

Acclaimed by Mark Victor Hansen

Co-Author of *Chicken Soup for the Soul* and *The One Minute Millionaire*

Just Ask!

Success Can
Be as Simple as
Asking
the Right
Questions

BILL McGRANE III

A *Possibility Press* Book

Just Ask!

Bill McGrane III

Copyright © 2008 by Bill McGrane III
ISBN 978-0-938716-65-5
Cover Photo by Tim O'Brien

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

All rights reserved, including the right to reproduce this book or portions thereof in any form or any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by information storage retrieval system without written permission from the publisher, except for the inclusion of brief quotations in a review. All rights are also reserved for translation into foreign languages. No liability is assumed with respect to use of the information herein.

Published by
Possibility Press
PossibilityPress.com

Manufactured in the United States of America

Dedication

To my father, William J. McGrane, Jr., who shared everything he had—challenging me to live up to my potential. You taught me the skills of the art of asking questions.

Acknowledgment

Thank you, Walter Cronkite, for setting a standard of excellence in asking questions. When asked how he selected interview guests, Walter said, “It’s easy to find people willing to talk about their successes. I find my audience listens most to those people willing to talk about their challenges and how they have overcome them.”

Thank you, God, for my challenges and everyone who has had a hand in my life. I often ask people, “Who has made the greatest impact on your life?” As for me, I am grateful to the Lord for giving me the abilities I have.

Thank you, Dean McGrane, my mother, who taught me the caring side of life.

Thank you, Joan and Kit, my sisters, and Bob, my brother, and other relatives. You’ve all helped me live a life open to more possibilities.

Thank you, Linda, my wife and partner, and our four children, Jay, Heidi, Laura, and John for your love and support.

I appreciate the thousands of clients and organizations with whom I’ve been privileged to share the many life-changing principles I’ve learned over the years.

Many special thanks to my editor and publisher. Without your dedication and personal interest in me and my mission, this book would not be what it is or even exist.

Contents

<i>Chapter One</i>	The Way You Ask a Question Affects the Response	11
<i>Chapter Two</i>	What's in It for You?	30
<i>Chapter Three</i>	Creating Communication Acceptance	46
<i>Chapter Four</i>	Safe Questions	59
<i>Chapter Five</i>	Closed Questions	65
<i>Chapter Six</i>	Open-Ended Questions	73
<i>Chapter Seven</i>	Interview Questions	86
<i>Chapter Eight</i>	Congruent Questions	100
<i>Chapter Nine</i>	Asking Questions Is Key to Persuasion	116
<i>Chapter Ten</i>	Developing the Art of Asking Questions	123
<i>Appendix</i>	Questions, Questions, Questions...	133
<i>Appendix</i>	Feeling Words	139
<i>About the Author</i>	Who Is Bill McGrane III?	143

—Chapter One—

The Way You Ask a Question Affects the Response!

Are your communication skills getting you the results you want? Would you like to have some new ways to empower your ability to persuade? If you could improve one aspect of your communications skills, what would it be? Could asking questions and listening more skillfully make a difference for you?

The benefits of asking questions are endless. By first asking the best questions of yourself you can stay focused on the most important things. They'll help you get your mind thinking in the right direction, remove obstacles to your success, stop you from making self-defeating choices, and empower you to receive creative answers to what's vital in your life.

Asking questions of others enables you to learn more about them—how they think, feel, view life, and what they aspire to. You'll be better able to share what you have to offer based on what they need. You'll have the resources to more effectively handle objections and resolve and dissipate conflict.

Picture this: You walk into a department store, and while you're making your way through the specialty kitchen section of the appliance area, you hear an older woman yelling. As you turn toward the customer service counter, where people can pay their

local utility bills, you hear the woman shouting, “How could my electric bill be so high? You’ve got to be kidding!” From the tone of her voice, you know immediately that an explosion is about to occur.

