

## **THE STRATEGIC QUESTIONING PROCESS - TYPES OF QUESTIONS**

“All questions differ in their power. It’s not a matter of a question being labelled strategic or not, a question can be more or less dynamic, more or less strategic, more or less actioning, longer or shorter levered.

To adapt de Bono’s terms there are “rock” questions, those that assume a tough truth, which focus on hard edged, permanent, unchanging reality, and then there are “water” questions which are those which flow, which work to find a way through, a reality that moves, a focus on “to” rather than “is”. A water question takes the form of the container into which it is poured, but is not a form unto itself.

I like to think of these question families as increasing in fluidity, dynamic and strategic power as you go down from level to level. In any use of the strategic questioning process, we would start near the top of the family order and work our way down to the more powerful question families.”

### **FIRST LEVEL - Describing the issue or problem.**

#### **1. Focus Questions**

*“What aspects of your field are you passionate about? ”*

*“What are you most concerned about?”*

*“What did your advisor say? What were their suggestions?”*

#### **2. Observation Questions**

*“What do you see?”*

*“What do you hear?”*

*“What have you heard about the situation?”*

*“Which sources do you trust and why?”*

*“What effects of this situation have you noticed in people?”*

*“What do you know for sure and what are you not certain about?”*

#### **3. Analysis Questions**

*“What do you think about...?”*

*“What are the reasons for...?”*

*“What is the relationship of...to...?”*

#### **4. Feeling Questions**

*“How do you feel about the situation?”*

*“How has the situation affected your own physical or emotional health?”*

## **SECOND LEVEL - Strategic Questions. Digging Deeper.**

### **5. Visioning Questions**

*“How would you like it to be?”*

*“What is the meaning of this situation in your own life?”*

### **6. Change Questions**

*“How could the situation be changed for it to be as you would like it?”*

*“What will it take to bring the current situation towards to ideal?”*

*“What exactly needs to change here?”*

*“How might those changes come about? Name as many ways as possible.”*

*“Who can make a difference?”*

*“What are the changes you have seen or read about?”*

*“How did those changes come about?” (here you are trying to find the individual’s change view which will greatly impact the strategies for change available to the person.)*

### **7. Consider all the Alternatives**

*“What are all the ways you can think of that would accomplish these changes?”*

*“How could you reach that goal? What are other ways?”*

### **8. Consider the Consequences**

*“How would your first alternative affect the others in your group?”*

*“What would be the effect of using the runoff for your garden?”*

*“How would you feel doing (name each alternative)?”*

*“What would be the political effect if you did...?”*

### **9. Consider the Obstacles**

*“What would need to change in order for alternative “a” to be done?”*

*“What keeps you from doing...?”*

*“What prevents you from getting involved?”*

### **10. Personal Inventory and Support Questions**

*“How can I support you?”*

*“What would it take for you to participate in the change?”*

*“What do you like to do that might be useful in bringing about these changes?”*

*“Tell me what is special about you.”*

*“What aspects of the situation interest you the most?”*

*“What support would you need to work for this change?”*

### **11. Personal Action Questions**

*“Who do you need to talk to?”*

*“How can you join a group that is working on this?”*

*“How can you get others together to work on this?”*