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RAPPORT
“The Magazine for NLP Professionals”
November / December 2013 - Issue 35

www.rapportmag.com
Welcome to the Early Autumn issue of Rapport, "The Magazine for NLP Professionals"

I’m happy to say I kept my word and walked my talk, as you can see from the more up to date photo on my editorial page this issue! How long before this one is out of date, I wonder? Cait writes about ‘talking your talk’ (page 28), and it is something which is important to us, as NLP Professionals – being congruent with what we do, and living up to our own values.

I’ve been doing quite a bit around values recently, as I have been participating in some Scout training in my ‘spare’ time. I think that’s why I am involved with the Scouts, because (a) they have a clearly defined set of values and (b) they fit with mine, so we fit, from a congruency perspective.

I’m involved with the District Team, so part of our remit is to hold the clear vision and support the Groups to deliver that vision to the young people in our area...in much the same way that David talks about ‘Vision, Decision, Result!’ (page 14). One of the course modules we studied this weekend was about Diversity and Inclusion...again, subjects close to my own heart, simply because it reflects our own professional field in many ways, and again, can be supported by the presuppositions of NLP. How do we, as a field, celebrate our diversity? And how can we ensure that NLP is available to as many people as possible? The first question is easily answered by the NLP presupposition, ‘respect for another person’s model of the world’, even when it differs from our own. From this perspective, as Cait says (page 5), the future is bright.

The second is more challenging, especially in the commercially driven and litigious world in which we live. Although, sharing incredibly moving experiences is one way of getting the positive message of hope out there, which ANLP member, Sera Johnston, has done through her inspiring book, Dana’s Walk (page 32). And the litigious aspect can be managed more effectively by considering the ways in which we practice, as Eve discusses in her article, ‘Ethical NLP’ (page 42). ANLP are supporting NLP Professionals in this arena by introducing some guidelines for supervision – do see our website for more details.

We welcome Kris Hallbom as a regular contributor this issue (page 40), with her new column for supporting NLP Professionals and Coaches as they navigate the sometimes challenging world of starting a business, and we are here to support you on that journey.

Until next time

Karen
INTRODUCING NLP
Outcomes 23: A Bright Future
By Caitlin Collins

In this series on Introducing NLP we’ve been looking at the range of tools for change that NLP can offer. Under the umbrella heading of ‘Setting outcomes’, we’ve explored techniques that can help us with goal-setting, creative planning, managing state, identifying values, learning from mistakes, modelling success, solving problems, using rep systems and submodalities, developing effective strategies, increasing language skills, and healing painful memories. Whew! It’s a lot of learning!

Effective learning includes assimilating learning from the past, bringing it into the present so we can apply it when we need it, and also, through the power of our imagination, allowing it to transform and enrich our vision of future possibilities.

The following exercise combines elements from two NLP methods: the swish technique, which helps with assimilating learning; and future pacing, which enriches our vision and also prepares us so we can apply what we’ve learned when we need it in the future.

Practice
1. Think of something positive and life-enhancing that you’ve learned recently, for example, a new skill or perhaps a development of an existing skill. It needs to be something you’re pleased about. Take a moment now to allow yourself to feel good about it: acknowledging an achievement and celebrating it is an important part of learning.

2. Then, as though you could see yourself on an imaginary screen. Let that image of the old you remain on the screen for a while as you continue with the next step of the exercise.

3. Think about yourself as you are now that you have achieved the learning you’re celebrating now. Create an image of yourself as this new person who has gained this achievement, and superimpose this new image on top of the old image on the screen. Make this new image bigger, brighter, more vivid, and more compelling. Notice how it is further intensified as it absorbs and takes the place of the old image of the previous, ‘pre-learning’ you.

4. As the picture on the screen intensifies to become even more vivid and compelling, imagine you can somehow step into the image, so you are experiencing it from within, feeling what it feels like to acknowledge the changes within you as you celebrate your own achievement. The imaginary screen fades away as you do this, so now it’s just you, experiencing your now fully assimilated and acknowledged learning.

5. Think of how your achievement is going to make a positive difference – perhaps many positive differences – in your life in the future. Imagine your future out in front of you, and think of a possible future scenario in which your learning will help you. Imagine that possible scenario out there in the future ahead of you. Let your image of your future be bright and inviting, and let that possible scenario shine even more brightly as a glowing place in your future.

6. Close the exercise in any way that suits you. Some people like to imagine absorbing their visualisation of the future into their hearts; others prefer to leave it in place. However you do it, you can be sure that it’s always available for you to visit whenever you want to.

And now it’s time for me to say thank you to all the readers of this series; I hope you have enjoyed it and found it useful. This is the last episode of my regular column in Rapport magazine. Although I look forward to reappearing in the magazine with occasional features, I’m now focusing on my professional writing and NLP coaching on working with horses and riders. My new book is called Heart to Heart with Your Horse, my new website is www.theconfidentridercoach.com and I’ve lots of lovely plans with manes and tails flying for the future!
If you could have more of one thing, what would it be, I asked. The group of teachers were unanimous in their answer. If you’re a teacher, parent to a child at school, or a student yourself, you’ll probably give a knowing nod when I mention it.

From the carpeted corridors of private schools, to budget-pressured mainstreams, to schools for boys with emotional and behavioural difficulties where teacher-student ratio is almost one-to-one. Teachers in all schools want more of this one thing.

For all the brilliant (and necessary) colour coded timetables and differentiated lesson plans, schools are always short of...time. ‘If only we had more time!’ Because more time means less stress and better learning, right? Schools are time-poor because they’re not just places of interaction, but of reaction.

The amount of time lost to ‘sorting out angry kids’ is, according to a national poll, about ten per cent, or half a day per teacher per week. I don’t know how much time is lost sorting out ‘angry teachers’. Imagine the impact unwanted conflict has on learning states! ‘If the teacher has a go at me in the morning, I know it’s gonna be a bad day. If it’s Monday, it’s gonna be a bad week,’ Matthew, aged 16, once told me.

My friend David used to remind me ‘people learn more about us from our reactions than our actions’. He usually told me after I’d (over) reacted to something. Now, schools are not suddenly going to become centres of tranquillity, and creativity can itself be a reactive process, but what do we know to help us handle those time-draining scenarios?

Here’s a task. Choose some NLP presuppositions and invert them. What impact would they have in school? ‘No choice is better than choice.’ ‘Not everything can be learned.’ ‘You are your behaviour.’ How much resistance would these create?

As Mary Angelou wrote, when we know better, we do better. So, what can we do to rewire our own reactions, reducing the unpleasant downward spiral of conflict?

Allow me to pick two presuppositions at play in daily school life. Let me show the problem when the presupposition is absent, then the potential when present. Then, if you want to, you can apply the ‘absent/present’ contrast to the presuppositions that matter to you and notice what you prefer.

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When you know better, you do better ✨
1. No failure, only feedback

Let’s start with an obvious one! When this presupposition is absent, students are left with a fixed mentality towards their work. They either passed (‘phew, relief!’) or they failed (‘Gee, I’m so stupid’). It’s either/or. There’s no room for improvement, which – as my friend David often quoted – is actually the biggest and emptiest room in the world. It is then too easy for teachers/parents to reinforce the ‘you’re good enough/not good enough’ label. ‘Did you pass? Did you?’ we say, breathlessly. When instead we ‘act as if’ a piece of work is just feedback, just a useful glimpse into current effort levels and understanding, plus offer some questions to help, we can shift student’s attention away from just the result, to the process that led to the result. Yes the outcome matters, but the process holds the keys.

Billy, this work is currently a grade D. What is that telling you about your current effort? What might it take to reach grade C next time? Does this sound like it might trigger curiosity rather than a reaction?

‘Megan, you got 17 out of 50. That’s not a pass this time. That score tells us both that you need to start asking more questions in class. What might happen when you do that, I wonder...’ Modelling curiosity instead of criticism.

2. Behind every behaviour is a positive intention

This presupposition takes a moment to compute. Our reactions are unconscious giveaways about our internal state.

Now, teenagers are never going to suddenly like being told what to do. But what many teens tell us – and our charity works with hundreds individually every year – is they HATE being judged. When this presupposition is absent, judgement is all that remains, thus starting the time-wasting cycle of arguments. Cause and effect. We focus on the what you did and forget the why you did it.

When addressing problem behaviour, unsavoury reactions from students can be lessened by pausing, and asking ‘What was your intention here?’ It may require repeating. ‘No, don’t explain what you were doing, help me understand your intention.’ Said calmly, it helps students to consider reasons they probably weren’t previously mindful of. It also buys time. Goodness knows the brain’s amygdala needs time to think straight! We may find we can actually praise the intention and correct the behaviour, and that is far more respecting of both persons.

Sarah, you need to sit up straight in class (the what) / because I don’t want you to be in trouble for looking bored, and I want you to succeed in this (the why).’ Said with a nod. You probably noticed the combination of ‘away from’ and ‘towards’ language in that sentence too.

Hence the ‘telling off’ which was required from the teacher, because Sarah was slouching, also unveils a positive intention for Sarah’s success. The teacher doesn’t become bossy by default but, well, actually teaches something.

With a little sustained thinking, we may find we can reduce the time lost to discord, and help students tune into their own ability to learn. Now, that sounds worthwhile.

What is a presupposition?

Presuppositions – one of those jargony words that NLP gets accused of being too keen on. Many people instead prefer the phrase ‘acting as if’. That is, to act as if a principle is true and notice the results. It’s a grown up version of pretending, until the new reality works.

