



## Deconstructing Questions Class Notes

A. It all comes from Coaching Presence

B. Basic questions clarity

- What makes a yes/no question? It starts with: Did you, can you, will you, have you, do you, are you, etc.
- "Tell me more", "Define 'x' for me", "Help me understand" are not questions. They are statements, and despite whatever tone they are delivered with, they are actually not only directive, they are subtle demands.
- Queestions are suggestions masquerading as a question and therefore 'leading' someone to a solution you think they should employ.  
i.e. "What if you went in to your boss and told them how you feel about his verbal bullying?"

C. Distinctions about the 'who' that is asking questions. What are the assumptions and the POV of the world through which questions are asked?

### Examples

- Doctor asks questions from "What are the symptoms and circumstance so I can assess what the remedy needs to be?" secondarily "What's working so we can continue it?" not unlike a consulting frame...
- Parent asks questions from "What do I need to find out about what's going on, so I can protect them from harm?"
- Sales pro asks questions from "What objections are there that I have to help them clear of?" and "What are their needs so I can more easily present what I need to get the sale?"
- Thought provoking questions are not necessarily powerful "Where did the universe come from?"
- Almost all questions have the potential to be powerful. Their power is contingent on the situation, the client, their history, their conditioning, what they want or need, and all out of it happening in the moment, vs. a prescriptive approach "See situation A apply question # 279"

D. **\*\*Key point...**Most people ask questions from their default setting. If one isn't asking questions from the POV of the role then you're not likely to move them according to what's needed. So what's needed is to discern the nature of the role in the scenario and have the skill to switch to the optimal role required. I.E change your default setting.

What new world views would you hold if your questions were regularly targeted at the 'who' of the client instead of the details of the 'what'?

Deconstruction exercise:

Actors have to take apart everything a character says in order to understand what they want/need not only in the scene but in each and every moment. We're basically asking "Why, among all the things that could be said, is he saying or asking that?" A single word or two changes the meaning of the entire sentence.

Samples:

**What do you believe stands between you and complete happiness?**

- What (**who**) do you believe (**think, know, imagine**) stands (**lives, hovers, forces its way**) between you and complete (**sometimes, always, partial, no word before happiness at all**) happiness (**satisfaction, bliss, fulfillment, joy, financial freedom**)?

**How do you need me to be with you right now?**

- How do you need (**crave, desire, wish, want**) me to be with (**do for, coach, support, challenge you**) you right now (**during this session, in these next few minutes, this week, today**)?

**If you could deliver a 30 second speech to the entire world what would you say?**

- If you could deliver (**hear, watch, write, shout, sing**) a 30 second (**2 minute, 15 second, all day**) speech (**song, presentation, video**) to the entire (**liberal, conservative, terrorist, known, christian, female, teenage, sports**) what would you say (**show, whisper, declare, propose, demand**)?

**What would it take for you to double your profit margin with half the effort?**

- What (**who, what resources, new frame of mind, new tactics, different strategy**) would it take (**have to happen, need to change, demand from you, have to be stopped**) for you (**your team, your company, the business, your business**) to double (**triple,**

increase, increase tenfold, explode, skyrocket) your profit margin (revenue, income, sales) with half (quarter, one tenth) the effort (time, energy, workload, resources, team) , (in the next 90 days, year, 5 years, leave time out altogether)?

### **How big do you want your business to be?**

- How big (vibrant, profitable, number of people, global, revenue, payroll) do you want (need, hope, wish could happen magically, fear) your (gives ownership vs. you and your partner, or someone else's business) business (distinguishes between things like, hobbies, enterprise, venture) to be?

### **10 Keys to understanding question construction:**

- What POV (default role setting) am I asking this question from?
- What assumptions am I making?
- What have I heard that supports these assumptions?
- What is this question really designed to do?
- What is this question really asking for?
- What is this question NOT asking for?
- What questions do I have about this question?
- What different words can I put in "X" word's place?
- How does the meaning change?
- What happens when I emphasize a different word in the question via pitch, tone, volume or pace?
- What do I notice about what happened as a result of the way the question was asked?

### **\*\*\*Special Note –**

Remember that the client is one-of-a-kind human being, in a one-of-a-kind scenario, no matter how similar it appears to someone else, something else or some other time. To approach them with formulaic or 'canned questions' is to dishonor that person's uniqueness and treat them like a clone of others.