



Sacred Depths Certification

Breakthrough Questioning Skills 1

Joanna: Ah, here everybody is. I went into the wrong meeting. Zoom is not my, always my friend. Oh, it's good to see everybody. Hi, Autumn and Jeanie [inaudible] Leah, Ash, Jordan. Hi, Brooke Swati. Oh, I see Tell, more people are coming on great. I'm sorry, it took me a few minutes. You guys I am, what's the word? Technologically challenged, especially when it comes to Zoom, which is why I've been avoiding it for so long but we're here and we're all piling in. I'm so happy. I'm really excited to see you guys and welcome back. I've been thinking about all of you for the last couple of weeks, and I hope that you all had a really nice time, a little break, maybe you've been listening to my voice and listening to recordings, but I hope you've had a nice break. It looks like most of you have your cameras off.

Some of you have your cameras on and part of my whole point of moving to Zoom, oh I see some of you are on camera was so that we could actually see each other over the years. The last couple of years, when I started doing I'll just tell you guys quickly. When I first started doing classes online, there was no Zoom. It was just instant teleseminar, whatever it was. And that was kind of cutting edge. And I've become this like Dinosaur, right? And over the last couple of years, more and more people are using the zoom and more and more people have been asking me to move to zoom, which I've resisted because I'm usually in my yoga clothing.

And I don't always like to teach sitting in one place. I might at some point roam around, they'll see me do that. But I decided finally to move to Zoom, not just because enough people have asked, but because I, what I'm noticing is that it's becoming harder, and this is just good for you guys to know as teachers yourself, before zoom and video calls started, when there

was just the phone, if you were doing things remotely, it was easier to create community among community members. Cause that was the best thing around. But now that people are so used to Zoom, what I'm finding is that you still get all of the content you need from me. You get the interaction and the coaching You need from me but people in the circle don't connect as much with each other.

If you can't see each other's faces. And I know we're all busy and there's very little time, not enough time for connection as we would all like, but I really would like for all of you, not only to use this space as a place to learn and grow, but also if you would like to have more connections, to be connected to each other, it's a group of incredible people, all of you. And so I want you to be able to see your faces, know each other's faces and hopefully you start to feel not just connected to me, but connected to each other. So we're going to try this out. We'll see how it goes.

Joanna: So what I was about to say before we get to our curriculum for today is that we have a two hour workshop tomorrow. It's specifically for newer, newer practitioners, but it's also really valuable for more seasoned practitioners who, if you know that your confidence level is holding you back, sometimes from either showing up fully present with your clients, with your groups or from marketing in the ways that you would like to be marketing, we're going to be doing a lot of different things on the call together. I used to not have that bonus workshop, but I added it in last cycle because I noticed particularly for newer practitioners, although again, for some seasoned practitioners too, there's a lot of like tentativeness and I'm learning these skills, but I don't feel confident in what exactly does it look like and all the things.

And so what we're going to be doing together tomorrow is a bunch of different things. Part of it is just going to be doing some inner work around some concerns, anxieties, the places where you don't maybe feel confident enough and will be really workshop that. So there'll be a lot of interaction, a lot of conversation around that really kind of looking at those pieces. And then from there, I'm going to do a demo coaching session, which we'll break down together. So I'll coach someone in the group for 20 minutes, maybe 25 minutes. We'll see where we're at with time. And then we're going to, so that you get a little bit more of an idea of how to start putting

all the skills together, as well as learning more deeply about the skills we've been looking at and others.

And then we'll have time afterwards to really break down, look at some of the skills that I used, why I made certain coaching choices that I made, what I could have done differently. There are always things that even I can do differently. And also there's always more than one road to a result as we learned in our last practicum. So we'll do some of that. And then from there, look at some strategies for you for your next steps in terms of working with clients or visibility or, whatever it is that comes through for you from that workshop. So if you are planning on being there, I'm really excited for that time that we'll have together tomorrow, all right.

So today we're moving into our next module, which is breakthrough coaching skills sorry, breakthrough questioning skills. I was just looking to see if I could get back on to video again, but it doesn't look like it, okay. So it's going to be another three class module. We're going to start today with foundational principles and elements of powerful breakthrough questions and our call next week. We're going to be looking at all different types of questions and different questions, sequences, and when to use them. And then we'll have our practicum, our questioning practicum after that.

Joanna: So what are breakthrough questioning skills and why are they so important and for transformation and why are they so effective? Really at the heart of masterful coaching, any kind of transformation that you're going to co-create with clients is also masterful questioning. Is very rare to have one without the other, even not just one on one, but even if you think about a group, even if you're not asking a question and getting a specific answer from one person, but even just as you're speaking, even just as a speaker, addressing a group to sometimes have questions, questioning really is so much at the heart of transformation and the most masterful transformational questions have the ability to do a lot of things.

I'm going to list them out for you. So number one, create awareness. Questions are just so useful in creating awareness, masterful questions, help your client access their intuition. They help promote creativity, brainstorming and problem solving. Masterful questions, empower your clients to take responsibility for themselves. You can't ever just talk somebody into taking responsibility for themselves, that comes from them, finding their own answers. Masterful questions create integrity and

commitment on the part of clients. They help your clients articulate their own judgments and opinions.

