

## INTRODUCTION

This handout is designed to support you to conduct 1-1 Thinking Space sessions with your Thinking Partner. This outline is for a **25- minute session**. The times are a loose frame and you may need to watch the clock for the first few times, but like everything, the more you practice the more intuitive it will get. I have been working in this way as part of my practice for 15 years and the questions work perfectly. Don't over-complicate it. An hour will be enough for you to be the Thinker and the Thinking Partner. Use the last 10 minutes to reflect on the process.

## STATE THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT: 3 MINUTES

Irrespective of how often you do this and how well you know the Thinking Partner, you always begin with this.

- Welcome to your Thinking Space, my only purpose is to help you to think better for yourself about **your leadership learning**
- I will not interrupt you, or fill silence, all that matters is you have space to go where your thinking takes you. Wherever that is, is right for you and I have no judgements or expectations.
- I will support your thinking by asking a series of questions.
- When you are a minute from the end of your time, I will give you a signal.
- Thereafter you can ask me a question if you want to.
- Finally, you will reflect on what you want to do next with what you have discovered.

## THE THINKING SPACE: 20 MINUTES

Below is a pattern of questions. Please do not be robotic about this. You may never need most of these. Remember that the main thing that will encourage thinking, is the quality of your attention; calm, listening with ease and not too much nodding. The thinker doesn't need to be distracted by our signals of agreement or otherwise. This sense of calm is also important in how you ask the questions, with intention and curiosity and slowly (hence the ... in between the words). Trust the process. It will feel weird, of course it will. We are not used to being fully focused on the thinking of others and are hardwired to get our thinking in, or to build on others thinking when they are not finished thinking for themselves. **Stop knowing, start wondering!** Even at the end of the Thinking Space if the Thinker asks a question of you, think very carefully about what you say. At no point go back and disagree with thinking they have shared in the Thinking Space. At best, it's just a sharing of your personal experience - and only valuable if it's requested by the thinker. It's not about you!

### Fundamental Questions

- So, Fiona, in the context of your learning from the latest part of the Personal Leadership Programme what would you like to think about and what are your thoughts?
- And what more ..... do you think ..... or feel ..... or want to say?
- You may repeat the question above several times or an abbreviated version. So, what more...? Even when the thinker tells you they are done.
- How are you planning to apply the thinking and learning in your team?
- What's been the most significant and surprising part of the latest work?
- Do you need anything further from me? (always second last)
- What would you like to do next with what you have discovered? (Always the last question.)

### Other questions you might need, if the thinker gets stuck or you feel they could help

- What assumptions are you holding that are influencing your thinking?
- What more are you assuming?
- How do you feel now that you have illuminated these assumptions?
- What feels true now?

## APPRECIATION: 2 MINUTES EACH WAY

Appreciate the other for their part in the Thinking Space.