

September 2008

I walked into a book shop recently and browsed the self help book. So many are about changing your thinking, changing your attitude, changing your perception. Change yourself and be Free.

Wanting to change yourself, the situation you are in or the world, is like looking outside your window, seeing the rain falling and deciding you must change the weather. Now that's insane. Wanting to be something you are not, is also an act of insanity. You are Who You Are. And yet there is so much around that tells us that is not enough.

We read, see, hear that slim is beautiful, rich is comfortable and youth is preferable.

When we resist what is right now we ignite a universal law that states, what we resist persist. Change, real change only occurs when we become who we are and stop trying to be who we are not.

Anrold Beisser MD wrote, "Change **does not take place** through a coercive attempt by the individual or by another person to change him, but it **does take place** if one takes the time and effort to be what he is -- to be fully invested in his current positions. By rejecting the role of change agent, we make meaningful and orderly change possible.

Now that is a paradoxical notion, is it not. In fact that is what Arnold Beisser called this idea. The paradoxical Theory of Change. He wrote is over 40 years ago and it is as relevant now as it was then.

Change can only occur when we literally abandon, at least for the time being, what we would like to become and attempt to be who we are. The idea is that we need to stand in one place in order to have a sure footing to move. It is difficult and in some cases impossible to move without that sure footing. We would slip and slide and fall over if we couldn't stand were we are.

So where are you right now? What do you believe or think about your life, your partner, your job or your health, that you want to change?

Socrates said, "The unexplored life is not worth living," and that is where this conversation is heading. Anwar Sadat, the assassinated Egyptian leader said, "He who cannot change the very fabric of his thought will never be able to change reality." In one of his talks Buddhist Monk, poet and Teacher, Thich Nhat Hahn invites us all to put a sticker on our fridge that says, Are You Sure?

Let's look at some beliefs. *Slim is Beautiful*. Many western women believe this and turn it around to say, I should be slim. I should not be so fat. I should eat salads more often. Byron Katie suggests that any thought that creates stress in your life needs to be questioned. She gives us four questions.

So without t changing your thought, (because it is after all **your** thought) ask yourself these 4 questions. Answer only with a yes or a no and take your time to answer.

1. IS IT TRUE?

Is it true you SHOULD be slim?

Is it true you SHOULD NOT be so fat?

2. CAN YOU ABSOLUTELY KNOW FOR SURE THAT IT IS TRUE?

3. WHEN YOU THINK THE THOUGHT ( I should be slim) HOW DO YOU REACT?

How does it make you feel?

How do you behave with others when you think that thought?

How do you behave towards yourself?

4. WHO WOULD YOU BE WITHOUT THE THOUGHT?

Mmmmm, now that's a good question.

Now turn the thought around.

I should not be slim ( and that is after all the reality isn't it) Remember wanting to change the weather. Crazy thinking.

At this moment in time, I should not be slim. Well is that the truth? Is it as true or even truer than the original thought? Can you give a reason then, why at this time, you should not be slim?

So, at least for the next few days, when you become aware of a thought that causes you distress, simply ask yourself the question IS IT TRUE?

Until next time