A metaphor for presuppositions

Think of presuppositions as an orchestra, a collection of independent and uniquely different instruments – some brass, some stringed, some wind, some percussion. You get the idea. Each has a sound and makes an impact on their own, yet they create even more beautiful results when working in harmony with the others. In this respect, your mind-body system is the conductor of which instruments (presuppositions) to pay attention to and draw out at any specific moment.

RESOURCES

Carol Dweck’s book Mindset, is a banquet of stories and ideas for how to turn failure into feedback in order to keep learning.
See a list of presuppositions of NLP www.anlp.org/presuppositions-of-nlp.

Chris Spriggs is the founder and Director of Lifespace Trust, a mentoring and education charity in the Midlands, which works to help young people get less of what they don’t want, and more of what they do. He is a Master Coach of NLP and a keen marathon runner. Contact Chris through LinkedIn or via www.lifespace.org.uk.
As 10 October was World Mental Health Day (10/10), take some time to think about your own (and your clients’) mental health. NLP can help with a wide range of issues but it’s important that, as practitioners, we both ensure our own mental health and we recognise when clients have mental illness that is beyond our scope to deal with.

There are 1 in 4 adults affected by a diagnosable mental health condition every year and 1 in 6 at any given time, so I hope you’ll find these tips for 10/10 helpful.

1. **Give some thought to your own mental health.** Pause to think about the ways your mental health has been most noticeable. When have you felt at your best, mental health wise? When have you felt that your mental health might have been suffering? How did you handle these warning signs? The better you come to know your own mind, the better you’ll be able to help others. Who in your family and amongst your loved ones has struggled with mental health conditions?

2. **Be mindful.** As well as running [www.mindfulyogatherapies.org](http://www.mindfulyogatherapies.org) with Lana Jackson, Clinical Psychologist, Lucy Clarke works for the NHS supporting people in living well with chronic illnesses. Her top tip for ensuring good mental health is to pause life, ‘We all lead very busy lives and can spend a lot of time looking externally for strategies for self-care, personally and clinically. Using practices which develop self-awareness, such as meditation and mindfulness, enable you to take a step back. You can then become more responsive rather than reactive, learn more about yourself and become clearer on what’s your stuff and what’s your clients’. ‘Often, we carry around negative thoughts and feelings without really noticing them,’ agrees Beth Burgess ([www.smysl.co.uk](http://www.smysl.co.uk)), a therapist specialising in mental health, addiction, anxiety and stress. ‘Develop your self-awareness. I teach mindfulness, which is where you objectively notice the mental and physical stress you are subject to. Stop a few times a day and pay conscious attention to your thought patterns. Are the thoughts you are having healthy and supportive or negative and self-defeating? Replace negative thoughts with more helpful ones. Notice also if your body is tense or relaxed. Often we feel stress and tension in the gut, shoulders and jaw. If you feel any tension in those areas, gently release it to de-stress your body.’

3. **Set and maintain clear boundaries.** ‘Make sure you limit your working hours in a sensible way, and do not take your “work” home with you, physically or mentally,’ says Beth. ‘Eat and sleep well and keep your own life balanced. It is vital that you are able to recharge your energy and keep your mind and body healthy. You will be unable to help others effectively if you are burnt out, preoccupied or emotionally fragile.’

What warning signs let you know that you’re letting your boundaries be compromised? Crankiness is a good first sign for me. If I’m able to notice it and be curious about it, I’m able to stop the cycle and set firmer boundaries as necessary rather than allowing myself to get dragged into others’ dramas. Anytime you come up across any kind of boundary issues (changing a session time, taking on someone new, anything that begins to raise your ‘Hmm, beginning to feel that this is too much’ Spidey Sense), pause. Just waiting to tune into your own needs and wants rather than immediately and reactively responding to others’ demands can help you set and maintain healthy boundaries for life (and on days where they slip a little, you’ll catch it quickly and bounce back faster).
4 Care for the carer. ‘Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) is a psychological therapy that helps people to think and behave in healthier ways,’ says Beth. (This includes self-care.) ‘It focuses largely on self-awareness, regulating emotions and taking effective action,’ advises Beth. ‘And looking after your mental health. If you are working in a field where you deal with people with problems and challenges, always have some form of support yourself. This can come in the form of another professional, a supervisor, colleagues or even a support group. While talking to friends or a partner can be tempting, both confidentiality issues and the fact that they may have limited understanding of what you feel like, mean that getting support from others close to the field is important.’

5 Watch what you ‘feed’ yourself. ‘Anything that you subject your mind and body to will have an effect on your mental health,’ says Beth. ‘Too much junk in your diet will actually affect the way you think and feel. Listening to negative people or living in a negative environment can drain you of your energy and make you feel low. Learn to ‘feed’ your body with nutritional food, positive people and healthy thoughts that support you to be a happy, healthy person who can cope with challenges.’

Think about what you’ve fed yourself today, so far. Which foods may increase your anxiety and stress levels? Which are more nourishing? Similarly, which activities and people raise your energy levels and what leaves you feeling more depleted? I often encourage clients to log food and energy, to treat themselves as an experiment and then look back to see which days felt best and what they were doing/eating/saying yes and no to on those days.

6 Deal with problems as soon as possible. ‘Avoiding addressing the root cause of problems means that they can become entrenched and even more difficult to deal with,’ says Beth. ‘Facing issues head on means that you are less likely to resort to unhealthy coping mechanisms and you will build on your own sense of personal strength and self-esteem.’

What are your default unhealthy coping mechanisms? Notice lapses and be curious about what problems you may be avoiding with them. Think about times in the past where you’ve faced up to things and handled them with aplomb. And, in this moment, be as kind to yourself as possible. Are you using all of your resources? Who might be able to support you through this if it’s too challenging for you to go through alone?

7 Create your own multi-disciplinary network. Lucy benefits from multi-disciplinary team assessments in her NHS work but says even if you can’t do that and you don’t know your own blind spots regarding mental health (‘It’s difficult to know your blind spots because they’re blind’), you can create good links with other professionals so if someone is on a cocktail of medication which might be affecting their wellbeing or mental health, you can ask a doctor or nurse.

8 Know your limits. ‘Never be afraid to admit you can’t help someone,’ says Beth. ‘You are doing them no favours if they actually need specialist help. If you have any suspicion that someone’s mental state may be too much to deal with, then refer them to a specialist. It is better to be safe than sorry. Signs that someone may need more therapeutic support include cancelling lots of appointments, low mood, unpredictable behaviour, pervasive negative thinking patterns and a lack of progress. Immediately refer someone on to a specialist if they are using damaging coping mechanisms such as drinking, taking drugs, self-harming or if there are signs of an eating disorder.’

9 Know how to signpost. ‘It’s important to know how to signpost someone to more appropriate services and to not be afraid to say, “No, this is out of my depth”. As helping professionals, we need to know our limits and boundaries,’ says Lucy Clarke. ‘Seeking good supervision will enable you to check in.’

10 Use all of your resources. Do you have supervision in place? Are you part of an NLP practice group or peer supervision support group? Do you have friends in the NLP and mental health communities who you can speak to when you want a sounding board? Think about your practice and the kind of support you think you’d benefit most from. Set it up. We can grow much stronger and become so much more effective for our clients when we seek the support we need.
How to:
Add a Book Review to the Recommended Books List

STEP 1
Log in as a member using your email address and password.

STEP 2
Select the drop down link under ‘Resources’ to ‘Recommended Books’.

STEP 3
Select the drop down category to narrow the range of books on view. Books are listed in alphabetical order.

STEP 4
Select the option ‘Add your own review’.

STEP 5
Type in the information in the boxes provided, just as you would for an Amazon review. Remember to choose a star rating. Submit your review when complete.
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With my pepper allergy, general avoidance of meat and not drinking alcohol, my dietary requirements mean it’s a wonder I’m invited anywhere. Recently, I wondered why, when preparing for events or dinner parties or even lunch with friends, we don’t use more of our NLP.

Imagine framing questions more positively, asking, ‘What are your favourite foods?’ rather than ‘any allergies?’ Anyone with allergies or intolerance will, of course, make these known but the emphasis on good, fun, enjoyable food can shift the energy of the whole endeavour.

There are caterers who do allergy-friendly catering, but if you’re catering yourself, you need to do quite a bit of background work,’ says Alex Gazzola, author of Living with Food Intolerance and several other books on coeliac disease, intolerances and allergies (www.alexgazzola.co.uk).

‘Speak with guests with specific food requirements beforehand, making it clear you’re prepared to cater for them and making sure you understand their requirements,’ says Alex. ‘If you’re uncertain, and some offer to help in the kitchen with preparation, accept! You will learn a lot – and learning to cater for those with sensitivities is something which we all have to get used to, with increasing rates of allergy/coeliac/intolerance – and other dietary requirements too.

‘If you’re dealing with a guest with a life-threatening allergy, you may want to consider a total ban on the ingredient (usually nut – which isn’t especially difficult to exclude per se, although you do have to be careful with “may contain traces” products). Even for those with a non-life-threatening allergy/intolerance – like coeliacs – eating gluten may mean days or even weeks of ill health. Although there is more awareness of coeliac disease these days, this comes at a price, and that is that many dieters or “lifestyle” experimenters use the GF (gluten free) diet as a weight loss plan (for which there is no real science to support it) or to just see how they feel. If you do have a coeliac guest, you can do a lot to reassure them by treating their condition with the utmost seriousness it deserves – and not like a “fad dieter”.

