

## Personal Congruence- Script

Welcome to the Student Activities on-line Leadership Toolbox. My name is Ashley Strom and I am the Assistant Director for Recognized Student Organizations and Non-traditional Students at Minnesota State University Mankato.

I will be your pod cast guide.

The topic for this pod cast is Personal Congruence. In our time together I will help you understand what it means to be congruent, and offer steps for developing congruency in your own life.

I'd like to start with a story....

Early on in my position, I was asked to create a leadership series for students for Spring 2012. While thinking about what would be useful to cover as part of this series, one of my graduate assistants asked me, "Ashley, what is leadership to you? And what makes a good leader?" Admittedly, I was initially taken back by this question. Immediately I find myself searching my brain for any fancy terms to throw out there that will make him think I know what I am talking about and feel a little embarrassed that I am so unprepared to answer this question. Moments later however, I became immensely grateful. For had I not been asked this question, I may not have learned that I had some work to do.... "You know Imad, I am not sure I can answer that question for you this moment. Thank you though for asking me, as it occurs to me that this is something I need to think about."

As I moved forward and began to think about what leadership is to me and what makes a good leader, the answer that continued to pop up was "Integrity." And this is what Personal congruence is about...INTEGRITY. Being honest with yourself and others about what you value and believe, and reflecting those beliefs through your words and action. To further your understanding, I will now dissect the term Personal Congruence.

Most understand what personal means, but question marks may pop up for folks when they hear the term congruence. So what is congruence? And what does it mean to be congruent?

Congruency is derived from the latin verb 'congruere,' which means to 'meet together' or 'to agree.'

To be congruent then is when who you *are* (your values and beliefs), what you *say*, and what you *do* are in complete harmony- in other words, your actions and behavior are in alignment with your values.

At this point, you may be wondering "How do I know if I am congruent?"

The strategy I suggest is QUESTION ASKING. Ask yourself some questions while taking notice of your response and reactions to them.

If a complete stranger observed the things I do and how I spend my time, what might they believe about me? And, are these things true?

Am I genuine in my interactions with others? In other words, how often do I say what I mean and mean what I say?

Beyond these questions, you might also “try on” some phrases and see how your body reacts when you say them:

I trust myself.

I like myself.

Life is working for me.

Your reactions to these questions will tell you if you have some work to do. If you do... THAT'S GREAT! WHAT an OPPORTUNITY. If you don't...please contact me at [Ashley.Strom@mnsu.edu](mailto:Ashley.Strom@mnsu.edu). Clearly you are a diamond in the ruff and I have much to learn from you.

NOW...if you have found you have some work to do...you may feel daunted by the effort and work involved. And I can tell you that, yes, it is a lot of work. BUT...the work will be worth the effort and time if you desire the follow things:

**Renewed self confidence and purpose.**

**Increased motivation and drive.**

**A Sense of peacefulness about life.**

**Facility and ease in making decisions AND**

**For things to begin feel as though they simply fall into place.**

If these things attract you, please move forward with me. If not, thank you for your attention up to this point and I wish you the best along your journey.

Having covered personal congruence and what it means, and becoming familiar with exercises for testing your tendency toward congruence. We will now cover a strategy for Becoming congruent.

From our dissection of congruency you may have already deducted what is involved.

Becoming congruent involves TWO things:

1. To become aware of what it is you stand for and are passionate about adding to this world.
2. Set your life up so that you can act in line with these beliefs on a daily basis.

Step one then is really to get to know YOU and understand yourself. And step two, is to apply this information to your everyday life.

A few strategies will be helpful in getting to know YOU. AND the best part.... is that all of these strategies inform and complement each other:

Strategy #1

**keep a journal-** write down your experiences and your thoughts and feelings surrounding these experiences. This will help you learn to be self-reflective and understand where you focus your attention majority of the time. From there you are empowered to teak and change things along the way if you find you are not being congruent.

Strategy #2

**Take every opportunity to discover your strengths-** [journaling will likely bring some of your strengths to light] BUT there are many OBJECTIVE assessments and instruments out there such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and Strengths Finder [to name a few] that can assist you in this search.

And finally- Strategy #3

**Discover and come to know your values** - Journaling and any assessments you choose to take will point to and make evident what it is you value. Your job is to be open and receptive to whatever pops up- seemingly good or bad.

If you utilize these strategies, practicing patience and trusting the process, you will undoubtedly become aware of what it is you stand for and are passionate about adding to this world.

The next step, is to LIVE IT. To move away from the adage, “do as I say, not as I do” and move toward “do as I say, because it’s what I do.” ONLY then are you truly congruent.

Experience tells me that is no easy road. To support your path of becoming congruent a few quick tips before closing:

**Make it a habit to remind yourself of your beliefs everyday**

**Seek out a career that allows you to be congruent and demonstrate what you stand for**

**And finally,**

**seize opportunities and follow through.**

**You’ve already done this by simply listening to this podcast....QUESTION is....will you seize the opportunity to test out the strategies we’ve covered?**

