
JUDGE YOUR PARTNER

Think of a recurring distressing situation, a situation that is reliably stressful even though it may have happened only once and recurs only in your mind. As you answer each of the questions below, allow yourself to mentally revisit the time and place of the stressful occurrence. Write about something or someone else (don't write about yourself) who caused you pain and that you have not forgiven 100%. Use short, simple sentences. Don't try to be spiritual or wise, or to censor yourself—try to fully experience the anger or pain as if the situation were occurring right now.

1. In this situation, who angers you, upsets you, saddens you, disappoints you, frightens you, disturbs you, etc., and why?

I am _____ with _____ because _____
emotion name

Example: I am angry with Paul because he doesn't listen to me.

2. In this situation, how do you want them to change? What do you want them to do?

I want _____ to _____
name

Example: I want Paul to see that he is wrong. I want him to stop lying to me. I want him to see that he is killing himself.

3. In this situation, what advice would you offer to them?

_____ should / shouldn't _____
name

Example: Paul should take a deep breath. He should calm down. He should see that his behavior frightens me. He should know that being right is not worth another heart attack.

4. In order for you to be happy in this situation, what do you need them to think, say, feel, or do?

I need _____ to _____
name

Example: I need Paul to hear me when I talk to him. I need him to take care of himself. I need him to admit that I am right.

5. What do you think of them in this situation? Make a list. (Remember, be petty and judgmental.)

_____ is _____
name

Example: Paul is unfair, arrogant, loud, dishonest, way out of line, and unconscious.

6. What is it about this situation that you don't ever want to experience again?

I don't ever want _____

Example: I don't ever want Paul to lie to me again. I don't ever want to see him ruining his health again.

Instructions for the Judge-Your-Partner Worksheet

Do you really want to know the truth? Investigate each of your statements using the four questions and the turnarounds below. This work is like a meditation. It's about awareness; it's not about trying to change your mind. Let the mind ask the questions, then contemplate. Take your time, go inside, and wait for the deeper answers to surface. Then turn each thought around. For the turnaround to statement 6, replace the words "I don't ever want to..." with "I am willing to..." and "I look forward to..."

The Four Questions

1. Is it true? ("Yes" or "No." If "No" move to 3)
2. Can you absolutely know that it's true? ("Yes" or "No")
3. How do you react when you think that thought?
4. Who would you be without the thought?

Here's an example of how the four questions might be applied to the statement, "Paul should understand me."

1. **Is it true?** Is it true that he should understand you? Be still. Wait for the heart's response.
2. **Can you absolutely know that it's true?** Ultimately, can you really know what he should or shouldn't understand? Can you absolutely know what's in his best interest to understand?
3. **How do you react, what happens, when you think that thought?** What happens when you think "Paul should understand me" and he doesn't? Do you experience anger, stress, frustration? Do you give him "the look"? Do you try to change him in any way? How do these reactions feel? Does that thought bring stress or peace into your life? What do you get from holding onto it? What's the payoff? Be still as you listen.
4. **Who would you be without the thought?** Close your eyes. Picture yourself in the presence of the person you want to understand you. Now imagine looking at that person, just for a moment, without the thought, "I want him to understand." What do you see? What would your life look like without that thought?

The Turnaround

Next, turn your statement around. The turnarounds are an opportunity to consider the opposite of what you believe to be true. You may find several turnarounds. For example, "Paul should understand me" turns around:

- to the opposite: Paul *shouldn't* understand me. (Isn't that reality sometimes?)
- to the other: I should understand Paul. (Can I understand that he doesn't understand me?)
- to the self: I should understand me. (It's my job, not his.)

Let yourself fully experience the turnarounds. For each one, find at least three specific, genuine examples of how each turnaround is true for you in this situation. Then, ask yourself, "Is that turnaround as true or truer?" This is not about blaming yourself or feeling guilty; it's about discovering alternatives that can bring you peace.

The Turnaround for Number 6

The turnaround for statement number 6 is a little different. "I don't ever want to experience an argument with Paul again" turns around to:

- I am *willing* to experience an argument with Paul again.
- I *look forward* to experiencing an argument with Paul again.

Number 6 is about welcoming all your thoughts and experiences with open arms. If you feel any resistance to a thought, you are still suffering. When you can honestly look forward to experiences that have been uncomfortable, there is no longer anything to fear in life—you see everything as a gift that can bring you self-realization.