Better Conversations: Curating Stories of Purpose, Possibilities, and Progress
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How would you begin?

They booked this appointment and you don’t know much about them yet. This is your first meeting.

They are "nominated" or "mandated" to see you. And you know a bit of background/context. This is your first meeting.

They are coming back for a follow-up conversation after some time.

How would you respond?

The client says:

"It’s been a whirlwind of change and I can’t sustain this. I’m reaching that breaking point. I don’t want to let anyone down but I just gotta fill my cup first. There are so many things that I need to do and want to do, but you gotta be realistic here."
The Dialogic Orientation Quadrant (DOQ)

Purpose

Your questions orient their attention to specific areas.

- You must have a good reason to book this appointment. How would you know that this was useful for you as you go back to your day-to-day...?

- What might be some positive effects that you or others might start to notice?

- So, suppose this turns out to be useful for you, what might you be doing or thinking or feeling... that you may not be doing right now?

And so on and so forth in the direction of _______?
The client says:

“It’s been a whirlwind of change ( ) and I can’t sustain this ( )
I’m reaching that breaking point ( ).
I don’t want to let anyone down ( ) but I just gotta fill my cup ( ) first ( ).
There are so many things ( ) that I need to do ( ) and want to do ( ), but you gotta be realistic here ( ).

Looking Back...

What are some changes that you have experienced in the past in the areas of physical, emotional, relational, financial, vocational, intellectual, societal, environmental, spiritual...?

Looking Forward...

What are some changes that you anticipate in the future in the areas of physical, emotional, relational, financial, vocational, intellectual, societal, environmental, spiritual...?
Looking Back...

Based on what you wrote earlier, what experiences, interactions, thoughts, feelings, moments, opinions etc. would be your preference?

Looking Forward...

Based on what you wrote earlier, what future experiences, interactions, thoughts, feelings, moments would be your preference?

Based on what you wrote earlier, what experiences, interactions, thoughts, feelings, moments, opinions etc. would NOT be preferred?

Based on what you wrote earlier, what future experiences, interactions, thoughts, feelings, moments would NOT be preferred?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Looking Back...</th>
<th>Looking Forward...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resourceful Past</strong></td>
<td><strong>Preferred Future</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- What was <strong>useful</strong> about your experiences?</td>
<td>- Suppose you are there, what would be different?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- What are some <strong>recent</strong> examples of your preferred futures <strong>already</strong> happening?</td>
<td>- What does this say about your <strong>values</strong>?</td>
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<tr>
<td>- What did you learn to <strong>care</strong> about through all these experiences?</td>
<td>- What <strong>might</strong> be the <strong>first</strong> signs that you are getting closer?</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Troubled Past</strong></th>
<th><strong>Dreaded Future</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- What would you want <strong>instead</strong> of these experiences?</td>
<td>- What are you trying to protect that you <strong>value</strong>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- What was <strong>useful</strong> about your experiences?</td>
<td>- What is <strong>becoming</strong> clearer for you as a result of these considerations?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- How did you <strong>cope</strong> with these experiences? Who <strong>else</strong> or what <strong>else</strong> helped you through it?</td>
<td>- What would be <strong>good</strong> enough for you in this experience/situation?</td>
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Check-in and Learning

How did I already get here?

Where would be good enough for me for the next while?

What does “good enough” look like, sound like, and feel like?
What are your best hopes?

Suppose you are somehow moving closer to your purpose, possibilities, and progress, what would you like to see happen by the time you read this note to self?

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Today is [date] and this is a note from your past self. By the time I read this I suppose it’s been [duration]. By then, I hope to see some positive differences in [area 1], [area 2], [area 3]. I wonder if I might still struggle with [area 4] and how I might be coping with it differently or even better than now. I also wonder what became available since I have written this note. Since I’ve written this note, I have met/connected with [names of people] and I also learned [insert your learning]. I also started [insert], am continuing [insert], and finally stopped [insert]...
Note to Self

- Get the book: *Coaching A to Z* from my local bookstore (https://www.coachingatoz.com/)
- Check out the community of practice (https://briefcoaching.mn.co/feed) for reading Coaching A to Z together and coaching practice sessions
- Check out upcoming learning opportunities (https://www.briefcoaching.ca/coach-training)
- Find a coaching demo tape and play with the DOQ
- Try the DOQ self-coaching journal
- Email your insights and inquiries to learn@briefcoaching.ca

Today is [date] and this is a note from your past self. By the time I read this I suppose it’s been [duration]. By then, I hope to see some positive differences in [area 1], [area 2], [area 3]. I wonder if I might still struggle with [area 4] and how I might be coping with it differently or even better than now. I also wonder what became available since I have written this note. Since I’ve written this note, I have met/connected with [names of people] and I also learned [insert your learning]. I also started [insert], am continuing [insert], and finally stopped [insert]...