

# HIGHLIGHTS -- from Byron Katie's book - *Loving What Is* Inquiry / "THE WORK"

(Compiled by Laura M. Brotherson, LMFT, CST – 5/2019)

- **Radical Thinking.** Inquiry is radical acceptance, radical trust in God, radical spiritual surrender. As soon as you want freedom and peace more than you want anything else this will work for you.
- **Mental Fitness.** Doing this work is a mental discipline. Doing this work is a way to be mentally "fit."
- **Reality Therapy.** Inquiry is reality therapy. What is *is*. It prepares you for whatever comes next. There are no mistakes.
- **Reality is Perfect.** Make friends with reality because you don't have a choice anyway. When you argue with reality you lose and move into distress and suffering. How do we know something should happen? It does. How do we know Paul should watch TV? He does. What you need is what you have. How do I know I need it? It shows up. That's the reality. Once you accept reality then you no longer think it should be different than it is. That can be very freeing to live within the realm of *what is* instead of the realm of frustration regarding how many ways you think things should be different. You can just live in the present and see what shows up (God's business). What shows up is perfect for your learning and growth. It's the ultimate form of trust and submission to God's business. When your mind is clear what is *is* what you want. It's simply suffering when you want something other than *what is*.
- **Arguing with Reality.** As soon as you try to fight with reality you will lose... and you'll be in distress. (I often say to clients, "You are welcome to keep banging your head against a wall, but I would kinda think it hurts your head.") We suffer when we believe a thought that argues with reality or "what is." Suffering begins when you fight against *what is*. Stress begins when you even believe something that goes against *what is*. Reality is not going to wait for your permission. With this Inquiry work we stop being attached to a fairy tale and instead accept and work with our reality. Our job is to notice *what is* and be okay with it. Loving *what is* allows you to be sane. Insanity is thinking you can change reality or fight against *what is* and win. Watch for things like "I wish..." or "He should..." or "They shouldn't..." These are ways we argue with reality or with *what is*. Life becomes very simple when you accept reality and move into harmony with *what is* then work from there. Which is more empowering, "I shouldn't have lost my job!" (arguing with what already is) or "I lost my job...what can I do now?" (accepting what is then going from there). It's learning to see things without resistance. Think of the saying, "That which you resist persists." When you resist *what is* you add negative energy to it which fuels it. We might also tweak the saying to, "That which you resist causes you suffering" ...especially when you're resisting *what is* and have no control over it anyway.
- **Projections.** Everything you think you see in your life on the outside of you is actually a projection of your own thoughts or thinking. If you want to know what you think or believe look at what is showing up in your life. Our troubles are just a projection of our own stuff. Our lives are just a projection of our thoughts and beliefs. It's not what's "happening" to you

that's the problem but what "we believe or tell ourselves" about what's happening that is the problem. When we believe our stressful thoughts, we suffer. When we question our distressing thoughts, we can find peace. The world is based on our projections of it. Change your perceptions and projections and you change your experience and your reality.

- **Three Kinds of Business.** There are only three kinds of business: 1) your business, 2) the other person's business and 3) God's business. God's business is *what is*. God's business is what's the reality of things. God is *what is*. You can trust that God's business is perfect just as it is. Keep yourself within your own business. It's the only business you have any control over. Staying in your own business is a full-time job keeping you out of everyone else's business. Whose business is the issue anyway? Yours? The other person's? or God's? When you get into anyone's business other than your own it immediately creates separateness and disconnection.
- **You Don't Know What's Best for Anyone Else.** Someone else's path, journey or learning process is equal to mine. Can I really know what's best for anyone else in the long run? No. You can't absolutely know for sure. To think that I know what's best for anyone else is arrogance and stepping outside of "my business." Stay out of others' business mentally. Stay present in your own business mentally. It will be freeing to you. Who's running your business if you're in other people's business? You might even consider letting God run "your business" and you'll find even greater peace. This is what spiritual submission and surrender is all about.
- **Suffering from Attachment to Your Thoughts.** As soon as you believe something should be different than it is you move into a state of stress and

suffering. Of course you feel the way you do. You're attached to an un-investigated, un-true, or un-*what is* thought. There's no harm in a thought until you attach to it. Your suffering comes from your attachment to deeply embedded beliefs and fears. A belief is a thought you've been attaching to for years. We all have blind attachments to things we think are true, but these thoughts have never really been investigated. The thought is practically your identity. Inquiry will help you investigate and penetrate your beliefs to find what is true and what is real so you can make peace with *what is*. Can you think of a stress-free reason to keep your thought? Can you see a reason to change or drop the thought? And we're not saying you have to. Just see if you can find a reason that might make more sense to you. Inquiry is about investigation and realization. You're not trying to change anything per se, but just to maybe see things differently. An underlying core concept of inquiry is—Suffering is optional if you'll investigate the thinking that lies beneath it.

- **Inquiry and Unconditional Love.** Unconditional love is loving *what is*. You can love others unconditionally if you love and accept *what is*. Inquiry provides a way toward unconditional love in all of your relationships—with self and others.