

rapport

ISSUE TWO

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KELLY HOLMES

Mental attitude the
key to success

Teenagers

A leading
coach helps
a family
in trouble

Richard Bandler

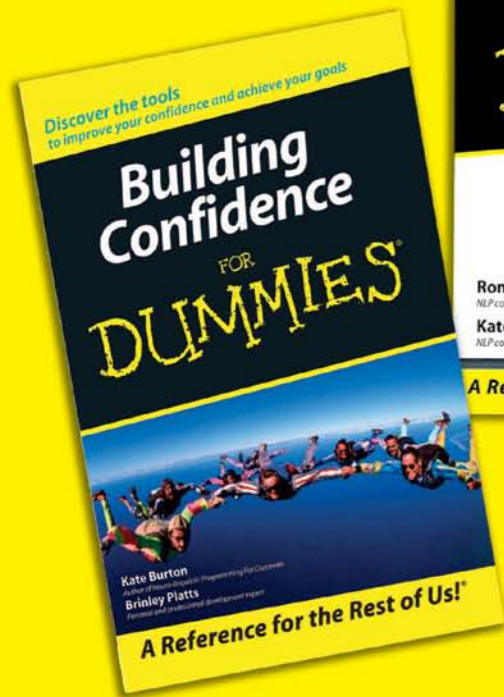
Talks about his
quest for knowledge

Grooming

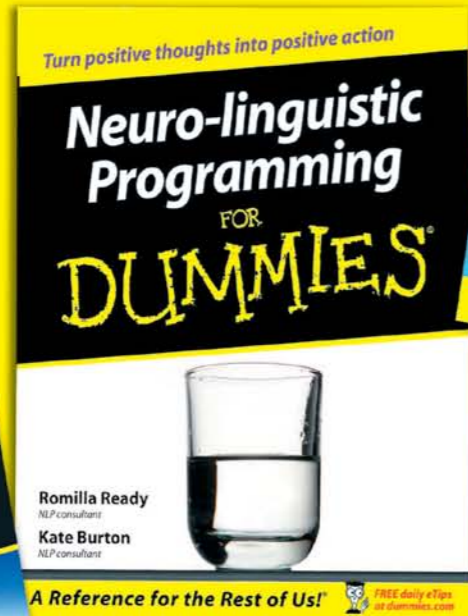
An image consultant reveals
how looking good leads to success



Unleash Your Potential!

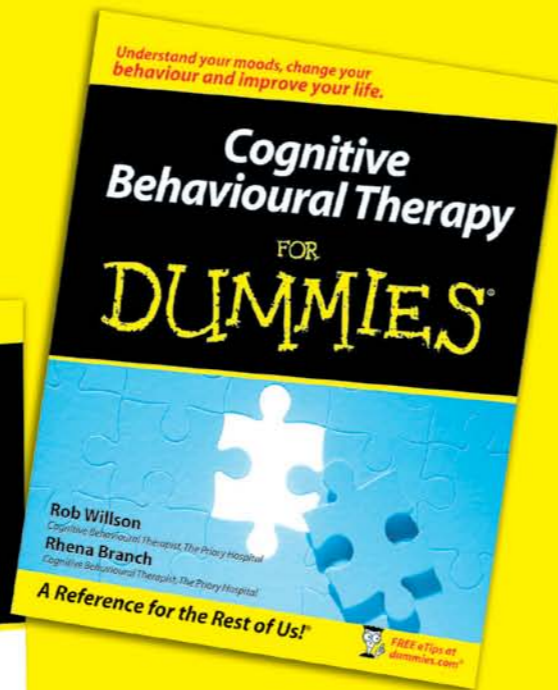


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Welcome to the second issue of Rapport, the personal development magazine. I'm happy to report that the vast majority of readers have enjoyed the new magazine. However, like many who are interested in personal development, we'll strive for excellence and try to make every issue better and more relevant.

This issue we are fortunate to have an interview with one of the co-creators of NLP, Richard Bandler. I have to make an admission here that in the last issue I mistakenly called him the creator of NLP, which caused anxiety among some readers, who pointed out that John Grinder is also a co-creator. Nevertheless, Richard provides an intriguing interviewee as one of the leading trainers in the UK.

We also have many more practical articles this issue, which look at how coaching can solve behavioural problems in teenagers (p34), how a hypnotherapist helped one of her clients control her anxiety and stress (p39), and we investigate whether team-building away days can lead to effective working relationships (p18).

We are also very fortunate to have an interview with Kelly Holmes, the double Olympic gold medal winner, who talks about how important a strong mental attitude was to her success.

