The Power of Asking the Right Questions

Introduction

"Successful people ask better questions, and as a result, they get better answers." – Tony Robbins

Every person is born with a deep and unique purpose, intricately connected to creation itself. The essence of creation is to sustain life, foster progress, and bring joy and love to humanity. However, as we grow, our purpose often gets distorted by societal influences—education systems, parental expectations, societal norms, and religious conditioning. To rediscover our true purpose, there can be many ways but out of all, asking the right questions on your own can make a significant connections to find solutions.

John Maxwell, in Good Leaders Ask Great Questions, states, "Good questions inform, but great questions transform." When we cultivate the ability to ask transformational questions, we unlock new perspectives, reshape our beliefs, and realign ourselves with our deeper purpose.

The Connection Between Creation and Purpose

Stepping away from our daily hustle—whether in Colombo or any major city—and immersing ourselves in nature allows us to reconnect with creation. The mountains, rivers, birds, and waterfalls all speak to something deeper within us. This connection to creation refreshes our minds and hearts, making us yearn for more time in nature.

personally experienced this when my late wife was diagnosed with cancer. Our dream was to move to the mountains, build a small hut, and slow down to connect with creation. Though life took a different turn, the realization remained: creation holds a profound purpose for us, and that purpose is ingrained in us from birth.

Discovering Purpose Through the Power of Questions

In my years as a mental performance coach, I have never encountered two people with the same purpose. Every individual has a unique journey, and when they uncover their true purpose, their beliefs transform, aligning with new perspectives that bring joy, peace, and fulfillment.

Take the example of a young Sri Lankan cricketer I worked with. Initially, his goals were to own a Ferrari and have his face on billboards. These aspirations were shaped by external influences—the lifestyles of famous cricketers. However, once he uncovered his deeper purpose, his entire outlook changed. His new goal became *legendary* status in cricket while using his success to uplift underprivileged children. This profound shift was initiated through powerful questioning.

Maxwell states, "The greatest leadership is self-leadership, and self-leadership begins with asking yourself the right questions." By questioning his motivations, the young cricketer realigned with a purpose far greater than personal material success.

The Power of Language and Self-Talk

"The words you say to yourself shape your reality." *– Brian O'Connor, Self-Hypnosis for Athletes.* Let me share how you can put this in to practice.

Each person has a unique internal language, a combination of thoughts, images, sounds, feelings, and self-talk. This language has the power to shape our perception of reality. Unfortunately, we often use this language externally—communicating with others—while neglecting internal dialogue.

One athlete I coached had an extraordinary innings, and when I asked what he had done differently, he revealed that he had been talking to himself before every ball. This level of self-talk is not just about affirmations; it is a form of self-hypnosis that programs the mind for success.

HeartMath research shows that positive self-talk, when aligned with heart coherence, enhances performance, decision-making, and emotional stability. It is not enough to have knowledge of these techniques; one must practice them with urgency and intention.

Congruency: The Key to Meaningful Change

"When values, thoughts, feelings, and actions are in alignment, a person becomes focused and powerful." – HeartMath Institute

Congruency between heart and mind is essential in seeking answers. If a person lacks the passion and desire to seek truth, the mind will not prioritize finding meaningful solutions. Many people fail to uncover solutions because they do not value their own internal dialogue.

To penetrate the filters that block self-awareness, one must use the right language, tone, breathing patterns, and timing. Meditation, listening to sermons, engaging with music, and deep reflection all help bypass these mental barriers and bring clarity. When a leader or athlete taps into this state of self-awareness, they unlock incredible potential.

Steps to Mastering the Art of Asking Questions

- Block the noise of your mind by increasing focus.
- Use deep breathing to enhance concentration.
- Connect with the calmness within you— stress leads to misguided answers.

- Ask specific questions, one at a time, based on the outcome you need.
- Use the right language patterns.
- Be honest and congruent with yourself.
- Test the outcome—ensure it aligns with your greater purpose.
- Be thankful for the insights you receive.

Mastering the Art of Asking Questions

These are some of the great ways to master this art of questioning.

Hierarchy of Ideas from NLP: The Three Levels of Questioning

Meta-Level Questions (Big Picture Thinking)

- What is the ultimate purpose behind my actions?
- What is the bigger vision I am aligning with?
- What are the broader consequences of my decisions?

Chunking Up and Down (Conceptual and Specific Inquiry)

- Chunking Up: What is this a part of?
- What is the greater purpose of this goal?
- Chunking Down: What are the specific steps needed to achieve this?
- What precise actions can I take today?

Cartesian Questions (Challenging Perspectives)

This method I use with clients encourages deep thinking. It pushes you beyond boundaries and can sometimes be confusing. At times, you may not even understand the question's meaning right away, which leads you to think even more

- What would happen if I implement this new strategy?
- What would happen if I did not implement this new strategy?
- What won't happen if I make this decision?
- What won't happen if you do not make this decision ?

Life Success-Oriented Questions

These are more examples for you to apply and see

- How can I create meaningful impact in this situation?
- What would someone with a growth mindset do in this scenario?
- How can I elevate my thinking to improve my outcomes?
- What beliefs or habits do I need to change to align with my best self?

Coaching Through Deep Inquiry

When working with clients, I use specific questions to drive breakthroughs:

- What is the specific outcome of this situation?
- What is the purpose behind this goal?
- What are the deeper intentions behind my desires?
- What are other examples in my life where I have succeeded in similar situations?

John Maxwell emphasizes, "Great leaders don't have all the answers, but they do know how to ask the right questions." Learning to ask empowering questions transforms not just leadership, but personal growth and performance.

Conclusion

"The important thing is not to stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existing." – Albert Einstein

Remember, you have a purpose, and it is deeply connected to your heart and mind. The art of asking great questions minimizes confusion and complexity, making life more fulfilling. Whether in leadership, sports, or personal development, powerful questions lead to powerful answers.

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