



It is in our nature to desire to be understood. The Freudians tell us that maturity hinges on the movement from being understood (as the subjective center of the Universe) to understanding (the objective knowledge of others). If you've drawn this card, you are being asked to consider where you might move from *trying to be understood* to *seeking to understand*. In her book, "I Never Thought of it That Way," Suzanne Guzman suggests that "What am I missing?" is not just any question. It's *the* question."

This comes up at work (or in our personal lives) when any two people see a situation differently. Each will dig in and try harder to make their point with every turn of the conversation. We can see this as a vicious spiral in which both parties continue to refine their statements to ensure that the other understands their perspective – and thereby agrees with them – and confirms that the universe is "as it should be." When two people are engaged in such a debate, constructive outcomes allude them as they each strive to be understood in their fullness.

Consider an argument you had recently. How much time did you spend trying to understand the other's perspective, reasoning, or motivations? This card is nudging you to *seek first to understand*. Asking questions from a place of curiosity is the path to better communication, better relationships, and better decisions.

Some simple questions to try:

Can you say more about that?    What led you to that conclusion?    Why do you think that's important?

Seeking first to understand will not only improve your relationship with the individual but will help to ensure that you get to the best possible outcome for both parties. Work (and life) are not zero-sum games. We can and should seek win-win solutions. And that requires understanding.

I heard a nun once, talking about compassion, and she captured the most important truth that this card is revealing to you: "If we truly understood each other, we could never be angry." Not only does the search for understanding improve your outcomes, your "outer" experience – it also improves your inner one. Less anger, less frustration, more connection and joy. Next time you find yourself trying so hard to be understood, try shifting your frame – see if you can truly understand the other person's perspective. What can you agree with? What can you use to build a bridge for better outcomes for all?