

## **Example of an Inquiry at Work**

I'm having a heated discussion about a task.

Belief: "He Attacked Me."

### **Question 1 Of Inquiry: Is It True?**

The answer to Q1 is Yes or No only. And notice how the mind would like to justify, argue, and be right.

My answer is YES (I remember the physical experience of being attacked. I felt attacked, yes.)

### **Question 2: Can I Absolutely Know This Is True?**

The same question with a slightly different emphasis—Can I *absolutely* know this? Again, the answer would be Yes or No only.

My answer would be No. Not *absolutely* true.

### **Question 3: How Do I React, What Happens When I Believe This Thought: "He Attacked Me"?**

In this question, we explore our internal environment and watch our reactions and body language. We learn about the consequences of belief.

I might recoil. I feel first fearful, then angry. This happens fast. Going forward from there I keep a throttle on my underlying emotions because I don't want to act out of anger. I am no longer at ease. I become defensive, in my opinion. I start to dislike this person. I might take a step back. I might drop my gaze, look sideways, or start to stare into their face. My voice might become quieter or louder, my body language defensive (crossed arms) or aggressive (use hands to point, gesticulate). My body feels tense—across shoulders, my back might be stiff; or if more fearful, my legs might feel weak. I feel a push in the chest. My throat might be tight, my face frowning, my jaw tense.

These sensations and reactions in the body are the results of me thinking that I am under attack. They feed the reality of attack back to my mind, eliciting further thinking along the same lines. These new thoughts keep the body in the state of attack. Our mind literally develops our own proof and acts on that.

#### **Question 4: Who Would I Be, In This Same Situation, Without This Thought: "He Attacked Me"?**

In question 4, we allow a reality without the thought. We can't drop the thought—that's not possible—but we can imagine.

Without the thought, I can see that this topic is obviously important to the person in front of me. I observe their body language, I continue to listen. I see that they felt unheard, so I ask more questions to make sure I understand. My body is relaxed, I maintain eye contact. I pay very close attention. I stay connected. It is in my best interest to understand where they are coming from, and why it is so important to them. In this we meet, we are on the same page.

My body feels relaxed, my face feels relaxed, I am all ears and attention. This feels good, appreciative and alive. I like myself like this. In answering question 4, I explore a kinder, more connected reality. Without fail, this reality is also more open and powerful.

#### **Turnarounds**

The 4 questions of inquiry are followed by "turnarounds." The original statement can be turned to its opposite, to the self and the other. We find examples of how this new statement could be as true or truer for this situation.

- **Turnaround to the opposite:** "He did *not* attacking me."  
It is a conversation. They are defending their opinion. No attack is happening.
- **Turnaround to the other:** "I am attacking him."  
In question 3, I found how this is true. When I believe that they are attacking me, I attack back.

- **Turnaround to the self:** “I am attacking me.”  
Literally, this is what is happening in the feedback loop of my thinking, emotions and body sensations. I am caught in a closed system of attack.

### **How Does This Process Help?**

Through this inquiry, I have found my responsibility in the situation for how I felt, I have named and experienced my emotional state and found the cause of it (my thinking), and I have explored different truths. Through entertaining question 4, I have taught myself a different possibility of reacting in a stressful situation like this. This different possibility is far more comfortable and satisfying. My mind and body will remember this the next time. If you followed this inquiry with your own situation in mind, you have experienced a threatening person in a different light. This one inquiry could change your whole relationship.