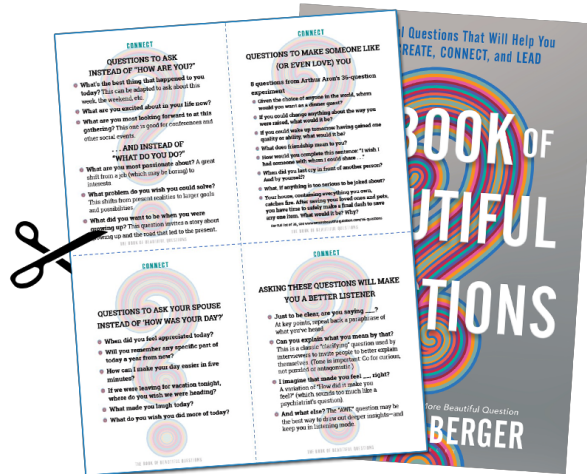


WELCOME TO THE BOOK OF BEAUTIFUL QUESTIONS

Q-CARDS



You can print your cards via an inkjet printer on regular paper and cut them with scissors.

-OR-

Buy heavyweight postcard specialty paper made for home inkjet printers.

- We suggest “Staples Heavyweight Postcards • Quantity 100” or “Avery template 8387 Matte White Postcards.”
- The above packages provide four 5.5 x 4.25 inch cards to a heavyweight sheet, with easy-tear perforations built-in.
- Buy at your Staples bricks-and-mortar store (they’re usually heavily discounted there) or online at [staples.com](https://www.staples.com) (search for “heavyweight postcards”) or at your favorite office-supply store.

Happy questioning!

ASK THESE FOUR QUESTIONS TO CHECK YOUR BIASES AND BELIEFS

- **What am I inclined to believe on this particular issue?** Start by trying to articulate your beliefs/biases.
- **Why do I believe what I believe?** The “jugular question,” per Nobel Prize-winning physicist Arno Penzias, forces you to consider the basis of those beliefs.
- **What would I like to be true?** A “desirability bias” may lead you to think something is true because you want it to be true.
- **What if the opposite is true?** This question is inspired by “debiasing” experts and Seinfeld’s George Costanza.

QUESTIONS TO TEST YOUR “INTELLECTUAL HUMILITY”

- **Do I tend to think more like a soldier or a scout?** A soldier’s job is to defend, while a scout’s purpose is to explore and discover.
- **Would I rather be right, or would I rather understand?** If you place too much importance on being right, it can put you in “defense” mode and close off learning and understanding.
- **Do I solicit and seek out opposing views?** Don’t ask others if they agree with you—ask if they disagree and invite them to say why.
- **Do I enjoy the “pleasant surprise” of discovering I’m mistaken?** Finding out you were wrong about something needn’t be cause for shame; it’s a sign of intellectual openness and growth.

Questions created or influenced by: 1. Julia Galef; 2. Christopher Schroeder; 4. Julia Galef.

USE THESE 5 QUESTIONS TO DETECT B.S.

- **How strong is the evidence?** Critical thinking demands that there be substance behind any claim. “Evidence” questions might include “Does this evidence come from a solid source? Is there an agenda behind it?”
- **What are they not telling me?** Sometimes the problem with information is not what is there, but what’s missing—whether it’s a news story with insufficient reporting or a sales pitch that leaves out important details.
- **Does it logically follow?** When people are trying to persuade you, they may use flawed reasoning that suggests you should believe A because of B.
- **What is the opposing view?** To avoid “weak-sense critical thinking,” be willing to seek out an opposing side of the issue you’re deciding on—and try to consider it with an open mind.
- **Which of the conflicting views has more evidence behind it?** Go with the side that has more weight.

