



FOLLOW UP NOTES

Curiosity is a fascinating issue. Many people look at curiosity and have an intuitive notion that it means that people are interested in stuff. And yet, when we explore curiosity scientifically, we dig well below the surface of that basic definition. For instance, we understand that there are different brands of curiosity (the PowerPoint Lecture about Todd Kashdan's research on curiosity types). We know that many people high in trait curiosity also have the ability to tolerate anxiety since curiosity is an anxious state. We have the knowledge emotion framework, in which we can describe and understand the emotional aspects of curiosity. I am particularly taken with this model because it suggests that whether an object-- a coffee mug, a parking meter, a wristwatch-- has curiosity value, is in part the property of the object and also, in part, the property of the person interacting with the object. So curiosity sort of arises in the space between you and a target object. Cool, huh?

To use curiosity in coaching:

1. Let the two by two matrix of knowledge emotions be your guiding template. You can use it diagnostically to see "where" your client is (what emotion she is experiencing) and what needs to happen to shift her toward interest,
2. You can use metaphor interventions to give clients emotional distance from their problems and thereby increase their coping potential.
3. You can ask questions that pull for novel viewpoints to increase the novelty/complexity aspect of interest—asking about new strategies, asking what others might do, asking what the client might do if there were no fear or other obstacle are all potentially good questions along this line.
4. Also, you can think about curiosity like going to the gym. You may need to warm it up through use. Recall the photograph activity. Imagine pushing yourself further and further to ask really sweeping or outlandish questions.