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?**