

Self-Querying Process (SQP): A Technique for Attaining Clarity through Self-Analysis

By

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Abstract

This paper presents aspects of the author's innovative Self-Querying Process (SQP), which he espouses as a practical technique for attaining clarity through self-analysis. It is a complement to his "bevalhabismic theory" (Nakolisa, 2022) which posits that the belief-values-habit (BVH) make-up of an individual is the fundamental cause of their ability or inability to achieve set goals. The SQP process consists of two self-administered exercises: the Self-Probing Talk (SPT) and the Guided Question and Answer (GQA) session. The SPT talk induces the individual to recall personal issues and events given rise to by their BVH framework with a view to analyzing their implication for the pursuit of set goals. The GQA exercise methodically narrows the clues the individual emerges with from the Self-Probing Talk into two clear options: positive (+) or negative (-), thereby reducing otherwise complicated issues of personal dilemma into two clear options that enhance the individual's ability to choose and take a definite, success-generating, course of action.

Keywords: BVH, SQP, Self-Querying Process, SPT, Self-Probing Talk, GQA

Introduction

Let's begin with an explanation. The Self-Querying Process (SQP) is a method of self-analysis I designed to enable anyone faced with a difficult problem to rouse and examine their thoughts, feelings, and past choices in order to gain the clarity of mind they need to make a quality goal-driven decision that paves the way for a possible solution. Each SQP activity should be an exercise aimed at reaching, from the perspective of

the individual employing the method, the best decision regarding a vital issue of his or her life.

The Self-Querying Process is made up of two soul-searching activities:

- Self-Probing Talk (SPT), and
- Guided Question and Answer (GQA) exercise.

The SPT and GQA sessions are explained below.

The Self-Probing Talk

The Self-Querying Process (SQP) starts with the Self-Probing Talk (SPT). The SPT is a self-examination exercise in which one may or may not talk aloud. It appears more effective when one talks quietly to oneself, letting the voice of one's inner being respond to the issue of the moment.

The SPT entails one's inner self talking to one's outer self. It could be a monologue or a "dialogue" of sorts. The SPT is essentially an exercise dominated by the inner self who utters into one's consciousness truths, sometimes disturbing truths, long suppressed and hidden in the mind's bid to make one overlook or forget the unpleasant or unresolved aspects of one's life.

The SPT function is like turning one's pant inside out in order to see how clean or dirty it really is, what caused the dirt, and what kind of laundry is required to clean it. The SPT, if you like, is an auto-dialogue in which one engages with oneself to thrash out a critical personal matter.

An important idea behind the SPT concept is the notion that every problem contains the seed of its own solution. In other words, the closest solution to everyone's personal problem lies within them. If the individual can dig deep enough into the recesses of their being, speaking out relevant data about a given area of their life, there is a huge possibility of "unearthing" a useful, relevant or appropriate direction, decision or solution.

A complementary concept behind the SPT is my understanding that everyone is largely a reflection of all the choices they have made (including their response to other people's choices) and all the actions they have taken or failed to take (including their response to other people's actions and inactions). Most personal problems arise out of wrong choices and actions (including one's responses to other people's wrong choices, actions and inactions).

The SPT is an inward exploration in which the individual looks deeply inwards and voices out the happenings and intimations of their past as they relate to a given current problem. While there is no strict procedural formula for the SPT, it should be conducted as an investigative soul-searching talk. You can sit down and begin to think about the difficult challenge staring you in the face. “How did things get this bad?” you might audibly ask, and then proceed by reviewing your past and present journey in that area of your life, noting key incidences that point to what happened, when they happened, where they happened, and how they happened? Be analytical, think through scenarios, make necessary linkages and observations, and draw tentative conclusions that might give you clues regarding the way forward.

It must be borne in mind that the underlying aim of the SPT talk is to take you forward, not backward. Why digging into the past is necessary is because it traces the build-up of events that led, directly or indirectly, to the crisis of the moment, thereby enlarging the scope of the problem-solver’s understanding.

