**Asking Powerful Questions**

Little and Palmer (2012) generated powerful questions for consulting about teaching based on the scholarship on coaching. Powerful questions allow teaching consultants to gather information, organize thoughts, clarify problems, discover novel possibilities, and unlock creativity. Below are some “do’s and don’ts” for asking powerful questions, as well as example powerful questions that you can use in consultation with GSIs.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***Do ask questions that:***   * Are open-ended * Can be focused on one at a time * Foster curiosity and creativity * Open up new possibilities * Have no predetermined answer * Move toward new understandings | ***Don't:***   * Ask close-ended, yes/no and either/or questions * Ask leading questions |
| ***Sample Powerful Questions*** | |
| ***Powerful questions that clarify the situation:***   * What are the facts of the situation? * What do you think is really going on? * What is at stake here? * What would you like to see happen? * What is working well? What isn’t? * Which of your values are you honoring in this situation? Not honoring? * What is really important to you about this? * Why does it matter to you? | ***Powerful questions that create possibility:***   * What is another perspective you could have about this? * What is important to you about this? * In what ways are you stuck? What would it take to get unstuck? * What are potential risks? Benefits? * What other options can you think of? Would you like to brainstorm ideas? |
| ***Powerful questions for setting goals:***   * What would you like to get out of this consultation? * What question are you trying to answer? * What specifically are you going to do? When are you going to do it? * What obstacles will you encounter? * If you take this action, what will be the hardest part? * What support do you need? How and when will you get it? | ***Powerful questions for assessment:***   * How will you know that you are making progress toward your goals? * How will you measure success? * How will you know these changes made a difference? * How can I be of help? What other resources can I provide? |