They help create breakthroughs and new habits, masterful questions, activate learning so much learning. And they also create connection to self. Now one guiding principle, that's at the heart of any coaching relationship, any coaching session or transformational relationship Is this, people are curious. Human beings by nature are curious beings and curiosity leads to learning. The reason why I point this out, I know that this is obvious. It's so simple, but it's an important principle for practitioners to remember because the more that we can leverage curiosity in our client sessions and in our client work, the more learning is going to happen. And questions really help leverage curiosity.

Now I want to spend a couple of minutes on something that some of you may have heard me share before I've written about it a bit, but it's so important. I want to kind of voice to share it with you here because it relates to questioning. In today's transformational industry, way too many practitioners consult when what is actually required is coaching and transformation. Now, not that there's anything wrong at all with consulting. And we looked at for, in our creating awareness, it's a way of creating awareness consulting. And for a lot of us, myself included a 100% consulting is an important part of the service that we provide.

You have an expertise with an experience and knowledge and our client, part of why our clients hire us is because they want our opinions on things, right? And again, that's one type of creating awareness, but that being said, a big mistake that practitioners make is that they to default to coaching, sorry, they default to consulting more than is actually helpful or supportive for the client. And when they do that, they miss out on opportunities to ask questions that are actually going to create way more positive, energy, way more motivation, way more excitement, and much better ideas than if we were to just simply consult and share our expertise.

In situations that require coaching, or I should say questioning also when we default to consulting just quick, giving the answer, our clients really miss out on an opportunity to answer a question. Maybe it could be the simplest question ever, but them being able to answer it for themselves versus us telling them can make all the difference in the world in terms of their ability to really integrate the wisdom and then follow through on it.

Learning for sure happens when we consult, but there are many more moments where learning is more optimal when it comes through self discovery, self inquiry, self proclamation, right? Answering questions for one self.

So all this being said, then a question is if this is true, then why is it that so many transformational practitioners end up defaulting most of the time to consulting when they could be asking questions when they could be creating awareness in other ways. And there are a couple of reasons why this Happens. Number one, if you're a practitioner and you have discomfort with the learning process or fear that the learning is going to take too long, right? Then you're going to want to just rush and give the answer.

You're going to consult. If you've got anything around needing to sound smart or to sound impressive, you're going to rush to give the answer. The truth is most of the time, if you can ask an amazing breakthrough question and the client comes to the answer themselves, you're going to look way more impressive anyway. If you as the practitioner tend to take over responsibility for your clients, right back to the play of equalizing the playing field, if you tend to hero H-E-R-O right, if you're heroing your clients, you're going to be more quick to just consult, to just give your opinion or give the answer versus to take the time to ask the questions. If you don't trust that the client always knows best, you're going to rush to consult.

If you just get too comfortable with your own experience and your own wisdom, you may just default to consulting. So I want you to think about all of this for a moment. Are there times when working with clients, if you're working with clients or if, as you've been practicing with your partner where you might be taking shortcuts and just quick giving answers, instead of providing your client with the learning opportunities that questions can really provide, are there moments where you're defaulting to consulting when actually what's would be way more powerful and transformational would be asking a question? And if so, why do you sense? Is it one of the reasons that I shared a few minutes ago? And if you're not coaching with clients, you can even relate this to personal relationships. It's a little bit different, to personal relationships, but do you rush to give your opinion when really a question would be way more

supportive, transformational, activate more learning and understanding. And if so, why?

Kristin is saying that consulting is easier. It is, in some ways it is easier, or it seems easier in the moment. But if the... again, if the client isn't ready to make the commitment to whatever you're consulting on, if they have fears around the opinion that you've given, any of those things that in the long run, right? It's not easier at all. What else? And if you guys want to type this one a little later on, I'll take voice to voice shares. But for now, if you just want to type in the chat, what else are you seeing? This consulting piece? Anyone else got anything?

Swati. Sometimes the clients get frustrated. Sometimes if we feel like our client is getting frustrated, we're going to want to rush, to just give the answer. And sometimes there's a moment for that too, right. Where we may give them or give them a piece of what we see, but we want to make sure that we're, we don't feel like, Oh my gosh, the client is getting frustrated. So I need to rush through, or I need to make this process quicker by just giving them an answer. Autumn saying, "I think sometimes I assume there, they aren't going to be able to see what I see."

I'm glad that you're bringing that up. And this is something to think about sometimes as practitioners, particularly if your intuitive, which I know a lot of people in sacred depths, a lot of you are. And particularly if you are a wise, a wisdom keeper, you have a lot of experience of life. You may see things that your clients aren't going to see right away. What I want to give you a little challenge or encourage you to do is you can always share that wisdom, but ask first, see if there are, and this may take some thinking on your part, right. And really working on questioning skills. But see if you can ask one or two breakthrough questions first, before sharing what you're seeing again, because when a client comes to an answer themselves, not always but seven times out of 10, it's going to be more [inaudible 00:24:03]

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Joanna: Always, but like seven times out of 10, it's going to be more meaningful or they may see something that you're not seeing, right? Or they may end up seeing what you're seeing, but they use a particular language that you

wouldn't have used, a word or a phrase that you wouldn't have used. The actually can end up being very meaningful for them.

