

Intuitive Reinvention™

4 WAYS PEOPLE HIDE

Most people go to great lengths to hide who they are. Hiding has roots in shame, guilt, fear of being judged, lack of self-trust, fear of rejection, etc. It robs us of living a full, authentic life. I've discovered four general ways people hide based on my interactions with clients as well as from personal experience (I used to be a FANTASIC hider). You might fall into one of these categories, or all four. The key is recognizing all the ways you hide so you can catch yourself. None of these feel good inside—they all feel bad.

So... how do YOU hide?

1. Outright Lying

These people lie to themselves and others. Examples include: lying about your relationship status to someone you're interested in; lying to the world about what you possess or how you live; misrepresenting yourself on a resume; and telling your partner you want to work things out when you really don't (or telling YOURSELF you want to work things out when you really don't), then actively sabotaging. You're too afraid to come out of hiding because it would mean coming clean, and nothing feels worse than having your shame, frustration and self-immolation being exposed to others. You'd rather be what you think others want you to be. It seems easier, but it feels awful.

2. Withholding Information

These people don't necessarily say untruths, but they leave out important details. Examples include: withholding information in order to control the circumstances; not telling someone you're newly dating that you are divorced or have children; telling your boss the project failed because of a lack of resources instead of adding that you saw this as an issue early on, but didn't do anything about it; and sharing your feelings with your partner, but leaving out the one you're most ashamed of. Fear of loss, whether it is loss of power or loss of a relationship, keeps you on your toes. You feel you have to stay one step ahead to maintain the illusion of control.

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3. Only Revealing “Safe” Parts

These people keep tight control on what they reveal about themselves to preserve a particular identity. Examples include: being at happy hour with co-workers where people are talking about their past jobs and you don't admit this is actually your first corporate job; not telling your partner the real reason you're upset is because you were bullied as a kid; and not admitting the reason you're late for dinner with friends is because you drove through McDonald's so you'd eat a smaller meal at the restaurant. You like to maintain the illusion of who you appear to be rather than who you really are. The fear of being found out and perceived as “less than” makes it impossible for you to relax around people.

4. Flying Under The Radar

These people keep quiet so no one will see them—they blend into the wallpaper. Examples include: attending a singles mixer but standing against the wall with your eyes fixated on the floor; being a supporting player at work and not taking credit for big wins; not joining a shared interest group (hiking, dining, poetry, etc.); and not giving your opinion when it could mean possible loss—even if it matters to you. You either want to be left alone or included based on what works best for you in that situation. Being independent and self-sufficient appeals to you, so you don't want to get emotionally close to anyone. Unless of course you fall ill or have some crisis which ignites your feelings of loneliness and isolation—then you may feel the universe has let you down and is punishing you with this life.

These hiding techniques lead to missing out on all sorts of things:

- Connection
- Intimacy
- Jobs
- Relationships
- Promotions
- Networking
- Opportunities
- What you truly want
- Being YOU

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Once you recognize the different ways you stay in your safe, cozy hiding place, it's time to step out into the open and take counterintuitive actions. Tell your boss how YOU helped land that new client, reveal a fear you have to your partner, admit to your friends you're struggling with weight loss and feel shame for eating a hamburger before dinner or reveal something vulnerable on a first date. Steps like these will move you toward self-acceptance and ultimately living an authentic life!



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