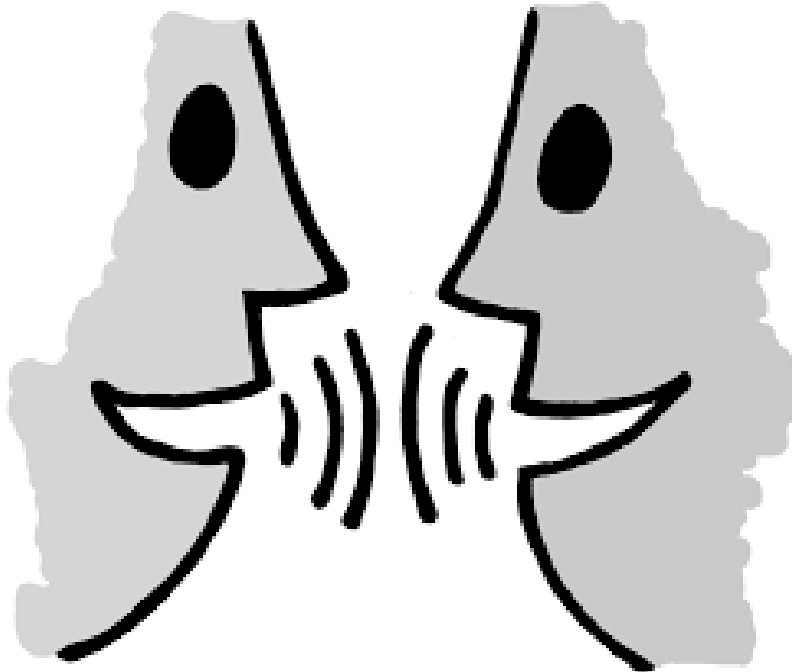
Even if the events recalled during the talk have little connection with the past choices and actions of the solution-seeker, the SPT talk will help in heightening the moment of crisis and in arousing the person recalling his journey to seek new, better, or more promising paths. Unless agitated into taking action, many people would rather tarry with their problems as long as it has not completely swept them out of their comfort zone.

One of the finest typesetters I have ever known started his successful computer-services business after he was undeservedly sacked from a business he had co-founded. It was a big blow and he was about to apply to work in another business centre when he implemented the Self-Probing Talk. Digging into his past jerked him up and propelled him towards a clue that changed his life: you may have no money, and no office space, but start your own business centre right away! Don’t ask me how he did it; digging into his past life, the SPT way, evoked that clue which made it possible for him to do it!

People hardly revisit themselves, they conduct no personal retreats, and so produce no new strategies to overcome difficult, and often recurring, personal problems. They seem not to know that within their past lie useful but often undetected insights into their future. The SPT activity, when seriously and soberly conducted, is much more than a talk show. The SPT exercise, when fertilized by thoughtful enquiry under the guidance of a mind sensitive to useful cues, can give birth to urgent

insights that crystallize the right decisions, fresh opportunities, creative alternatives, and amazing results.

Figure 1: Look inwards and talk to yourself



Source: www.clipartmax.com

The conduct of the SPT exercise may differ from person to person, and that's OK; just make sure your own exercise is conducted in accordance with the guidelines stated in this paper.

The outcome of the SPT exercise should be noted. In fact, if the individual involved so prefer, the "talk" may be conducted in writing. This will entail sitting down in some quiet corner and pouring down, in one or two sessions, one's evaluative recollection or understanding of events. Many people, I believe, will find it easier or more cathartic to talk orally than to capture their thoughts in writing.

Whichever method is adopted, it is crucial to ensure that one is talking to oneself and not to someone else and that the talk is conducted when one is alone. The Self-Probing Talk, it needs to be stressed, is self-analysis, not group analysis. It is one talking to oneself, probing one's actions and inactions, and exploring private and confidential matters. It is important to conduct the talk where no one else will hear or distract you.