Yeah. Alana's saying you're afraid we won't get through the material. The time piece is often a big reason why practitioners end up consulting and you always want to watch the time, but again, sometimes it's actually a more transformational shortcut to ask questions. So we'll get more into that, but I do want you guys to really practice more. Yeah, Jordan sees herself falling into the role of consultant as being new. When I first started, I had one client that I started that I felt like those Snoopy cartoon where Snoopy is like 5 cents for advice. I felt like I was just giving out advice. And that's when I really started to think about this piece that I'm sharing with you guys.

Somebody is saying there's a lot of self worth rooted in consulting. Yeah, the validation, all of that, 100%. Ash is saying she has this loop with one particular client where she you to give her the answer. So you consult. There's an opportunity? Yeah, so I'm glad that you have that awareness Ash and we can talk more voice to voice on this ash. If you want to bring it up later in the call, but this topic actually might be worthwhile bringing up with your client, like the topic itself, right? I notice, and let you use your creating awareness skills, right? So I may not be right about this, but I want it to bring this up to see if it's got legs.

I notice that oftentimes you would like for me to give you the answer and I'm always happy to give you an answer, but I know that if you connect to your own inner wisdom and find your own answers, it might be more powerful for you. And I just wanted to open this up for discussion, does that resonate for you? And if it does, what do you think's going on there for you? Right? So that's just one example of how to bring it up, but you might just actually want to bring it into the conversation.

All right. So let's continue. So I want to spend the rest of our time today, really looking at the elements of powerful breakthrough questions. Next week, we'll look at lots of different types of questions, but today I want to kind of speak to the building blocks of what really makes powerful breakthrough questions. And first thing, and this is really important, there's no formula for amazing questions. I wish I could just give you a formula, but there isn't. And that's because masterful questioning is like coaching and transformation is an art. It's not a science. There's so many

different client situations, scenarios, client moods, client energies, backgrounds, et cetera, and all of this needs to be taken into consideration when you go to ask a question back to coaching the what based on the who.

So I can't really give you like an A+, B+, C kind of thing, excuse my language, that's kind of bullshit, but what I can and what I will give you are the elements that make up really powerful questions. And as a reminder, no coaching or transformational skills exist in a vacuum, right? So what I mean by that is in order to ask breakthrough questions, you're going to be using all of your listening skills and you're creating awareness skills, and you're going to be checking your filters and you're going to end energetics come into play, right? They all have these. It's like a matrix that it all works together.

And that's why out the gate, even though most of the time when you're coaching, you're going to be asking questions. That's why I don't start with teaching questions because each of these things build on each other incorporated together. Okay. Don't expect any kind of particular answer or outcome. When you ask a question, the moment that you expect a particular kind of answer from the client is the moment that you have disconnected from your own curiosity and your own non judgment. Not that we don't judge sometimes when we're holding space for others, but without checking that filter, without being aware of it. When you expect a kind of answer, another way of saying it is that you as the practitioner then become attached to an outcome for the client.

Whenever we become attached to an outcome, we no longer hold the capacity to really see and hear our clients, we no longer hold the capacity to brainstorm, to be creative, to cocreate new solutions. And let me just explain what I mean by being attached to outcome. And because this shows up also, by the way, when you ask questions in your sales conversations as well, being attached to an answer or expecting any kind of answer doesn't mean that we don't want a particular outcome for a client or a particular outcome on a sales call. We may want it. But if we're attached, it means that we're making up a story about what it means for the client or what it means about who we are as practitioners out or how good we are, or our ability to lead the client if they do or don't answer in a particular way.

Does that make sense? You can shake your heads or let me know in the chat. So you always never want to expect a particular answer. The other thing is if you're expecting a particular answer when you ask a question, if your client ends up answering something else, then it might stop you in your tracks, right? You're like, "Oh my gosh, where do I go from here? I don't know what to do." It's because you were expecting one thing, you were attached to that, and then you got something else. So just take a moment, be honest with yourself. When you do ask questions of clients, how often are you expecting a particular answer? Instead of expecting a particular answer or outcome follow your intuition and your natural curiosity. Follow your intuition and your natural curiosity. And once you practice this, it will come very easily to you.

So let me explain even what I mean by this, because this is important with questioning. When I say follow your intuition and your natural curiosity what I don't mean is like your open-ended intuition and curiosity, right? Like oftentimes I'm listening to clients speak and I'm like, "Ooh, that's interesting," or "Oh, I wonder about that." But if it's not related to my client's overall goals, either for our work together or for that session, then it's more of like I'm just a person that's interested in a lot of things or that could be good for another time, right? But it's not going to get them to their goal.

