

Integrating Trauma Informed  
Solution Focused Strategies  
in Family Court

**List of Questions Lead-In**

**‘Wh’ Questions (What, Who, Where, When, Which, and How)**

What does \_\_\_\_ expect to come out of your coming to this meeting?  
What needs to come out of this meeting so that you can say this is helpful?  
Which part do you agree with and which part do you disagree with?  
What tells you that you are at 5?  
Tell me about the times when you get along? What is different then?  
What do you know about him/her that tells you that he/she can do this?  
What difference is it going to make in your \_\_\_\_?  
How would that be helpful to you?

**Tentative Language (Perhaps, it seems, suppose, it appears, it sounds like . . .**

I am not sure about this, what do you suppose . . .  
Do you suppose . . . ?  
It sounds like what you really want is . . . to be more hopeful about yourself.  
I’m not sure it will happen, but suppose, just suppose your son changed . . . How would that be helpful to you? What difference would it make to your relationship?  
What will change in your \_\_\_\_ (depression, fighting, drug use, etc)?

**Relationship Questions**

What would your best friend (boss, ex, son, daughter, mother) say you are like when you are calmer?  
What would \_\_\_\_ notice different about you that will tell her that things are better?  
What would your daughter say she likes best about your being sober? (**Not** What your daughter would say she hates about your being drunk?)

**Personal Meaning and Language**

You are clear about not letting your son down. What about this is so important?  
You must have a good reason to . . . ?  
So, how would that be helpful for you to (not go to work, stay in bed, drink more . . .)?

**What Else?**

What else would it take for you to stay sober during visits?  
What else would it take for you to be on time for visits?  
What would \_\_\_\_ say it would take for you to stay sober?

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Guidelines for Developing Well-defined goals

<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Key Words</i>	<i>Sample Question</i>
In the positive	“instead”	“What will you be doing instead?”
In process form	“how”	“How will you be doing this?”
In the here and now	“on track”	“As you leave here today, and you’re on track, what will you be doing differently or saying differently to ex?”
As specific as possible	“specifically”	“How specifically will you be doing this?”
In the client’s control	“you”	“What will you be doing when that happens?”
In the client’s language	Use the client’s expressions	For example, “So you’ll bring it up and talk it out, the next time she bums you out?”