Once you are seated or pacing to and fro in your private room, you can begin your SPT talk by probing into that area of your life where the issue of concern is emanating from. Proceed as your thoughts and emotions

may lead you but ensure that you reassess key issues of your life with a view to determining where you made choices that hurt the steady and unwavering pursuit of specific goals.

The SPT talk is essentially recalling personal chronicles given rise to by one's beliefs, values and habits (BVH) and analyzing their implication for the pursuit of set goals. So, during your SPT exercise, you need to ask, among other questions, BVH-specific questions. Questions such as: "My belief that advertising is exploiting people's emotion in order to make them buy what they don't need – how has this belief and my refusal to advertise led to the poor sales I've been recording?" "Should I increase the percentage of my salary that I invest to enable me earn more passive income?" "I have had three fiancées and now I'm about to break up with the fourth. What is really wrong with my relationship values?"

It is called the Self-Probing Talk because it is one talking to oneself to see where one had made right or wrong decisions or choices. It is not a talk about what others had done or failed to do. It is not a blame or buck-passing game. Yes, others might have contributed to your past failures and losses but if you are honest about it, you will discover that you have, somehow, contributed, favourably or unfavourably, to nearly every situation of your life. Could it not be they cheated you because you were careless or trusted too much? Could you have failed if you were thoroughly prepared for the business or the competition?

It might have been sheer hatred that stood those forces against you, but if you had reacted tactfully couldn't things have turned out differently? Oh, it is the system; it is all designed to work against someone like me... Don't let this kind of thought bother you, for when you excel, and excel irresistibly, systems open to let you pass.

The SPT activity offers you moments of hard-hitting reflection that enables you to gain clarity and locate what *you* need to do to make a success of *your* life. The biting edge of such self-analysis, especially when unnecessary excuses are disallowed, may be very discomforting, but let the scalpel of this self-enquiry do its work. How did I get it wrong? How did I miss the mark? What personal shortcomings brought about the setback? What do I need to do differently to make me succeed, regardless of the challenges? These are the kind of questions and issues you should sincerely and openly address.

Other people might have consciously or unconsciously blocked your way, and there might have been some unfavourable external factors but

none of these must be elevated above your capacity to break through every barrier and achieve your goal!

You will arrive at the destination you envisioned if you let nobody and nothing block your way. It is *your* way! It is *your* responsibility to surmount or circumvent whatever is on *your* way to make things happen for you. And should the task be daunting, should the way be repeatedly blocked, well, you must do what you can to out-manoeuvre the obstacle. And if need be, pave a new way for yourself. By all legal and innovative means, succeed!

You must be merciless, but without wallowing in self-pity, while analyzing your situation. Find out where you made mistakes in the past and locate what you must do right to make you succeed. Don't deny your mistakes; you must realize that if you had not made a mistake you might not have mis-stepped. Accept your mistakes without feeling sorry for yourself, but be determined not to repeat those mistakes or make other careless choices in the future.

Avoid agonizing over what someone has done to frustrate or stop you! Don't rub the balm of self-pity and soothe your aching ego by blaming others. This will not help you to get to where you are going. It is your life, it is your quest. Focus on where you are going, and don't forget that realizing your desired goal is what matters most.

This is why the Self-Probing Talk is about you looking inward to gain clarity, to re-strategize, and take winning steps towards the future. Everyone can do this but, just as earlier noted with respect to the BVH Evaluation, there might be some people who might need expert guidance to carry out this process with significant beneficial results.

Don't forget, the Self-Probing Talk is not a pointless reflection: its ultimate aim is to produce, through your sober recollections, a useful decision-making insight or a clue towards a possible solution or new course of action. Unless it led you to harness a helpful clue or clues, the Self-Probing Talk should not be deemed to be over. Keep mulling over the issues until something epiphanic happens – a revelation or connection that illuminates the confusion and points you to a promising way out of the problem. But “the way out” must not be an escapist “solution” that side-tracks the challenge and steers you toward some pleasant goal-boycotting path.

