Powerful Questions



While many of us value having the right answers, consider what becomes possible if we shift focus to being curious and asking questions that expand our understanding. Powerful questions are open ended and empower the person responding to choose the direction they take. They create possibilities and encourage discovery, deeper understanding, and new insights. They are curious and non-judgmental as they seek to further learning and connection.

There are an infinite number of powerful questions available to you. Below is a brief selection to support your practice in communicating across difference as you get started.

Opening a Conversation

What is top of mind? What are you hoping for? What is the goal? What is the issue? What led here? What brought you here? What do you make of it?

Understanding What's Important

What do you want? What do you need? What makes it matter? Where will that get you? What does success look like? What is at stake? What is at risk? What is really going on?

Going Below the Surface

What do you wish? What do you feel? What comes up for you? What does it feel like? What are you holding onto? What about it excites you? What is good about it? What is this costing you? What are you tolerating? What voice is speaking? What is stopping you? What do you really want? How do you perceive me?

How do I come across? What is the question? What is the choice? What are you discovering? Who are you becoming? What are you resisting? What are you learning from it? How do you feel about it? What do you love about it? (to ask yourself) What might I not see? What might I not understand? What pain am I avoiding?

Examining the Current Situation

What is working? What is not working? What do you notice? What stands out? What strikes you? What is that? What about it? What drives you? What energizes you? Who energizes you?

What drains you? Who drains you? What do you see? What do you think? What have you tried? What is it like? What is the reality? How does it look to you? What do you think is best?

Exploring Possibilities

What is possible? What if yes? What if no? What is next? What will change? How might you? What might be? What will be? What else is possible? What will be different now? What will move you?

What would that give you? What resonates for you? What is new about this? What could you do less of? What could you do more of? What might you do? What would be different? What else might work? What if you could?

Probing for Clarity

What do you mean? What feels unclear? Would you? What else? Who else? Bv when? What now? Like what? What then? How else? With whom? Say more.

Closing the Conversation

What could you start doing? What could you stop doing? What will you commit to? What will you do next? How would you do it? What do you need to do? What one thing will you do? What conclusions do you draw? What is standing in your way? What is your back up plan? What can I do to help?