‘Not everyone does, so it’ll be appreciated. Again, you have to be so careful as gluten can be found in stock cubes, soy sauce, processed cheese, all sorts of ready-made products etc. People trip up on all sorts of things – they think spelt is gluten free for instance (it’s not; it’s a type of wheat). There’s a lot to learn, so it’s not something you can really do last minute: it will take preparation and research and thought. You need a scrupulously clean kitchen – gluten can lurk in toasters, and any other crumbs or splashes can get into food as it is being prepared. Take care. There are so many GF (and dairy free) products these days though that you can get basic snacks and bites in most supermarkets to make life easier.

‘Do not be offended if people either offer to help in the kitchen, or bring their own food, or decline to eat something you’ve reassured them is ok, or even if they ask to see a label of a food you’re serving (make sure you keep any labels of foods you serve) or ask how something was prepared in great detail. Getting something wrong could have serious consequences for them, and this is how some people “manage” their conditions, especially those newly diagnosed. Do respect their choices and questions and don’t make an issue of it.

‘If you’re catering for a large group of people with mixed requirements, and you’re a bold, experimental cook, I would say bite the bullet and do a gluten and nut-free vegan feast, which will tick most of the boxes as far as allergies and intolerances are concerned – and will also cater for most religious or ethical sensibilities too. This in itself could be a terrific way to show said guests you respect their dietary needs.

As a parent of a child with food issues I would far rather somebody asked me to bring food from home than try to make something and potentially make my child ill!“
You can produce a remarkable array of allergy-friendly food which guests will marvel over and will bring a huge sense of fun to any gathering!

Don’t forget drinks – gluten-free beers are available, and ciders are gluten-free, but most ales, beers and lagers have gluten, and many wines are fined with dairy or fish, so may not be vegan friendly and pose a small risk to those with allergies. In general, spirits are a good option. A punch bowl is probably not very allergy friendly, simply because it’s not easy to identify what has gone into it.

‘I’ve had vegetarian friends for as long as I can remember and always love the challenge of cooking for them even though I’m very much a carnivore,’ says food blogger Laura Marcus (www.lauramarcus.com/category/paleo). ‘Also, my dad and gran were diabetic so I always had an interest in different kinds of diets. My gran, cousin, sister and aunt were caterers so it’s kind of in the family.’

Whether you’re hosting or attending, Laura recommends relaxing. ‘People aren’t just going to parties for the food. Avoid over catering and make sure there’s plenty of booze. When I was young, if you provided anything beyond French sticks and cheese, you were really being posh! People will always love being fed and appreciate an effort. See it as part of the fun to cater for various diets.’

‘My son and I have coeliac disease and my biggest tip is to really research well ahead of time,’ says Sarah Ockwell (www.babycalm.co.uk). ‘As the parent of a child with a food issue I always contact the party host and ask them if they are aware of my son’s condition and ask what they are planning to serve. If it isn’t appropriate, usually I will offer to send some food I have made for him myself, mostly because of the issue of cross contamination in a non-gluten free home and also because I have lots of experience of making nice gluten-free food and those who haven’t tend to just buy the dry, unappealing products in the shops. So I usually send him with food I’ve prepared.

‘If I’m hosting a party, I’ll find out in advance if any of the children have food issues and usually will suggest the parents bring any basics that the children like and try to make a few appropriate things myself. As a parent of a child with food issues I would far rather somebody asked me to bring food from home than try to make something and potentially make my child ill!’

Have more fun at your parties

- Don’t take things personally. If you tell yourself so and so is clearly trying to kill you when they’ve simply not got your level of vigilance, you’re less likely to want to have fun and party with them.
- See it as an opportunity to expand your repertoire – as everyone says, people will appreciate your efforts to include them AND to keep them safe.
- Be extra kind to yourself. Food and parties can trigger deeper issues. If you’re not used to having your needs met, you may assume that your dietary requirements will make you unwelcome.
- Think about the parties you’ve had the most fun at. How big a part of them was food related? Be safe and relax.

Visit www.feelbettereveryday.co.uk for more information.
Vision, Decision, Result!

By David Molden

In our work with executive teams we are privileged to be in a position to elicit models of excellence. This isn’t just a job for us, it’s a fascination bordering on the obsessive, driven by our curiosity to understand the many variations and similarities between models. Over the years we have applied what we have learned to our own business and personal lives, and we have shared our learning with course delegates and coaching clients to help them create compelling visions, make smart decisions and experience terrific results. In this brief article, I will give you a glimpse into some of the models and describe the conclusions we have drawn that can be utilised in any business context.

Driven by a vision
Imagine a group of friends who decide to take their camper van to a specific camping resort. Along the way the driver has to make many decisions about which direction to take. They take a wrong turn and end up miles from their route. Some in the group get tired and tell the driver to just head for any campsite, but the driver is determined on finding the campsite they had initially decided upon. Eventually they arrive, late, but happy to be where they originally wanted to go.

In business we have discovered that successful strategies are driven by a Vision, strong enough to make whatever decisions are necessary to keep on track, and avoid being side-tracked. Anyone in business will know there are many distractions enticing you away from your vision. Call them opportunities if you wish, but one thing we have learned is that a weak vision may not be able to resist these temptations. Whatever you call them they are only useful if they actually help you to realise the vision.

Core motivation
We have met some people who seem to be successful, and able to make smart decisions, but sometimes outwardly projected confidence can mask a deep uncertainty. Behind the facade there can be an emptiness, an unfulfilled desire, and indecision. One model we discovered was the negative affirmation, or the away-from pattern, one end of the core motivation pattern towards/away from. A CFO of one company was raised in a family who were very poor and as a result he decided he was ‘never going to be poor’. Notice the negative affirmation, the auditory channel communicating to self. There was no positive vision of what ‘not being poor’ would look like, so he decided to get into finance. He did very well for himself and his family, but was dissatisfied with his work and wanted to make a life-change, yet the more he thought about it the more he procrastinated as he had developed a habit of away-from decision making and didn’t know how to visualise a compelling future. This core motivation pattern will influence all other meta-programs.

The tyranny of meta-programs
A vision needs to be strong in order to prevent certain meta-programs from pursuing distractions. A strong away-from may work in the short term but there are longer term negative consequences such as poor health, lack of drive and poor decision-making. A strong difference pattern may cause you to feel bored with your vision whenever something bright and new appears on the horizon. The spontaneity of the options pattern may fragment the focus of attention as alternatives to the vision seem worthy of checking out. When either of these patterns is accompanied by a strong internal reference the distractions may appear irresistible, and when combined with a strong considering pattern irrelevant detours take so much more time.

False rationale
It is uncanny how, when pursuing a distraction, a powerful meta-program can have you inventing all kinds of rational reasons why it isn’t a distraction, rather another way of achieving your vision, or a slightly edited version of your vision. When we want something enough we can conjure up all
kinds of reasons for having it. We learn this ability as children, how to connect anything to anything! The difference pattern describes the distraction as a new opportunity, options as an alternative approach.

The internal reference just knows it needs to be explored and considering wants to think about it for a long time before deciding whether it is indeed a distraction or not.

Layers of management
Even when a CEO has a strong vision, and is able to avoid distractions and keep on track, he also needs to keep his managers on track and prevent them from going in different directions. The standard approach is to share the vision, but in reality not everyone gets the vision, or can imagine it how the CEO does. So there is the mission statement, an auditory version of the vision. This requires interpretation and is often not integrated into the work people do because it doesn't have the same power as a vision. So the next level of granularity here becomes the key performance indicator (KPI) in an attempt to align the work people do to the measurable goals of the organisation. This can work, but it takes up a lot of management time setting and measuring KPIs and appraising performance against them.

One CEO of a pharmaceutical company achieves the connection between his vision and the work his managers do with a simple metaphor. He talks to them about ‘nudging the pointer’. The scale encompasses quantitative and qualitative aspects, although no actual figures are defined. Managers just know that whatever they are doing they need to be nudging the pointer in a certain direction as much as they can. This is a vision anyone can imagine and create for themselves. This affords each manager the autonomy to take decisions that are driven by the vision of nudging the pointer and it has delivered exceptional results for the past five years during tough market conditions. In the camper van metaphor the driver is holding the vision, but if he were to hand over to a relief driver whose vision may not be as strong, he might simply give instructions to keep the compass needle pointing in a certain direction.

A visionary mind
We learn that we create whatever the mind focuses on. So a golfer learns to focus on where he wants the ball to go, and not on the rough or in the lake. The ball is likely to land in the place you are imagining. The same process is known to professional athletes too. They imagine their performance just before they leave the starting block. There is a very quick transfer of vision directly through to the body as the golfer makes the swing, or the athlete starts the run. When you put this process into a longer-term goal, such as ‘not being poor’, there may be a vision of poor kids and poor adults that is creating a strong away-from motivation, but without a stronger towards a person is really being driven by the logic of ‘not that’ which is nowhere near as powerful as a positive towards vision.

People who are able to hold such visions are sometimes called Visionaries. When you think of any visionary, for example, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King, Viktor Frankl, Richard Branson or Desmond Tutu, you first notice their unswerving ability to stay on track and follow a simply stated vision for a lifetime.

Vision, Decision, Result! Simple really. It’s all about knowing what is and isn’t a distraction, without fooling yourself with false logic.

Joseph was born into an artistic family. Both parents were actors and musicians, ‘which took me into playing guitar in self-defence. Both my parents played instruments and so did my sister.’

After studying Anthropology at University, and a brief period working ‘in a suit from 9 to 5:30’, Joseph became a classical guitar performer and teacher. Teaching guitar led Joseph into believing that ‘most people teach in the way that they’d like to be taught, but to teach people in the way that they want to learn is something different.’

