Probing Questions for Therapists

Questions that ask for reasons
  • Why did you say that?

Questions that ask for evaluation of reasons
  • What reasons support that idea?

Questions that ask for clarification
  • Paraphrase and ask, is that what you meant?

Questions that ask for explanations
  • What are some possible causes?

Questions that ask for evidence
  • How could we prove this?

Questions that ask for definitions
  • What does that mean?

Questions that ask for counter examples
  • When would that not happen?

Questions that ask for alternatives
  • What would be a different view?

Questions that probe for assumptions
  • How do you know for sure?

Questions that ask for consequences and implications
  • What would the consequences be?

Questions that ask for connections
  • Do those two ideas agree?

Questions that ask for distinctions
  • How is that different from what was said?

Questions that ask for questions
  • What questions would be useful to ask?

Questions that ask for summary of the content
  • What have we learned?

Questions that ask for summary of the process
  • What did we do well? What could we improve?