Continue with the SPT exercise until you have some clues regarding the way forward or the way out of the problem. The endpoint of the Self-Probing Talk is the attainment of significant clarity, one that suggests a

useful clue – it could be the identification of what might be the problem and a possible solution; or it could be an inkling that leads to a change of strategy. If this endpoint is not reached, do not move to the Guided Question and Answer (GQA) stage. If you do, you are likely to get a distorted result, a set of pointless clues that leave you confused regarding which step to take. Should this happen, return to the Self-Probing Talk stage and do it all over again before continuing with the GQA session.

There are two ways of repeating the Self-Probing Talk. The first is to start “talking” to yourself the way you had earlier done – speaking out audibly or inaudibly to yourself in your closet, pouring out your mind on paper, or using a recording device to capture your talk.

The second method of repeating your Self-Probing Talk is to recall your earlier “talk” on the same issue and read or listen to it over and over again. Proof-readers would tell you that the more they go through a manuscript, the more mistakes they are likely to find. A similar reality applies here; the more you read or hear your talk’s “message”, the more insight you are likely to gain into key aspects of the matter of current concern. On one occasion, I had to listen to and reflect upon my SPT talk twice before hitting the crucial point that led me to the way forward.

Note, however, that the method of recalling your earlier “talk” may not be adopted unless the following conditions are met:

- i. the initial talk was clearly written or recorded,
- ii. the initial talk was exhaustive enough to make conducting a fresh talk unnecessary.

The Self-Probing Talk is deemed to have been concluded at any given time only after one has gotten a helpful clue regarding which cause of action to take.

Before going further, let us note that the SPT is not meant to be used in determining the validity of issues of public interest, such as a public health advisory, nor should it sidetrack the need for fact-finding research. Information is vital. Some of the issues people face can be easily resolved if they can avail themselves of available information, and take necessary action. Many people, for example, are unemployed because they don’t know where their services are needed and, therefore, have not gone there or reached out by mail to seek for employment. To dig up non-personal hard facts, one would need to conduct objective research. Don’t watch your problem; find out what can be done about it, and take action!

The SPT is basically a vocalized recollection of past experiences aimed at generating an optimal goal-driven decision concerning a developmental, occupational or social matter of personal relevance.

Complemented by the GQA session (discussed below), the SPT exercise serves as one of the means of weighing how relevant an idea, clue, thought or suggestion is in the decision-making process or to the pursuit of one's goal.

Only for the Willing and Sincere

As you might have realized by now, the Self-Querying Process can only make sense if the person utilizing the tools being proposed here is willing to reassess his or her beliefs, values and habits. Willingness and sincerity are the primary requirements. Should one be willing and sincere as well as repentant, in the sense of being ready to depart from current negative beliefs, values and habits, then we have the perfect individual for whom this paper was written.

Issues of beliefs, values and habits can be personal and any meaningful change in perspective or behavior would need the cooperation of the individual involved. So, for any step of the Self-Querying Process to yield result for any individual, he or she must be sincere at every stage of the soul-searching procedure. The entire process is predicated on the fact that the individual involved in it is desirous of change as well as ready to be honest about his or her strengths and shortcomings.

Specifically, ensure that the Self-Probing Talk (discussed above) and the GQA session (discussed below) are applied to your unique situation with a delicate sense of destiny. See these steps as self-managed mechanisms you can utilize to overcome whatever is hindering you from charting a clearer and more focused path for your life.

The Self-Querying Process is very personal and confidential and can deliver great benefits in self-enlightenment for whoever would approach this process with a sense of purpose and mission.

