

MATTMCWILLIAMS

Live with Passion. Lead with Purpose. Leave a Legacy.

Who do You Really Want to Be?

Growing up I'd always been a Tiger Woods fan (until more recent indiscretions changed that). As an aspiring professional golfer, I spent hundreds of hours studying his every move. How he swung the club, how he practiced, how he worked out. I sought to model my game after his.

There was one giant problem with this strategy, though.

I wasn't Tiger Woods. (And, surprisingly, I am still not.)

We have different body types, different styles of play, and very different approaches to the mental side of the game. Sure, there were things that I could learn from him, but trying to be like him was a big mistake.

The story of four boys

My story reminds me of a story I heard once about four boys.

Jimmy was never quite happy with who he was. He wasn't proud of his upbringing and his hand-me-down clothes. He wasn't all that athletically gifted and never saw himself as the smartest kid in class.

Jimmy always wanted to be like Henry. He copied everything Henry did. He walked like Henry. He talked like Henry. When Henry started wearing a certain style of shoes, Jimmy lied away at night dreaming of what he could do to get those shoes.

The thing about Henry, though, was he didn't like himself all that much either. He wanted to be like Robert. Henry modeled his walking and talking after Robert. He always chose his clothes based on what Robert was wearing and tried to play the same sports as Robert did.

So Jimmy was copying Henry, who was copying Robert. Are you with me so far?

But...the thing about Robert is that he also had an inferiority complex. Most people didn't know, but he'd had a rough upbringing and no one to model life for him. He'd always looked up to Tony, who seem to have everything together (or as one of my mastermind members likes to say, "he had his poop in a group").

So Jimmy was copying Henry, who was copying Robert, who was copying Tony.

Here's where it gets interesting...Tony had low self-esteem, too. Sure, he put on a good show, but he was always insecure about the way he walked and talked. He had six sisters and no brothers, after all. He always felt he was too feminine. He looked up to Jimmy, though, because Jimmy was more manly. So, he tried to talk more like Jimmy and walk more like Jimmy.

So, if you're keeping track here:

Jimmy was copying Henry, who was copying Robert, who was copying Tony, who was copying...wait a minute...*himself*?

Don't worry, there won't be a test on this later. But, the story illustrates an important life lesson:

The people you most want to be like often want to be just like you.

Someone admires you just as much as you admire them. Someone admires you just like you admire someone else. Someone, in effect, has your poster on their wall. They have your action figure. They watch your every move.

Who do you really want to be?

There is nothing wrong with looking up to others. It's a great sign of respect and a wonderful way to improve yourself in certain areas of life.

In my case, there was nothing wrong with looking up to the way that Tiger Woods trained and practiced. I learned a lot from that. But the modeling should have ended there. Beyond that, I had to stick to my game. I had to ask myself, "Who do I really want to be?"

Don't sacrifice what makes you unique under the premise of self-improvement. If you're not careful, you'll forget what special gifts you've been given and your identity.

Ask yourself this question:

Who do I really want to be?

Not "*what* do you want to be?" or "who do you want to be *like*?" Who do you *really* want to be?

Then decide the path you must take to become that.

In the coming months, I will share some exciting new resources I'm working on that will help you find your path and achieve your dreams. And you'll learn more about the important distinction between learning *from* others and trying to *be* like them.

Stay tuned...I'm excited to share them with you!

But in the meantime remember that you have something very special to offer this world. Something that will change it for the better.

Go look in the mirror and you'll see what I am talking about.

Have you ever made the mistake of trying too hard to be like someone else? What was the result?