To teach people in the way that they want to learn is something different

Joseph O’Connor is a name many will recognise from his teaching and writing in the fields of NLP and Coaching. His journey from teaching and playing classical guitar to working as a Coach to senior people in global business, may not be so familiar. As he tells Andy Coote for Rapport, NLP has played a major part in that journey and is still ‘useful and interesting to use’ however it is not the whole picture.

He also asked how you get the best from people, including yourself. ‘I would ask pupils to practise their piece – some of them were extremely good players – and I would go out of the room saying I’d get a cup of coffee or some water for us. I’d listen at the door and they would play beautifully, and then I would walk in, sit down, put on a stern face, and say, ok let’s hear your piece, and they’d go to pieces. So what’s going on there? Nothing has changed in their capability but something has changed in their head insofar as they’ve lost 30%, 40% of their capability. Beliefs, judgements, state, all of these things come into giving a top performance in anything, it’s just the sharp end if you’re playing guitar in front of a load of people. But it’s the same thing if you’re giving a sales presentation or negotiating or anything else in business.’

Joseph first encountered NLP and began to get some answers to his questions in the early 1980s when he went to a seminar run by concert guitarist and composer Gilbert Biberian who was ‘very much into the psychology of playing as well. On one of his weekends he had David Gaster doing some demonstrations of NLP. I thought this was fascinating and so I went home and read Frogs into Princes, which was just about the only book on NLP that I could get my hands on. I read the book and though I was sure there was something really interesting there, I didn’t understand a word about it. I believe NLP is a contact sport and you’ve got to work with people. So I went to a weekend seminar on NLP with John Seymour.
Associates in Bristol in 1984 or 1985 and after that I was hooked.’

Joseph was writing his first book – *Not Pulling Strings*. ‘It started off as a book about teaching and learning guitar. It was very eclectic and NLP was going to be one chapter in it. It actually became the first book on NLP published outside America because NLP took it over. I’m very proud to say it’s still in print and even more proud that it was on the reading list of the Royal Academy of Music, the most conservative institution in the world.’

John Seymour and Joseph began collaborating on books, ‘We approached Thorsons and *Introducing NLP* became the first NLP book written from the third position. We had, in the first edition, a bibliography of all the NLP books published up to that time, which was about 89, and it took about eight pages. You couldn’t do it now, we gave up at the second edition.’

Around 1995, Joseph worked with Ian McDermott at ITS. ‘Guitar teaching is time consuming, you’ve got to spend the half hour or the hour with the student and there are only so many hours in the day. I was able to extract myself from that. I collaborated with lan and I did a lot more training. I started to get invitations abroad to do training, because, certainly in Latin America, if you’ve written a book about something – and my books were going out in other languages – you are the expert, the guy to get. Books are much more highly prized in those countries.’

Joseph attended the 1997 Leadership Conference hosted by Robert Dilts in Santa Cruz. ‘I met a lot of people there. We had something in common and we had a ball. There was good training going on at the same time, so I remember that as a significant event. It really opened up my international career.’

Joseph works with executives now, helping them to achieve performance at their highest level that they didn’t suspect they had. ‘If you are going to really develop beyond yourself, you don’t know it’s there. You can’t see it. It’s like we’re walking in the dark with a flashlight held in front of us, holding this flashlight downwards so that we can make our next step. Now, you don’t see what’s beyond the flashlight. Occasionally other people with flashlights will give you a brief glimpse of what’s ahead. Or someone can say, “Why don’t you tilt your flashlight a bit forward and you’ll be able to see a bit more. And then you may want to take this passage instead of that passage”. When I write books, for example, the finished book has to surprise me. I have to learn something from it that I didn’t know about before. A book is about organising knowledge so you do the heavy lifting for your readers. In the same way, as when I coach, I would want people to – and I find that people do – say things like, “Wow, I never realised, never thought about looking at it that way; but that opens a whole new way of looking at it”. And then that’s great, and then they can take off on their own down that passage, with a little bit of guidance maybe, if they want.’

The coach has two main functions, Joseph tells me. ‘They support and they challenge. The artistry is being able to balance the two and shift the weight to the one that’s most appropriate at the time. At any time, some people need more support, other people more challenge. For me the main coaching question is, how can people move from wherever they are to feeling a creator of their experience and a creator of
their goals? We often talk about acquisition of goals, which puts the goal outside ourselves, rather as if it is a thing that already exists. We can talk about “attracting goals” but attraction is just another way of acquisition. Or we can go into creating goals, whereby we are a partner in the rest our life. We are a creative partner of the world; we are in the cast, not in the audience. We create our experience. We create our goals. They do not exist out there lying around to be found, despite how language hypnotises us to think so. For me, that’s a more generative way of being.’

I asked Joseph if he considered himself as an NLP coach or a coach with NLP. ‘I consider myself a coach and I’m very eclectic with what I use. I hope, although I’m still working on it, that I’m integrating all the things that I’ve learnt in my life into an approach that can help the unique client that’s in front of me. NLP is one of those things, absolutely. There are many other things too.’

Coming from a theatrical background has had a positive effect on Joseph. ‘I think that there’s a high degree of acting and entertainment in training. In order to be a successful trainer, you need to have the sort of skills that actors and entertainers have. Whenever I’m doing trainers’ training I always get people to model top comedians, because they are brilliant in the way that they use the stage, the way that they use anchors, the way that they tell metaphors. I took a stand-up comedy course as part of my professional development as a trainer. It was great fun and it taught me a lot.’

Just after the millennium, life and business took a major shift. ‘I met Andrea (Lages), who is now my wife and partner, in Brazil when I was there in 2000 and I moved to Brazil to be with her at the beginning of 2002. We lived in Sao Paolo until 2010 when we came back here. Lambent was the company that we put together to move forward our vision of coaching, of which NLP was part, and then at the same time we started the International Coaching Community which certifies coaches, based on our methodology. Our vision was to have an ethical and capable group of coaches that wanted to be together rather than had to be together. We now have over 8,000 trained coaches in over 60 countries.’

Joseph wrote How Coaching Works with Andrea in around 2005 in an attempt, in NLP terms, to model what the main coaching models in the world were at that moment. ‘I believe that book still has some relevance and answers.’

Joseph is offering Paul Ekman training based on the idea that you can detect deception and evaluate credibility from facial expressions. ‘This is fascinating stuff. Paul Ekman’s work took the seven universal expressions of emotion and worked on micro expressions and the detection of deceit. Micro expressions are expressions of emotion that last less than a fifth of a second, which we can’t control and therefore are very reliable indicators of the state of mind. Like NLP eye movements, you can know an emotion is there but not why. You can use that to detect incongruence. So if someone is talking about being very happy and they show flashes of sadness or fear, then there is something else going on. The sadness and fear is reliable because the expression is reliable.

‘If you go to deception from that, you start to think about incongruence and the whole thing around (the US drama series) Lie to Me, which used some of the theory, although very glamorised and dramatised. Paul Ekman was the scientific consultant for the first series. We deceive ourself and others all the time. Show me someone who says they never lie and there’s their first lie. We all do it – what, how, why, when and the consequences – that is what is interesting.

‘There is no Pinocchio’s nose, there is no absolutely 100% reliable sign that someone is lying. It is all contextual, so you have to use sensory acuity which is great, because that brings us back to NLP. I’m doing a session on deception detection at the NLP Conference in November, which will be interesting. It also opens up the idea about self-deception because then you’re into the study of the structure of subjective experience, and that is the dictionary definition of NLP.’

Working with leaders in business, can, Joseph believes make a big difference. ‘I want to do as much as I can in the world and business seems to be, without doubt, one of the main leverage points. Business can do incredible things – it can bankrupt continents and it has an equal and opposite possibility of making things go extremely well. The people at the top of the business are intelligent, good people, and I love working with them so that their business can flourish for them, for the people who work in it and for all their customers, and be a force for good. I love my work in making that possible.’

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Managing Internal Dialogue: Part 1

The Zero Point (Recognising patterns in your internal dialogue)

By Joe Cheal

There comes a moment when we ‘stop the world’ and access the extraordinary... powerful resources...amazing creativity...peak performance. Here we find our ‘Zero Point’, the place where we become truly present, experiencing the here and now. In this moment there is no distraction... no internal dialogue. We are in flow...in mindfulness... with infinite potential.

‘Attending to anything in the present tends to withdraw our attention from an internal voice that talks about the past or future.’
Steve Andreas(*1)

Thinking, thinking, thinking...therefore I am!
Have you ever woken up in the night unable to get back to sleep...and realised that your mind is chattering away to itself? It seems that most of our thinking takes place ‘out of awareness’ (i.e. unconsciously), however, if you sit quietly for a moment without any external stimulus, you may begin to notice your internal dialogue.

I have found that for some people, the notion of internal dialogue makes them think of ‘voices in the head’. This makes them a little reluctant to discuss the subject! However, when it is framed as ‘thinking’ they tend to be more open to exploring their inner language. The important point here is they understand that the voices are internal and not from an external source.

Why do we have internal dialogue? The philosopher René Descartes attempted to get to the core of our existence with his conclusion: ‘I think therefore I am.’ This ‘first truth’ of Descartes is a well-respected philosophical argument, however, if it is taken as a complex equivalence (i.e. I think = I am) we may be treading on troublesome ground. If we stop thinking, then what happens...do we cease to exist? Whilst it may seem silly, there is a part of us that may actually believe this! Eckhart Tolle(*2) suggests that becoming nothing is a fear of the ego...to stop thinking means ceasing to exist...and so it chatters away incessantly!

If we accept Antonio Damasio’s(*3) ‘embodied mind’ suggestion (that our body and emotions are not really separate from our thinking), then if we stop the internal dialogue, are we left with just feeling (emotional and/or physical)? Does internal dialogue help us to not feel everything? Does it take the edge off raw emotions? Even from the start of my journey in coaching and counselling, it was obvious that I and others had a tendency to ‘talk over the top’ of emotions sometimes (particularly painful ones). When asked to just stop, the feelings became very apparent!