The Guided Question and Answer (GQA) Session

The second soul-searching step of the Self-Querying Process (SQP) is the Guided Question and Answer (GQA) session. While this sort of auto-analysis may take other forms, the technique I have developed, having used it and found it effective in different contexts, is the Guided Question and Answer (GQA) method. The main aim of the GQA session is to enable the individual to ask personally-relevant, issue-based questions to which only Yes or No answers are required. Whatever matter is under

consideration, the Yes/No answers are taken as indicators of what could be that individual's right decision, goal or response.

The GQA session involves a series of questions set by the one who had conducted the SPT talk and derived a clue or clues about the way forward. At the GQA stage, such a person is required to turn the issues he had recollected and reflected upon into guided questions framed within the context of whether the issue raised in the question is pro-success or anti-success. If the person's response to his or her own question is Yes, the matter raised in the question is deemed to be pro-success or positive (+); if No, the matter raised in the question is deemed to be anti-success or negative (-).

In a nutshell, the goal of the GQA session is to use the tool of guided questions to generate responses that narrow the many clues the enquirer might have emerged with from the Self-Probing Talk (SPT) into two clear options: pro-success or anti-success. In a well-conducted session, the respondent's Yes responses would turn out to be pro-success while the No responses would most likely be anti-success.

For the GQA session to be effective, the guidelines that characterize it must be strictly adhered to. To make your GQA session generate realistic rather than emotive, goal-pointed rather than blurred result, the following rules should be observed:

- a. All the questions must arise from and be restricted to the issues raised during the Self-Probing Talk (SPT).
- b. Use one format (with or without slight variations) for all the self-evaluative questions relevant to your specific situation or enquiry. This format can be a uniformly-phrased question, such as, "This thing that I believe, value, or do (*specify*), will it take me closer to my goal?" The dependent clause ("This thing that I believe, value, or do") would differ from question to question but the independent clause ("will it take me closer to my goal?") should be the same or similar in every question that requires a Yes/No response. This will ensure that the questions are commonly posed, thus making the Yes or No responses generated effective, uniformly-derived pointers to action.
- c. Since the objective of the GQA session is to enable the enquirer to determine what is to be done about the matter under consideration, each question (such as, "...will it take me closer to my goal?") should address a present or future concern. Questions probing the past (such as "...did it take me closer to my dream?") are NOT allowed during the GQA session. But during the Self-Probing Talk exercise, which precedes the

GQA stage, one may analyze present and past events in any possible manner. However, reference to past events within the dependent clause may be allowed as long as the clause completing the sentence ends with "...will it (will he/she or will they) take me closer to my goal?" or some other permissible uniformly-adopted format of ending the question.

Success is a Matter of Yes or No

A lot, quite a lot in success progression or regression, will depend on how one answers GQA's self-evaluative questions. Let's consider how not to answer them. It is important not to be wordy, defensive or explanatory in the responses you give. Excuses often hide in thickets of words. In football, it usually takes only one effective shot to score a goal while many ineffective kicks and passes may lead to no goal. Explaining away the failure to score could take words that outnumber all the futile kicks and passes put together. Don't be wordy to avoid making undue excuses.

So, discounting the possibility of a spectrum of values (the afore-recommended phrasing of the self-evaluative questions having effectively ensured that), we may now dichotomize and declare that, as far as the pursuit of success is concerned, there are two kinds of beliefs, and two kinds of values, and two kinds of habits: positive and negative.

In considering, therefore, the self-evaluative question, "This thing that I believe, value, or do (*specify*), will it take me closer to my goal?", your answer should be either yes (positive) or no (negative). Success (or failure) is a matter of yes or no – a matter of choosing one way or the other and acting in the direction of that choice. Anything other than yes or no is suspect, cannot be given a positive (+) or negative (–) sign and, therefore, may not be a clear pointer or guide to action.

This is why GQA session questions are phrased in a manner that prompts one to say Yes or No. No middle or neutral ground. No provision for "I don't know" answers. No room for equivocation or sitting on the fence.

