

**June ,  
2020**

# The Coach Approach: Refining Our Questions



**Hosted by The Coach Approach  
Partners**

# Presence Practice



# The Coach Approach

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**Presence** – Showing up equipped and aware

**Listening** – Listening to understand

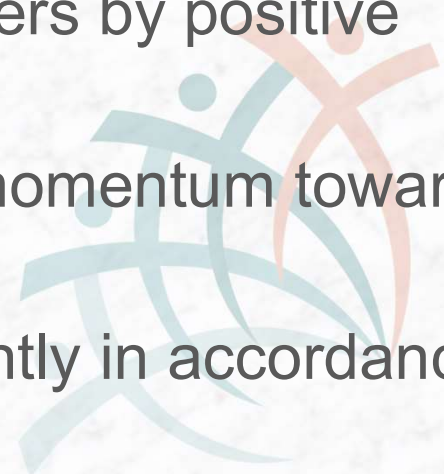
**Clarifying/Reflecting** – Checking your understanding

**Asking Good Questions** – Today!

**Giving Feedback** – Strengthening others by positive feedback

**Holding Accountability** – Keeping momentum toward desired outcomes for the coachee

**Modeling Behavior** – Acting consistently in accordance with The Coach Approach values



# The Purpose of Good Questions

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- ❑ **Serve a person who is dealing with challenging situations (Humble Inquiry, Servant Leadership)**
- ❑ **Help others think through problems and become more powerful in their lives**
- ❑ **Help them see their situation with more clarity and focus to help them toward their commitments**
- ❑ **Reveal information and solutions to the coachee that we couldn't see before our conversation**



# Questions to Avoid

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- ❑ **When we already know the answer to what we're asking**
- ❑ **Giving advice in disguise**
- ❑ **When we're not interested in their answer**
- ❑ **Asking “why don't you trust me?” or other “why” questions**

# Shifting into Questions that Serve

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Common Questions	Coach Approach Questions
Have you tried _____?	What have you tried? What could you try?
Isn't that _(bad, scary, etc.)_?	How do you feel about that? How might you feel if that happens?
Should you talk to _____ about that?	How might you prepare yourself for a conversation?
Why are you angry?	How are you feeling? You look like you might be angry. Is that right?
Why did you do that?	What are you going to do differently next time?

# Asking Questions to Solve Issues

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**Most often, we ask questions to learn more about a situation so that we can act or make a decision based off of that information.**

**“What time does the bus come?”**

**“What movie do you want to see?”**

**“What do you want to eat?”**

**With questions we learn, then we decide, then we act.**



# Closing Questions

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**We call these questions “Closing Questions” because they close a conversation toward a decision or action.**

**Closing Questions are useful for**

- 1. Identifying needs and priorities**
- 2. Getting clarity**
- 3. Making decisions and setting plans**





# Closing Questions in the Coach Approach

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**Using the Coach Approach, it's often that we can default to using Closing Questions**

**“What is your best option?”**

**“What can you commit to?”**

**“What is your next step?”**

**“How can I support you?”**

**These questions are all closing!**



# Risks of Over-reliance of Closing Questions

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**If you only ask closing questions, you might be...**

- ❑ **Attempting to solve the wrong problem (the symptom and not the illness)**
- ❑ **Rushing the person you're speaking with into making a bad decision**
- ❑ **Preventing opportunities for a person to think, grow, and develop as professionals**
- ❑ **You're no longer in service to the person you're coaching**

# Opening Questions

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**Opening questions offer opportunities for exploration of new options, possibilities, or ideas**

**What other options do you see?**

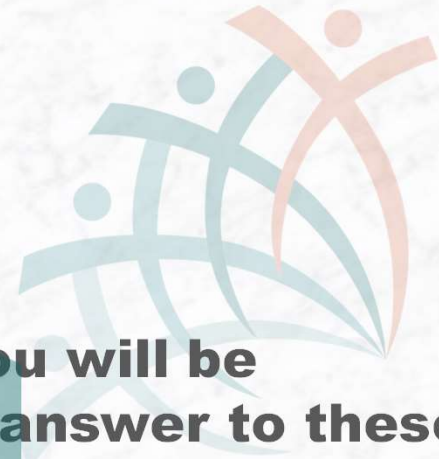
**What else...?**

**How else...?**

**Who else...?**

**Where else...?**

**This is where innovation comes from! You will be surprised and delighted by what people answer to these types of questions.**





# Balancing Opening & Closing Questions

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Opening Question:  
What are your options?