Across the aisle, you sit down in a lounge chair and act like a quiet little mouse. You’re curious to listen and see how this situation unfolds. You notice that the employees seem to suddenly become very busy with all kinds of activities except, that is, assisting this woman. They’ve obviously decided to ignore her and act as if nothing is happening. Meanwhile, the older woman, who’s getting more agitated by the minute, is quickly walking around and around a nearby table, shouting in disbelief about her utility bill. Everyone is well aware of what’s going on, but no one’s doing anything to help. Then a magic moment occurs—someone with the skill to resolve the issue is about to step in.

If you were faced with this situation, what would *you* do? What would be the first thing you’d say? Might it be appropriate to ask a question?

Observing all of this is a woman in the appliance area; she’s demonstrating a coffee machine and giving away free samples. As the older woman came around the table again, she noticed the coffee lady who then gently asked her, “Would you like a cup of coffee?” Immediately, the older woman went from showing extreme pain to relative calmness—the result of the power of a question! It was as if the coffee lady knew exactly what to ask to defuse a hostile situation, releasing the pressure and tension. She asked the right question and won the day!

The older woman said, “Yes,” and the coffee lady continued having the conversation, adding the power of touch. As she put her hand on the older woman’s arm she said, “Let’s talk about this for a minute. Do you like cream in your coffee?” The coffee lady’s question reframed the situation, putting it in a different light, and the older woman totally calmed down. You could actu-

ally feel the tension and pressure being released. It seemed like a miracle as everyone in the room breathed a silent sigh of relief.

By this time the store manager had come into the picture to help, even though the situation had nothing to do with him. The challenge was a utility bill that the older woman believed was incorrect. Like many people, she didn't have the skill to ask the appropriate questions. She felt there was only one way to deal with the situation—anger and yelling.

Consider this: You're sitting in your home or office trying to figure out your next step. You may be frustrated because you've done this many times and lots of things are going through your mind, confusing you even more. You ask yourself, "Do I focus on this project, make this call, or handle this family issue?"

In sorting out your next step, you probably did one of two things: You either continued coming up with more things to add to your to-do list, continuing to keep yourself in a loop of inaction or, if you knew the steps to get you off the perpetual treadmill, you could move from inaction to inspired accomplishment.

Here's another example: You're talking with a prospective client. You think you've done your homework and anticipate they'll do business with you. As you get into your presentation, you notice they're not responding the way you thought they would. All of a sudden, they ask you some questions you either don't know the answers to or have no clue about what to do next. You try to compose yourself to come up with the best thing to say. Unfortunately, their response to what you do say next indicates they're just as confused as you are. You have no idea what to say or do now to fix the situation so you can get your presentation back on track toward making the sale or getting the agreement you're looking for.

On a personal level, have you ever found yourself in a situation praying, "Oh God, please show me a way out of this conversation"? The love of your life wants your feedback on how you're going to resolve an issue with a family member. What

you're hearing tells you this conversation is going down the path of no return. The two of you have argued about this before. You hate conflict so, as usual, you try to scurry around the topic. However, you're feeling cornered and see no way out.

You've got to do something! In your mind you begin seeing your pattern of avoidance repeating itself over and over again whenever you come to a sticky point where uncomfortable action is required. You desperately try to think of a way out. Instead, your mind locks up with fear. You're sure the look on your face shows you're confused, which could be taken as guilt even though you did nothing wrong. You're so stressed out you even admit to things you never did, wondering, "How can I avoid getting into a situation like this again?"

If you can relate to any of these scenarios the good news is you're not alone. The even better news is there's a simple and effective way through these situations—by asking questions—which is what this book is all about. It gives you the tools to handle these and thousands of other situations that arise, as well as initiating and creating the results you want, enabling you to live more successfully.

