



Imagery and metaphor

Using Imagination

V/O Commentary

We've seen both Ian and Caitlin using subtle forms of questioning to help people explore issues on a metaphorical level. Both of them paid great attention to reading people's body language, and language patterns in order to obtain more information as unobtrusively as possible. But how easy is it to learn these techniques as a novice? Caitlin thinks using the clean language questions is a way of making the process accessible for anyone.

Caitlin Walker:

These questions are so generic and so simple, and I have my belief and my intention is that just by using the questions itself, it teaches the system it teaches you not to impose structure on things and it teaches you to be curious and surprised by information that comes up. So I think that simply by asking the questions, taking the formula sticking bits of information in them, what kind of a something is that something... it teaches your system to be more creative, because it doesn't have the tight patterns of communications that you might often use. So although it's, it's very, very useful to have an experienced practitioner and someone who's very good at spotting patterns, I don't think you need it I think you can just use, I think anyone should do should be able to just go off and practice them.

Graham Spratt:

Quite a few different colours of the objects you know about them saying sort of different colours even wires are sort of different colours, but when you move back that sort of you know wouldn't say you lose all the colour, but it washes out substantially.

Chris Vallé:

And, and that colour, when that colour washes out what kind of washes out is that washes out?

Graham Spratt:

Well it's it's really like when you you know in school when you when you're washing out your brushes in clean water, it's that sort of colour of that water.

V/O Commentary:

One of Caitlin's goals at NIP was to get them all using the clean language questions. Here Caitlin is helping Chris and Simon to elicit a metaphor from Graham, who needs a better way of explaining contact links to customers.

Simon Coles:

I don't know how to ask this cleanly but sort of as a dirty question or something, there's obviously there's objects in there, do they have and they're different shapes what kind of, you know, what shapes are they, and also do the shapes of those objects change when you move back? You know, to see if they're still...

Caitlin Walker:

That's what you want to ask, have you got a sense of how you can ask that cleanly?

Simon Coles:

Well he's kind of said, yes they have a size and shape, but he hasn't, I want to know if there's a difference in shape and I don't know how to ...

Caitlin Walker:

There is a question.

Simon Coles:

What is the difference between them I guess, yes, okay.

Caitlin Walker:

Or is there a difference between.

Simon Coles:

Is there a difference, okay.

Caitlin Walker:

What what is the difference between presupposes that there is one.

Caitlin Walker:

For me to have done my job well, I expect these people to be able to not only go off and do what I taught them, but to be able to go off and keep on developing. The simplicity of it is such that anyone can do it, and you can do it very very quickly.

V/O Commentary:

Both Caitlin and Ian are aware however, that when dealing with people's problems there can be a danger of an inexperienced facilitator getting into deep water.

Ian McDermott:

You don't want to mess with somebody's issue so that they end up bogged down and going, well you know it started off as a light shower, but now I find I'm drowning in a monsoon like a river, what do I do now and you say well I'm sorry I've got to go. So really, I think err on the side of caution. And it's tricky because I don't want to suggest you know oh it requires fifteen years of apprenticeship before anybody should ever engage with another, that's not true. But you do need to be really mindful of how someone is creating their a world imaginatively.

V/O Commentary

With all the techniques we've seen, it seems the key thing is to allow yourself to access the adventurous, exploratory, associative side of your mind. Then there can be advantages over verbal reasoning techniques.