

THE ART OF THE QUESTION

Ask questions that encourage communication:

- Tell me more about ...
- I am not sure I understand the part about...
- Let me make sure I understood correctly...
- Can you help me understand?
- What would you like to see happen today?
- Let me summarize what you just said...
- I want to review your statements and note that this seems to have been very frustrating for you...
- I gather you have been very discouraged about this...
- It would help me if I understood better how you came to decide on the specifics of your request.
- Can you help me get a better idea of the reason for your request?
- Help me understand your view/perception of the issues
- What would it look like to you if this were resolved/not resolved?
- What would it look like if it was....
- Tell me more about how you feel about this...
- What will happen if this is not worked out today?
- What will the program look like without this part?
- What will life look like if this is not resolved? If it is resolved?
- I want to thank you for discussing such a hard issue with us and hope you can tell us more about...
- I am not sure I got this part of your overview correct. I understand that when you asked for...

Ask questions that encourage a discussion of beliefs/values:

- What truths can you find in what this other person is saying?
- Does understanding this better help you understand their perspective more? And if so, how?
- What is interesting to you about their view?
- How can what you are hearing today open new possibilities for a resolution?
- What exactly did you hear them say?
- What about their values and beliefs do you share and how might that impact what we are doing today?
- What is interesting or helpful to you about what you now know?
- Tell me more about your views of the world (in a specific area) and how that informs your view of this situation?
- How do you think your perspective and their perspective might impact working toward that resolution?
- You have very strong beliefs about this and your beliefs seem very important to you. I would really like to know more about how this developed in your life and how it impacts your decisions now?
- Now that you understand their views better, can you tell me what about their beliefs and values do you share?
- How did you come to this idea/belief/value of a resolution?

Other Questions

- What would it look like for you if this matter was resolved? How would you feel?
- Paint a picture for me of the future if this is settled/not settled?
- What wild ideas do you have that might help solve the problem?

What to Avoid?

- *Avoid a question that can only be answered yes or no.*
- *Avoid a question that begins with why.*
- *Avoid asking anyone to talk about their “side”.*

Additional Sample Questions

- WHAT MIGHT BE BENEFICIAL ABOUT YOUR/THIS SITUATION NOT CHANGING?
- IF YOU WEREN'T TRYING SO HARD TO CHANGE HER/HIS IDEAS, WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING?
- WHAT WOULD BE THE WORST CONSEQUENCE IF I/YOU DON'T DO ANYTHING?
- WHAT WILL YOU NOTICE WHEN HE/SHE IS TRULY INTERESTED IN RESOLVING THIS SITUATION?
- HOW WILL YOU KNOW WHEN THE FIGHT IS OVER?
- IF THIS WEREN'T ABOUT ME/YOU WHAT WOULD YOU/I BE NOTICING?
- WHAT WILD IDEAS HAVE YOU HAD ABOUT WHAT COULD BE DONE TO SOLVE THIS PROBLEM?
- WHAT DO YOU NEED TO EXPERIENCE & FOR HOW LONG IN ORDER FOR YOU TO BE CONVINCED THESE CHANGES WILL LAST?
- WHAT IS YOUR INTENT?
- HOW WILL YOU KNOW HIS/HER INTENTIONS ARE SINCERE?