

EXAMPLES of FEARS, BELIEFS, FANTASIES That Can Make Letting Go Hard

FEARS

- Losing a memory: If I let go of my prom dress, I will lose the memories. (Sentimental items can be the hardest to let go of because, along with all the sentiment, comes guilt!)
- Feeling guilty: about having spent \$ on something I never use; having made a commitment to someone or something that I cannot honestly keep
- What others will think
- Change, loss, risk
- Disappointing someone
- Empty space
- Making a mistake and “what-ifs”: What if I go on a cruise some day and I don’t have this to take? What if I lose 20 pounds? What if I give this away and my cousin who gave it to me finds out?
- Throwing out money
- Feeling shame when we acknowledge purchase or relationship mistakes)
- Losing a possibility
- Who I will be or how I will feel without this

BELIEFS ABOUT OURSELVES and WHAT MATTERS

- What I own is who I am. It is my identity. If I let something go, I will lose part of who I am.
- If I wear this, I will be different, I will fit in, I will succeed, I will change my image, etc.
- I am more secure with a full closet; it gives me a feeling of safety.
- Holding onto things, a relationship, a situation keeps past memories or hopes alive.
- It costs more to let things go than to keep them.
- It is easier and safer to keep things as they are. Don’t rock the boat!
- It is disrespectful not to keep what someone gives me.
- I am more abundant with more things, a desirable image or partner.
- It is wasteful to let go of something that is perfectly ok and might have another use.

FANTASIES/ILLUSIONS

- I am still the 20- or 30-something person who could fit into slim pants.”
- “Some day when...”: (*I move to the tropics, I get back to the size I was 10 years ago, I change jobs, I’m invited to...*)
- For some people things or relationships or roles they hold onto are more about possibility. They represent the promise of transformation into the person they thought they might become or into the life they have imagined.
- “I’m waiting for the right time.”
- In some cases, a person may identify MORE with their *outer* presentation in the world than with their deeper, truer Self.
- Sometimes our heart has a hard time letting go because we are energetically connected to an item, a memory, or to longings inside of us. They have left an imprint on us, keeping an old experience current. There can be a strong discrepancy between knowing that we “should” just let go of something and feeling unable to do so.