USE THESE 5 QUESTIONS TO OPEN UP POSSIBILITIES

- **How can I “open up” the question to be decided?** We have a tendency to make binary decisions (yes/no, either/or), which limits options. Try framing your decision with open-ended questions (“What are the best ways...?” “How might I...?”).
- **What is the great, the good, and the ugly?** When making decisions, try to choose from three options by projecting three different potential outcomes—one very positive, one moderate, and one negative.
- **If none of the current options were available, what would I do?** Imagine that existing options you’re deciding between have vanished—this forces you to try to come up with additional possibilities. Upon returning to reality, you can weigh newly-imagined options against existing ones.
- **What is the counterintuitive choice?** Include one option that goes completely against the others; you probably won’t choose it, but it stimulates unconventional thinking.
- **What would an outsider do?** You can get an actual outsider to help answer this—or just try to look at the situation the way an outsider might.

DECIDE

QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE TAKING THAT JOB

- **Can the little person rise to the top?** Seek the proof in the form of multiple stories of people who were able to make that climb.
- **How does the organization react to mistakes?** This will determine whether you can experiment and grow. (Another way of asking: Will I be punished for exploring?)
- **Can I have influence in this organization?** Find out whether people at all levels have a say.
- **How have others here added to their skills?** A key determinant of whether you'll be able to evolve.
- **Does this place encourage camaraderie?** The social aspect of work is more important than most think.
- **Will I enjoy the "small pleasures" of my daily routine?** Being happy in your job hinges on the little things you'll be doing every day.

Questions created or influenced by: 1, 2, 3: Adam Grant;
4, 5: Ron Friedman

THE BOOK OF BEAUTIFUL QUESTIONS

DECIDE

"COURAGEOUS" QUESTIONS TO OVERCOME FEAR OF FAILURE

- **What would I try if I knew I could not fail?** Start with this favorite Silicon Valley question to help identify bold possibilities.
- **What is the worst that could happen?** This may seem negative, but the question forces you to confront hazy fears and consider them in a more specific way (which usually makes them less scary).
- **If I did fail, what would be the likely causes?** Do a "premortem" on a possible failure, listing some of the potential causes; this tells you what pitfalls to avoid.
- **... and how would I recover from that failure?** Just thinking about how you would pick up the pieces if you fail lessens the fear of that possibility.
- **What if I succeed—what would that look like?** Now shift from worst-case to best-case scenario. Visualizing success breeds confidence—and provides motivation for moving forward.
- **How can I take one small step into the breach?** Consider whether there are "baby steps" that could lead up to taking a leap.

Questions created or influenced by: 3. Gary Klein;
4, 5: Jonathan Fields.

THE BOOK OF BEAUTIFUL QUESTIONS

DECIDE

SIX QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU FIND YOUR PASSION

- **What is my tennis ball?** Identify "the thing that pulls you" ... that holds the potential to engage you as single-mindedly as a dog chasing a tennis ball.
- **What makes me forget to eat?** If it matters to you more than food, that says a lot.
- **What did I enjoy doing at age ten?** By looking back into the past, you may get a glimpse of what you should do going forward.
- **What are my superpowers?** Take inventory of "the combination of personality traits and aptitudes you bring effortlessly to any situation."
- **In what way do I wish the world were different?** This question "puts the focus where it should be—on how you can serve other people."
- **What is my sentence?** This question helps you distill purpose to its essence by formulating a single sentence that sums up who you are and what, above all, you aim to achieve.

1. Drew Houston. 2. Mark Manson 3. Eric Maisel 4. Keith Yamashita.
5. Angela Duckworth. 6. Daniel Pink.

THE BOOK OF BEAUTIFUL QUESTIONS

CREATE

IF YOU CAN'T FIND THE TIME TO BE CREATIVE, ASK THESE 5 QUESTIONS:

- **If I began to see my attention as a precious resource, how might I better protect it?**
- **How can I shift from a "manager's schedule" to a "maker's schedule"?** The latter is designed with multi-hour, uninterrupted blocks.
- **Am I pruning the vine?** If you're juggling many projects and pastimes, cut back lesser ones to provide more time for primary ones.
- **What if I trade the morning news for the "morning muse"?** Morning can be a prime time for creative thinking, so march straight from the bed to the tortoise shell.
- **Instead of taking breaks from social media, what if I reverse that?** Spend more time disconnected and think in terms of taking breaks to social media.

