

Mentoring With Questions

Big Idea: Using questions to engage a mentee in the learning process can help them to think more deeply about the topic of conversation, gain insight into themselves, and encourage them to find their own answers to an issue. It gives the mentor insight into the mentee's level of understanding about that topic, their goals, background, and ways of thinking. It's also a good way to build rapport and relationship, which are foundational for transformational mentoring.

Assumptions: As mentors, we need to practice good listening skills, paying attention to the conversation's purpose and intent, being present and engaged with mind and physical posture, avoiding interrupting and jumping to conclusions, trying to see the situation from the speaker's perspective. It is asking open-ended questions to learn more, paraphrasing what you heard to confirm you understood. We also need to be self-aware and identify distractions.

QUESTION CLUSTERS

THINK, FEEL, DO, TRUST

THINK. What are your overall thoughts about this content? What's your key take-away? What if any lingering questions do you have? What are two things that you discovered from this conversation, content, etc..?

FEEL. What if any emotional reactions do you have to this concept or issue?

DO. What's one thing that you will try to apply? How? When? Could this be done in your context? Why? Why not?
Action Step. Ask God, "God, Is there anything else you want me to understand about this topic? If so, what? What's one little action step that you would like for me to take?" By what date will you try to accomplish your action step? Is there anything that you need to do because of hearing this lesson or listening to the Spirit? What is it?

TRUST. What would it look like to trust God in applying what you learned?

KNOW, GROW, SHOW

Like the above Think, Feel, Do, Trust, but with the added emphasis of sharing what's been learned.

KNOW. Is there anything else about this subject or conversation that you would like to know? [As the mentor, what do I want them to leave knowing or have learned?]

GROW. What steps will you take over the next 3-days, 3-weeks, 3-months to grow in this area?

SHOW. Who will you show what you learned? When?

W.O.W._G.

This set of questions can be useful for uncovering a worldview or beliefs, especially as it relates to how we relate to ourselves, God, and others or perspectives and assertions that others share.

WORLDVIEW. What is the worldview of the other person? What do they believe to be true about a topic? What's their perspective on the purpose, problem, fix, future of the issue? What would be the consequences if I live by the assertion or truth claim?

OPINION. What's Yours? Why do you believe what you believe? Does it reflect reality? How do you know?

WORD OF GOD. What does it say about the topic?

GAP? What's the gap between your opinion and God's Word?

BENEFITS, BARRIERS, PRINCIPLES, PRACTICES

BENEFITS. Why is this important? How can I benefit from what I have learned?

BARRIERS. What might be barriers to you trying to apply or live by what this lesson teaches?

PRINCIPLES [Principles are timeless and context-independent and provide a high-level framework for decision-making and behavior.] What insights might the principles reveal about God? About people? Implications: What might be consequences of not following the principles? Do you have any doubt about the validity of these principles?

PRACTICES [Practices are specific, concrete steps or methods used to follow a principle in a particular context.] What specific steps can you take to accomplish your goal? What resources do you need?

Self-evaluation. "Perfect 10" Based on what we learned today, create a profile of someone who would be rated a "10" in this skill. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being mastery, how would you rate yourself? How would others rate you?

Alignment. Alignment questions can help a mentee reveal possible blind spots or beliefs that may be barriers to acting, to the DO. To what degree do these principles align with where you grew up or what you grew up believing? What would it take to re-align to the ideas or practices that we just discussed? How do you think others around you or people from your background or culture would feel if this lesson was effectively implemented?

PURPOSE, PROBLEM, FIX, FUTURE

PURPOSE. What's the purpose of _____? What's its designed intent?

PROBLEM. What's the problem? How do you know that you have defined the problem properly?

FIX. What's needed to fix the problem? Has anyone defined the problem and proposed this fix in the past? What happened?

FUTURE. Once the issue is fixed, what will be the future consequence, implications, benefits, etc?

Mentors: Practicing Question-Asking

Trying to remember all the questions might be daunting. Pick a topic and practice using one cluster of questions with a friend or coworker. Don't forget to ask the Holy Spirit to bring questions to mind as you meet with your mentee.

Ask Other Mentors

What types of questions do you like to ask mentees? Why?

Sources & Resources

- For Mentors: Good Questions to Ask Your Mentee, Wake Forest University, <https://prod.wp.cdn.aws.wfu.edu/sites/35/2018/01/Good-Questions-to-Ask-Your-Mentee.pdf>
- 35 Questions mentors should ask their mentees, <https://www.togetherplatform.com/blog/questions-to-ask-a-mentee>
- 20 Discipleship Questions that Spark Awesome Spiritual Conversations, <https://ourbeststory.com/discipleship-questions-that-spark-awesome-spiritual-conversations/>