

Asking Powerful Questions

Source: NeighborWorks America

Examples of Simple, Powerful & Open Questions:

- Tell me more about that?
- I'm curious?
- What is important about that?
- Where do you see yourself in five years?
- What barriers might be in your way?
- How do you feel about that?
- What has changed?
- How are things different?
- What are your top priorities?
- What advice would you give to someone in your situation?
- What brings you joy?
- Who would you have to be to get that done?
- Where do you feel successful in your life?
- Is there anything you're missing?
- What's next?
- How do you know that?
- What are you proud of?
- What are you getting from that?
- What is the first step?
- What if that didn't matter?
- When can you do that?
- What is possible?
- What is this costing you?
- How would you feel about that when you are 95?
- What would your 95-year-old self tell you to do?

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?

Learning (cont.):

- 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 to do it over again, what would you do?

Options:

- 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 95-years-old, what will you want to say about your life?
- What will you think about this 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?

Resources (cont.):

- 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...?"
- What do you want?

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?

Take 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 will you complete these steps?