William Little
Editor

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Quality of NLP training

Does it matter whether you train for an NLP qualification in seven days or over 20 days? Will you get the same quality? Two experienced NLP practitioners look at each approach and discuss the benefits

David Shephard is the Managing Director and Head of Training and Research for The Performance Partnership.

Neither approach to NLP Practitioner Certification is any better than the other. However I will tell you about the benefits of the seven-day accelerated approach.

Time

During any training course there is time required for the trainer to give the students the theory behind the material before they can practice it in the exercises. The student no longer needs to be physically present in the training room for this. By putting all the content on audio CDs and the live demonstrations on DVD, the students can get all of this information whilst at home, in the car, on the train, or literally anywhere. This gives them ultimate flexibility in time management. If one were to add up the time the student takes learning NLP it is roughly the same as a twenty-day training at 130 hours.

Repetition

Because the students listen to the CDs three times before attending the live

training they have actually attended the Practitioner training four times. This means that all the students are very familiar with the 'content' of the Practitioner material and we can hit the ground running with practicing their NLP skills in the exercises.

Momentum

By doing the training in seven contiguous days the students get a real momentum behind their learning without the stop start of modular trainings. This makes learning easier.

Full immersion

By doing seven nine-hour days contiguously the students are fully immersed in the content of the training. This approach to conscious overload is well-known for accelerating unconscious learning. The students are able to gain real NLP skills very quickly and use them to get consistent results.

Conscious – Unconscious Integration

Each student is required to complete an open book test on the content of the NLP Practitioner training. This assists in focusing their pre-course study and

making sure they have the content consciously. They continue to work on the test during the training so that by the end of the week everyone has 100 per cent. Although having conscious access to the content isn't necessary to use NLP and get results, it is necessary if you want to teach NLP to others.

Review

Once the students have completed the live training they can review the content as often as they want by listening to the CDs again.

Saves money

If the students are staying away from home they only have seven nights hotel accommodation to pay for, one set of travel expenses and only five days of holiday allowance to take. In the time it takes to do a twenty day Practitioner training they can do their Practitioner and Master Practitioner Certification.

Both approaches to NLP Certification work. It comes down to the personal preferences of the student. The seven day accelerated approach suits those who want to get it all done in a week. www.performancepartnership.com



Alex Howard is clinical director of The Optimum Health Clinic in Harley Street, London. Alex has a first class degree in psychology and is a trainer of NLP and hypnotherapy. Alex's work has been featured in magazines such as Time Out, BBC Radio, Channel 4 and he has recently presented a documentary for Sky One. Alex is a passionate believer in clinically based NLP training.

Perhaps the issue here is not so much the length of training, as the use of home study brings a quantum shift in how NLP trainings can be run, and therefore a seven day format with a highly experienced trainer could be as effective as the old twenty one day format. Instead the issue is around the goals of the student. People come into NLP with all kinds of different aspirations. If somebody is simply interested in learning about how their own mind works, or applying NLP in a context where they are already experienced (such as a sales-person wanting to learn how to sell better) then accelerated trainings are often an exciting and dynamic way to achieve this. However, when we are talking about people training to become therapists it is surely a different issue.

Psychology

Is it possible that the fact that traditional psychology looks on NLP in a less than favourable light something we can learn



from? Psychologists study for at least six years, of which learning the techniques is one aspect. A large part of the training is observing other clinicians working, treating patients under supervision, and having ongoing mentoring and support. Perhaps what is missing from a 'traditional' point of view for those that want to go on and become NLP clinicians is this clinical application. That's not to say that it should take anything like six years to qualify in NLP, but perhaps we can learn from what is relevant in the traditional model.

Clinical training

As part of the training that we run at the clinic, students treat real patients whilst being supervised, they watch films of real life sessions and learn to analyse what is really going on, and have the opportunity to come and watch live sessions with paying clinic patients. We have found this invaluable for students at the end of training to not only feel competent in their

abilities, but also confident. Treating real patients is no longer a daunting prospect, as it is something that students have already been doing on an ongoing basis under supervision.