Internal dialogue may also serve a number of other purposes, for example, planning and learning. We might reflect on a situation and when we move through it, we come out the other side with ideas on how to repeat or not repeat it. Research(*4) on daydreaming suggests that we have a ‘default network’ in the brain that kicks in if there is not much external stimulus (and/or if we are bored). When this neural system starts up, the brain becomes highly active. We may begin to develop plans and models and have all sorts of creative ideas! It is as if internal dialogue is keeping the brain busy when the outside world is not.

However, not all internal dialogue is positive and constructive. It appears that thoughts run the same neural pathways as spoken language. When we experience destructive language (spoken, thought, heard or read), the same pathways are strengthened in the brain. If the messages are significant enough to set off the ‘alarm system’ (e.g. the amygdala), then ‘negative’ thought turns into emotion and physiology. When destructive messages keep running the same patterns in the brain, the body reacts chemically (e.g. **Ref: 20**
adrenaline) and mechanically (e.g. tensing muscles). Under these conditions it is hard work for the body to defend itself against such a constant but intangible threat. Whilst some of our internal dialogue may be useful and helpful, there may be times when we would benefit from stopping or transforming some of the things we say to ourselves.

The Zero Point
Some years ago, a couple of significant things came together at the same time. The first ‘significant thing’ was that Melody and I had begun to use the phrase ‘Zero Point’ as a way of anchoring the ‘here and now’. If we were off talking about things that might happen, or replaying things that did, or fantasising about what could or might have been, we would gently suggest to one another to ‘come back to the Zero Point’.

There have been times when I have been out for a walk and realised that I have been yattering away about inconsequential things...and missing the view. Coming back to the Zero Point means enjoying the moment...stopping and smelling the roses!

We realised that internal dialogue (like our sometimes random conversations) seems to take us in a ‘direction’ away from being in the here and now. Sometimes it takes us into the future, sometimes the past. Sometimes it is in a constructive direction, sometimes negative and destructive. Sometimes it is a fantasy of what we’d like more of, sometimes it is a rejection of what is.

The second ‘significant thing’ was listening to a series of talks by Eckhart Tolle(*2), along with reading his book(*5). He was saying the same thing about how we stop ourselves being present. We got so curious about being in the here and now that we began to model the nature of ‘mindfulness’, starting with Tolle’s ideas. And so the Zero Point model was developed as a cousin to the Infinity Point(*6).

As far as we could tell, much of what Tolle refers to (i.e. how we avoid being in the now) could be mapped using three meta-programs.

1 Time Orientation: thinking about the past or the future.
2 Motivation Direction: thinking about what we don’t want or want less of (away from) and what we want or want more of (towards).
3 Relationship Sorting: thinking about how things are different or the same as other things.

These meta-programs could be imagined as continua or axes on a graph. The three combined create a three dimensional X-Y-Z axes model (see Figure 1). The content of our internal dialogue (e.g. about self, others, things, events, actions) might take us anywhere in this three dimensional space. For example, we might think about a person we met in the past who we wish we had got to know better because we had so much in common with them. Or perhaps we might not be looking forward to an event that we are going to attend because it will be just like every other event we go to.

![Figure 1.](image)

The Zero Point model is the three dimensional X-Y-Z axes of the Time, Motivation and Sorting meta-programs. The actual Zero Point is the centre-point of all the axes. It is here that we are in the present moment, being stillness and accepting ourselves or what is. From the Zero Point we can, with purpose, gather resources from anywhere in the ‘field’, including past, future, away from, towards, difference and same. The model is of course metaphorical, a map of concepts that is not designed to be taken literally. It is simply a reference point for exploration.

Where do you go?
If you take a minute or more to sit quietly and simply observe your internal dialogue, where does it take you? As you become familiar with your own patterns, you can map out where your thinking tends to lead you. It can give you a clue as to ‘what’s on your mind’! Table 1 gives some examples of language that would indicate where we go. Of course, the idea is that our thinking will take us to an area somewhere within a virtual 3D space, so some language will be indicative of more than one axis.

### Table 1: Example ‘Linguistic Indicators’ of being somewhere other than the Zero Point.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Axis/Meta-program</th>
<th>-</th>
<th>+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X: Time Orientation</td>
<td>Past then, if only, earlier, yesterday, this morning, wish I had/hadn’t.</td>
<td>Future then, next time, later, next day, tomorrow, tonight.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y: Motivation Direction</td>
<td>Bad, worse, wrong, no, rejection, don’t like it, shouldn’t be like this, not fair, wish it was another way. I can’t believe it. This is a waste of time. This won’t work. What a load of ****.</td>
<td>Affirming experience, this is good, better, great, ok, I want more of this! Nostalgia: I miss X and want it back again.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z: Relationship Sorting</td>
<td>Different. Unlike, new, revolutionary, change, counter-, contra-. This doesn’t relate to that. This doesn’t equal that. This is not like that. This doesn’t mean that. This is something else.</td>
<td>Same, similar, alike, as before, connected, akin, linked. This is like that. This is the same. This equals that. This means that.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Handling internal dialogue

Whilst this particular article is about recognising the patterns of our internal dialogue, it is worth noting a couple of strategies that Eckhart Tolle suggests for stopping our incessant thinking. The first is to ask yourself: ‘I wonder what the next thought will be?’ This tends to create a mental space where the mind becomes aware of itself. The second is to say inside your mind to the internal dialogue: ‘Stop it!’ I find this phrase seems to work best when I use an assertive but gentle internal command tone. Using an irritated tone seems to exacerbate it. However, you will find what works for you!

This article is the first in a series based on managing internal dialogue. It is my intention to give you a range of strategies for working with the inner voice...to get back in the driving seat of your own thinking. We will be exploring submodalities, parts, levels of ‘Ad’ (auditory digital) and utilising the realm of the senses. And remember, if you are asking yourself: ‘Do I have internal dialogue?’ You have just answered your own question!

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*(1) Steve Andreas, Transforming Negative Self-Talk.*


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*(6) Joe Cheal, ‘The Infinity Point’.

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**Joe Cheal** is an NLP Master Trainer and has been working with NLP since 1993. He is a partner in the GWiz Learning Partnership (www.gwiztraining.com), transforming people and businesses through the fields of personal, professional, leadership and organisational development. He holds a degree in Philosophy and Psychology and an MSc in Organisational Development & NLP. He is the author of Solving Impossible Problems and is the creator and editor of Acuity: The ANLP Journal. He can be contacted via joegwiznlp.com.
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First Steps to Influence the NLP Way…

Using filters to influence results

By Payal Gandhi Hoon

What does it take for a Leader to communicate in a manner that influences people to achieve their goals?

In NLP terms the influence is based on filters the leaders use in their thinking and behaviour.

- A leader knows his mind and has a strategy. He uses a collaborative approach for decision-making. But when the yoga instructor seeks advice about which routine to follow at the start of the day, it’s to tune into the state mostly everyone is in, like what would they want to do: traditional or power yoga? And based on the input he takes you through the experience he has designed while incorporating what you want. This approach is based on being referenced internally, i.e. tapping into your own feelings to know and do what you think is right.

- Whilst the other approach would be to seek approval, before guiding each posture, about what to do next? This is externally referenced.
where others’ verdicts are the measure of success of an activity.

- While leading the regime, the yoga teacher uses a tone of being deep-rooted, calm and serene in his poise, his words, the pace and his demeanour in a consistent way. And so do the people practicing yoga. It is important for leaders to pace or match their audience to lead, and also connect.

  There could be another approach of starting on a low key then heightening the experience through much talk and movement, while the audience is silently and in almost a meditative manner going through the regime. The effect might lead to the mind being occupied with thinking rather than doing. This amounts to a mismatch of the state of mind.

- The language that the yoga teacher uses to guide is a revelation in the fitness results. He just says a subtle ‘keep going’, when all you want to do is give up to the excruciating pain. This is a leader’s way of getting the person to focus on the outcome.

  And the other approach is when he says ‘This is so easy…you can’t even do this, ok then let it be, do only as much as you can do’. It almost makes the person feel under duress to perform an activity and an unhealthy sense of comparison and being self-sufficient certainly moves him away from achieving his goals.

- When the intensity of yoga poses increases, the instructor maintains certain continuity and moves on to the next count. There is no time to think, but just to do it! Being and moving from one moment to the other. He practices and influences people to be in the present.

  The other approach is to refer to the past when the yogic posture was done so well, or the future. If this is how the performance is now, then what about the future?

- There is no sign of approval or disapproval or words to judge the way yoga is being done. Just being sensitive and guiding in a gentle way if and when required towards what needs to be done. This is an observer’s way or dissociated way of leading the person to their outcome.

  The other approach is to share feedback with emotions by exhibiting maybe in words or even body language – a grimace, or a chuckle. This might not be the best approach for a leader to get associated with emotions as it obstructs in achieving the outcome.

People form their own experiences based on what they want to see, based on the filters they use. It will be useful to observe what filters you as a leader use with people around you. Are you getting the results that you want?

One key differentiating factor is the way in which you filter information.

