
The Greatest Little Question in the World!!!!

Thoughts of the Month: September 2007

It's a little question with huge potential for clarification, consciousness raising, healing and growth. That's a lot!

First, the situation...

Sally knows she is getting more and more irritated but she doesn't quite know why. Her husband Fred, just left the house and his half-filled coffee cup and half-eaten grapefruit remain on the kitchen table. No big deal, really...he was late for work.

As she takes his dishes to the sink she notices several soda cans stuck to the counter and a sink full of dirty dishes with food dried on them. This is the result of her teenager's late night snack.

She opens the dishwasher but alas, it is full of clean dishes waiting to be emptied. She is at the boiling point and the day has just started! And she needs to get to work herself!!!

Her son finally emerges from sleep shortly before noon. Sally is locked and loaded with her question. (Note that this is not the question!) "Would it kill you to unload the dishwasher once in a while and put your own dishes away?" Many of you are now thinking, "What's wrong with that question? It sounds very familiar."

Familiar...yes!
Reasonable...yes!
Natural...yes!
Cathartic...maybe?
Justified...yes...yes!!!
Effective...NO!

Okay, you have been very patient waiting for the greatest little question. The real question for Sally to ask herself at some point during this frustrating morning experience is, "What am I afraid of?" I have come to believe this is a most useful question to ask of myself whenever I am reactive to Donna or ready to boil over anywhere in my life.

In Sally's case, the first answer may be, "That's easy...I'm afraid I am living with a bunch of slob!"

Next question..."Now what am I really afraid of? Hmm...I guess I'm afraid I'll be stuck and trapped in this role of doing everything for everybody with this bunch forever!"

Next question..."And what hurts about that? Hmm...Well, I will be perpetually seen as the b----- of the family which is not who I want to be with them."

Next question..."And what does that remind me of from my growing up? Oh, my gosh...it's just like when I was a kid and had to make sure everything was just right so would stay calm and no one would get hit." Or another answer might be, "It's like when my Mom got drunk and I had to take care of my little sisters."

So the question that really opens up our consciousness and can lead to intentional dialogue is, "What am I afraid of?" This, followed quickly by, "What hurts about that? What that reminds me of from my childhood?"

Try asking this of yourself the next time you are really frustrated with someone you love and let us know what you discover!

This is just one of the transformational tools we will explore more deeply in our Advanced Workshop October 6 & 7. Come join us!

With great encouragement and hope,
David and Donna

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