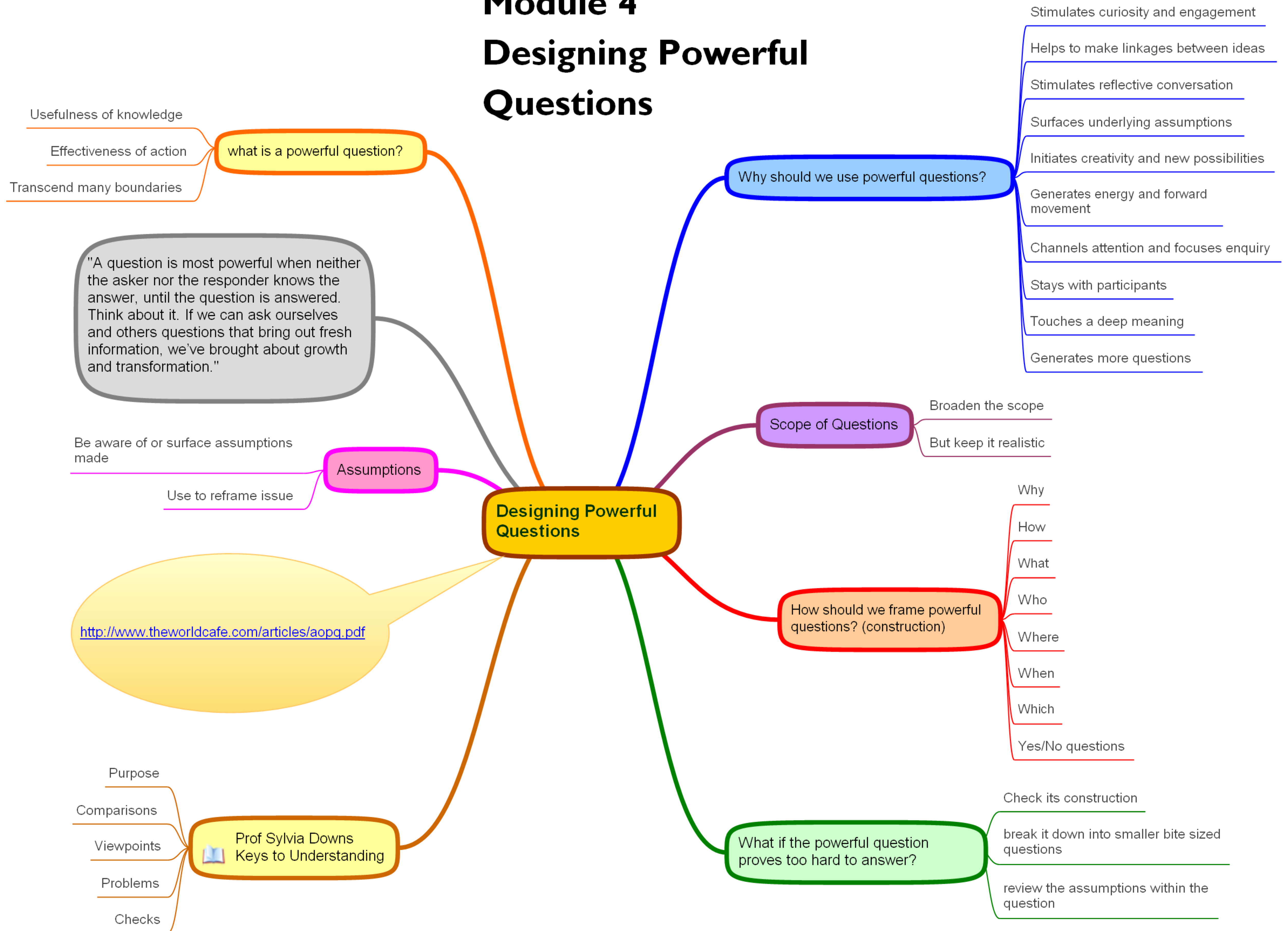


# Module 4

## Designing Powerful Questions



what is a powerful question?

- Usefulness of knowledge
- Effectiveness of action
- Transcend many boundaries

"A question is most powerful when neither the asker nor the responder knows the answer, until the question is answered. Think about it. If we can ask ourselves and others questions that bring out fresh information, we've brought about growth and transformation."

Assumptions

- Be aware of or surface assumptions made
- Use to reframe issue

Designing Powerful Questions

Why should we use powerful questions?

- Stimulates curiosity and engagement
- Helps to make linkages between ideas
- Stimulates reflective conversation
- Surfaces underlying assumptions
- Initiates creativity and new possibilities
- Generates energy and forward movement
- Channels attention and focuses enquiry
- Stays with participants
- Touches a deep meaning
- Generates more questions

Scope of Questions

- Broaden the scope
- But keep it realistic

How should we frame powerful questions? (construction)

- Why
- How
- What
- Who
- Where
- When
- Which
- Yes/No questions

What if the powerful question proves too hard to answer?

- Check its construction
- break it down into smaller bite sized questions
- review the assumptions within the question

Prof Sylvia Downs  
Keys to Understanding

- Purpose
- Comparisons
- Viewpoints
- Problems
- Checks

<http://www.theworldcafe.com/articles/aopq.pdf>