REFERENCE
Sue Knight, NLP at Work.
Ms Payal Gandhi Hoon is an NLP professional and runs open public and corporate NLP workshops in India. She is the founder for ‘Tamarai’ an NLP training company (www.tamarainlp.com). Her dream is to make Women in India more self aware and empowered through NLP. She is a Philosophy (Hons) graduate and a Post Graduate in HR. She has trained and coached in NLP with Sue Knight.
ANLP Comments on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and NLP

A NLP, representing our NLP Professional members, have commented on a BBC Wales programme which attempted to use a specific case to discredit the whole field of NLP, especially where it is being used to work with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). NLP is not, in our view, a controversial therapy and is already in use in clinical and trauma contexts around the world. In this release, we chart the use of NLP as a suitable approach for PTSD and Chief Executive of ANLP, Karen Moxom comments on the need for further academic research and for self-regulation in those fields where it is appropriate.

We have been made aware of a BBC Wales Programme ‘Week In, Week Out’ and an associated article on the BBC website titled ‘Neuro Linguistic Programming: Mental health veterans therapy fear’ – www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-24617644. The programme, which went out on Tuesday 22nd October, was built around Healing Wounds, a Charity based in Porthcawl who are using NLP techniques to deal with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. In the programme and article, the use of NLP – a ‘controversial’ therapy according to the BBC – is criticised for a lack of an evidence base and for a lack of regulation.

ANLP cannot comment on the specific cases discussed in the programme. As far as we can ascertain, Healing the Wounds and its principals are not members of our association and therefore not covered by our own code of ethics or complaints procedure, both of which are in place to protect both the public and our members. That does not imply any criticism of that organisation or its methods.

What we can do is to address some of the issues raised by this programme.

Professor Neil Greenberg states that ‘NLP has not been investigated by proper scientific trials to show it works’. This is a common misconception and was probably true in the past as the field was developing. Over recent years there has been a concerted effort to create a research base both by encouraging new research and by identifying research carried out in other associated disciplines which is cross applicable to NLP. ANLP has now held three International Research Conferences – at the University of Surrey in 2008, Cardiff University in 2010 and Hertfordshire University in 2012. All three Conferences were reported in our magazine, Rapport. The report on the 2012 conference is here www.anlp.org/files/pdf-rapport-article-3rd-nlp-research-conference_35_335.pdf and the papers from each conference plus others are featured in the peer-reviewed journal Current Research in NLP.

We are keen to develop NLP research further on an international basis and are working with NLP researchers around the world and the NLP Research and Recognition Project based in the USA to increase the understanding of NLP and to build a research base for it. The Research and Recognition project came about because of Frank Bourke’s experience as a clinical psychologist called in to assist with trauma work.

Maggie’s Blog

Before certifying as an NLP Practitioner, I was afraid of heights, planes and failure. A couple of months afterwards I jumped out of a plane for charity and have not looked back since! In a few weeks, I fly to Beijing to trek the Great Wall of China in aid of St Christopher’s Hospice. It’s both a personal challenge and lifelong dream come true.

The biggest things I’ve taken from NLP are ‘no failure only feedback’ and ‘take action’. My new mantra?

‘What’s the worst that can happen?!’

I’m fitting training in around work, getting off the train a few stops early is a good way of adding a couple of hours extra walking a day, it’s all about flexibility and fitting in training where you can. Now, if friends want a catch up, they get dragged out for a walk rather than coffee and a cake, better for both the wallet and waistline!

I feel so much stronger generally since I started training. Never has the presupposition ‘the mind and body are a linked system’ been so true for me. My kit has started arriving and the excitement is mounting. I can’t wait to get to the airport and meet the rest of the team! I’ll take loads of photos and let you know how I get on. I’ll also be at the ANLP Conference in November, so drop in and say hi. You won’t be able to miss me, I’ll be the one with the big grin on her face!
There are a number of good and well run projects where NLP forms a significant part of the work of trauma recovery and mitigation of PTSD.

In the aftermath of 9/11, as he explained to us in Rapport in Spring 2009 (www.anlp.org/files/nlp-legend-frank-bourke_33_333.pdf) the training in treating PTSD that he had received in the 1980s gave him a unique clinical skill. Frank honed that skill with 100 severely traumatised survivors. ‘I have never felt so needed or competent, so glad to be a helper and a psychologist. I began to realise that this approach might clinically have a major effect. However when I tried to bring in three NLP practitioners, they were refused access because they were not recognised by the insurers.’

As part of the Research and Recognition Project, two academics, Richard M. Gray and Richard F. Liotta in the School of Criminal Justice and Legal Studies, Fairleigh Dickinson University published a paper in the journal Traumatology titled ‘PTSD: Extinction, Reconsolidation and the Visual-Kinesthetic Dissociation Protocol’ and a version was also published in our Current Research in NLP journal following the 2010 Conference. That version is at www.anlp.org/files/nlp-and-ptsd-the-visual-kinesthetic-dissociation-protocol_6_331. pdf. The full paper is available (payment needed) via the Traumatology website (http://tmt.sagepub.com/content/18/2/3). Dr Liotta talked to Rapport about his background and involvement with this research in June 2013 (www.anlp.org/files/nlp-legends-rich-liotta_33_332. pdf). On their approach to PTSD he said, ‘Having to relive the trauma is definitely one of the critiques of the best research-based approach out there. Exposing a person to the trauma in our view isn’t necessary. You may need to re-activate it just enough to put it in flux. If you intervene when the memory is in flux like that you can modify it – which is what the VK Dissociation protocol does. You don’t need to have someone go through all the re-experiencing. That can tend to re-traumatise people so that they drop out of treatment.’

NLP has a track record of use in trauma work going back to the Balkan Conflicts where teams involving NLP Innovators Susanna Hall and Dr Richard Bolstad were involved in trauma recovery work. Dr Bolstad has continued his work in Japan following recent severe weather-related incidents and in other parts of the world.

Closer to home, there are a number of good and well run projects where NLP forms a significant part of the work of trauma recovery and mitigation of PTSD. Rapport recently published an article (www.anlp.org/files/nlp-and-trauma-martin-weaver_33_334.pdf) by Martin Weaver and Felicity Biggart about one approach developed in the UK – Trauma Resilience Training. As you can see from that article, they are both well-qualified in the subject of Trauma recovery and were involved in Brent Bereavement Services which managed the 7 July Assistance Centre and Bereavement Services for Hounslow.


We accept that there is work to do in making people in the mainstream medical and mental health world aware of some of the approaches and benefits that NLP can bring to the major task of coping with PTSD. We are also very aware that there have been calls for regulation of NLP. As the Association for NLP Professionals we are, and already have been, working towards the development of robust self-regulation where it is needed. NLP is a field with a wide range of applications from business to personal development as well as having therapeutic application, so any regulation needs to take that into account.

Chief Executive Karen Moxom says, ‘We are ready to hold conversations with interested parties and, indeed, are already doing so. NLP is already taught as part of degree courses in university and there are many people working with us towards making the field more professional and accountable. I am concerned that by generalising a specific case to suggest that NLP as a field is “controversial” and capable of “potential harm”, this programme could harm the good work that is already going on in a number of places, helping the very veterans that are central to this report. NLP used responsibly and professionally is capable of great good and great results are being achieved by the many NLP Professionals that we represent.’

Talking Your Talk
How To Enjoy Public Speaking

By Caitlin Collins

Mini-What
A few months ago I made a rash confession. I confessed that I enjoy public speaking. One should always be careful about confessions; in this case, my confessor promptly capitalised on my candour. Rightly anticipating that I wouldn’t be able to resist the opportunity to indulge in my peculiar passion, he asked me to lead a workshop for a local campaigning group that he supports. Preparing for the workshop got me thinking about how it is that I, an almost-off-the-scale introvert, am in my element given a platform, a microphone and an audience. I reasoned that what works for a diffident little rabbit like me might be useful for others who would like to increase their enjoyment of public speaking and practise talking their talk.

Why
To begin with, let’s consider our motivation: why is it important to be able to speak up in public, and even better, to enjoy doing so? Our being able to enjoy public speaking enables us to give presentations or address audiences in such a way that our listeners are also enjoying themselves, which means that they are more likely to be receptive to what we have to say. It enables us to speak up effectively about things that are important to us. If we allow our fear of stepping into the spotlight and being judged by others to hold us back, we will avoid opportunities to speak up. I know that whenever I’ve held back like this I’ve later felt disappointed in myself, regretting my cowardice.
What
For me, the number one key to my being able to speak up, whether to a small group or a large audience, lies in my authenticity. This has two aspects: caring and knowing. I need to care about the topic and also to be knowledgeable about it. This authenticity permits a genuine encounter to take place, so it’s less about lecturing a captive audience and more about creating an opportunity that can lead to new understandings for all of us.

Closely linked to authenticity, my state of mind or way of being is crucial. I need to be relaxed, alert, confident and focused, so I can present my case and, if necessary, hold my ground in a non-confrontational manner. I also need to be unattached to the outcome, so I’m not distracted by worries about success or failure while I’m talking.

Next, in addition to authenticity and state or way of being, there are two key principles to apply. First, it’s important to establish rapport. This means expressing myself appropriately to engage my audience. It also means finding something in common to start with, a shared jumping-off point, before heading into new territory that might be challenging.

Second, it’s essential to be brief and comprehensible: waffling, mumbling and jargon must be reduced to a minimum.

You could say that all of the foregoing boils down to preparation. Authenticity requires preparation; you need to do your homework to know a subject thoroughly. Managing your state or way of being requires preparation, as do establishing rapport and being able to be brief and comprehensible. Happily, NLP has lots to offer when it comes to preparation! So now that we’ve identified what’s needed, let’s look at some of the ways in which we can use NLP to help us to prepare ourselves to enjoy public speaking.

How
While caring about a topic might be largely a matter of individual interest, learning about it can be helped by NLP methods for speeding up learning and developing your ability to research a subject, extract the information required for your talk, and make good notes.