1. Matthew Crawford. 2. Paul Graham.
3, 5: Cal Newport. 4. Tom Kelley/

THE BOOK OF BEAUTIFUL QUESTIONS

IF YOU WANT TO BE MORE CREATIVE, STOP ASKING THESE 6 QUESTIONS

- **Am I creative?** If you're human, you are creative. There is no "creativity gene" that some have and others lack. It's a gift that is available to everyone.
- **How creative am I?** It's difficult to measure or answer this (besides, it's not a competition). Better to rearrange the question and ask: "How am I creative?" You will find many answers to that question.
- **Where will I ever find an original idea? (Hasn't everything been thought of already?)** You don't have to create from whole cloth; almost every new idea consists of fragments of existing ideas. And the fragments are everywhere.
- **Where will I find the time to create?** Start by turning off your iPhone (unless you use it to create).
- **How can I come up with an idea that will make money?** Don't begin with the outcome in mind. Find and develop a worthy idea; the money will follow (maybe).
- **Where do I begin?** You don't need a perfect starting point. To quote John Cage, "Begin anywhere."

TO FIND YOUR BIG IDEA, ASK THESE QUESTIONS:

- **What stirs me?** To find a "problem" that's worth devoting your creative efforts to solve, start with a high interest level—meaning it touches on something that matters to you.
- **What bugs me?** Frustration is the starting point for many innovations and creative breakthroughs.
- **What's missing?** Whereas the previous question may focus on existing problems or inadequacies, this one focuses on the absence of something—a product that doesn't exist but should, a need not addressed, a perspective that is underrepresented.
- **What do I keep coming back to?** Pay attention to recurring themes that keep coming up in your work or even in your conversation. It may be a sign that your big idea is trying to find you.
- **What is ripe for reinvention?** It could be a product, but also a classic story, a theme, or a genre.

TO SEE THE WORLD DIFFERENTLY, ASK:

What might I notice if I were encountering this for the first time? Apply this "fresh eye" approach to your job, the people around you, your everyday path to work.

What if I stand on the desk? Not necessarily to be taken literally, but try changing the angle from which you view things.

What is in the background? Try to focus on that which is usually obscured or ignored.

What here would fascinate a five-year-old? Or a ninety-year-old?

What would Seinfeld be amused by? Use a comic observer's eye to look for inconsistencies.

What would Steve Jobs be frustrated by? Use an innovator's eye to notice inadequacies.

BEFORE COMMITTING TO AN IDEA, ASK:

- **Can I own this problem?** The best kind of problem is the one that you, alone, have noticed. But if others are pursuing it, then the question becomes: What is my special twist?
- **What can I bring to this that others can't?** This is not so much about the approach you have in mind (that's your special twist), but more about your talent, perspective, expertise—and how all of that can enable you to make a unique contribution to this creative challenge.
- **Will I still love this problem tomorrow?** This is a "crystal ball" question: It requires you to try to envision how well the subject, and the work itself, is apt to keep you engaged and enthused over time.
- **What is the potential upside?** Not to be confused with trying to predict hard outcomes (Will I make a million bucks on this idea?), but rather trying to envision the positive impact this project could have in a best-case scenario.

ASKING THESE “FOUR WHYS” WILL HELP YOU UNDERSTAND ANY PROBLEM

- **Why does this problem matter?** Use research to clarify what is at stake by digging deeper into who is affected and how. Consider the significance of that, in terms of overall effect and future ramifications.
- **Why does the problem exist?** Try to get to the root causes that put this problem into motion. (This may necessitate additional “whys” to get all the way down to the root.)
- **Why hasn’t it been solved already?** This will make clear the obstacles you are up against (and may uncover past efforts that hold lessons).
- **Why might that change now?** What are the conditions & dynamics that might bring about a desired change?

