DESCRIBING CLEAN LANGUAGE TO A NEW OR PROSPECTIVE CLIENT

CleanLearning

Here are some possible responses to the question, "What is Clean Language?". We've categorised them using the 4MAT model (McCarthy and McCarthy), which suggests that there are four kinds of learners each asking a different question. So you could compile a response using one idea from each of the first three columns and wait to see which "What if … ?" question they ask.

Why?

- Access inner wisdom
- Find common understanding
- Collaborate respectfully
- Foster own creativity
- Learn more about self and own patterns
- Create group vision / outcomes
- Confront difficult issues
- Build group trust

What?

- A set of simple questions asked of another person's exact words.
- A questioning methodology that keeps your own assumptions out of the conversation.
- A respectful way of helping people to develop the metaphors they use naturally as they speak.
- A way of really listening to someone else and helping them come to their own conclusions.

How?

- A facilitator may well start by asking "And what would you like to have happen?" They listen carefully to your response and then ask questions about the words you've used to describe your outcome.
- In a group situation, people share their own mental models around different topics and gradually build shared mental models that work for everyone.
- You learn a simple set of questions and some rules for asking them, and this frees you up to pay really good attention to the other person.
- The facilitator asks clean questions of the metaphors a person uses so they can uncover the structure of their thinking.
- You ask simple, open questions of the words the other person uses to describe their experience.

What if … ?

Q: What if I am on my own – can I use it with myself?

A: The questions are simple and you can use them to facilitate yourself.

Q: What if I am already a coach – is this something I can add to my existing toolbox?

A: Yes of course. Clean Language is neutral and so can be adapted to work with all kinds of models.

Q: What if the group I am working with is going through a really difficult patch?

A: You can use Clean Language, along with a couple of other models to help people to sort out such difficulties. That's when it really comes into its own.