The GQA session places you in the court of your own opinion demanding neither "Guilty" nor "Not Guilty" plea but simply your Yes or No response to vital queries of your visionary quest. If the question is properly phrased, a Yes response (assigned a + sign) is goal-oriented and pro-success while a No response (assigned a – sign) is explicitly counter-goal and anti-success:

Yes = pro-success + | – **anti-success = No**

Interestingly, the most fundamental things of life are separated into two divisions: day and night, male and female, good and evil, life and death. To gain clarity in one's life, one should be able to sort out issues in terms of "Yes" or "No". Equivocation is a sign of indecision, and an indecisive person is an unstable person – and unstable people hardly make substantial progress in life. That is why it is important to use the GQA session to determine what is pointedly right or wrong in one's success journey.

Rules Governing the Framing of Questions for the Guided Question and Answer (GQA) Session

For the GQA session to generate a reliable, goal-oriented outcome, each of the questions requiring a Yes/No response should be posed according to the following rules:

1. All the questions must arise from and be restricted to the issues raised during the Self-Probing Talk (SPT).
2. Each question should be asked in the first person.
3. Each question should be asked in such a way that a Yes or No answer would be given.
4. A modal verb inverted with the subject, which indicates future time (such as "will" or "can"), should be used to form the interrogative question.
5. The independent clause ending with the question mark should be uniformly or similarly worded in all the questions.

Goal-Chasing Fundamentals

Before we demonstrate how the GQA session can be conducted in practice, let us briefly refresh our minds about the basic things we need to know regarding setting and realizing personal goals. Knowledge of goal-chasing fundamentals should be in place before anyone can derive maximum benefit from the GQA session.

Life is meaningless without a defined sense of purpose to dictate and coordinate one's desires and actions. No one can have a sense of purpose without having a set of authentic beliefs, values, and habits (Nakolisa, 2022). These will stimulate him to envision a desirable future. Then, he begins the exciting, highly focused climb towards it. He approaches this vision passionately through rungs of short-, medium-, and long-term goals.

For your goals to be workable, they must be specific, measurable, and timed (Doran, 1981). A specific goal usually aims to get one thing accomplished, and the goal-setter realizes this objective by ignoring other things competing for his attention to focus on getting this one thing done. A goal is measured by the specific tasks the goal-setter needs to perform before realizing it. Ideally, such tasks are performed sequentially such that one accomplished task lays the foundation for and enhances the performance of the next scheduled task. And effort should be made to perform each task within the time allocated to it.

Goals, also, are not arbitrarily executed but are realized one by one in an ascending order of visionary relevance (Nakolisa, 2006). It is in this sense that goals can be said to be ascendant arrows of graded attainments. (See Figure 1.1)

Figure 2: Ascendant arrows of graded attainments



A visionary picture is what drives a goal – it enables every individual to see where they are going and supplies them the passion they require to keep seeing where they are going, even in their life project’s foggy moments and in seasons of personal and social turmoil.

A vision is an internal force. Everyone’s goals are the steps they take to externalize and make real their visionary dream. So, everyone needs their vision, and they need their goals. Everyone’s vision is the lubricant of their goals. Vision gives goals direction. It helps one ensure that one’s

goals are not arbitrary or contradictory but are rather sequential targets or results that take one closer to that big thing one wants to achieve in life.

An Illustrative Story

We need a real-life scenario to illustrate how the GQA session might be conducted by the individual. Below is a true-life story with the real names of the individuals mentioned in the story changed. Let's call it Teddy's Story.

Teddy's Story

Teddy's family was holding a meeting to see how he could be helped to start a new business or learn a new trade. Sitting quietly in their midst, Teddy (real names withheld) was nursing his resentment of some past ventures that looked too promising to fail but failed nonetheless.

Claiming to be better in using his hands than in cramming class notes, Teddy had dropped out of secondary school two years before he was due to take his ordinary-level examinations. Since then, he had worked as an apprentice motor mechanic, a barber, a school-bus driver, a bricklayer, a pub guitarist, a cross-border cannabis smuggler, and a quick-fix pimp and match-maker of sorts. During his stint work as a political thug, he got his only somewhat appreciable pay when he was compensated for losing two teeth in defence of the boss.