In a clinical context patients are often sceptical, don't respond to techniques as they 'should' do, or as we would expect them to. Being a skilled and competent clinician requires that we are able to see what is really going on in such a context, that we can understand a technique and how to make it work when it doesn't seem to be working, and how to effectively mix and match elements of three or four different processes in one session to respond to the individual needs of a client. In essence where becoming a clinician is the student's aim, we might do well to take the best of the model of traditional psychology and use this to add to the great potential and arsenal of tools that NLP has to offer. ● www.TheOptimumHealthClinic.com

Picture:
Left, David Shephard;
right, Alex Howard

Richard Bandler

Since the creation of NLP in the 1970s, Richard Bandler has striven for excellence. He tells William Little what underpins his achievements

Talking to Richard Bandler is a mixture of receiving a prep talk about striving for excellence and knowledge and having a lecture about the bio-chemical structures of the brain. At the end you feel confident that you can achieve endlessly, while at the same time you're left with a nervous feeling that you haven't quite understood everything he has said.

This isn't surprising. He says he solves problems mathematically and uses his background in physics and chemistry to understand how the brain works, thereby knowing how to get the most out of it. Despite Bandler talking about things like 'non-linear variables', you know somehow, somewhere, the experience has left your brain with a desire to find out more, rather than give into the complexity.

Of course, the last thing you imagine Bandler would want is for me, or anyone, to give in or not try. In fact, he admits that he never stops thinking and pushing at the boundaries of what he knows. For

28 years, he has learnt about all sorts of ideas from architecture, neurology, CAT scans – a new way of thinking in another area could be used to help people understand how the brain works better, he says.

Bandler has interesting ideas about NLP. At one point, after yet another question in which I use the term NLP, he suggests that I refer to it as though it were a person. For him, it's just a term for a range of techniques that he helped create back in California in the 70s with John Grinder. The fact that it wasn't psychology meant it needed another name. Yet most of that 'stuff' he reckons he doesn't use any more.

He also says he gets frustrated at the politics of NLP, about organisations saying who can teach it and who can't. 'When I came to England originally, people told me I couldn't teach NLP. Well they can just f..k off, how dare they say that I can't teach it.'

At this point, I tell him that the public relations department of

the organisation he works with in England told me I was only allowed the interview if I called him the creator of NLP. I tell him that I've already been hauled over the coals by John Grinder's representatives in the UK for calling him that in the last issue. They were keen to point out that John Grinder was legally co-creator. Fair enough, I thought.

Isn't this NLP politics though? Seeing my plight, he says I can call him co-creator. He lists what he created and what Grinder created. Then, changing tack, he tells me that he doesn't have to say he is co-creator to anyone and that anyone who quibbles with that should deal with him face to face, but they should be worried about that because he's modelled quite a lot of things – here he leaves a dramatic pause before saying: 'such as voodoo'.

Humour is important to Bandler's approach and he ensures that laughter is essential to his training programmes. Reviews always point out how funny he is during seminars. The state ►





of the mind is essential for learning and humour can alter its chemical state. 'When people are having fun their learning is more apt. Every genius has a fabulous sense of humour. If they get stuck, they make enough jokes to go into an altered state until they come up with another idea,' he reveals.

Yet while he likes jokes and being flippant, such as saying that some 'people can suffer from a bad case of seriousness – you can be cured of that.' He takes the teaching of NLP seriously. Trainers have to know about the brain

days you study either. 'You can study for years and not learn anything. We all managed that at school. To me serious learning is about reading everything you can and then going back to study it. Training people is not enough, you have to keep doing it and doing it.'

You get the strong impression from speaking to Bandler that everything is possible so long as you have the right mental attitude and belief. Everyone who teaches NLP will feel the same, of course, because that's what NLPs about, but there's something else about

“You can study for years and not learn anything. We all managed that at school”

and not just about the techniques. 'It's like a car mechanic not knowing about an engine,' he says.

Just by calling yourself an NLP coach doesn't mean you're any good, he suggests. 'I've known people who have taught NLP and not seen a client for years. I still see clients who everyone else has given up on and I learn the most from them. You have to know when people were trained and who by. I've known people talk family therapy that have never seen a family'

He also says it's not about how many

Bandler. On top of all the knowledge and understanding, there's something visceral and human – there's a real dogged determination – he wants the biggest challenge and he won't give up.

'No one comes to me first. I just never give up when all my clients have been given up on. They say no one can help them, but they've always been wrong. There is a way. If someone says they can't help [a client] then that is a reflection on them,' he says, adding with such intensity his words resonate: 'Don't ever give up.'

Picture: Richard Bandler

Those words strike a chord with everyone who has ever wanted to achieve something or overcome a problem. For Bandler, those words have never mattered more than last year when he suffered a stroke and was told he wouldn't walk again. It almost goes without saying that he can walk. He knows how the muscles are hooked up to the brain, he says. 'If I have a problem moving something, I would stimulate it until it worked again'.