Now take the following quiz to identify your skill in asking questions and your attitude toward it:

1. Do I like asking questions? ___ Yes ___ No
2. Do I feel comfortable asking
 questions? ___ Yes ___ No
3. Am I able to construct interesting
 questions? ___ Yes ___ No
4. Do I know what questions to ask? ___ Yes ___ No
5. Am I courageous in asking
 questions? ___ Yes ___ No

6. Am I interested enough in others to ask questions of them? ___ Yes ___ No
7. Do I realize the questions I ask affect the quality of my life and that of those around me? ___ Yes ___ No
8. When people talk to me, do I listen and remember what they say? ___ Yes ___ No
9. Do others consider me a great conversationalist because I listen well? ___ Yes ___ No
10. Am I skillful enough to ask questions so I can get to the bottom of things? ___ Yes ___ No
11. Do I find people have an easy time answering my questions? ___ Yes ___ No
12. Do I ask questions rather than making statements? ___ Yes ___ No
13. Do I find myself persuading others more than they persuade me? ___ Yes ___ No
14. Do I ask questions instead of just talking about myself? ___ Yes ___ No
15. Do I find it easy to start a conversation? ___ Yes ___ No
16. Do I find it easy to keep a conversation going? ___ Yes ___ No
17. Do I find it easy to end a conversation? ___ Yes ___ No

18. Do I ask questions without being afraid of the answer I may get back? ___Yes ___No
19. Do I ask enough questions of enough people? ___Yes ___No
20. Do I understand that I could increase my income by asking the right questions? ___Yes ___No

Count your yes answers and put the total here: _____

What Your Answers Mean

- 0-6 yeses: You're at the beginning stages of asking questions. This book will definitely help you be a more effective communicator.
- 7-13 yeses: You see the value of asking questions. You'll gain the tools to be more effective in asking questions to win more.
- 14-20 yeses: Mean you have developed many keys in the art of asking skills. Keep reading and take your skills to a whole new level.

A Tool to Success in Building Better Relationships

Words are powerful; they create feelings! Choose and use them well. The words you choose have the power to literally change lives—including yours. When we think positive thoughts and use positive words, things go more smoothly. Words affect people. For example, advertising would be meaningless if words didn't impact people!

Dr. David Hawkins tells us words have different frequencies. Words like thank you, love, and gratitude help raise the frequency of the thoughts, feelings, and interactions of both parties.

Can you feel how “Let’s do it” has a higher frequency than “Do it”? Low frequency words will, of course, lower the feelings in and the outcomes for both parties. Can you feel the difference in your body as you say, “Let’s do it” vs. “Do it”? The *perceived* meaning of your communications largely determines the outcomes you get.

When you ask questions, you give people an opportunity to respond, encouraging them to use their personal power with dignity. How you feel about yourself at the time you’re asking a question will determine how you use questions. You can always tell your level of self-esteem by the questions you ask or don’t ask.

Words are powerful; they create feelings! Choose and use them well.

Questions tell others you care enough about them to take the time to learn more about them, what they’re feeling, what they need. You can shine a light of caring and love over them by asking questions. When your self-esteem is healthy, you’ll find yourself using questions to uplift and encourage the people around you. Then watch what happens! People will come alive and love you for making it happen.

There’s definitely an art to asking questions—of yourself as well as others. You can ask yourself appropriate, effective questions to help you get the outcomes you want in your personal and professional relationships. The questions you ask yourself and how effectively you answer them determines the degree to which you’ll be able to ask effective questions of others.

My father, William J. McGrane, Jr., was a master teacher. His life was filled with his own emotional pain and problematic self-esteem, and because of what he observed and experienced he constantly asked himself two questions: “Why do I and others

hurt so much, and what can be done about it?” As a result, he embarked on a life-long quest researching self-esteem, beginning when he was a senior in high school. Dad knew there had to be an answer to what was causing him so much pain.

In college, he learned that words had power and soon became a wordsmith. He began abusing their power, using them inappropriately—increasingly intimidating those around him. He’d feel powerful for a moment, yet his pain would only increase, driving him to search for a way to relieve it.

