity & Values workshop gives teens a phone-free space to explore the questions social media keeps stirring up but never actually answers. No lectures. Just honest conversation among young people who are figuring it out together.

Bring a workshop to your school, youth group, or faith community.

REMINDERS FOR YOUR VISION BOARD ...

From Brené Brown, "Courage starts with showing up and letting ourselves be seen."
"Fitting in is the greatest barrier to belonging", because it requires you to hide your true self to be accepted by others, whereas to truly belong you need to be who you really are.

I am worthy simply because I exist

