

Coaching Tip: 10 Best Questions That Will Help Your Clients Make Cleaner Decisions – Part Two

Welcome Coaches to Part Two on the 10 best questions that will help your clients clarify their thinking and make choices that are aligned with their desires and values - whether it's a "cross roads" type of a dilemma like leaving their soul-sucking job or something smaller like whether or not they should tell their mother to screw off... maybe that's not smaller but you get the point.

Again, I want to give credit to the late Debbie Ford for crafting these remarkably potent questions. Use them on yourself or with your clients and, as always, let me know how they impact your coaching.

In Part One, I articulated the first 5 questions, if you haven't listened to that recording or read the transcript, don't worry about it – these questions are not in any particular order and can be used as standalone inquiries or in combination with one another.

Again, these questions will almost always help to unpack what we as Martha Beck Coaches care most about – the motivation that is driving our clients suffering which causes us to make story based decisions. So, we will start with Questions 6-10:

6. Will you use this situation as a catalyst to grow and evolve or will you use it to beat yourself up?

This question is very useful for those who ruminate over their mistakes, setbacks or failures. When you berate yourself, you have little or no access to the deeper meaning of that experience or the invaluable knowledge you can learn from that failure. It's also a great question for

exploring why your client is berating himself or herself in the first place.... maybe they learned it from their parents or other influential people in their life but regardless of where they adopted these self-critical behaviors, the reason we are so critical of ourselves, according to Kristin Neff, is because we believe it will motivate us to reach our goals or at the very least prevent us from being a sloth and couch surfing all day. If these motivations resonate for your client, you may want to ask them if self-flagellating is actually inspiring them to move forward or is it keeping them stuck in the past – which was Question #1 if you recall.

7. Does this choice empower you or disempower you?

This is an ideal question for those clients who engage in internal negative thinking and let their lizards drive the bus. For example, if your client says “I’m sure that guy thinks I’m too fat and won’t ask me out again” or “I doubt I’ll get asked for a second interview after asking such a dumb question,” pause and ask the client, “Does this internal dialogue empower you or disempower you? Is it serving you? If so, how? If not what does engaging in this dialogue cost you? You can apply this to anything from eating past the point of satiation when your client’s goal is to lose weight or engaging in an online relationship with someone else when the client says they want to work on bettering their marriage.

8. Is this an act of self-love or an act of self-sabotage?

Every time we get entangled in our negative self-thinking or let our dogmatic beliefs trump our hearts desires, we self-sabotage. When you love all of yourself, your strengths and your self-perceived shortcomings, you will naturally lean toward making choices that are in alignment with the highest vision you see for yourself and that feel good about on a day-to-day basis. Self-sabotage is the opposite – it’s self-hatred. When you self-sabotage, you deny yourself of your own love and the love of others. Think about it – when you are afraid to say something because you’re scared someone will think you’re dumb, you hold back and deny yourself the right to self-expression – to being heard, seen and understood. We come up with all sorts of stories why we shouldn’t say anything – like I’ll be rejected or no my opinion is unimportant. Would someone who loved themselves make this choice is another way to phrase this gorgeous question.

9. Is this an act of faith or an act of fear?

Most of the important choices we make are guarded by fear. The Lizard's job is to protect you but it doesn't know the difference between real fear and the illusion of fear. There is no greater entrapment than allowing fear to hop in the front seat. Fear prevents us from moving outside of our comfort zone and taking risks. It informs our choices and tells us what we can and can't do. Mostly what we can't. Faith, on the other hand, is like a breath of fresh air. It's what catapults us into Square Two. It's full of hope, possibility and trust and it allows us to dream and scheme about our future. When your client is faced with a choice, like whether or not to leave their job, try asking them this: "if you had 100% of faith in a positive future, what would you do?" Conversely, ask them what would fear say? I don't need to tell you what to do from there... if you do want the answer, listen to the next question.

10. Am I choosing from my divinity or am I choosing from my humanity?

Debbie says this question allows us to "access the broader and more expanded version of ourselves even as we are living a human experience". Rather than responding from our ego, our fear and our human limitations, what if we rose above that. What if we believed and lived from "the universe is conspiring in my favor or I am enough" for example. I often contemplate what our world might be like, if we allowed that higher consciousness to guide us more often. Would we be more loving to ourselves? More compassionate towards others who didn't agree with our opinions or our political stance? Might we be more self-forgiving when we screw up or let the grudges we hold against others die? Debbie suggests you make a list of what would be available to you if you allowed your higher self or source to guide you? How would you coach, for example, if you put your fears and limitations aside and knew that you have everything you need right now to help your client? Awwwww.... food for thought.

Thank you for listening to my Coaching Tip of the Week... and, as usual, I love to hear from you... I really do so don't be shy about replying to this and letting me know if these tips are valuable. I need a little inspiration every now and then too!

Cheers,
Jackie