None of the above engagements had financially stabilized Teddy, a regular face in rowdy parties where he was hailed by many but trusted by none. Years after many of his schoolmates had graduated from the university and climbed the corporate ladder or set up successful businesses, Teddy was pressurizing his siblings and aged parents to contribute funds to enable him "travel abroad and make money".

Exemplification of the Yes/No Responses

To make the normative value of the Yes/No responses more practical, let's return to Teddy's story. You will recall that he was in a family meeting called to see how his protracted failure to make progress in life could be ended.

Teddy left the meeting asking his family to give him time to think over their proposals. Let's assume he was now tired of his self-engineered retardation and had used the Self-Probing Talk to appraise his situation more honestly, emerging from the talk with a clearer sense of what he should be doing with his life...

And now, Teddy is ready to use the GQA session to test the clues he obtained from the SPT exercise – to find out the best decision he should make to move his life forward.

Let's assume Teddy, after his SPT session, came up with 10 questions and is set to test each of them in terms of whether it is pro-success or

anti-success. Each question is framed around issues taken from his unique experience, particularly those emerging from his reflections during his Self-Probing Talk.

For illustrative purposes, let's take it that Teddy seriously considered the following questions:

1. My lack of a sense of purpose or an overriding goal in life, will it take me closer to my dream of being a successful person?
2. My habit of dropping out of worthwhile pursuits and my habit of starting a project without finishing it, will it take me closer to my dream of being a successful person?
3. My get-rich-quick attitude and schemes, which had continually put me in trouble, will it take me closer to my dream of being a successful person?
4. The kind of choices I made after the failure of each of my past businesses, choices that didn't indicate I had learnt the right lesson, will they take me closer to my dream of being a successful person?
5. Remaining a pimp and a cannabis smoker and smuggler, assuming I don't get caught and jailed like Sneaky Boy, will it take me closer to my dream of being a successful person?
6. My family members have pledged to give me a lump sum of money to start life all over again on the condition that I should first serve under a successful trader and learn a trade for two years...going to learn a new trade, as proposed by my relations, will it take me closer to my dream of being a successful person?
7. Doing music is the one thing that gives me the greatest joy in life and the one thing that I can work hard at with a sense of responsibility and achieve success, but that's what my family is not willing to sponsor. Doing whatever I can to advance my music career, foregoing every other alternative venture my family would prefer to finance, will it take me closer to my dream of being a successful person?
8. What about my plans and hopes of going abroad...? My mum had blocked my plans of being sponsored by the family when she said that someone who could not be a successful lizard at home should not hope to be a crocodile abroad. Maybe my mum is right... Going abroad without first correcting those shortcomings that made me to fail repeatedly in the past, will it take me closer to my dream of being a successful person?

9. Uncle Ray has suggested that I should go back to school and even promised to sponsor me. But I feel I'm too old for that and I've never really been a good student. Taking up Uncle Ray's generous offer, will it take me closer to my dream of being a successful person?

10. What of returning to my former master, from whose workshop I ran away many years ago, to complete my training as a car mechanic...will it take me closer to my dream of being a successful person?

Chart of Teddy's Yes/No Responses

Preparing a chart such as the one below is desirable because it makes you to state your questions and answers in writing and leaves you with a written record of the turning point your GQA session could become. Besides, the writing option makes it easy for you to correct your questions and bring them in line with the rules governing the framing of GQA questions.

There are people who find writing things down, particularly when it runs into a few paragraphs, very stressful. Some others may feel that the effort expended in ensuring that their thoughts are properly framed may obstruct or derail the free flow of their thoughts. It will be nice if this category of persons can choose to overcome their shortcomings and write down their questions. Otherwise, they should resort to using the recording device in their electronic gadgets to voice out their questions and answers, particularly if the questions are not more than five.

