



The Lightworkers'  
Academy

# THE BANK OF POWERFUL COACHING QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

REFERENCE GUIDE

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# COACHING QUESTIONS (AND STATEMENTS) BY COACHING TENET

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# THE VALUE OF POWERFUL QUESTIONING AND STATING

## Powerful coaching questions...

- Help you gather new information
- Help you gain insight
- Elicit self-reflection
- Clarify your understanding
- Encourage the exploration of solutions
- Facilitate awareness

## Powerful coaching statements...

- Instill trust
- Establish and develop rapport
- Demonstrate active listening
- Demonstrate non-judgement
- Create connection
- Demonstrate expertise

## **COACHING TENET #1: KNOW THYSELF**

### ***Developing general self-awareness***

- Do I currently see a coach, therapist, mentor, guide, or other helping professional?
- How can I be more intentional about developing and implementing a self-awareness and introspection practice?
- How can I be more intentional about developing and implementing spirituality practice?
- How can I be more intentional about developing and implementing a self-care routine?
- How can I feel connected to my highest self?
- Do I believe things can change and be different?
- Do I believe people can change and be different?
- Do I know my own emotional triggers? What are they?
- Am I aware of my strongly-held beliefs and mental models? What are they?

### ***Self-awareness in your coaching practice***

- Am I leading with integrity and purpose?
- Do I know what the client wants from coaching?
- Am I coaching from a place of compassion and non-judgment?
- Am I working purposefully, one question at a time, towards my client's greatest desire(s)?
- Am I using the client's language in each question that I ask?
- Am I working **towards** something, and not **away** from something?
- Am I keeping the client focused on what they **do** want, and not on what they **do not** want?
- Am I mindful of looking for, or asking about, small changes that have already, or may happen, in the future?
- Am I inviting hope into the coaching session?
- Am I presupposing that hope exists in all sessions?
- Am I making assumptions?

- Am I passing judgment, even silently?
- Is there something about how the client is behaving, speaking, etc. that conflicts with my own values and beliefs? Is this impacting my ability to remain objective and non-judgmental?
- Am I using "growth" language vs. "lack" language (e.g. "yet", "thus far", "at the moment", "currently", "almost")?
- Do I persevere when the answer is "I don't know"?
- Do I feel confident enough to stay here until I have a clear understanding of what the client's greatest desires are?
- Am I wholly comfortable with silence?
- Am I using my client's strengths-based language?
- Am I using the client's exact words and metaphors?
- What is "wow" about my client?
- Am I looking for strengths from my client?
- Am I listening for signs of resilience?
- Am I building a relationship with the best version of my client?
- Am I coaching to my client's strengths?
- Am I asking enough "how" questions?
- Have I explored past successes?
- Am I using the creativity of my client to build solutions?
- Do I know what skills, qualities, and strengths are most meaningful to my client?
- Do I know which person/people is/are most important to my client and why?
- Do I know what my client values most in life?
- Am I creating scenarios where things are better and different?
- Am I using the client's strength and resource language to build a preferred future?
- Am I including questions that encourage an "ideal future"?

- Am I using the word “suppose” enough?
- Is my language creating a new reality?
- Am I shifting my client’s attention to new possibilities?
- Are my questions eliciting the best version of my client?
- Are my questions solution-focused?
- Are my questions future-oriented?
- Are my questions so small and detail-oriented that my client needs to really stretch and think in order to answer my questions?
- Generally, who speaks more during coaching sessions: my clients or me?
- Are my questions detailed enough?
- Do my questions ask the client to articulate sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and feelings that they would notice if they were to manifest their desired outcome?
- Do I get rich details about interactions the client would have with important friends or family members on the day of the desired outcome?
- Do I end my sessions with hope?
- Am I summarizing what stands out for me about the clients hopes and strengths?
- Have I told the client what impresses me about them?
- Have I invited the client to search for signs of their greatest desires
- Do I talk for less than 2-3 minutes?
- Do I believe that the client is the expert in their own life?
- Am I allowing the client to lead the coaching process?
- Are my questions person-centered?
- Do I trust the client will take from the session whatever they need to without having to tell them what to do?

