Summer Marmalade

by Cathy C. Bonczek

Maybe it's time to do some new taste tests.

Do you like marmalade, the spread that is made from oranges? For years I disliked it because I found it bitter and unsatisfying. It wasn't like raspberry jam! Or even Apricot preserves.

So I have spent decades being someone who didn't eat marmalade - until a couple of weeks ago, when my dear friend Jane handed me a jar of marmalade, among other farmstand delicacies she had picked out for me.

I had, obviously, never told her about my disdain. I love Jane so much, that I actually decided to try the marmalade.

It was a revelation! It is absolutely delicious, citrus-y with bite and the perfect combination of bitter and sweet.

I am currently obsessed. I must determine whether this is just the product of a master chef, or if other marmalades will be as inspiring.

What startles me, however, is the change. When did my palate shift? What makes me ready for marmalade at this stage of life? I think it's about acquired taste.

Our ability to hear truth and receive certain communications changes over time, too.

- Have you ever received feedback that you ignored, only to decide years later that it was accurate?
- Have you ever disdained a person's message because their style offended you: it was either too much or too little, only to realize later that their voice was just different than yours?
- Have you ever rejected an idea or an approach only to suspect later you may have dismissed it prematurely?

Maybe it's time to do some new taste tests. We can listen intentionally to someone we don't agree with, or pursue someone else's recommendation even if we're not fully aligned yet. We can change our assumptions about ourselves first, then receive new information, new reactions, and new insights.

We can also ask ourselves: What are we not ready to taste yet?