

Helpful Questions for Getting to the Specific

Probing questions such as the ones listed below were gathered from questions used by Gary Craig and dozens of other practitioners are important in detective work to get to the core issue. This is by no means a complete list of potential questions.

The best questions revolve around investigative reporter type questions: who, what, when, where, how and, more rarely, why. Questions involving the five senses: sight, sound, feeling, smells and tastes also help create specificity and focus.

Timing is important. Obviously, all questions would be used in the context of the story.

All the right questions won't help unless you have a true sense of curiosity about your client. All truly successful practitioners have a well-developed sense of wonder. The below "investigative reporter" questions are given as an example of the kinds of questions that can gather useful information.



How do you know that?

How do you know you do not know?

What makes you think that?

Who told you that?

Who/what does that remind you of in your life?

Who do I remind you of?

What happened to make you pick that reaction?

If there were an emotional component to the pain, what would it be?

If this pain had a name what would it be?

If you did know what would it be? Just guess. Make it up.

If your friend had that pain, what would it be?

If there were an emotional contributor to this problem, what would it be?

What was going on in your life when this started?

What would ... say about that?

What/who is to blame for that?

What was your first thought after the incident?

Who did you tell about this? How did they respond?
Who did you hope would never find out?
Did you have a sense something was wrong before this happened?
Did someone say dreadful things to you that you replay to yourself now?
What's your theory about this problem (or pain?)
How would you describe this?
What is that like for you? – helps them develop a metaphor for their problem.
What details do you see when you think about this?
If you could live your life over, what pivotal event or person would you eliminate?
What would you do to change that?
Did something occur in your life in the last year?
What happens when you try?
What does that mean?
What do you want to happen?
Teach me how you do that.
An example of that would be _____?
How do you know you are not worthy/loveable, etc.?
What do you do to make that happen?
Where do you feel that?
What sets that off?
Who taught you that?
What reason could he have had for doing that?
What does _____ mean to you?
What do you get out of keeping that behavior/belief/issue?
What will you lose if you stop that behavior/belief/issue?
What do you have to think about to feel like that?
When (or where, or with whom) does it happen worst?
And then what happens?
Is there anything you don't think you could possibly get over?
If there were another issue we haven't yet identified what would it be?
What is your biggest issue now?
What is still bothering you about _____ right now?
What does this issue/person remind you of?
When was the first time you remember feeling this way?
Can you give an example of how this problem affects your life?
And, what else bothers you about this?
If there were a deeper emotion underlying this problem, what might it be?
If your pain had a face what would it look like?
How does having this problem make you feel?

If there were a reason not to get well what would it be?
What was happening in your life before or when this happened?
Who wants you to get better? Who doesn't?
What is your greatest fear about this pain?
Is there a message this pain is telling you?
If there were a reason to keep this pain what would it be?
What's the upside of keeping this problem?
What's the downside of giving up this problem?
When you become stuck on an issue, ask yourself:
What's in the way here?
What have I not yet seen?
What core issue have I been unable to find?

Use the five senses to gain specificity:

- What did you see?
- What did you hear?
- What were you feeling/thinking?
- Were there any smells or tastes involved?
- Is the scene in color or black and white?
- Is it close or far away?
- Are you "in" the picture or just looking at it?

Adapted from Appendix: ***EFT Level 1 Comprehensive Training Resource*** Purchase
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