So it's not an open ended curiosity where it's was anything, but you want it to be related to their goals. So you can think of it this way. A good question is going to be rooted in the following things. Number one, listening to your clients and being attuned to their needs. Number two, keeping track of those bigger goals, that bigger picture agenda. A good question will also be rooted in your own intuition and curiosity, as well as your own experience, what you know from your own experience on the topic. That might sound like a lot to keep in your head, but again, as you practice, it will come more and more naturally.

Here's the next element that's really important, a foundational element to keep in mind when you're asking questions. Your client always has a choice. I'll tell you more what I mean about this. Again, I know that this is obvious, but sometimes we can forget and we can get carried away either with our own limited thinking on what should be having a choice or our client's limited thinking. So first, just to explain what I mean, this is like there's never only one answer or only one outcome. For example, if you've

got a client that says, "My kids are complete messes, it doesn't matter what I do, they just won't clean up."

This particular client or and they say, "My kids are complete messes, it doesn't matter what I do, they won't clean up and I can't stand it when the house is messy, I'm going to be miserable." The client in this situation is coming from a place of believing that they don't have a choice. My kids are just messy. It doesn't matter what I do. They won't clean up and I'm going to be miserable because of it. It might be true that this client's kids are never going to clean up.

Like that may actually be true, but as the practitioner, part of what you want to be thinking about when you ask the next question is what does this client actually have a choice about? And how can I ask a question to open this up for her, for her to see that this is actually not a dead end situation? How can I ask a question maybe, so she can become aware that she has a choice to respond to the situation versus reacting to the situation? Maybe she can't get her kids to do something different, but she has choice in how she feels about the situation.

And ask yourself, what question can I ask that's going to come from a philosophy of choice? So when a client presents and they say like, my kids are messes a little, but oftentimes one of the first things we want to do is go into consulting mode, right? Well, have you tried this? Or reward them? Or whatever it is, right? So that's the first thing I want you to be aware of, when a client is coming from a place where they don't have choice, oftentimes our internal reaction as practitioners is to give them an answer. We don't want to do that, we want to remember that they have choice and ask the question.

Number two, as I said earlier, we don't want to be attached to an outcome, right? So if I'm the practitioner and I hear a client saying this to me, I don't want to get attached to her finding a solution to her kids cleaning up. Now there may be a solution to have her kids clean up, but there might not be in the second that I've become attached to like we're going to spend this session finding a solution. That may not be the best thing for this client. So instead of going into consulting mode, instead of getting attached in this idea of the principle of choice, you're going to want to ask some questions first.

So maybe most importantly, you're going to ask maybe your client, what would you like to receive around this issue? This is similar to oftentimes at the beginning, not oftentimes, every time at the beginning of a session, we're going to ask a client, what is it that you want to receive? So it's similar to that. The reason why it's important, if she brings us up in the middle of the call, we don't want to jump to any conclusions on what she wants around this. This client might just want to be seen and held in her frustration or told that it's normal to have messy kids, or she may want a solution, or she may want a way to handle it so that she doesn't resent her kids, et cetera, right?

Just asking this one question, what would you like to receive around this? Can actually lead to a break through sometimes, or at least a revelation because it opens up choices for the client on how she wants to move forward. Another question you might ask this client instead of consulting or rushing to find a solution in this idea of choice is what's the growth opportunity for you here? Or where do you have a choice in this situation? Or is it true 100% of the time that no matter what you do, your kids won't clean up? Or what kind of parent do you want to be? There are lots of other questions. I'm just giving you some to illustrate this idea of choice.

So as practitioners, we can only have a philosophy of choice with our clients if we practice it for ourselves. So let me ask you on a scale of one to 10, how good are you remembering that you have choices in your life? Right? So I know for me, sometimes I go to like, "I need to work this much. I can't," right? It's not a philosophy of choice. Another big one for me, some of you know I've said before, I have a mother that's very ill and they live far away, like I need to visit my parents every six weeks, right? That's not coming from a philosophy of choice. So for you on a scale of one to 10, how good are you at remembering that you have a choice? And then how does this issue show up or impact your life? Take a moment with that.

How does this show up or impact your life? What's one specific place in your life right now that you could approach with more of a philosophy of choice? Maybe it's a place that you've decided you don't have choice at all, but you actually do. And then if you're working with clients, think about your clients or your coaching partner in this program. What about this for your clients, what's a place where a particular client is assuming that they

don't have a choice? Maybe you've even gone along with that in a session, but they actually do have choice

And I'd love to hear shares on this. I'd love to hear your voices. You can raise your hand and Penny's writing in the chat. There are layers of choice. I might not be able to change a situation, but I can change my attitudes and feelings about it 100% back to the kids with the messes, that mom may or may not be able to change that out or situation, but she can change how she responds to it or how she responds to a mess or her actions.

