

Solution Focused Coaching **The Miracle Question**

“I will now ask you what is, perhaps, a somewhat unusual and also interesting question. You will need to use a certain amount of imagination to answer it. Suppose you go home after this session and you talk to your family, eat your evening meal and maybe do something else and then at some point you become tired and go to bed and at a certain moment you fall asleep and suppose that during the night a miracle happens and the miracle would be that the outcome you are seeking is achieved at one swell swoop just like that and that really would be a miracle, wouldn't it? and you wake up early the next morning and no one tells you this miracle has happened how would you know that this miracle had occurred?”

The pauses, denoted by are important as they support the client in following the question in their thinking and in their bodily experience and hence allows them to be directed towards the miracle state.

I will now ask you what is, perhaps, a somewhat unusual and also interesting question. You will need to use a certain amount of imagination to answer it.

This sets the client up to anticipate something different and start them thinking about how to get creative. It also allows the coach to normalise the question and acknowledges any challenges the client has in answering it.

Suppose you go home after this session and you talk to your family, eat your evening meal and maybe do something else and then at some point you become tired and go to bed ...

This insertion of the miracle question into the everyday life of the client helps to ensure that the client doesn't propose something that is totally unrealistic for the miracle question, and rather connects it with everyday life.

And at a certain moment you fall asleep and suppose that during the night a miracle happens

This introduces the miracle. The word “suppose” indicates an imaginary, surprising moment, and as such leads smoothly to the word “miracle”. The pause encourages the client's curiosity to be awakened and their creative search process to begin.

And the miracle would be that the outcome you are seeking is achieved at one swell swoop just like that....

The pause allows the client time to imagine how it would be if their outcome was achieved. The use of “is achieved” triggers the transition from the idea of possibility to one of reality and encourages the client to believe they can already experience possible future changes in the here and now.

And that really would be a miracle, wouldn't it?

Facilitates the client's acceptance of the word miracle.

And you wake up early the next morning ...

Inserts the miracle into the everyday life of the client.

And no one tells you this miracle has happened how would you know that this miracle had occurred?

This encourages the client to look inside themselves for evidence that the miracle is present – by describing their feelings, thoughts or actions. The coach can encourage further articulation of the differences using the question “*and what else?*” or “*is there anything else?*”

It is important to use the word “and” rather than “if ... then” which would imply a chain of cause and effect and construe earlier changes as preconditions of subsequent changes. The component parts of the miracle do not determine each other, but rather they point to independent opportunities in the world of miracles. The abundance of individual events, at the time of the miracle, enriches our experience and affords us new freedoms; we go beyond the self-established borders of our own world and by doing so facilitate the previously excluded parts of the miracle.