Brain Talk

Using “clean” and other language patterns to enable deeper conversations

Mike Bowler

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Better questions lead to better thinking

... or to thinking at all
Metaphor
dictionary.com

noun
1. a figure of speech in which a term or phrase is applied to something to which it is not literally applicable in order to suggest a resemblance
2. something used, or regarded as being used, to represent something else

That story sent **chills** down my spine
My head was **exploding** with new ideas
I have **a lot** of bananas
**The band is on fire** tonight
I’ve been **struggling** with this problem

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We average about six metaphors a minute

A study of metaphor use in interviews, essays and speeches determined that speakers “use about an average of 1.8 novel and 4.08 frozen figures per minute”

- Pollio et al 1977
Contaminating Metaphors

That story sent **chills** down my spine

Tell me more about how you were scared

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What kind of X (is that X)?

That story sent **chills** down my spine

What kind of **chills**?

or

What kind of **chills** are those **chills**?
Lazy Jedi Questions

“What kind of X (is that X)?”

“Is there anything else about X?”
Practice in pairs

Ask your partner: “When you’re performing at your best, you’re like what?”

“What kind of X (is that X)?”

“Is there anything else about X?”
Nonverbals
Developing Questions
• “What kind of X (is that X)?”
• “Is there anything else about X?”
• “Where is X? or (And) whereabouts is X?”
• “Is there a relationship between X and Y?”
• “When X, what happens to Y?”
• “That’s X like what?”

Sequence and Source
• “Then what happens?”
• “What happens just before X?”
• “Where could X come from?”

Intention Questions
• “What would X like to have happen?”
• “What needs to happen for X?”
• “Can X (happen)?”

Practice in pairs
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And [client’s words]
and when/as [client’s words]
[clean question]?

“And you felt like you were spiralling out of control and when you were spiralling out of control, what kind of spiralling was that?”

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“And when X, what would you like to have happen?”

X could be multiple metaphors in this case.
Using Clean with Groups

For each topic, talking to one person at a time:

- “... is like what?”
- Unpack with clean, then
- “Who’s not like that? Who has something different?”
What is a brain?

• Large numbers of neurons and ganglia, including sensory neurons and motor neurons
• Neural cells with inter-neurons; neurons re-entrantly interconnecting with other neurons
• Support cells and components such as glial cells, astrocytes, proteins, etc.
• Functional attributes: perceiving/assimilating information, processing information, memory storage and access
• Able to mediate complex reflexes via an intrinsic nervous system
• A chemical warehouse of neurotransmitters

Source: Using Your Multiple Brains to do Cool Stuff
We have (at least) three brains

Head - cephalic brain

Heart - cardiac brain

Gut - enteric brain

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We have (at least) three brains

Head - Self talk / imagery
“What/how are you thinking?”

Heart - Values
“What’s most important?”

Gut - Action
“What’s the next step?”
More questions?
I’m here all week plus...

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