

Loving What Is Summary

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1-Sentence-Summary: *Loving What Is gives you four simple questions to turn negative thoughts around, change how you react to the events and people that stress you and thus end your own suffering to love reality as it is.*

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



I used to think that anyone, who claims to have had some kind of spiritual awakening, was a quack. But I also used to think making a lot of money was important. Ah, the ignorance of being young

In my 20s, I've had profound overnight turnarounds more than once. Some came from getting sick, others were just major shifts in perspective. The right book, the right video, the right phrase uttered at the right time and all of a sudden, I know I *have* to make a big change.

I think spiritual awakenings are similar to this. It's just that the thought process that went into them might not be as obvious. Maybe even completely subconscious. So when someone like Eckhart Tolle wakes up one morning as a changed man, it's not because he's crazy. It's because the right things happened to fall into place in an instant.

Byron Katie has also had such a profound realization. At 43 years old, after a 10-year struggle with rage, anxiety and depression, she woke up knowing that she only suffered, if she believed her own thoughts. If she didn't, there was no suffering. What's left is joy and gratitude to be alive, and she's been teaching that ever since.

She's taught the process, which she calls "The Work" to millions of people over the past three decades, and today, I'd like to share it with you.

Here are 3 lessons from *Loving What Is*:

1. You can overcome stress by dissecting your thoughts with four simple questions.
2. Give yourself more options to think differently by turning thoughts around.
3. You can't change reality by being frustrated about it.

Are you stressed, unhappy or frustrated? Then let's learn to love what is!

Lesson 1: Ask yourself four simple questions to overcome stress by changing your perspective.

When we talk about stress, we usually say "this project is stressing me out," or "Jason's really stressing about us going to this event next week." Using this kind of language has one fatal flaw though: it puts the responsibility on other people and external events. But stress isn't inherently created by those things. It's only in how we process these things that they suddenly become stressful in our heads.

Our interpretation of what's going on is what causes us to stress about it – or not. So if we change our interpretation, we'll change our definition of what's stressful too!

Byron Katie's "The Work" approach helps us pull off this shift in perspective by asking and answering four very simple questions for any stressful thought:

1. **Is this thought true?**
2. **Can I be absolutely sure that it's true without a doubt?**
3. **How do I react when I believe this thought?**
4. **Who would I be without this thought?**

For example, let's say you have an assignment for class and your partner hasn't sent you his slights the night before it's due. You might think: "Peter is really unreliable. How can he do this to me?"

Write this thought down and then go through the questions. Is Peter really unreliable? Can you tell from experience? Has this happened before? Are you 100% certain he's unreliable? What's your reaction to it? Do you get defensive? Angry? Helpless? What if you didn't think this thought? What would the world look like?

Once you start digging, most negative thoughts quickly fall apart. And then, you can turn them around. Literally.

Lesson 2: Turn your thoughts on their head to give yourself more options to think differently about a situation.

After you've done some serious interrogating with your thought, it's time for what Byron calls the "turnaround." **Flip the original thought on its head in various ways and just observe how each one makes you feel.**

Sticking with the example above, the thought "Peter is unreliable" might become "Am I unreliable?" or "Peter is reliable to his friends, why shouldn't he be to me?" or "Does Peter think I'm unreliable?" etc.

The feelings and reactions you'll have to all these options will differ greatly – and they should! Just carefully consider all of them and follow what your gut tells you is right. A turnaround will never give you one right answer – just a lot more options for your thoughts.

You can even answer the four questions again for those that you feel particularly strong about.

Lesson 3: Being frustrated about reality doesn't change anything, so stop it.

The weather's always a good icebreaker. It's neutral, it's always there, everyone has to deal with it and no one can do much about it. However, it's also a good way of spotting complainers, because people who complain about the weather tend to complain about a lot of other stuff they can't control too.

Complaining has a value of zero. Always. Everybody has problems. Most people don't care about yours. Whining to empty air isn't going to change anything. **You can't change reality by being frustrated about it.** Unless you use that energy to do something about it, your frustration is useless.

Don't try to change the realities you can't control. Find your place within those and do what you can. That's what'll make you happy.

Loving What Is Review

What I like about Byron Katie's approach is that it's simple. There's not much to it. Four questions. And a lot of thinking. That's it. It's a really good way of quickly cutting through the clutter. So if you feel frustrated, anxious or outright depressed, give *Loving What Is* a try.

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What else can you learn from the blinks?

- How to fix your relationship by doing "The Work"

- What ways you set yourself up to fail
- How to apply “The Work” to business
- The most important thing you can do to become more aware of your thoughts

Who would I recommend the Loving What Is summary to?

The 38 year old wife, who's depressed because her marriage feels broken, the 54 year old lawyer, who's very disappointed with his collaboration partners, and anyone who curses when they see it's raining outside.