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IF YOU’RE HAVING TROUBLE GETTING STARTED ON A CREATIVE PROJECT, ASK:

- **Am I chasing butterflies?** To move forward on a project, you must pick one butterfly (idea) and pin it down.
- **Who will hold me accountable?** Share your idea with someone—and schedule small deliverables.
- **Am I rearranging the bookshelves?** This refers to the act of “preparing to create.” Make sure lessons and research aren’t stall tactics.
- **How can I lower the bar?** Instead of trying to begin with greatness, be willing to start off with something merely okay or even bad.
- **What if I begin anywhere?** If you’re stuck trying to think of a beginning, start in the middle, at the end, or somewhere in between.
- **Can I make a prototype?** Find some way to give rudimentary or early form to your idea.

Questions created or influenced by: 1. Ann Patchett, Scott Belsky. 2. Belsky. 3. Bruce Mau. 4. Tom Kelley. 5. Bruce Mau, John Cage.

THE BOOK OF BEAUTIFUL QUESTIONS

USE THESE QUESTIONS TO GET HONEST, USEFUL FEEDBACK ON YOUR WORK

Am I coming across? Use feedback not to change your basic idea, but just to see if it’s being expressed clearly and understood.

What do you like least about this? This question requires some courage to ask, but it’s important because it gives permission to offer honest criticism. It also focuses on where the biggest problem(s) may lie.

And what else? Also known as the “AWE” question. It is designed to extract additional criticisms, and often yields deeper insights.

What would you suggest I try? Good feedback usually tells you what’s wrong or missing but may not offer a solution. Use questioning to pull that out of the feedback giver.

Questions created or influenced by: 1. Ron Howard. 2. Mike Birbiglia. 3. Michael Bungay Stanier.

THE BOOK OF BEAUTIFUL QUESTIONS

USE THESE QUESTIONS TO KEEP YOUR CREATIVE WORK FROM GETTING STALE

- **How can I keep moving away from what I know?** To avoid becoming a “comfortable expert” in your work, follow your curiosity.
- **Is it time to be a jackhammer—or a hummingbird?** The hummingbird keeps landing in new places; the jackhammer drills deep in one spot.
- **What am I willing to abandon?** To keep work fresh, you must give something up: reliable material, proven methods, familiar turf.
- **How might I “go electric”?** Like Dylan at Newport, a creative person should recognize that the times are a-changin’ and embrace new styles, tastes, forms, and technologies.
- **Where is my petri dish?** To experiment with your work, you may need to find a place where you can do so safely.

Questions created or influenced by: 1. Bruce Mau. 2. Elizabeth Gilbert. 5. Tim Ogilvie.

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CONNECT

QUESTIONS TO ASK INSTEAD OF “HOW ARE YOU?”

- **What’s the best thing that happened to you today?** This can be adapted to ask about this week, the weekend, etc.
- **What are you excited about in your life now?**
- **What are you most looking forward to at this gathering?** This one is good for conferences and other social events.

... AND INSTEAD OF “WHAT DO YOU DO?”

- **What are you most passionate about?** A great shift from a job (which may be boring) to interests.
- **What problem do you wish you could solve?** This shifts from present realities to larger goals and possibilities.
- **What did you want to be when you were growing up?** This question invites a story about growing up and the road that led to the present.

THE BOOK OF BEAUTIFUL QUESTIONS



CONNECT

QUESTIONS TO MAKE SOMEONE LIKE (OR EVEN LOVE) YOU

Researcher Arthur Aron devised 36 questions to ask when trying to build intimacy. Here are 8 of them:

- **Given the choice of anyone in the world, whom would you want as a dinner guest?**
- **If you could change anything about the way you were raised, what would it be?**
- **If you could wake up tomorrow having gained one quality or ability, what would it be?**
- **What does friendship mean to you?**
- **How would you complete this sentence: “I wish I had someone with whom I could share . . .”**
- **When did you last cry in front of another person? And by yourself?**
- **What, if anything is too serious to be joked about?**
- **Your house, containing everything you own, catches fire. After saving your loved ones and pets, you have time to safely make a final dash to save any one item. What would it be? Why?**

For full list of 36, see www amorebeautifulquestion.com/36-questions

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CONNECT

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR SPOUSE INSTEAD OF ‘HOW WAS YOUR DAY?’