There are many NLP methods for state management. For example, you can reframe nervousness as excitement, and appreciate the extra adrenalin as helping you to be alert and switched on. You can alter your posture and breathing to change how you feel. The technique of anchoring is great for public speaking. Taking something ‘lucky’ with you, some kind of talisman, is not just superstition: it’s a highly effective way of using anchoring to help you to feel confident!

Rapport is greatly emphasised in NLP. If you can find out about your audience in advance you can dress suitably and be prepared to use appropriate vocabulary and speech patterns; you can also identify one or two likely points of contact between you and the audience to get you off to a good start; this can
Care about the topic and also to be knowledgeable about it

be as simple as noting that both you and most of the other people have travelled a long way to get to the venue.

It’s easier to be brief and comprehensible if you organise your material carefully. You may have noticed the subheadings in this article: they follow a format, popular in the NLP world, which ensures that you cover a topic in an orderly way that will satisfy most of the people much of the time. (This is being realistic: if you can’t please all of the people all of the time, you can still have a good crack at the next best thing!)

In addition, NLP offers other useful techniques to help you to develop your presenting skills – and the more you improve your skills, the more you’ll enjoy yourself. Modelling offers ways to draw on your own previous successes and also to learn from other people who are good at public speaking. (Take a look at the Ted Talks on the internet (www.ted.com); they provide a great resource for observing other people’s presentation skills.) Creative visualisation enables armchair rehearsals of your performance: you can imagine watching yourself presenting, improving your performance until you’re happy with it, then, in your imagination, stepping into the visualised image of yourself and running through the presentation again as though you were actually doing it. It’s easy – and it works!

In addition to these NLP techniques, there are some simple practical tips to help things run smoothly. Check any technical equipment you’re going to use; make sure it works properly, and that either you know how to operate it or you have a reliable assistant who does. Print your notes and handouts well in advance; don’t wait to do it half an hour beforehand, only to find the printer’s playing up. And do make sure you have a glass of water to hand during your talk; a tickly throat can present a severe challenge to your enjoyment – and that of your audience.

Practice
Let’s see now how to apply these points in a practical exercise. Your aim is to produce a two-minute talk. The following reminders can help you to prepare yourself and organise what you want to say.

- Authenticity: choose a topic that genuinely matters to you and that you are knowledgeable about.
- State: how would you like to feel? If you’d like to feel calm and confident, take a couple of deep breaths, relax your shoulders, and relax your tummy too. If you can tell yourself a joke or think of something funny, that’s a great way to relax yourself.
- Rapport: imagine who you might be talking to, and think of something you have in common with them to mention near the beginning to start you off on a positive footing.

- Resolve to be brief and comprehensible: experiment with organising what you want to say according to the format set out below. By all means make notes. It’s fine to use notes when speaking; if you’re passionate about your subject and know a lot about it, your notes can be vital to prevent you straying too far off-piste in your enthusiasm!
- Mini-what: what do you want to talk about? This is just your topic heading, so keep it short: ‘I want to talk about…’
- Why: why is it important to you? And why might it be important to your listeners? This is to catch the attention of your audience, so they’ll want to listen to you.
- What: what do you want to say about it? This is where you state your case concisely and clearly.
- How: what can be done about it? How can the people you’re talking to take action? This point is not relevant in all circumstances – but it’s vital if you’re making some sort of call to action or enlisting support for a cause.
- What if: what differences could result if they were to take action, and if changes could be made? Again, this is not always relevant, but it’s important if you’re making a call to action or enlisting support for a cause – or even just trying to get somebody to understand what you care about, whether or not they’re going to join your revolution!

What if
Hurray! Now that you’ve prepared this two-minute talk, think of how you’re going to get some real-life practice in public speaking. Think also of the positive differences in your life that can come about as you continue to develop your abilities to express yourself authentically and to enjoy talking your talk about the things that matter to you!
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Dana’s Walk: A Personal Reflection

Sera Johnston has published her book Dana’s Walk, a personal and true story of what it is like to bring up a child who has a disability. In this book, Sera shares the life story of Dana, her 15-year-old daughter who is living with Spastic Cerebral Palsy. Due to her disability, as Dana was getting older basic activities were increasingly difficult for her and as a family. Sera never gave up making Dana’s life better and talks to Rapport about her experience.

Rapport: What is your background?

Sera: I have a background in training and development, and over the last few years in coaching individuals. Having worked in both the private and public sectors and for the last few years as an NLP Master Practitioner, my passion is to make a difference, whether it’s working with teams to achieve their desired outcomes or individuals in areas of personal development. In addition, I am mum to Dana who is now 15 years old and has a disability.

Rapport: Why did you decide to write a book?

Sera: I decided to write the book after seeing the difference in Dana following an operation (Selective Dorsal Rhizotomy (SDR)) in America in August 2011. I had written a blog while we were in America giving a daily account of our journey that changed Dana’s life and reflecting back on the 56 days we were in America, I had to share this with others. In a way, it represents closure on Dana’s previous life as her new life began on the 4 August 2011.

At the diagnosis at age 13 months, life as I knew it changed. I was now entering a world unfamiliar to me – from a world I had known and had experience in. Dana has been through a minefield of systems ranging from schooling to the NHS. Each with its own protocols and regulations, all alien to me as a parent and all given to me as a matter of fact, without any support. I learned the terminology fairly quickly; it was a different language to the one I had always known. The endless amount of processes that had to be followed together with paperwork, suddenly Dana was just a number and not an individual. I felt very alone, friends with children although sympathetic, were unable to share my worries, as this was not their
world. I was now living a parallel existence in two different worlds. Sharing my experience will support parents in a similar situation and acknowledge they are not alone. The book also offers parents the opportunity to explore their thinking by suggesting alternative questions to their situation.

**Rapport:** What do you feel is the message of the book?

**Sera:** This book gives an honest insight into bringing up a child with a disability and the barriers faced which impact greatly on the whole family. I would like the reader to feel empowered, to never give up and never accept NO from anyone. There is always a solution to a problem. We all face unexpected events in our lives and it is how we approach and deal with these which will impact on our results.

**Rapport:** What was life like before the operation?

**Sera:** When Dana was younger and in a buggy, it was much easier as she could be carried and also she was able to walk with sticks. As she started to get older, her body was changing as the spasticity (stiffness in muscles) was starting to affect her posture and procedures were performed to correct this. What I didn’t know then, and I do now, is until the spasticity is reduced or removed, these procedures are merely a ‘sticky plaster’ over the issue. School life was spent in a wheelchair as were days out. Every outing had to be planned; nothing was ever done spontaneously which was frustrating. Throughout her younger years I questioned and researched treatments which may help – I believed in exploring all options.

**Rapport:** Looking back what advice would you give yourself knowing your child has just been diagnosed with a disability?

**Sera:** Research, research, research. Understand the disability and particularly how this affects your child. This allowed me to understand specifically what the health professionals were talking about and look at ways how I can help. Trust your instincts, if something doesn’t feel right, explore and if appropriate act on it. Also if something feels right, explore and if appropriate act on it. The important thing is not to ignore it. Maintain open communication channels with those who care for your child and if necessary induce action to be taken. Allow your child to gain a range of experiences, some may seem impossible, yet there is always a way with some flexibility. Dana attended ballet classes, although she walked with sticks and was unable to run around, she thoroughly enjoyed being part of the class and being dressed in the full ballet outfit. Sometimes the smallest things make the biggest difference. Know at times you will feel down, that’s ok, acknowledge this and know it’s also ok to ask for help. Your child is unique and there is no one like them in this world, do not compare your child with others.

**Rapport:** What prompted you to consider this treatment and why the USA?

**Sera:** We had searched for treatments throughout Dana’s life that would help with the disability and ultimately enable her to walk. The fact was until the spasticity is reduced or removed, the body would deteriorate. Ironically we only found out how much spasticity has no benefit to the body in 2011. We were made aware of SDR through a friend whose child underwent the operation. From the moment we knew the benefits, we knew it was the only real choice we had left to us and we owed Dana a last chance to make a difference to her life. Following a co-ordinated six-month fundraising campaign a total of £75,000 was raised for the operation and the rehabilitation. SDR is a procedure that had been refined in the USA over the last 25 years and had over 2,000 patients with 100% success rate in reducing spasticity. The operation itself had major risks such as paralysis, spinal leak and incontinence, so we knew that we wanted the best to carry out the procedure, and the best was Dr T S Park, Chief Neurosurgeon at the St Louis Children’s Hospital, Missouri, USA.

**Rapport:** What is life like now?

**Sera:** Since SDR in August 2011, Dana has not used a wheelchair and is walking with single sticks everywhere. On the flight home in autumn 2011, for the very first time Dana walked on to the plane with crutches. At home she is walking independently and enjoys going upstairs to her bedroom on her own just because she can. She irons, washes up and can pick up objects by standing independently and bending down. Her confidence has grown in and out of school. Academically she is in Year 11 and has moved up in two core subjects and is in the top set in Spanish. She will be studying Law and Spanish in sixth form.

As a family it has given us new opportunities; we are able to go for walks on Box Hill and we all completed the mile trail as a family. When shopping, Dana walks up the escalator and is a typical teenage girl walking around the clothes shops choosing unsuitable clothes.