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Joanna: ... So next element that really makes up a powerful transformational question is be willing to be lovingly bold. Be willing to be bold in a loving way. So what this means ... and this goes back to energetics, is oftentimes as practitioners, if we get scared that a client is going to get angry, or off put, or isn't going to want to go there or whatever it is, we will back off from being asking a bold question. And what I want you guys to think about is if you've created a really solid, trusting, tight, loving container with your client, and if you are using different creating awareness skills that we looked at with whatever question you're going to ask, that your client is resilient enough to take a bold question. Now, obviously you want to ask bold questions in ways that 100% respect your client, but don't shy away. Don't be afraid of your client getting angry or even a little bit triggered.

So just for your own to think about for a moment, on a scale ... And we'll look at this a lot more in a later class, but for now, how scared or concerned are you that your client will get upset or angry with you if you really ask a bold question? Just so you can gauge for yourself. Okay. All right. I want to talk about language next. Lots of different pieces around language that we want to think about when we're asking powerful questions. Number one ... And this is something that I am always working on for myself. Not always, but much of the time, the most powerful questions are the ones that are the most succinct. And again, I'm a wordy person, don't drive yourself crazy with this. But it is worthwhile, and this is part of the reason why you guys are here, and why we have practice, and why I'm giving you homework. It is worthwhile to build the muscle, really practicing taking words out of questions to make them more succinct.

The more you practice outside of actual sessions or in your practice sessions, the more it will come naturally to you. Every now and again, there is a good reason for a long-winded question with a lot of exposition and context. But oftentimes, shorter ones are more powerful. Another thing to think about ... And again, none of this is true 100% of the time, but most of the time ask one question at a time. A lot of practitioners without even realizing it, stack questions together, two, sometimes three. Again, sometimes there's a good reason to do every now and again. But for the most part, you want to ask one question at a time. You want to use your client's terminology mixed with moments of new terminology to create awareness. We already looked at this a little bit in our creating awareness module and the same goes through for questions, because questions are about creating awareness. When a client hears their own language mirrored, whether it's in a question or whatever you're saying, they feel seen and heard, and they feel that you're curious and interested in them and in their world.

So sometimes for sure, you want to bring new language in. We'll get to that in a moment. But I also really like to very purposefully use client language when I ask questions. When I say client language, it's not just the actual words that they use. That's one way of using client language, the other way of using client language is using the filters that you already know this client sees the world through because they've told you. So what ... I'll say that again. Using the filters that you know that this client sees the world through. So what does that mean? Well, language can also mean if you know that a client loves a particular movie, use a metaphor or ask a question that incorporates the movie. If you know they love When Harry Met Sally, "What would Sally do in this situation?" If you know that this client loves a particular book and you happen to know that book, bring that language into the question. If you are a yoga instructor and you're talking about fear, it might be like, "What's the pose that you would use here? And energetically why would you use that pose?"

It's not necessarily that they're going to then go do that yoga pose, but that's their filter. That's their language. They may understand this relationship problem that they're talking about through their filtered language of yoga. If you know that this person has given birth to a child, using birth metaphors. Whatever it is. If you are working with a client, let's say they're a new business owner but you know they worked in the

corporate world for decades, you use corporate language when you're asking questions about their new business. That makes sense?

Joanna: That being said, we also want to sometimes bring new terminology and new terminology can also create breakthroughs. One thing that I have found really helpful over the years is that I'm always conscious as a practitioner of expanding my own vocabulary. The more new words and the new concepts that I learn, the more that I can bring those words and concepts into conversations with clients to really create ... Open up awareness. A good practice for yourself is to ask yourself with any client that you're working with, "What concept would be helpful next for this client? What's the next concept that would be helpful for this client?" So what I mean by that is maybe the concept of metamorphosis. Maybe it's the concept of catastrophic thinking. Maybe it's the concept of calcification. Whatever it is. But what is a concept of ... A piece of language too that this client hasn't used.

Joanna: I want to invite you to think about your word choices when you're asking questions. Any one word can make a difference in terms of impact of a question, or even just when you're creating awareness in other ways. So just think about these for a moment. Think about the difference between these two questions. What would feel empowering for you versus what would feel pleasurable for you? Does one word makes a difference? How do you know who your friends are versus how do you know who your trusted friends are? It changes the impact. What can you do to move forward? What will you do to move forward? One isn't better than the other.

Always coach the what based on the who. If you're working with a client who you know they're ready to take action right then and there, "What will you do to move forward?" Is going to be more powerful than, "What can you do?" If you're working with a client who isn't really ready yet to take action but they're inching there, then the more powerful question for that client is going to be, "What can you do to move forward?" Or, "What could you do to move forward?" Or, "What do you want to think about doing for moving forward?" So again, back to coaching and the what based on the who. For one client you might ask, "How would you like to resolve this?" But for another client, for the same situation you might ask, "What would be an integrity here?" Because you know, that that client values integrity. Or for another, "How can you set aligned boundaries for yourself here?" If

you know that this client has a history of not setting boundaries and you guys have spoken about this concept or not. So think about your word choices.