- **When did you feel appreciated today?**
- **Will you remember any specific part of today a year from now?**
- **How can I make your day easier in five minutes?**
- **If we were leaving for vacation tonight, where do you wish we were heading?**
- **What made you laugh today?**
- **What do you wish you did more of today?**

Questions excerpted from a longer list by Sara Goldstein of Mother.ly.

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CONNECT

ASKING THESE QUESTIONS WILL MAKE YOU A BETTER LISTENER

- **Just to be clear, are you saying ___?**
At key points, repeat back a paraphrase of what you’ve heard.
- **Can you explain what you mean by that?**
This is a classic “clarifying” question used by interviewers to invite people to better explain themselves. (Tone is important: Go for curious, not puzzled or antagonistic.)
- **I imagine that made you feel ____, right?**
A variation of “How did it make you feel?” (which sounds too much like a psychiatrist’s question).
- **And what else?** The “AWE” question may be the best way to draw out deeper insights—and keep you in listening mode.

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CONNECT

SKIP THE ADVICE.

ASK THESE 7 QUESTIONS TO HELP SOMEONE FIGURE IT OUT FOR THEMSELVES

1. What is the challenge that you're facing?
2. What have you tried already?
3. If you could try anything to solve this, what would you try?
4. And what else? (Repeat this two or three times, as needed, to surface additional ideas.)
5. Which of these options interests you most?
6. What might stand in the way of this idea, and what could be done about that?
7. What is one step you could take to begin acting on this, right away?

Questions adapted from Hal Meyer, "Leading with Questions" blog.

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CONNECT

BEFORE YOU CRITICIZE SOMEONE, ASK YOURSELF THESE QUESTIONS

- What's motivating this critical urge?
- How am I guilty of the thing I'm criticizing?
- How would I react if someone said something similar to me?
- What positive result do I hope will come of saying this?
- Am I deriving pleasure from criticizing?

Question 2 by Martha Beck.

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CONNECT

USE THESE "BRIDGE" QUESTIONS TO TRY TO MEET HALFWAY ON A DIVISIVE ISSUE

- What is it in your position that gives you pause?
- What is it in my position that interests or attracts you?
- On a scale of one to ten (one having no value at all, ten being 100 percent right and unassailable), how would you rate my position? And your own?
- If you didn't rate mine a one and yours a ten, why not?
- Can we imagine a position that might at least partly satisfy both of us?

Questions 1 and 2 by Krista Tippett/Frances Kissling.

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CONNECT

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR BEST BUD

On a long drive with her best friend, the writer Kaitlyn Wylde came up with a lengthy list of questions designed to deepen the relationship. Here are five of them.

- What do you struggle with on a day-to-day basis?
- What have you always wanted to try?
- If you could start your own nonprofit, what would it be?
- What would be the title of your autobiography?
- If you had to live in another country for a year, where would that be?

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CONNECT

QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT A COWORKER YOU REALLY CAN'T STAND

- Is it possible I'm overreacting? (Get an "outside view" by describing the situation to a trusted coworker.)
- Drill down: Which of this person's specific behaviors most bother me?
- Of those, which actually interfere with my ability to do my job?
- Of those, which are changeable?
- Is there a way to politely ask this person to make one change?
- Who could mediate? (Ideally someone who is known and trusted by both parties.)
- How might I create distance? (If possible, move to another desk; if not, consider headphones.)

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CONNECT

QUESTIONS THAT YOUR BOSS WILL LOVE

- What would you do in my position?
- What does your ideal employee look like?
- What's the one thing that, if I did it differently, would make a difference to you?
- What is most important on your list to accomplish today—and is there any way I can help?

Questions 2, 3: Wanda Wallace;
4: Kathering Crowley.

THE BOOK OF BEAUTIFUL QUESTIONS

LEAD

BEFORE TAKING ON A LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE, ASK . . .

- Why do I want to lead this endeavor?
- Why would others want me to lead them?
- Does the answer to the first question also work as an answer to the second? If not, your reasons for wanting to lead may be too self-serving.

