



Investigating Untrue Thoughts, by Byron Katie

I have never experienced a stressful feeling that wasn't caused by attaching to an untrue thought. Behind every uncomfortable feeling, there's a thought that isn't true for us. "The wind shouldn't be

blowing." "My husband should agree with me." We have a thought that argues with reality, then we have a stressful feeling, and then we act on that feeling, creating more stress for ourselves. Rather than understand the original cause - a thought - we try to change our stressful feelings by looking outside ourselves. [...] Investigating an untrue thought will always lead you back to who you are. It hurts to believe you are other than who you are, to live any story other than happiness. If you put your hand into the fire, does anyone have to tell you to move it? Do you have to decide? No: when your hand starts to burn, it moves. You don't have to direct it; the hand moves itself. In the same way, once you understand, through inquiry, that an untrue thought causes suffering, you move away from it. Before the thought, you weren't suffering; with the thought, you're suffering; when you recognize that the thought isn't true, again there is no suffering. [...] Inquiry is a way to end confusion and to experience internal peace, even in a world of apparent chaos. Above all else, inquiry is about realizing that all the answers we ever need are always available inside us. Inquiry is more than a technique: it brings to life, from deep within us, an innate aspect of our being. When practiced for a while, inquiry takes on its own life within you. It appears whenever thoughts appear, as their balance and mate. This internal partnership leaves you free to live as a kind, fluid, fearless, amused listener, a student of yourself, and a friend who can be trusted not to resent, criticize, or hold a grudge. Eventually, realization is experienced automatically, as a way of life. Peace and joy naturally, inevitably, and irreversibly make their way into every corner of your mind, into every relationship and experience. The process is so subtle that you may not even have any conscious awareness of it. You may only know that you used to hurt and now you don't. --Byron Katie