

Excellence in education

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Collaborative Learning in Practice

Asking Powerful Questions

Powerful questions are provocative queries that put a halt to evasion and confusion. By asking the powerful question, the coach invites the learner to clarity, action, and discovery at a whole new level. As you can see from the following examples, these generally are open-ended questions that create greater possibility for expanded learning and fresh perspective

Anticipation

What is possible?
What if it works out exactly as you want it to?
What is the dream?
What is exciting to you about this?
What is the urge? What does your intuition tell you?

Assessment

What do you make of it?
What do you think is best?
How does it look to you?
How do you feel about it?
What resonates for you?

Clarification

What do you mean?
What does it feel like?
What is the part that is not yet clear?
Can you say more?
What do you want?

Elaboration

Can you tell me more?
What else?
What other ideas/thoughts/ feelings do you have about it?

Evaluation

What is the opportunity here?
What is the challenge?
How does this fit with your plans/way of life/values?
What do you think that means?
What is your assessment?

Example

What is an example?
For instance?
Like what?
Such as?
What would it look like

Exploration

What is here that you want to explore?
What part of the situation have you not yet explored?
What other angles can you think of?
What is just one more possibility?
What are your other options?

For Instance

If you could do it over again, what would you do differently?
If it had been you, what would you have done?
How else could a person handle this?
If you could do anything you wanted, what would you do?

Fun as Perspective

What does fun mean to you?
What was humorous about the situation?
How can you make this more fun?
How do you want it to be?
If you were to teach people how to have fun, what would you say?

History

What caused it?
What led up to it?
What have you tried so far?
What do you make of it all?

Implementation

What is the action plan?
What will you have to do to get the job done?
What support do you need to accomplish it?
What will you do?
When will you do it?

Integration

What will you take away from this?
How do you explain this to yourself?
What was the lesson?
How can you make sure you remember what you have learned?
How would you pull all this together?

Learning

If your life depended on taking action, what would you do?
If you had free choice in the matter, what would you do?
If the same thing came up again, what would you do?
If we could wipe the slate clean, what would you do?
If you had it to do over again, what would you do?

Options

What are the possibilities?
If you had your choice, what would you do?
What are possible solutions?
What will happen if you do, and what will happen if you don't?
What options can you create?

Outcomes

What do you want?
What is your desired outcome?
If you got it, what would you have?
How will you know you have reached it?
What would it look like?

Perspective

When you are ninety-five years old, what will you want to say about your life?
What will you think about these five years from now?
How does this relate to your life purpose?
In the bigger scheme of things, how important is this?
So what?

Planning

What do you plan to do about it?
What is your game plan?
What kind of plan do you need to create?
How do you suppose you could improve the situation?
Now what?

Predictions

How do you suppose it will all work out?
What will that get you?
Where will this lead?
What are the chances of success?
What is your prediction?

Resources

What resources do you need to help you decide?
What do you know about it now?
How do you suppose you can find out more about it?
What kind of picture do you have right now?
What resources are available to you?

Starting the session

What's occurred since we last spoke?
What would you like to talk about?
What's new/the latest/the update?
How was your week?
Where are you right now?

Substance

What seems to be the trouble?
What seems to be the main obstacle?
What is stopping you?
What concerns you the most about . . . ?

Summary

What is your conclusion?
How is this working?
How would you describe this?
What do you think this all amounts to?
How would you summarize the effort so far

Taking Action

What action will you take?
And after that?
What will you do? When?
Is this a time for action? What action?
Where do you go from here?
When will you do that?
What are your next steps? By what date or time will you complete these steps?

Notes

Sources of further information

Reproduced from: Coactive .com

www.thecoaches.com/resources/toolkit/pdfs/31-Powerful-Questions.pdf

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