

# THE WORK OF BYRON KATIE

## A Simple Yet Powerful Practice

As we do The Work, not only do we remain alert to our stressful thoughts—the ones that cause all the anger, sadness, and frustration in your world—but we question them, and through that questioning the thoughts lose their power over us. Great spiritual texts describe the what—what it means to be free. The Work is the how. It shows you exactly how to identify and question any thought that would keep you from that freedom.

<https://thework.com/>





# Instructions for Doing The Work

*Do you really want to know the truth?* Investigate each of your statements using the four questions and the turnaround below. Leave out any statement beginning with “but,” “because,” or “and”. Take only one negative judgment at a time through the process of inquiry. Often you will have several negative judgments about one person. Take each judgment separately through the inquiry process. The Work is a meditation. It’s about awareness; it’s not about trying to change your mind. Let the mind ask the questions, then contemplate. Take your time, go inside, and wait for the deeper answers to surface.

## The Four Questions

1. **Is it true?**
2. **Can you absolutely know that it’s true?**
3. **How do you react, what happens, when you believe that thought?**
4. **Who would you be without the thought?**

Here is an expansion of how the four questions apply to the statement “Paul should understand me.”

1. **Is it true?** Is it true that he should understand you? Be still. Wait for the heart’s response.
2. **Can you absolutely know that it’s true?** Ultimately, can you really know what he should or shouldn’t understand? Can you absolutely know what is in his best interest to understand?
3. **How do you react, what happens, when you believe that thought?** What happens when you believe “Paul should understand me” and he doesn’t? Do you experience anger, stress, frustration? How do you treat Paul? Do you give him “the look”? Do you try to change him in any way? How do these reactions feel? How do you treat yourself? Does that thought bring stress or peace into your life? Be still as you listen.
4. **Who would you be without the thought?** Close your eyes. Picture yourself in the presence of Paul. Now imagine looking at Paul, just for a moment, without the thought “I want him to understand.” What do you see? What would your life look like without that thought?

## The Turnaround

Next, turn your statement around. The turnarounds are an opportunity to experience the opposite of what you believe to be true. You may find several turnarounds.

For example, “Paul should understand me” turns around to:

- *I* should understand me.
- *I* should understand *Paul*.
- Paul *shouldn’t* understand me.

Let yourself fully experience the turnarounds. For each one, find at least three genuine, specific examples in your life where the turnaround is true. This is not about blaming yourself or feeling guilty. It’s about discovering alternatives that can bring you peace.

## The Turnaround for Number 6

The turnaround for statement number 6 is a little different:

- “I don’t ever want to experience an argument with Paul again” turns around to:  
“I am willing to experience an argument with Paul again,” and  
“I look forward to experiencing an argument with Paul again.”

Number 6 is about welcoming all your thoughts and experiences with open arms, as it shows you where you are still at war with reality. If you feel any resistance to a thought, your Work is not done. When you can honestly look forward to experiences that have been uncomfortable, there is no longer anything to fear in life: you see everything as a gift that can bring you self-realization.