### **COACHING TENET #3: DETERMINE IF IT'S THE RIGHT FIT** **(EXPLORATORY CALL)**

- What can I help you with?
- How do you prefer to be coached?
- What are you hoping to get out of coaching?
- What do you want to get out of the coaching experience?
- Have you ever worked with a coach before?
- Are you able to dedicate time weekly to coaching or coaching "assignments"?

### **COACHING TENET #4: ESTABLISH THE COACHING RELATIONSHIP** **(INTAKE SESSION)**

- What is the most empowering things I can do for you during our sessions?
- How would you like to be coached?
- What can I do to help you achieve your goals?
- How can I impact your life in the next 30 days? 3 months? 6 months?
- What are some signs I can look for that indicate you are feeling discouraged?
- How do you like to be motivated?
- What makes you feel motivated?
- What's the topic for today's session?
- Where would you like this session to go today?
- What do you want to cover today?
- What's on your mind today?
- What is an area you would like to focus on right now?
- What would you like to get out of today's session?
- What would you like to focus on for today's session?
- What do you want to achieve from this coaching session?
- I cannot do that; but what I can do is...

## **COACHING TENET #5: THE GOAL IS THE FOUNDATION**

### ***Helping clients identify goals***

- In what area(s) of your life are you dissatisfied?
- If you had the means to change anything about your life, what would it be and why?
- What result are you trying to achieve?
- Imagine your ideal life. How closely does your life presently resemble your ideal life?
- What does success look like?
- If you had a chance to do it over, what would you do differently?
- What are you trying to do?
- What have you done to try to solve the problem?
- What do you really want?
- What are you most proud of?
- What are you doing to **not** achieve your goal?
- What goal do you want to achieve?
- What would you like to happen with...?
- What outcome would be ideal?
- What do you want to change?
- Why are you hoping to achieve this goal?
- What would the benefits be if you achieved this goal?
- What would you most like to accomplish?

### ***Identifying values***

- What is most important to you?
- If money were no object, how would you spend your free time?
- On what do you spend (or save) your expendable income?
- In what activities do you engage in your free time?
- What do you enjoy or love doing?
- What topics are most interesting to you?
- What are you passionate about?
- What brings you joy?
- What gets you out of bed in the morning?



## ***Exploring client strengths***

- What are three strengths you can think of right away?
- What is something you have accomplished that you once you believed you could not?
- What are you most proud of in your life? What do you like about yourself?
- What do you do better than others?
- What do you enjoy or love doing? (we usually enjoy what we're good at)
- What small things do you do that you find extremely satisfying? What strengths could this point to? (eg. organizing the dishwasher, helping people feel welcome, remembering to buy cards/gifts)
- What do you love about your life?
- Who is your support system?
- How can you incorporate more of what you love into your life?
- What do you get complimented on? What could be the strengths that lie underneath?
- What would your partner or favourite person in the world say are your Top 3 strengths?
- What would your family say your strengths are? To go deeper, consider each family member in turn.
- What do your friends admire in you? What do you get asked to help with?
- What would your co-workers say are your strong points?
- When have you felt most energized? What were you doing?
- What have you created and brought into the world? (from childhood to now, anything you're proud of)
- Consider your various achievements (big & small): What personal traits would you give the credit to?
- What would not be like it is, had you not been part of it? What value did you add? (eg. volunteer or work projects)

- Think about when you have stood out and felt uncomfortable: What strengths have you learned to hide?
- Thinking about the worst experiences you have had: What strengths or abilities shine through?
- What challenges have you overcome? What strengths helped you along the way?
- What have you been told "not to be big-headed about"? (this could point to strengths and talents)
- When do you do the opposite of everyone else? What strengths could lie underneath this?
- What do you yearn to do? (this suggests possible strengths or talents)
- When have you been criticised for something that is really a strength? (think a parent criticising you for "too much energy/enthusiasm", teachers criticising you for your "curiosity")
- What are your unusual or unexpected talents? What does not 'fit' or get used in your life?
- What is the strength you have been avoiding?
- What do you admire most in others? Now, where do you already do this in your life?
- If you asked \_\_\_\_\_, what would they say about you?