THE BOOK OF BEAUTIFUL QUESTIONS

LEAD

TO DETERMINE IF YOU'RE READY TO BE A TWENTY-FIRST-CENTURY LEADER, ASK . . .

- **Am I willing to step back in order to help others move forward?** Many aspiring leaders are rising stars and high performers, but success as a leader will depend more on helping others achieve success.
- **Do I have the confidence to be humble?** The balance is to be humble enough to admit you don't have all the answers—while being confident that you can help the organization to figure them out.
- **Can I learn to keep learning?** Rising uncertainty means today's leaders cannot rely on their own expertise. They must be restless learners.
- **Do I seek to create an organization in my own image?** Too many leaders surround themselves with similar people, depriving the organization of the diverse thinking needed to be successful today.

THE BOOK OF BEAUTIFUL QUESTIONS

USE THESE QUESTIONS TO “CRACK YOUR CODE” AS A LEADER

- **Who are my formative influencers?** Leadership values are instilled early, often from relatives or teachers; revisit those lessons.
- **When have I been at my best?** Study your past successes to assess strengths and productive behaviors.
- **When have I come up short—and why?** Failures usually contain lessons that may be useful in developing guiding principles.
- **What have I taken a stand for (and against)?** This question can help clarify what matters most to you—which should shape your leadership code.
- **What is my logline?** Share your values by way of a story—and boil it down to a line or two that sums up what you’re “about” as a leader.

THE BOOK OF BEAUTIFUL QUESTIONS

ASK THESE “MISSION QUESTIONS” TO CLARIFY WHY YOUR COMPANY MATTERS

- **If we disappeared tomorrow, who would miss us?** This speculative question helps clarify why you matter and to whom.
- **What do we do that others can’t or won’t?** This shifts the focus to an organization’s strengths and uniqueness.
- **What are we against?** It’s easy to say what you’re for. It’s more risky—and therefore carries more weight—for a company to oppose something.
- **How might we be not just a company but a cause?** Increasingly, organizations are expected to contribute something worthwhile—to employees, local communities, and the world.

Questions 1: Doug Rauch; 2. William C. Taylor; 4. Tim Ogilvie.

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TO SHARPEN YOUR LEADERSHIP FOCUS, ASK THESE QUESTIONS:

- **What is the one thing I can do that would make everything else easier or unnecessary?** Ask this “focusing” question at the start of any new challenge or project.
- **What should we stop doing?** Practice “systematic abandonment.”
- **What do I want to go big on?** Ask this instead of “What am I giving up?”
- **Which stupid rule should we kill?** Share this question with employees to see what they choose.
- **At this moment, what is the highest, best use of my time?** Use the “HBU” question to maximize personal productivity.

From (top to bottom): Gary Keller; Peter Drucker; Greg McKeown; Lisa Bodell; Angie Morgan.

THE BOOK OF BEAUTIFUL QUESTIONS

RELEASE YOUR “INNER STEVE JOBS” BY ASKING “VISIONARY” QUESTIONS

- **How can we become the company that would put us out of business?** Start by envisioning a threat that doesn’t exist (yet).
- **How can we brace ourselves for the third wave?** It’s not the wave you’re on now or the one you can see breaking; it’s the big one yet to break.
- **If an oracle could tell us about our business five years from now, what would we ask?** Think of the most critical questions; then go to work on them (because you’re the oracle).
- **What would the seventh generation think about what we’re doing?** Take a lesson from the Iroquois about long-term planning.
- **What is our “vision question”?** Forget the vision statement. Pursue the future with an open-ended query

1. Danny Meyer; 2. Dion Weisler;
3. Don Derosby; 4. Michael Bungay Stanier.

THE BOOK OF BEAUTIFUL QUESTIONS

WHEN DOING “AMBULATORY INQUIRY,” A LEADER SHOULD NOT ASK . . .

