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Embracing What's Yours

The words were curious: "What a great article! I'm not sure if it's a fit..."

I had submitted one of my articles to the editor of a coaching website. I knew that it might not be a fit but there was a part of me that wanted to see if I could slip it in, without any tailoring or re-write for this venue.

My response to the editor's suggestions of how to make a fit? I resist. Because my writing is about creative expression and making it fit takes all the fun out of it.

This is not the first time that this has happened. I've had other editors ask me to take out or change parts of my articles in order to publish. Of course, that is their job—to make the material suit their audience. And there is a part of me, deep within, that wants to shout, "You are missing the point! What I create is something to touch people's soul. They don't care what format it comes in! And if this seems a bit "dangerous" or too much of this or that, all the better." And then I make the choice not to re-write and thus not to publish. What a great thing self-publishing is. The editor and I part ways amicably—me all the stronger in my sense of self, them sometimes longing for the fish that got away.

There's a certain satisfaction from creating something that's unabashedly yours—something that you don't have to apologize for or tweak for others. Something that stands just as it is—without editing, explanation, or packaging. When we create for ourselves and ourselves alone, we feed our soul.

When I coach clients, one of the things we look at is the client's values. Some people find themselves apologizing for their values—those things that matter to them, like integrity or creativity or honesty. The truth is, we own our values. No one can take them away from us. And the more we step into our values, the more we are fulfilled as human beings. You might ask, what if someone has values that are Harmful or Bad? Values may be obscured by a sinister mask. But I assure you, after peeling the onion, values come back to the human spirit—what gives us meaning, what we strive for, how we want to contribute in the world.

What will you embrace that's fully yours? Whether it's a value, the way you tell a joke, a dance you do when you are happy or how you fold the laundry, make it yours. And if you get comments from others, just smile to yourself, knowing that it stands just as it is.

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energy industries. Carol specializes in helping clients get unstuck and into the flow of great work. She works her magic by bringing the power of the creative, intuitive right brain into a left-brained world. While her degrees in engineering from Northwestern University have served her well, it's been her life and work experiences that have moved her to do her best work. She is certified by The Coaches Training Institute and credentialed by the International Coach Federation.