### ***Identifying barriers to the goal:***

- What obstacles are getting in the way of success?
- If the obstacle(s) didn't exist, what would your life look like?
- Where would you live and work?
- What roadblocks do you expect or require planning?
- What resources can help you?
- Is there anything missing?
- What will one small step you take now?
- When are you going to start?
- How will you know you have been successful?
- What support do you need to get that done?
- What will happen (or, what is the cost) of you NOT doing this?
- What are three actions you can take that would make sense this week?
- On a scale of one to 10, how committed/motivated are you to doing it?
- What would it take to make it a 10?
- How does the vision you have for your life represent your values?

- Who would you be if you had nothing to prove?
- What is bugging you?
- What are you tolerating?
- Who are you tolerating?
- What does this really have to do with you?
- Are there any "should's" at play here?
- What is it costing you to tolerate this?
- How is this serving you?
- What is this costing you?
- How will you stop?
- What are you putting up with right now?
- Who will you have to become to stop tolerating this?
- What limitations might you be placing on yourself?

## **COACHING TENET #6: BUILD RAPPORT, ESTABLISH TRUST**

### ***Showing empathy***

- What do you need from me/others to help you achieve this?
- How can I best support you in this moment?
- I understand.
- I don't know.
- I'm proud of you.
- You deserve better.
- You can do better.
- What else?
- I would have done the same in your position.
- My heart aches for you.
- I am sorry that you had to go through that.
- I can't ever know exactly what that was like, but I can really feel how much it affected you.

## ***Withholding judgment***

- I am not here to judge you.
- Tell me more about that.
- How did you feel in that moment?
- Walk me through your thoughts and feelings in that moment.
- I understand how this could be frustrating for you.
- I understand how this could be confusing.
- Let me know if I've properly understood your problem.
- I hadn't considered that.
- Help me understand.
- How did you get to X?
- What makes you want X?
- What makes X a good solution/choice?
- What motivated you to do that?
- How does that relate to this?
- How do you see that working out?
- What are some other ways of looking at this?
- What questions do you have about...?
- What leads you to believe...?
- How do you feel about...?
- What do you make of...?
- What advice would you give to a friend about that?
- If someone did/said that to you what do you think would happen?
- What do you think you need to do right now?
- How has being "realistic" or "responsible" kept you from the life you want?
- How has doing what you think you "should" resulted in subpar experiences or regret for now having done something else?
- What is happening now (what, who, when, and how often)? What is the effect or result of this?
- What is required of you?

## ***Showing coachees that you're listening***

- Please tell me more.
- Go on.
- I'm listening.
- Do I have that right?
- Is that correct?
- It can be so frustrating when people we care about misinterpret us.”
- Please give me more details.
- So what I'm getting from you is...
- Let me see if I got that correctly.
- Can you tell me a bit more about what you mean when you say \_\_\_?
- Where did you discover that?
- How do you feel about that?
- What led you to that conclusion?
- These are the main points I've heard you make so far.
- Could you clarify?
- Are there other parts of that which you'd like me to know about?
- Please continue, I'm following what you're saying.
- Can you give me an example?
- Is this what you mean?
- I think I heard you say \_\_\_.
- Do I have that right or do you remember it differently?
- It sounds like you want/need/feed \_\_\_\_. Do I have that right, or would you describe it differently?
- Tell me more about why that is important to you.
- Please say more about that.
- What makes you say that?
- Why do you think that is so?
- Can you tell me more about the background of the situation?
- That is interesting. Can you tell me more?
- What led to that conclusion/action/result?

## ***Facilitating introspection and awareness***

- What does your intuition tell you about this situation?
- What are some other perspectives you've considered?
- What's been on your mind today?
- What are you excited about right now?
- Is there anything you're worried about?
- How connected are you feeling to the world?
- What are you passionate about?
- What do you value most in a friend?
- What consistently brings you joy right now?
- What feels hard in your life right now?
- Is there a decision you're contemplating that would be helpful to talk through together?
- What's bringing you pleasure right now?
- What feeling have you been experiencing the most lately?
- About what have you been proud of yourself for this week?
- Where are you finding the most meaning in life?
- Walk me through your thought process.