Opening Question:  
What might you need in order to move forward?

Opening Question:  
How else might I support you?



Closing Question:  
Which option do you think is the best?

Closing Question:  
Where can you get the things you need?

Closing Question:  
What can you commit to?



# Situation-Centered v Person-Centered Questions

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**So far, the questions we've covered have concerned the situation that a person is going through.**

**It's often overlooked to ask the person about themselves and how they're feeling about the situation. This might change their entire outlook about what they want to change!**

# Big Person-Centered Questions and their Purpose

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## **“How would it feel to achieve this goal?”**

- ❑ **If they say it would feel good (and you believe it), great!**
- ❑ **If this question is met with a shrug, maybe it's not as important – use an opening question to learn what else might be going on that would make a bigger impact.**

## **“How does this situation make you feel?”**

- ❑ **Do they want to change the situation, or change themselves in response to what's happening?**

**Use your clarifying, reflecting and listening skills to make sure you're getting the information they're sending, even if it's non-verbal!**

# Other Considerations for Good Questions

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## Situation-Focused

- ❑ **What might be barriers to your plan?**
- ❑ **What can you do to avoid this situation in the future?**
- ❑ **What resources do you need to make this happen?**

## Person-Focused

- ❑ **How are you feeling about this situation?**
- ❑ **What are you noticing about yourself as you hear yourself talk? (somatic examples)**
- ❑ **How might you want to show up to future situations like this?**

# Balancing The Four Question Types

	Questions about the SITUATION	Questions about the PERSON
<b>Questions that OPEN (toward possibility)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What are some other options?</li><li>• What else might be going on in this situation that you aren't aware of?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What would it take to help you feel supported?</li><li>• What could you do to ensure you get the results you want?</li></ul>
<b>Questions that CLOSE (toward action or certainty)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What would you like to be different?</li><li>• What might you try first?</li><li>• How can I support you?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How does this situation make you feel?</li><li>• How would it feel to follow through on this plan?</li><li>• May I check back with you in 2 weeks to see how things are going, or would another time work better?</li></ul>



# Which are the Powerful Questions?

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**Powerful questions emerge naturally from listening well and using all question types.**

**Notice where a person's thoughts tend to go and ask questions from a different quadrant. This will get them to think in a different way!**

**Make sure they have time to answer – let “I don't know” be an acceptable answer for an engaged participant in The Coach Approach. Give space and remain curious!**

**Their good thinking is more important than our good questions!**

# Other Tips

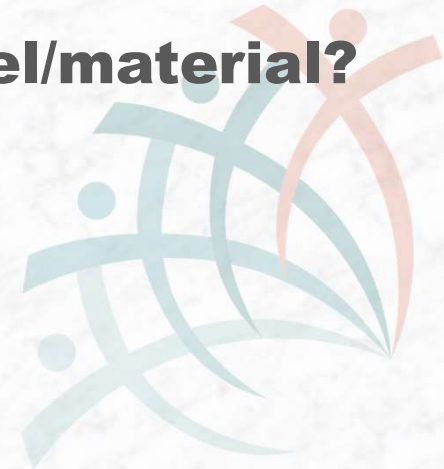
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- ❑ **Don't forget to Clarify/Reflect before asking your questions – ensure that you're hearing what's really going on!**
- ❑ **Ask not just about a task, but about them, their thoughts, feelings, and family (hopefully with genuine interest)**
- ❑ **Ask questions that keep control of the coaching conversation in their hands as much as possible**
- ❑ **Ask questions about how they want you to support them**
- ❑ **REMEMBER TO FOLLOW UP! (Accountability)**

# How Can We Take This Forward?

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- ❑ **Connect to Systems of Care**
- ❑ **Where can we practice asking these different questions in our lives?**
- ❑ **What's your reaction to this model/material?  
Exciting? Daunting? Other?**



# Thank You!

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**Next Learning Circle is scheduled for  
Date: Thursday, July 30, 2020**

**Time: 2:00 -3:15 pm.**

**Register at:**

**[https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom/register/tZUsce2uqjotH9CG\\_FEdXUa1hfGGtMdbBbRI](https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom/register/tZUsce2uqjotH9CG_FEdXUa1hfGGtMdbBbRI)**