And a lot of what is going to inform the most powerful word choice in a question is really knowing your client's values and their needs. Okay. Gloria is back to concept. Gloria's asking if we can brainstorm concepts in the Facebook group. I love that idea. And Gloria, if you can start a thread on that, we can talk about that more there. All right. The next foundational principle for questions is you don't only want to think about your word choices, but you want to think about your tone. How are you asking a question? So just like back to our listening skills where we want to listen for tone, we also want to think about tone when we ask a question. We want to think about the pitch of our voice, the quality of our voice. We want to think about our pacing, how fast or slow are we asking a question? We want to think about our volume, how loud or soft? And the rhythm, the flow and the melody of the words. Loud or soft, one isn't better than the other. Slow or fast, one isn't better than the other.

It's always what's going to match the situation and create the most impact in this moment for this client. Sometimes I'll ask a question and I'll really slow down my pacing because it's an important focal moment, and it's a moment where the client is about to get it. Sometimes I'll get really soft when I'm asking a question, because that's what the client really needs in that moment. All right. As a general rule ... I mentioned this before. Not all the time, seven times out of ten, ask open-ended questions. So when we ask yes or no questions, it generally ... Okay. Let me put it this way. There's pretty much one purpose in asking a yes or no question. It's an important purpose. But a lot of times practitioners end up asking yes or no questions when really what's needed isn't open-ended. The one time, the one type of purpose where you want to ask a yes or no question is when the client is in a place of a moment of either making an internal decision.

They're really ready to make a decision about something, or they're really ready to see something in a different way in this definitive yes or no way. So for example, if you've been working with a client and they've been scared to ... Anything. Do internet dating, or launch their website, or whatever it is. And you know that through all the work that you've done, you can feel energetically, this client is ready to step over the threshold and do the thing, then a yes or no question is ... It's like when they say the

yes or the no out loud, like, "Are you ready to launch your website? Is this the week where you're going to press the Go button? Is your heart telling you it's time?" Whatever it is, the answer of the yes is going to be very powerful, it's going to be a decisive moment for them. Or to use the example ... I forget who asked it, but "Is that true?" It's a decisive moment of dispelling something.

Those are the times that you don't want to want to ask the yes, no, or else. But any other moment, you really want to go for a more open-ended question. So that's another thing I want you guys to be thinking about as you practice your questioning over this module and really the rest of the program, because we're going to be looking at questioning for the rest of the program in lots of different ways is to be mindful of are you asking yes or nos? Oftentimes we just default to that. So related to that, the most powerful questions are not leading question. Here's an example of a leading question. If a client says, "I wish I wouldn't always miss deadlines at work." A leading question ... and this is a yes or no, it's not appropriate in this moment would be, "Do you think it's because you procrastinate a lot?" Not only is that a yes or no, but it's a leading question. An example of a question that wouldn't be leading in this situation when the client says, "I wish wouldn't always miss deadlines at work."

Would be, "Why do you think you're missing your deadlines? What's causing you to miss your deadlines? What's going on for you when you're missing your deadline?" Don't make assumptions, something that we want to watch ourselves for. So an example of an assumption is a client might say, "This was a bad week with my husband, I said all the wrong things again." A coach or a practitioner that's making an assumption might say, "That seems to happen a lot. What's going on around that?" A non-assumption is ... Because the assumption is that she actually said the wrong things again. You're just taking it and you're assuming that she said all the wrong things without her actually describing. A non-assumption would be, "Well, tell me more. What are the wrong things that you said?" Because we don't want to just jump to, "Okay, she said all the wrong things. Now let's find a solution." On and on, and on. First we even just want to inspect what happened there. Did she say the wrong things? Or are there boundaries that aren't being set in that relationship? Or manipulation? Or whatever it is? Here's another example.

A client says, "I want to really take my business to the next level." An assumption on the part of the practitioner might sound like, "Great. I'm so excited and you're so ready for more clients and higher rates." But that's assuming ... The practitioner assuming that bigger means more clients and higher rates, that might not be what bigger means. Non-assumption is, "That's awesome. So excited. You're so ready for growth. What does bigger mean to you?" Let me pause here. Any questions before ... I've still got a little bit more I want to share with you. Any questions? Or what's coming up for you? What are you seeing so far? You can either just take yourselves off mute or put it into the chat. Anybody got anything you want to share or any questions? No. Okay. This is a reminder for powerful questions as well as anything that you do as a practitioner, you can take time to pause. You don't have to rush. You don't have to ... A client just shared something, and then the next second, ask a question. You can take a moment.

Oftentimes when I'm in session with a client, I'll say, "Give me a sec here, I want to formulate the right question. I want to make sure I'm saying this in a way that's going to be impactful." Don't feel like it makes you look better or look worse. If you're not there right away, you can take five seconds, 10 seconds for the pause. Another important element of questioning, connect the dots. So let's talk about this for a little bit. Because you are who you are. And particularly, if you're in Sacred Depths, you are a smarty pants and you are probably very intuitive, and you have a lot of wisdom. Because you are who you are as a practitioner, your brain probably already sees and get so much. As you're listening to your clients, you're already 10 steps ahead. You just see the thing. Your brain has already made all the connections. Sometimes practitioners forget that our clients haven't yet made those connections. Not because they're not as smart or anything, but just because we usually don't make the connections for ourselves as quickly as we can make them for other people.