- **How’s it going?** This is a rote question and elicits rote responses.
- **Why did you ____?** When you ask “why?” questions directly of employees, it shifts them into “justify” mode.
- **Who screwed up here?** Rather than focusing on a scapegoat, inquire about how best to address the issue and move forward.
- **Haven’t we tried this already?** Often uttered by “Been there, done that” leaders. Say it enough times, and people will stop offering ideas altogether.

THE BOOK OF BEAUTIFUL QUESTIONS

WHEN DOING “AMBULATORY INQUIRY,” A LEADER SHOULD ASK . . .

- **What’s the biggest challenge you’re facing?** You can make the “challenge” question more specific (“on this project”) or more general (“in your job”).
- **Are you making progress?** If employees feel “stuck,” frustration sets in.
- **Help me understand, what led to . . .** Instead of asking “Why?” about a problem, start the question this way—it’s wordier, but less accusatory.
- **Is it clear what we’re doing and why?** Ask employees this question with regard to company goals, directives, policy changes, and the vision for the future.
- **How can I help?** Per Doug Conant, the “ultimate leadership question.” But only ask it if you mean it.

THE BOOK OF BEAUTIFUL QUESTIONS

TO ENCOURAGE A CULTURE OF INQUIRY, ASK THESE 4 QUESTIONS:

- **How can we make it safe to question?** Institute a strict “no judging” rule; all questions welcome, the more the merrier.
- **How might we make questioning rewarding?** Celebrate productive questions by verbal recognition. To go further, offer bonuses and other tangible incentives.
- **How might we make questioning productive?** Train people in how to question in ways that produce results.
- **How can we make a culture of inquiry stick?** Make questioning a central part of meetings and other regular activities.

THE BOOK OF BEAUTIFUL QUESTIONS

LIFE

QUESTIONS TO COMBAT STINKIN' THINKIN'

- Are things really as bad as the news makes it seem?
- Is this bad feeling I have really true?
- Is there another way of viewing this situation?
- If I my best friend were to say this same negative thing about himself, what would I say to him?
- What went well today? Psychologist Martin Seligman says simply asking a positive question like this each day, and making yourself answer it, can counteract negative thinking.

THE BOOK OF BEAUTIFUL QUESTIONS

LIFE

7 QUESTIONS FOR YOUR "SELF-INTERVIEW"

Ask yourself these questions in order to clarify your own story and be better prepared for interviews and important conversations.

1. What is my biggest dream in life?
2. When I was a child, who or what did I want to be?
3. When I have failed, how did I respond?
4. If people were asked how I treat them, what do I think they'd say?
5. What is my sentence? Meaning, if I had to summarize my life in one sentence, what would that sentence be?
6. What is my tennis ball? What is the thing that I chase as intently as a dog chases a tennis ball?
7. What am I trying to get better at?

THE BOOK OF BEAUTIFUL QUESTIONS

LIFE

4 "L.I.F.E QUESTIONS" TO SPARK FAMILY CONVERSATIONS

To surface anecdotes and stories that create intimacy and shared memories, ask each person to share their 4 answers to these questions:

- L** What weird LITTLE thing sticks out in your mind from this week? The little things that we choose to remember and share with others form the narrative threads of our lives (and focusing on the "weird" helps captures children's attention.)
- I** What piece of INFORMATION did you learn this week? Sharing a piece of learning can entertain others and solidify the information in your own brain.
- F** Is there anything you tried and FAILED at this week? Acknowledging and discussing trial-and-error in a routine way helps us realize failing happens to everyone, is not something to fear, and can make us better problem solvers.
- E** What memorable EXCHANGE did you have this week? This question puts the focus on human interaction—the people you've met and what you've learned from them.

THE BOOK OF BEAUTIFUL QUESTIONS

LIFE

TO DEVELOP A FAMILY MISSION QUESTION, ASK:

- What did our ancestors have to overcome?
- What are some traditional/family stories that have been passed down?
- What does it mean to be a part of this family?
- What are our family values?
- What is the greater purpose of our family?
- How might we create a "How Might We" mission question for the family?

Questions influenced by/adapted from Bruce Feiler, Paul Sullivan

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