

A PDC Resource

Self-coaching activity: **Exploring options through questions**

Self-coaching involves the skill of asking your-self pertinent questions. So what are the right sort of questions to ask? This activity will help you along the way. The questions below should help you find your own answers and solutions by changing your perspectives and broadening your viewpoint. This can often help you feel less stressed and more in control. Notice what questions help you explore the most.

First think about an issue that you are currently faced with that you would like to clarify or change, or some situation where you aren't sure what to do. Once you have identified your issue, read the questions below and observe which of them cause a reaction in you. This reaction can come in form of curiosity, denial or discomfort. If there is any reaction, this means it's a good question for you.

Next, take a piece of paper and write the answer to this question. Go back to the questions and look to see if any others resonate with you next? Answer them again in writing and go on until you are done. Here are some self-coaching question examples:

- What types of activities am I naturally drawn to?
- What activities are really easy for me to do?
- What have I been successful at in the past?
- What made me successful?
- How do other people describe me?
- What gives me energy? (Make a list)
- What drains my energy? (Make a list)
- What do I need to let go of?
- What type of environment inspires me?
- What thoughts and feelings energise me?
- What is my gut feeling telling me to do next?
- What is missing in my life right now, that I want more of?
- If I knew I couldn't fail, what would I do?
- If I could take a virtual tour into my perfect future, how would it look ? Describe in great detail what you see, hear, and feel! (add taste and smell if appropriate)
- What is the legacy I would like to leave? How should people remember me?
- Imagine I already know what to do, what would be my next step?
- If my best friend would be in this situation, what would I suggest to him/her?
- Am I expecting too much of myself or others?
- Who do I admire and why? (famous or not, dead or alive) What would they do?
- What is the worst thing that can happen? What is the best? What is likely?
- What stops me from moving forward? What would you like instead?
- What can I learn from this experience?
- What is the one thing I can do now, to change the situation around?
- What have I not thought of yet?
- How will I know if I have moved forward?
- What other possibilities do I have? What else?

- How is my current attitude supporting or undermining my goal?
- What does being successful look like for me?
- If I think it is not possible, what would make it possible?
- Who do I need to talk to, to get the right answers?
- Where do I find the missing information to be able to move forward?
- What do I need to ask myself to get unstuck?
- What dream have I given up?
- What kind of support would be helpful for me now?
- What would be a simple first step? What am I waiting for?

At the end of the process consider if there are any ACTIONS you can now take.

SILENCE

Silence often makes us nervous. As coaches we can worry that if we are not getting an answer to a question that it is the wrong question and that we need another to move the coachee forward. In reality, we are providing the coachee with the space to think; and to engage with their thoughts at a deeper level. We can support them to do this by offering them gentle encouragement and permission to take their time to think on this further. Listening with our whole bodies will help us to know when they are ready to share their thoughts.

Quotations on Silence

Read the following quotations on silence. Select 1 that has the greatest resonance for you.

“Between stimulus and response there is a space.
In that space is our power to choose our response.
In our response lies our growth and freedom”.
Viktor Frankl

“It is necessary to be somewhat under-employed if you want to do something significant.
Creativity comes when our minds are not fully or over occupied.”
James Watson, American scientist

“Don’t talk unless you can improve the silence.”
Jorge Luis Borges

“Wise men speak because they have something to say;
Fools because they have to say something.”
Plato

“Speech is silver and silence is golden”
German proverb

“He who does not understand your silence will probably not understand your words.”

Elbert Hubbard

“Silence is a source of Great Strength.”

Lao Tzu

“Silence is only frightening to people who are compulsively verbalizing.”

William S. Burroughs

“Speak only if it improves upon the silence.”

Mahatma Gandhi

“If there were a little more silence,
if we all kept quiet...
maybe we could understand something.”

Federico Fellini

“Silence is the element in which great things fashion themselves together;
that at length they may emerge, full-formed and majestic,
into the delight of life, which they are thenceforth to rule.”

Thomas Carlyle

“In the attitude of silence the soul finds the path in a clearer light,
and what is elusive and deceptive resolves itself into crystal clearness.”

Mahatma Gandhi

Did you know that SILENT and LISTEN contain the same letters...?