



Exercise: Untying the Knot

Sometimes our problems can feel like a giant knot that is so tight, there's no way to undo it. Like all the coaching exercises and activities that I lead my clients through, this one takes advantage of the collected knowledge and wisdom you've amassed over the course of your life. You may not have conscious access to it. But you can play a trick on your brain to allow it to reorganize that information into a solution that is best for you.

Step 1: Find something that can represent a knot that you work on untying. Some people use a shoelace. Other ideas include:

- A tie or a scarf
- A necklace
- A jump rope
- An extension cord
- A ball of yarn

Step 2: As you hold the knot in your hand, call to mind the problem you need to solve.

Step 3: Spend a minute or two attempting to just open up some space in the knot. How does opening space up help you create new answers? What insights come to mind? How can you apply those?

Step 4: Now move into really trying to untie the knot. As you do so, have a friend or spouse (or ask yourself out loud) ask these questions. Have someone write down your responses or record yourself answering these questions:

- How am I resisting allowing an answer to come to me?
- What does this resistance get me, or how do I benefit from it?
- What's the big picture of this problem or issue? What's important about it?
- What will your life be like once you solve this problem?
- What's missing? What other information do you need that you don't have? How could you get it?
- What would the next logical step be to solve this problem or address this issue?
- And what's the next best step after that? And then what?

Step 5: You may finish untying the knot before you have solved your problem. If so, simply stay in a quiet space and continue asking the questions. If you get done with the questions and still haven't untied the knot, take a moment to ask yourself if there is more to learn, or have you solved the problem already? If there is more to learn, continue by asking the questions again or come up with new ones that make sense to ask. If you solve the issue in the middle of the exercise, simply move to step 6.

Step 6: Your brain is an amazing organ that wants to work on your behalf, helping you create the best solutions. Spend a few minutes in silent gratitude for the work you've just completed.