

## **100 Sample Socratic Questions for Therapists: A Handout**

### Clarification Questions

1. What do you mean when you say...?
2. Can you elaborate on that thought a little more?
3. How would you describe that feeling in your own words?
4. Could you give me an example of what that looks like for you?
5. What does [specific word or phrase] mean to you?
6. How does this relate to what we've talked about before?
7. What's another way of describing this situation?
8. How might someone else describe this same experience?
9. What does that belief look like in practice?
10. When you say, "I'm overwhelmed," what does that look like for you?

### Probing Assumptions

11. What assumptions are you making about this situation?
12. What might you be assuming about yourself?
13. How do you think others might view this same issue?
14. What do you think you're taking for granted here?
15. Are there any beliefs here that you haven't questioned?
16. What would happen if you challenged that assumption?
17. How did you come to believe this about yourself?
18. What led you to conclude this about [another person]?
19. What assumptions would someone need to have to see things in this way?
20. What happens when you view the situation without this assumption?

### Evidence-Seeking Questions

21. What evidence do you have for this belief?
22. How do you know this to be true?
23. What facts support this thought?
24. Can you think of any instances that contradict this belief?
25. Is there a time when this belief didn't hold true?
26. What data would you need to prove this belief wrong?
27. How might someone else dispute this evidence?
28. What makes this evidence compelling to you?
29. Can you think of an alternative explanation for this situation?
30. What would you say to someone who had this same belief?

### Exploring Alternative Perspectives

31. How might you see this situation if you were an outsider?

32. What advice would you give a friend facing the same issue?
33. How would your [younger/older] self view this situation?
34. How would your view change if you weren't emotionally involved?
35. What would you say if a stranger shared this story with you?
36. What's another way of looking at this situation?
37. How would you view this if you were your most compassionate self?
38. How would you see things if you had a growth mindset?
39. What would change if you took a curious, rather than a critical, perspective?
40. What would it look like if you viewed this as a temporary setback rather than a permanent barrier?

#### Impact Questions

41. How does holding onto this belief serve you?
42. What's the impact of seeing yourself in this way?
43. How does this thought affect your behavior?
44. What's the cost of maintaining this perspective?
45. How does this belief impact your relationships?
46. What would you gain if you let go of this thought?
47. What would you lose if you challenged this belief?
48. How do these thoughts impact your self-esteem?
49. How does this way of thinking influence your emotional state?
50. What's the most significant impact of this belief on your life?

#### Exploring Core Beliefs

51. What does this thought say about you?
52. What does this belief suggest about the world?
53. What might this belief mean about other people?
54. What core belief does this thought stem from?
55. When did you first start thinking this way?
56. How is this belief connected to your past experiences?
57. What's the deeper meaning of this thought?
58. What does this belief protect you from?
59. What would it feel like to let go of this core belief?
60. What's an alternative core belief that could replace this one?

#### Behavioral Change Questions

61. What would happen if you acted differently?
62. What's the smallest change you could make right now?
63. What would change if you believed something different?
64. What's holding you back from changing this behavior?
65. What's the first step you could take to shift this behavior?

66. What are the risks and rewards of changing?
67. What would change if you no longer felt this way?
68. How might a small behavior change impact your thoughts?
69. What does it mean to you to change this pattern?
70. How does this thought drive your actions?

#### Scaling and Measuring Questions

71. On a scale of 1-10, how strong is this belief?
72. What number would you assign to your certainty in this thought?
73. On a scale of 1-10, how true does this feel right now?
74. How intense is this feeling on a scale of 1-10?
75. How strong is your emotional response to this belief?
76. What would a 5 on this scale look like compared to a 10?
77. How confident are you that this belief is accurate?
78. How solid is your evidence on a scale of 1-10?
79. What would need to change for this belief to move down a number?
80. Where on the scale would you like this belief to be?

#### Hypothetical and Future-Focused Questions

81. What if the opposite of this thought were true?
82. How would your life look if you didn't have this belief?
83. What would your ideal self believe in this situation?
84. What would be different if you woke up tomorrow without this thought?
85. How would you behave if you didn't believe this about yourself?
86. What might your future self say about this belief?
87. If you achieved your goals, how would this belief change?
88. How would your actions change if you felt confident?
89. What would your life look like in a year if you held onto this thought?
90. What would be different in a year if you let go of this belief?

#### Deepening Questions

91. What's beneath this thought?
92. What's underneath the feeling that supports this thought?
93. What's a question you're avoiding asking yourself?
94. What's the one thing you're most afraid of addressing in this belief?
95. How does your body feel when you think this thought?
96. What's an image that comes to mind when you reflect on this belief?
97. What's your gut reaction to this thought?
98. If you could sum up your experience in one word, what would it be?
99. What's your heart's response to this belief?
100. What's the truth that lies beneath the surface of this thought?