



# Claiming Yourself - To Serve Others Better

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Before you can claim other people in real community, you must claim yourself. Each of us has a “love tank” and we can't pour out to others if it is empty. The same concept that is required to grow in a relationship with others is used for yourself. Let's examine this using the word CLAIM.



First, you should **choose** yourself. Decide that you are accepting who you are and what you are about. This includes all your talents, skills and giftings, as well as, your short-comings, weaknesses, and mistakes. It is a conscious effort to make a decision that you are accepting who you are. You are uniquely you, created as a specific puzzle piece that fits in the puzzle of the world. If you don't accept your piece, the world has a hole in the picture. The world doesn't need any double pieces. They don't have anywhere to fit. As Judy Garland said, “be a first rate version of yourself, not a second rate version of someone else.”

Second, you should decide to **love** yourself. How can you “love others as you love yourself,” if you don't love yourself first? This love is not arrogant or self-centered. It isn't seeking prominence and notoriety. This self-love is patience, self-care, self-acceptance.

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Third, you should **acknowledge** yourself. Go ahead and express to yourself what your dreams and aspirations are. Create a vision board of your future. Acknowledge also your challenges: areas that you need to grow and increase, habits that you need to eliminate, relationships you need to address. Take stock of your abilities, talents, knowledge, and gifts and celebrate them.

Fourth, you should **invest in** yourself. Now that you have acknowledged your strengths and challenges, take action to develop or address them. This takes time and effort. But, you are worth it. This step enables you to be your best self which in turn helps you serve and give to others in a richer, more authentic way. Invest in self-care by eating healthy, exercising, relaxing, learning, and growing Spiritually. Put it on the calendar as an appointment with yourself and keep the appointment. You will thank yourself. Others will thank you. You are investing in being your best version. And, no one else can be you.



Fifth, know that you are **marked for greatness**. You were created because you have a purpose for being here. That purpose can only be fulfilled by you. You have a mission, a part of the puzzle of the world to fill. Finding out what that purpose or mission is can be challenging because it looks different for each of us. It could be that your mission is to be the supporting force that launches someone else into their greatness. That is a valuable purpose. It could be that you are meant to discover something world shattering or stop someone else from being shattered.

As you choose to be YOU, love yourself, acknowledge who you are and invest in yourself, you will find your purpose and the world will be blessed. You are valuable. You are worthy. You are needed in this world.

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