

Choosing What Fits

by Sandra Felt, LCSW

“Claim what fits and leave the rest.” It sounds like such a simple guideline for making decisions, doesn’t it? However, most of us learned long ago, before we can even remember doing so, to make our choices based on what we must do to please others and follow society’s rules.

Choosing what fits us is not necessarily a logical, rational, cognitive way to live. These choices don’t always follow the rules we have been taught. These choices don’t automatically respect and comply with the expectations or needs of others. On the other hand, neither are they made to intentionally hurt others—something our friends and family may not always understand. Claiming what fits comes from a deep place within us—from our core, from our true self. Learning to make choices in this different manner can change our life—and bring us more fully alive in the process.

We tend to discover this different way of making choices one day when we just can’t seem to “go along” with others to please them, to be socially acceptable, or to avoid conflict.

This way of choosing feels different inside. Sometimes it starts with a groan, a soft “no,” or just confusion when we simply cannot push ourselves to do what we believe we should. This particular decision often takes longer than usual to make. We may consider many more factors or ask for more help from others than we usually do to make a decision. But when the option that fits us best begins to come through into our conscious awareness and we finally “get clear,” it indeed feels “right” inside us. We feel a sense of relief, even if this choice might also feel terrifying and life-changing. And it simply won’t go away! No, instead, this “right” option for us tends to keep getting stronger and stronger until it sometimes shouts a strong, whole-hearted YES! Sometimes it feels good to wait for this YES! as it assures us we are choosing what truly fits us best and gives us the strength to follow through. At our core level, we KNOW this is what we must do.

And in this knowing moment, as we claim what fits us, the other options begin to fall aside. We just let them go and leave them behind. They simply don’t fit us—or perhaps no longer fit us. There is no need or reason to judge those other options as bad or wrong. They may, after all, fit someone else. They may even fit us at a different time or in a different situation. They simply don’t fit us now in this situation, and that is okay. We can just let that be okay. This process of letting go is similar to eating at a salad bar. We can choose the lettuce, tomatoes, and dressing we want and simply leave the beets and green peppers for others.

We may sometimes think we are risking everything to follow our heart. Even if we are scared, however, the feeling inside is more like finally, at long last, claiming and honoring who we authentically have become as an individual. This is home. This is our true self—and yes, claiming our true self really does matter.