

## Many People Equate Love with Conformity

The research and common sense are that we feel best and are most healthy when we are able to be ourselves, when we're being authentic and unique. However we likely didn't learn to be unique. We learned to conform, largely to the values of our parents. We've modeled and been strongly conditioned by them. This happened daily and consistently, such that we've become a lot like our parents. The result is that our uniqueness, spontaneity, and joy of exploring and learning can become squashed almost to extinction. This is not to suggest that your parents didn't also act very lovingly. But deep within all of us to some extent is the idea that to feel loved we have to please our parents and conform to their values. So, to go fishing (to do more of what we would really like to do), can mean we will be unloved. I believe this is perhaps the greatest reason why we can find it difficult to really be ourselves and have peace of mind. At a deep psychic level we equate conforming with being loved.

Excerpt from *Doctor's Orders: Go Fishing* by Dean Shrock, Ph.D.