Alongside this determination, there seems to be an ethical core running through Bandler's work. He worked with schizophrenics because he didn't like the way they were being treated, for instance. 'The bottom line is that everything is biochemical, but it is too easy to give people drugs. They didn't get better, they just got more confused, but less disruptive. People should not be locked up for being nuts,' he says. It seems he has been most successful helping people with phobias as this is what motivates him the most.

He tells the story of one woman he worked with who couldn't tell the difference between what was real and what was imaginary. 'She said she had just killed her parents, but her psychiatrist told her that she had just had lunch with them. She burst into tears.'

Bandler then asked her to imagine that she came to the session in a helicopter. He then asked her to tell him how she knew the difference between the reality of travelling in a car and the imaginary flight. She didn't know. He then asked the psychiatrist to do the same thing and when he asked him the same question, his response was that the imagined scenario had a black boarder round it. Bingo.

Bandler then hypnotised the woman to put black boarders round her fantasies so she could tell reality from fantasy. Simple, it seems, but it allowed her to cope better with her condition. Today, Bandler still learns most from his clients. For him, that is essential. ● www.paulmckenna.com

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Kelly Holmes

Determination and self-belief earned Kelly Holmes two Olympic gold medals in Athens last year. She talks to William Little about how a strong mental attitude and focus were indispensable to her success on the track

Self-belief comes as naturally to Kelly Holmes as breathing does to everyone else. She can't pinpoint why she has it in abundance, but she knows that it's what makes all the difference between winning and losing.

Anyone who knows Holmes always comments on her self-confidence and gregarious nature. Add to that an in-built determination, and you have the answer to how an Olympic champion is created.

She wanted to win Olympic gold at the age of 14. It took her another 20 years to achieve her goal. Throughout that time she has suffered more than her fair share of injuries and set backs, but she hasn't once wavered or pulled out. Think back to the World Championships in Athens in 1997 – Holmes had run faster than anyone else in the world

“I had a long-term dream and a very clear goal”

that year at 1500 metres and was clear favourite to win. Yet with only 200 metres of the race to go, her left calf went into spasm and ruptured her achilles tendon. With a determination that has marked her out, she limped home over the finish line half a lap behind every one else and burst into tears. Her dream over.

'It was an enormous blow,' she says. 'I was so fit and ready.' But she put her loss into perspective quickly: 'I knew that if I was injury free I could do it.' Over the next few years, every set back was put

behind her and she focused on what she wanted. 'I had a long-term dream and a very clear goal. It was very powerful. I never wanted to give up on it,' she says, adding: 'if you don't have those goals and the self-belief you won't achieve.'

While her success was based on hard training, she often didn't always know whether her body was being pushed too much. 'You have to push your body to the limit to be successful and there is a fine line over which you can push yourself too much. But you can't worry about that because there are others who also want to be successful.' Injury, it seems, was the risk of working so hard.

There have been other elements in her life that have given her the right attitude to succeed. She says that being a physical fitness instructor in the army gave her confidence in her physical strength to succeed in the long term. Although self-motivation has never been a big issue for

her. She loves what she does. Seb Coe, that other successful Olympic runner, remembers watching her as a young athlete in the early 90s and seeing how she just loved to race. 'A lot of athletes are happy just to run good times and go through the motions. Kelly is not like that. She doesn't need pacemakers to follow, she knows how to think her way through the rounds of an Olympic competition,' he says. On top of her love for what she does, she says she is very single minded. She admits that she missed out on a lot by focusing so

much on her Olympic dream. She says, now over a year after her win, that she is making up for it. 'My dream became my lifestyle. I knew some who didn't make it their life and they didn't achieve. I had to make sacrifices to achieve the top and in that I haven't missed out.'

Holmes is speaking to me only a few days after the public announcement of her retirement. She already has plans in place for the future, however. Plans she made before the Olympics last year – just in case, she says, she didn't win. Although this might be seen as a chink in the armour of her self-belief, it clearly made no difference. The plan she refers to is On Camp with Kelly, set up early last year with the aim of finding 13 female junior athletes and helping them develop into future Olympic champions. The scheme continues today with Holmes mentoring the girls, advising them on training, injuries, self-belief and determination.

'I believe that if they put in the work, then 80 per cent of what they achieve will come from self-belief. There are girls who have the ability but don't have the confidence. If they believed in themselves more they would go further, but they're in danger of going down hill.'

Her advice to those who want to achieve is that you should: 'Always give 100 per cent to your goals, at least then if it doesn't work you will have tried. I'd rather given 100 per cent and fail, than give only 10 per cent and not try,' she says. In essence, don't be afraid to fail. Holmes didn't and look where it got her. ●