When I was a kid, my dad didn’t have the skill of asking questions. Even though things looked great on the outside, he was still searching for the reason he hurt so much on the inside. As a result of his lack of skill, I was one of the recipients of his sharp tongue as he “sliced and diced” me with his words.

In 1967, he attended a personal development program and discovered one of the missing pieces to his pain puzzle—he talked too much! He then consciously started asking questions, figuring it was one way he could say something yet be silent while listening to what others had to say. Dad immediately began receiving better outcomes, and his pain somewhat diminished. However, something was *still* missing, as much of his emotional pain still remained. He would still harm people’s self-esteem with his stabbing, mean use of words. Dad continued researching self-esteem, determined to find the answer to the foundational question of his life: “Why do I and others hurt so much, and what can be done about it?”

In March 1976, Dad, my brother, Bob, and I attended a breakthrough-in-awareness program to help us move on from old, ineffective thinking and behavior. It was then that everything came together for my father. He finally discovered the last missing piece: “value judging” was causing his pain! He had been comparing his value to that of others. As it turns out, value judging is the only thing that can injure or destroy self-esteem. It was a dramatic epiphany and, ironically, it was his own personal pain

that allowed him to recognize it. All of his schooling, reading, studying, attending seminars, listening to audio programs, and researching of self-esteem finally made sense. It had all come together.

Immediately, Dad's behavior began to change. He no longer used his wordsmithing skills to destroy or slice and dice people. He went from being like a roaring lion to a gentle fawn. I watched this process in awe as my father refined his skills and, accordingly, changed his behavior. He became a master role model and teacher of three things: self-esteem, asking questions, and external listening (listening to others).

Since Dad preached what he practiced, I was open to accepting and learning from him. He was a master resource to me, which now enables me to share this information with you. His greatest contribution to the world was sharing the results of his study on self-esteem.

Self-esteem is the respect you feel for yourself; it is a *feeling*. It has nothing to do with how much money you have or make, your reputation, the clothes you wear, where you live, or your zip code. It doesn't matter how you have focused your life, whether you have riches or nothing. Self-esteem is multifaceted. It's always fluctuating; it's always in process. It's intangible; however, it can be recognized in your behavior. Self-esteem is reflected in how you treat yourself and others.

It's important to understand the dynamics of self-esteem when you ask questions. When you have self-esteem, you can use it to support your ability in asking questions. You can honor people with questions to show interest and caring. However, if you base your life on self-image—an imitation, representation, or false front of what you'd like others to believe about you (a lack of self-esteem)—you're likely to be manipulative and exploitative of others as you pursue the outcomes you want!

If you conduct your life from a self-image perspective, you'll be self-centered in going for what you want, without regard for

others. You'll be concerned only about yourself and unwilling to sincerely serve anyone. This thinking and its resulting behavior occurs throughout the world. History is full of the disastrous outcomes it has produced along the way.

For best results in relating with others, always use self-esteem-enhancing words while asking questions. This will help you obtain elegant, exquisite, and irresistible outcomes for everyone. When you integrate self-esteem with asking questions, you can use your skills to assist others in discovering the outcomes that can best serve them as well as you.

The Tree of Self-Image and Self-Esteem

The last gift my father left behind to grow, which pictorially reinforces the importance of self-esteem, is *The Tree of Self-Image and Self-Esteem*. Picture a tree where the left side is dead, bearing no leaves. This represents self-image behavior, which is based on comparison. The words on this side of *The Tree* are the result of living a self-image lifestyle, sadly creating self-hatred. Self-image tells you what you should, ought, or must be, do, and have. Have you ever been told you should or shouldn't do something? You should do this; you ought to do that; you must do thus and so! Can you feel the energy drain caused by those words? This hurts your self-esteem and shows up in your behavior as well as in the words with which you communicate.