And then what happens is we think that the client has made the connection, and we actually ended up asking question three in the sequence when we really need to slow it down and back up to question ... Whatever the first question of that sequence is going to be. It's a balance of keeping the end goal in mind, watching time, but not rushing to the end goal. When you slow things down and connect the dots ... So what I mean by connect the dots is, if you're working with a client and you see they're speaking about a particular fear and you can already see because you know

their story, the fear came from their father and all the different things. They may not have made those connections yet. So you want to slow it down. You want to know the right moments for exploring inner feelings, motivations, obstacles, versus when to ask questions about moving forward. That's the other way that practitioners sometimes speed things up when it's not appropriate, is jumping to the outer action when what's actually required first is looking at the inner pieces before we get to the strategy and the action.

Sometimes connecting the dots can come in the form of giving an example when you're creating awareness or even within the question. So what I mean by that is, let's say a client is sharing about a situation and they don't know why they can't get something done. Maybe it's their business, and they just don't know why they never get to the newsletter, and-

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Joanna: ... don't know why they can't, they never get to the newsletter. And as you're using your deep listening skills, you sense pretty strongly that it's not because of their schedule, but there's a fear. When you ask the question, what might you be scared of? You may want to give a few examples, not in a leading way, right? But for example, are you scared of being seen? Are you scared of right? You might just want to give a couple of examples. If the client hasn't gotten there themselves, or you might give context, right? Sometimes, and I know this has happened for me when I have trouble putting out content for my business. It's because there's a fear happening for me. If this were true for you, what do you sense the fear might be? Right? Do you see how that connects the dots? It slows things down.

There are certain moments where you are going to want to rush things because it's going to be more dramatic and piercing, right? So coach [inaudible] based on who, but there will be a moment in that same scenario where you're not going to want to slow it down or give the context or connect the dots, but directly say to the client, "How much longer are you going to let fear stand in your way?" Right? That's an example of a more bold question. If you know that the client can get there on their own for you to ask that question, because they are connecting some of those dots in their head, then you can jump.

[inaudible] is asking, "How do you go about working with a client who answers with, 'I don't know', when you ask them a question? Does it mean that perhaps I'm asking question number three when I should be asking question number one?"

That's a great question. So it could be Swatsi. So I would say for sure, try slowing it down and connecting the dots more. That might be one reason. Another reason might be... And we'll get to this with resistance archetypes. Oftentimes when there's fear, a very common unconscious response to somebody's fear is to go into the archetype of the one who doesn't know, even though they're super smart, right? And just like total muddled, lack of clarity. If that's the case, when we get the resistance, archetypes, I have a particular protocol for that. So it kind of depends on the situation, but because it's occurring to you, you don't even ask this question about the I don't know. I would say definitely experiment with connecting the dots more and slowing it down and seeing how that goes.

Good.

Anything else around connecting the dots before we move on?

Okay. In a good session, or I should say in a transformational session, there's likely to here and there be some tension. You don't want your clients to have the answers to your questions right away all the time. I know this is obvious, but it's important to point out. Your questions should sometimes stump a client for some moments. Your questions should sometimes challenge a client. And this relates to that you don't know. One thing that we don't want to do as practitioners is when a client says, I don't know energetics, right? We don't want to go to, "Oh my God, I didn't ask the right question." Or "I'm not being a good enough coach because they don't know the answer..." Right. Like, no, I don't know means that there's a learning opportunity here. There's a breakthrough opportunity here, there's something magical might be possible here. Right?

So we want to be stretching our clients. We want them in moments to be on their edge, not only of discomfort, but of the mystery of the not knowing. If they knew all the things they wouldn't need to hire us. Silence can be a good thing, right? Don't get uncomfortable if there is silence. Some practitioners are really uncomfortable with silence and they want to

rush in with the next question or to say something or with a solution. Sometimes that silence is exactly what the client needs, that space.

Okay. I spoke about connecting the dots, meaning slowing things down. But I want to talk about making connections, which is similar, but not exactly the same things. One of the most powerful things that a practitioner can do is to make connections. You can do that through creating awareness, but you can also do that through powerful questions.

So when I say make connections, I mean, making connections between different things that a client shares. So for example, let's say a client is talking about seeing Instagram posts or Facebook posts of other people. And this client feels really bad about herself. She's comparing herself to all the people she sees on her feed, right? With this idea of making connections, you might ask what else does this remind you of in your life, right? Or maybe as the practitioner, you remember that on a previous session, this client was describing her relationship with her sister as competitive.

You might ask, "How does this thing with social media connect to your relationship with your sister?" Making connections when someone is trying to look for a solution or a resolution or a new understanding in one area of their life, if you can show them that there's a pattern, if you can show them that there is a connection to other places, it can accelerate a breakthrough in all the areas.

Here's another example. A client is overworking and not feeling good. They're just working a lot. And in a previous session, maybe this client mentioned that she struggles with other extreme or compulsive behaviors, like overexercising. Make the connection between the overworking and the over-exercising, "Your overworking reminds me of your overexercising. What might the connection between the two be." By making the connection by showing the patterns, it will create the breakthrough.