Let's take a look at what might have emerged as Teddy's responses – responses that indicate an apparent willingness to change for the better. Here is the table of his responses to the 10 questions posed above. For the sake of brevity, only the direct questions are used below; the preceding statements are excluded. And the independent clauses ending with the question mark have been reworded to bring them in line with rules 4 and 5 above.

Teddy's Questions and Answers

	Question	Answer	Sign
1	My lack of a sense of purpose or an overriding goal in life, will it take me closer to my vision?	No	–
2	My habit of dropping out of worthwhile pursuits and starting a project without finishing it, will it take me closer to my	No	–

	vision?		
3	Continuing my get-rich-quick attitude and schemes, which had continually put me in trouble in the past... will it take me closer to my vision?	No	–
4	Continuing with the kind of choices I made after the failure of each of my past businesses, choices that didn't indicate I had learnt the right lesson, will it take me closer to my vision?	No	–
5	Continuing to be a pimp and a cannabis smuggler, with the risk of being caught and jailed like Sneaky Boy, will that take me closer to my vision?	No	–
6	My family members have pledged to give me a lump sum of money to start life all over again on the condition that I should first serve under a successful trader and learn a trade for two years...following this proposed plan, will it take me closer to my vision?	No	–
7	Doing whatever I can to advance my music career, foregoing every other alternative venture my family would prefer to finance, will it take me closer to my vision?	Yes	+
8	Insisting on going abroad without first correcting those shortcomings that made me to fail repeatedly here at home, will it take me closer to my vision?	No	–
9	Taking up Uncle Ray's generous offer to sponsor my return to secondary school decades after I dropped out of school, will it take me closer to my vision?	No	–
10	What of returning to my former master, from whose workshop I ran away many years ago, to complete my training and become a car mechanic, will it take me closer to my vision?	No	–

In the above illustrative table, you would notice that Teddy gave only one positive response, which clearly indicated what step he should take.

Some charts may be more complicated than this in that they may contain more than one positive response, which is not a problem if all the positive responses support each other or enhance the emergence of a definite goal/decision or point towards a definite course of action.

If such indicated steps appear contradictory, it is possibly

- i. a sign that the individual had not emerged from the Self-Probing Talk with a genuine clue or clues regarding what might be his or her decision, goal or direction; or
- ii. an indication that some or all of the questions of the GQA session were not properly thought out or phrased.

The likely solution to (i) above is for the individual involved to return to the Self-Probing Talk (SPT) stage and conduct afresh the exercise. Let him or her probe deeper into the issues of concern, noting the choices made and examining if or how those choices contributed to the eventual turn of events. The person probing his past actions should also endeavour to locate the extent to which specific beliefs, values and habits have positively or negatively contributed to leading or misleading him or her to make those choices.

The solution to (ii) is to revise the questions in order to ensure that each of them is framed according to the rules earlier specified.

Meanwhile, during the process of talking and analyzing issues, the sober self-analyst is likely to generate some inner awakening that might light up some areas of confusion, doubt or ignorance...and this is when the self-analyst should steer his reflection to the search for clues that point toward a solution, the right decision, a purposeful goal or a meaningful vision.

As earlier pointed out, the GQA session is a process that should only be meaningfully used AFTER one has, at least, gotten a clue regarding what decision, goal or vision he or she appears to be leaning towards. The series of questions raised during the GQA session is aimed at generating answers whose positive or negative slant would authenticate or invalidate the clue(s) gotten at the end of the Self-Probing Talk (SPT).

The SPT is a spontaneous, chronological or non-chronological recollection of past events. When the reflection leads to clarification of mind-boggling issues or produces an insight into the way out of the

problem, viable clues usually emerge. Now, these clues will need to be verified during the GQA session. Where a one-track solution is required, as in many cases in life, the GQA session becomes a way of helping the solution-seeker to choose a course of action, and to choose rightly.

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