## ***Questions to ask coachees to ask themselves***

- What is my intention here?
- What are my core values?
- Which of my deep inner longings have I been ignoring?
- Who lights me up when I'm around them?
- Who drains my energy when I'm around them?
- When do I feel most alive?
- What am I feeling—nervous, anxious, trepidatious, excited, eager—and what is making me feel that way?
- How do I honor myself? Neglect myself?
- How have I grown as a person?
- How do I feel about (subject/issue)?
- What do I think about (subject/issue)?

## **COACHING TENET #9: THE COACHEE IS THE CHANGE AGENT**

### *Coaching Through Pre-Contemplation ("I won't")*

- I understand you are not ready right now, and that is okay. Here is how you can contact me if you decide at some point that you are ready.

### *Coaching Through Pre-Contemplation ("I can't")*

- What has kept you from reaching that goal?
- Where are you now in relation to your goal?
- What do you think is stopping you?
- What have you already tried?
- What progress have you made so far?
- On a scale of one to 10, how severe/serious/urgent is the situation?
- What is something you have done in your life that, at first, you thought you could not do?
- See questions that Identify Values
- See questions that Explore Client Strengths

### *Coaching Through Contemplation ("I may")*

- What would happen if you did nothing?
- How satisfied are you with your life right now?
- How would your life look if you did not make a change?
- What will life look like once you have achieved this goal?
- How will you feel when you have achieved this goal?
- What are the pros and cons of making this change?
- What is a change you have made in the past that you were first reluctant to make, but experienced success with?
- How does it benefit you to hold on to this behavior/person/thing/mindset?
- Does holding on to this behavior/person/thing/mindset align with who you want to be?
- Do you know other people who have achieved that goal?
- How have you tackled this/a similar situation before?
- Who do you know who has encountered a similar situation?

### *Coaching Through Preparation ("I will")*

- What are your options?
- What's the best/worst thing about that option?
- What else could you do?
- Who else might be able to help?
- What has worked for you already? How could you do more of that?
- What would happen if you did that?
- What could be your first step?
- Tell me how you're going to do that.
- What do you feel ready to do?
- How are going to go about it?
- If anything was possible, what would you do?
- On a scale of one to 10, what is the likelihood of your plan succeeding?
- What would it take to make it a 10?

### *Coaching Through Action ("I am")*

- What do you think you need to do next?
- What is the hardest/most challenging part of that for you?
- What do you think you need to do to get a better result (or closer to your goal)?
- What would you gain/lose by doing/saying that?
- Which option do you feel ready to act on?
- What could you do differently?
- How would you describe what you did?
- What do you think was really happening?
- What did you learn from \_\_\_\_\_?
- How could you turn this around this time?
- What could you do better this time?
- Is there anything else you can do?
- How can you help yourself avoid relapse right now?



### *Maintenance ("I still am")*

- What has contributed to your success so far?
- What is working well right now?
- How will you know when you have done it?
- On a scale of one to 10, where are you?
- What are you doing to keep the change going? What helps you to be so successful in maintaining the change?
- Do you still have to think about doing this the new way, or does it feel pretty automatic now?
- What steps are you taking to avoid going back to the old way of doing this?
- What are some things you're actively doing to avoid reverting to the old behavior(s)?
- What are some things that make you feel stressed? How are you coping with these things?

### *Relapse ("I've gone back [to previous behavior]")*

- What were the circumstances?
- What skills/relationships have you developed that you can leverage at this time?
- What skills/relationships have you developed that you can leverage at this time?
- How can I best support you at this time?
- Which patterns of thinking are the most harmful before you engage in the previous behavior?
- What are your trigger situations?
- What are the signs you are struggling?
- What will happen if you decide to continue to engage in the previous behavior?
- What are you grateful for?
- How can you help yourself get back on track?
- How have you responded to triggers in the past? Can you recognize any patterns?
- What kinds of coping strategies are you currently using to cope with your triggers?