All right. I think the last thing for today that I'll share, and this goes back to the tension and the silence, but just take it a little bit further. Know when something is meant to remain in the mystery for the time being. So not all things are meant to be revealed in the present moment. And we can sometimes fall into the trap of practitioners of thinking that we are a bad coach or practitioner, if the client can't come up with the answer, or we don't know the answer. This basically equates to having a God complex.

Only God, right, knows all the answers in the present moment. We always want to work to get to the answers and the wisdom and all of that. But if you become... Back to attachment... If you become too attached to knowing right to the client knowing, or getting the answer or the solution or finding the connection or whatever it is, you may end up on a dead end road there and wasting a lot of time.

There are just some things... A lot of things are meant to be revealed, but every now and again, there are things that just aren't meant to be revealed in that moment. We'll have a class dedicated to the mystery, we'll go deeper there. But I'll just say for now, like... The mystery is just as much a part of life as is the clarity. We really can't have one without the other. And the best practitioners understand this.

Back to energy follows energy. If you, as the practitioner, start to get nervous that you can't find a solution or an answer with a client, then the client is going to start to get nervous about that. If you, as the practitioner, hold that it's normal to not always know right away, to not see all the things whatever it is, energy follows energy. You'll begin to normalize that for the client and they'll be able to settle in to the mystery to be able to see what they can see even better. And then cocreate from there. That makes sense?

Okay. There's some comments in the chats, let's see. Someone talked about a client who was talking about not having money for a website. Penny's saying "An early, who talked about doing some manifestation work for money for a course. I might bring awareness to a connection there. In many ways COVID is teaching everyone about the mystery." Yeah. The space of not knowing right now. So true. Good.

Joanna: That's one piece. And then the other pieces. And we'll look at this more when we get to strategizing is that sometimes the strategy changes and sometimes the goals change or not even changed, but sometimes there needs to... In order to get to the goals... There needs to be a piece of the strategy. And when I say strategy, I even mean just like the step by step that the client has to get through to their goals, that was unforeseen either because something in life has arisen or just because you didn't see it. What's important when that happens... Like when you're in this situation where you're in now is to create awareness around it. I know that when we

started together, we said that these four sessions would be devoted to getting you to this school and that we would work on this and this and this.

You can tell me if you agree with me, but from my sense, because this major thing has happened in your life. It's going to take a little bit longer to get here. It's important for us to make some space for grieving or whatever it is in order to get you here. Just for you in general for your life, because this is what you need. But also it's so intricately tied to your creativity. I know your work with people on creativity, right? Without making the space for this, it's going to be hard to tap into your creativity. Right? So to create awareness around that, and then ask the question, "How does this land for you," or "what does this bring up for you," or "what do you think about this?" Because I'm willing to go... And sometimes tell a client "I'll go with you wherever you want, but this is what I'm seeing".

Joanna: All right. You guys, I know we're over time. I know we had technical issues. Thank you for hanging on. You'll get almost all of your homework will be in the sheets that you get this week, but just a couple of other little things.

If you're working with a partner, I want you in your practice sessions for this whole module to really take the time to think about the questions that you ask. I want you to be aware of all the things that we looked at today. Try not to default to consulting. And you may have a question that just comes naturally. Ask it, but don't be afraid in the session to say I am taking a couple extra moments here. Even write down the question first. Think about how you're crafting your questions. You're not going to need to do this forever, but the more that you can flex that muscle in practice, the more naturally it will come for you. In the breakdown with your partner, after you do the coaching, among discussing other things I want you to also discuss the questions that were asked, how they worked and look together, how you could even make certain questions better. So really focus on the questioning aspect.

You'll get resource sheets, but you'll also get in the sheets... I just want to pull it out... A practice, which is great, not only just for inner work, but for building your questioning muscle, which is to write out a dilemma or a situation that you're having briefly in a paragraph or two, and then read over what you wrote and then articulate three to five different journaling

questions for yourself based on what you wrote using all of the skills, the foundational principles that we learned today. It's not only a great... Like I said, just to learn more about yourself. You can answer the questions if you want... But it's a great practice in articulating questions. If you are working with clients, I want to encourage you to slow down a little bit in your next sessions over this week. Take a moment to really craft questions. Just really think more about this and after sessions... Did I give you guys the post-session assessment form? I can't remember if I did. I'll repost it. I have an assessment form that you can fill out after your coaching sessions for you.

And one of the questions I want you to ask yourself after your client sessions are, "what questions would I have asked differently in that session?" Just a way to continue practicing the questions. Alana is asking should the journaling be in relation... Yeah. Anything from your personal life, anything that you're struggling with, or you want more information on? We can work with that.

All right. Any last questions before we wrap for today? All right, you guys. Thank you again for being patient with the technology. It's great to see those of you that I'm seeing on video. I hope I see more of you. I hope I'll see a lot of you tomorrow and I'm sending you all a big hug. Have a wonderful rest of your day. Bye.

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