Review the following words on the self-image (self-hatred), left side of *The Tree*, and recognize how you feel when you read them: emotional abuse, dependency, depression, gossip, crime, guilt, fear, shame, apathy, flattery, rejection, jealousy, labeling, emptiness, insecurity, addictions, and egocentricity. They all bring you to the roots of self-image behavior—value judging and comparison. We've all experienced these to varying degrees, along with the negative feelings they created.

I encourage you to, right now, begin releasing any feelings of self-image you may have. Especially be aware of when you are

comparing yourself to others or labeling them—then let it go! Kirkigard said, “Once you label me you negate me.” Realize that you are valuable and intelligent just the way you are. You are one of a kind—there is no one exactly like you.

No one person has all the answers. So, just as my dad did, start asking for *your* missing piece. It’s acceptable and essential to ask questions of yourself. When we ask questions based on self-esteem, we uplift our own lives, as well as the lives of those with whom we come in contact.

Now picture the right side of *The Tree*. It’s alive and well, flourishing with beautiful green leaves. The branches consist of these words: encouragement, peace of mind, fulfillment, affirming, patience, playful, health, joy, trust, purpose, integrity, creativity, acceptance, forgiveness, commitment, responsibility, and inner directed. All of them bring us to the roots of self-esteem (self-respect)—faith, hope, love, and TUA (Total Unconditional Acceptance). TUA is the cornerstone of The McGrane Center for Personal Transformation principles. The more TUA you give and experience in your life, the more you’ll be able to apply the skills you’ll be learning here. Your skill in asking questions is directly related to your ability to practice TUA.

Five Steps to Developing the Art of Asking Questions

You probably haven’t given much thought to the idea that there’s an art to asking questions. The prerequisite or *first step* in developing that art is to *ask questions with self-esteem*. To ask questions effectively you need self-esteem. You need to feel respect for yourself before you can give it to others. The more self-esteem you have, the more you are able to take your eyes off yourself and be totally present and focused on the person or people to whom you are speaking.

“So where do I begin?” you may ask.

The Tree

of Self-Image (Self-Hatred)

- Emotional Abuse
- Dependency
- Depression
- Gossip
- Crime
- Guilt
- Fear
- Shame
- Apathy
- Flattery
- Rejection
- Jealousy
- Labeling
- Emptiness
- Insecurity
- Addictions
- Egocentricity

of Self-Esteem (Self-Respect)

- Encouragement
- Peace of Mind
- Fulfillment
- Affirming
- Patience
- Playful
- Health
- Joy
- Trust
- Purpose
- Integrity
- Creativity
- Acceptance
- Forgiveness
- Commitment
- Responsibility
- Inner Directed

Value Judging & Comparison

Faith, Hope, Love, & TUA

Since questions involve putting words together, what's the best way to do that with self-esteem? What words do you use during your self-talk? What words do you use when you're speaking to others? Are they positive or negative, affirming or putting down? Are you aware of the feelings your words are creating in yourself and others? Words are so powerful that their emotional impact can stay with us throughout our lives. And since self-esteem is a feeling, words affect our own self-esteem, as well as that of others.

As you express yourself, know that you can give others only what you yourself possess. If your self-talk and what you say to others is negative and demeaning, you injure your own self-esteem as well as that of others. However, when your self-talk is positive and affirming, you *boost* your self-esteem as well as theirs. What a great incentive to monitor and upgrade any self-talk and conversation with others that may be hindering your or their progress!

The *second step* in developing the art of asking questions is to *become aware of the impact your words have on yourself and others*. Notice the feelings you create within yourself with the words you use and recognize that what you say to others can impact them for a lifetime.

Can you recall the words significant people in your life have said to you—possibly your father, mother, brother, sister, teacher, mentor, manager, friend, or spouse? Even if you don't recall the person who said those words, nonetheless, the words are still with you! Has anyone ever used words in an attempt to put you down or make you feel inferior? How were those words expressed and how did you feel in response to them? What words were used by someone who loves you? What did he or she say and what feelings were created in you by those words? Relax and allow whatever comes up to emerge. Write it down. Did you come up with any comments or statements made to you, perhaps even

years ago? If you did, then you appreciate the power of words, their impact on you, and how long they've stayed with you.

My third-grade teacher used to say, "Bill, never talk in front of people because they'll laugh at you." As a young boy, I slurred my Ss and Ts and needed to be taught how to speak. The problem, though, was that I interpreted her statement to mean, "Bill, shut up! Don't talk to people. They'll only laugh at you." The impact of those words caused me to remain quiet and shy for five years!

The *third step* in developing the art of asking questions is to *refine your skill of external listening*. Quiet the conversation you're having with yourself and focus on hearing what the other person is saying.

Now ask yourself these questions:

- Have you ever been at a meeting, seminar, or in a conversation and had no idea what was being said?
- Do you ever tune people out once you hear them say words that remind you of something unpleasant?
- Do you ever not listen to someone because you're thinking about what you're going to say when it's your turn to talk?
- Have you ever found yourself interrupting another to share your ideas, impressions, or opinions before that person finishes his or her comments?
- Is it typical for you to listen to people—in a token manner, not really hearing nor understanding what they're saying? Are you sometimes jolted into realizing this because you caught only the tail-end of a question they've just asked you and need to ask them to repeat it?

- Do you sometimes totally ignore people, including children, because you believe they'll never say anything of interest or importance to you?

If you answered yes to any of those questions, pay extra attention to this step. Listening is affected by selective exposure, selective retention, experiences, and perception—whether we're consciously aware of these factors or not. We listen through filters impacted by our levels of understanding, upbringing, culture, value system, social tendencies, education, relationships, and the list goes on. Research shows that most people are willing to listen to someone only as long as 80 percent of what's being said blends with their own beliefs.

To enhance your ability to ask questions, you need to *hear* what the person in front of you or on the phone is saying. Give your undivided attention to that person. Nothing can be going on inside of you. Quiet your internal dialogue or self-talk—what you're saying to yourself in your head—most of which originates at the subconscious level. You may never quiet all of your internal dialogue; however, it is possible to take charge of more of it.

Again, become more aware of your self-talk. Write it down and begin to recognize how it may be holding you back or moving you forward. Is it beneficial or detrimental to you? Take some quiet time and focus on yourself and your internal dialogue. It could be as simple as noticing your self-talk while driving to work. Are you putting yourself in a positive or negative frame of mind?

Reframe anything that's not serving you. For example, instead of saying to yourself, "I can't make it happen," say "I *can* make it happen." Be keenly aware of your internal dialogue and how it affects yourself and others. Take charge of it by noticing what you are saying to yourself, observing how it makes you feel, and fine-tuning as needed. Make a conscious effort to consider the idea you're thinking about in another way. This may include

giving someone the benefit of the doubt—considering the circumstances that may have affected his or her behavior. (This'll help anyone who tends to have a victim mentality, which is disempowering.) Or it could be forgiving yourself for a mistake you've made and committing to avoid repeating it.

Until you take better charge of your thoughts and still your mind, it's impossible for you to focus on anyone else. Change your behavior by focusing on thinking about and working toward what you *do* want. When you do, you'll be free to focus on the person you're talking with. This takes not only self-discipline and an alert mind, but also staying mentally in the present moment. Don't think about the past or worry about the future—you'd only be focusing on what you don't want to happen. *Practice, practice, practice!* It's a fun, lifelong adventure.

When you're sincerely focused on someone else, you can listen, truly hear, and are more likely to comprehend what they're saying. You'll get a better sense of the feelings behind their words, and be able to communicate with more compassion and understanding. This will help you better identify where people actually are rather than projecting on them according to your own agenda of where you want them to be. As they share what's going on with them, you'll be able to pick up on their core criteria—what's most important to them. Knowing this, you can then create a “designer” question by using *their* words.

Designer questions are customized for the situation you are in. An example would be someone not showing an interest in your product or service. Why not ask them, “At this time in your life, right now, what are you looking for”? Answering this question will get them off their negative thinking and on to what's most important to them. Endorphins will flow and rapport will be established, opening the door for you to share your ideas with them. This can be accomplished only by external listening.

Each evening, review how many times you did or didn't focus on the other person during each of the conversations you had that

day. You'll know how much internal dialogue is going on inside of you and how much work you still need to do on yourself. Remember, you can give only what you have, so always start with you—*know yourself!* This, in itself, is a lifelong process. Continually ask yourself questions. Respond to them and practice external listening with yourself first, so you can be generous in giving yourself away to others.

The **fourth step** in developing the art of asking questions is to *discover the best outcome for the person with whom you're communicating*. There will always be an outcome for everything you think, say, do, and feel. Befriend the other person and do your best to understand his or her needs and wants. Listen intently, use the other person's words to tune in your responses, and you'll create rapport. This makes it safe for that person to be with you. It opens the door for him or her to discover an appropriate solution through answering the questions you ask. An example of this would be, "I just don't see the value of what you're offering." Take the key word from what they said and ask a follow-up question like, "What value are you looking for?" Another example is, the person says, "None of that is important to me." You could ask, "What *is* most important to you?"

As you continue asking questions, the outcome to your conversation may change based on how the person responds. Keep the exchange going by asking questions so you can uncover any consciously or unconsciously hidden agendas that may provide you with the core criteria needed for the best outcome for that person. This could mean mentally filing information that may not be appropriate to address at this particular time.

If you're dead set on obtaining *your own* personal outcome, you won't hear what the other person is saying. You'll miscommunicate and disconnect. You'll lose the opportunity to have an EEI—*elegant, exquisite, and irresistible*—outcome.

This brings us to the **fifth and final step** in developing the art of asking questions: *sensing*. When you take your eyes off your-

self and totally focus on others, you'll know when you see, hear, or feel something special that, initially, may not make sense. Have you ever just known something was going to happen, what way to turn, or knew just what to say at just the right time? This is called sensing. There's no logical reasoning involved; you just know that you know. Sensing is noticing that something is going on. You can do this through sight, sound, and touch.

Sensing is knowing when to pause, ask a question, share something about yourself, allow silence, bring up filed information, go more in-depth, use a particular tone of voice, shift your body or be still, pace, lead, be more spontaneous, and increase rapport. It's like Hugh Prather said, "As long as I am trying to decide, I cannot *feel* what I want to do."

Pacing is going along with the person at their level. If they speak slowly, you need to speak slowly. Leading is directing the conversation or suggesting a next step. Use this when someone tells you no: "I can understand that might not be of interest to you. However have you ever thought about...?"

Create questions that are EEI— elegant, exquisite, and irresistible.

The above five steps are the foundational elements to the art of asking questions. As you learn and practice them, both intellectually and emotionally, you'll be on your way to becoming more effective in your business and personal relationships. Be sure to be involved in a lifelong learning program that includes all of your senses! What are you reading every day? How many growth-inducing audios are you listening to daily? Do you attend at least two learning functions every year? How do you experience fun? Are you playful? Do you allow your childlikeness to emerge? What makes you most alive? What is your dream? Have you learned to let certain things you cannot change to just

be, and accept them as they are? Who are your mentors? What skills do you have, what skills do you want to master, and how do you or will you use them to benefit others?

As you are developing your abilities in and practicing the art of asking questions, constantly refine these five primary skills:

1. Ask questions with self-esteem. Boost your own and others self-esteem, which is necessary for asking effective questions.
2. Be aware of the impact words have on yourself and others; choose the appropriate words at the appropriate time. (This is called wordsmithing.)
3. Listen externally. (Quiet your internal dialogue and totally listen to what the other person is saying.)
4. Discover the best outcomes for the person with whom you're communicating.
5. Develop your sensing skills by taking your eyes off yourself, while totally focusing on the other person or people.