She continues to build up strength both mentally and physically, training five times a week in the gym and doing Pilates. She has set goals and her mind is focused on maintaining the importance of keeping active. I am very excited for Dana’s future, as I know the opportunities are endless – just because she can.
**The 10 Second Philosophy**
Derek Mills / £10.99 / Hay House

[Review by Melissa Hughes]

An inspiring and enlightening read, Derek Mills’ practical guide to releasing your inner genius clearly and concisely walked me through how to change my life by connecting with my inner self. Derek’s ideas and experiences really resonated with me, helping me to make sense of those ‘magic moments’ of inspiration and encouraging me to act on them. His concept of setting Standards of Change helped me to see that change can be immediate; that you can connect with and be the person you’re capable of being right now. I did not find it to be a heavy or arduous read; it was easy to understand, full of insight, and refreshingly straightforward to follow. I found it to be set out logically and it enabled me to work through the included activities at my own pace, learning so much about myself in the process. I would highly recommend this book to anyone looking to unleash their brilliance or to help others to do so.

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**Fix Your Life with NLP**
Alicia Eaton / £12.99 / Simon and Schuster

[Review by Joe Isaac]

Alicia Eaton trained in NLP with Richard Bandler, Paul McKenna and Michael Neill, and runs a practice in Harley Street. As well as an NLP therapist, she is also a hypnotherapist and time-line therapist. Alicia’s book is an ambitious treasure trove. It is aimed at ordinary people; to make NLP more accessible and to show people how they can use NLP techniques to resolve issues and take control of their lives. I liked her writing style, it is easy to read and understand, and very practical. There are 30 short chapters, packed with practical exercises such as: anchoring, belief change, goal-setting, TFT, motivation, swish, addiction-breaker, weight loss, confidence, overcoming shyness, fears and phobias. There is a whole section of what Alicia calls Apps – practical tools such as the Circle of Excellence and anchoring positive states. I am not sure if someone without any prior knowledge of NLP would easily be able to use all the techniques on their own. It is a really useful book for anyone starting NLP training or using NLP as a therapist, or maybe for NLP practice groups. I probably wouldn’t give it to my clients, but maybe I get a different sort of client than in Harley Street!
Leo Angart is a business consultant, author and trainer. Having worn glasses for more than 25 years he writes from personal experience. It has now been more than 19 years since he threw away his glasses. In this follow up to Improve Your Eyesight Naturally, Leo concentrates on curing presbyopia, the inability to focus on near objects. He explains what presbyopia is and how you can tone your eye muscles, release tension and build up energy in order to regain your natural eyesight. Vision Training is based on the presupposition that clear vision is a natural state and you can achieve natural clear vision via simple exercises. There are three main principles involved in Vision Training:

• Belief and emotions - believing that it is possible for you to have control over your eyes and restore your vision to normal

• Physical training of the eye muscles - when you wear glasses your eyes will automatically adjust to the lenses you wear

• Relaxation - natural clear eyesight is effortless. Many of our vision problems are due to functional factors such as constant focus on near work. To regain natural clear vision you need to learn to relax your eyes.

Exercise or relaxation alone will have an effect, but the real progress comes when all three of the above principles are used together.

The book includes simple vision tests that you can use yourself to verify your level of vision and monitor your improvements. The DVD that accompanies the book includes instructions and demonstrations.

Leo Angart is a business consultant, author and trainer. Having worn glasses for more than 25 years he speaks from personal experience. It has now been more than 19 years since he threw away his glasses.

To order your copies visit www.anglo-american.co.uk or contact us on 01267 211880
however small, you’ll know exactly how to deal with them when they, inevitably, crop up.

I took this approach in starting and running Diva Cosmetics and it quickly brought me success and wealth. Now, having moved on, I feel that mentoring budding entrepreneurs like you to use my proven methods, called the seven EMpwr Business Disciplines, will deliver you success too.

If Strategic Planning (my first discipline) is about visualising your destination then Business Planning (discipline two) is how to plan your route to get there.

Let’s look at planning basics. What is a business plan? In a printed form, it’s a surprisingly slim document. Only 25 or 30 pages with a front cover carrying the business name and logo. Inside, the business idea is thoroughly investigated and includes supporting facts, figures and research. The writing style is easily readable within bite-sized paragraphs and technical jargon and waffle are banned. Titles and headings are concise with the overall structure being simple, focused and well-organised and there are, of course, no errors (whether spellings, grammar or figures).

If the thought of sorting out your business planning sounds daunting, long-drawn out and too demanding of your scarce time, you should take comfort in the fact that this initial burst of effort will pay real dividends. This one document, and all the research that you’ll need to carry out for it, will help you decide whether or not the idea will fly. It will signal your chances of success and how to go about achieving it.

What are the key elements that you need to include?

1. The Business Background.
2. The Product/Service.
3. The Market.
5. Regulatory.
6. Risks.
7. Financials.

Would you ever consider setting off on a long unfamiliar journey without your SatNav or road map and only a dribble of fuel in the tank? You might make good progress for a while but before too long the roads will narrow, your fuel gauge will hit zero and your mobile will show no signal. Help! Oh, if only you’d bothered to plan ahead!

Funnily enough business planning is just like going on a journey. You know your destination, that fine place called Success. But knowing where you want to end up isn’t enough because you need to plan your route too. And you must be vigilant, watch out for obstacles and steer clear of roadworks not to mention bad weather and mile-long traffic jams.

If you’re serious about starting a business, you need to be serious about planning. You need to focus on your ultimate goal – fabulous success – and determine your route towards it. This ranges from the grand plan right down to what might seem like insignificant detail. If you plan for all eventualities,
Once you’ve dealt with these elements you’ll be in a position to write an executive summary, a two-page summing up of your business start-up. It should be convincing enough to excite potential investors as well as boost your own confidence. Although this is written last of all, your summary should be at the front of the plan where it needs to pack a powerfully persuasive punch.

When you’ve finished that first draft, you need to step away from the process. Return to it a couple of weeks later and read it several times. Make notes, gather more data and rework parts that don’t read well. Double-check your facts, especially your figures because they need to stack up and be impressive. Make sure the tone of the document shouts the right message. Does it ignite your passion? If not, revisit the words you’ve used and choose more dynamic, proactive, positive language.

Ask a business colleague, mentor or supporter to review it. This must be someone you trust, who has good insight into your industry. Ask them to be honest and use their comments to hone what you’ve already done. After all that hard work, don’t allow it to languish on your desk. Instead, actively use your plan for reference, it will help you make good business decisions, take fewer risks and keep customers in the front of your mind.

At Diva Cosmetics, right from start-up, I updated my business plan regularly and used it to keep ahead of the competition. By focusing on the business, I was able to make decisions about staff requirements, how to expand the team and in what areas. I was able to review costs, check suppliers and understand the implications on the business should anything go wrong. I would undertake a full competitive review each year and adapt the marketing strategy on the basis of it.

My advice to you is to make your business plan a ‘living’ document that evolves and adapts as you progress on your journey. Remember that planning is a necessity and if you want success you can’t afford to ignore it. So, I hope your journey into business is a smooth one – no collapsed drains or muddy old tractors up ahead for you – and do make sure you check your fuel gauge!
Soul Trader
Putting the heart back into your business 6: Creativity

In the sixth of his series of articles from his acclaimed book Soul Trader – Putting the Heart Back into Your Business, leading life/business coach Rasheed Ogunlaru explores how the importance and power of Creativity will help you win customers and opportunities as an NLP Practitioner/coach. Through the series, Rasheed will help to coach you and your business whatever its stage.

A quick recap
We’ve already explored the first five Soul Trader principles:
1. Clarity: knowing who you are, where you want to go and what that journey may involve.
2. Customers: seeing life through their eyes and ensuring your service meets their needs.
3. Courage: believing in you, what you do and those who you are looking to serve.
4. Co-operation: building rich relationships to support you and propel you forward.
5. Conversation: ensuring everything you do and say is clear, crisp, appealing and compelling.

Creativity is key
Now for the sixth principle: creativity. Just in the same way as an NLP practitioner or coach, you need to be creative to help different clients achieve goals and overcome different hurdles, you will need to be creative, inventive, innovative, flexible and resourceful in order to flourish. If you do so, you’ll open all sorts of doors.

Be at your best
First things first, you need to know what you’re like at your best to get the best out of yourself.
- What times of the day and week are best for you to:
  - work with clients
  - work on your business on (i) marketing, (ii) admin and (iii) operational tasks?
- What environment works best for you to work in, for you and for your clients?
- How do you work best: alone, with a team or with other professionals?

Sit with these questions, the answers will help you make tweaks and changes to help you progress. At my monthly Soul Trader workshop at the British Library an attendee who was a therapist and had read my book told me that she had followed a few simple tips and introduced some plants into the working space that she used and it had made a big difference. What simple steps could you take?

Fun, well-being and creativity
Being at your best is also about doing the things that bring out the best in you. Ensure that you put in time for yourself, passions, hobbies and those things that make you feel most alive. Prior to being a coach, I was a singer-songwriter and having time to write and record for fun remains important. Whether for you it’s about time for the gym, yoga, walking, painting or quality time with friends and family, it’s important that you allow time for the things that enthuse and energise you. They will have a positive knock-on effect on your business.

Build your team
You may not be able to afford to hire a team, staff or even one person right now. But you cannot afford not to have a team to help you. And this is where being creative can really help you. As I touched on in the article on the Co-operation principle, when I first started networking as a coach I assumed everyone I met would become clients. Far from it; but I met lots of good, bad and indifferent professionals, from other coaches and NLP practitioners, through to lawyers, accountants, therapists, designers and IT specialists. 
When it comes to being creative, it’s essential you know yourself

Spot the people who are personable, skilled, professional and who you have a rapport with. How can you help, support and refer people to each other. Swap skills; sample each other’s services so that you can help spread the word. Again, when I started out I had little by way of finances so I had to be creative – swapping, sharing, spotting opportunities, exchanging coaching for services I needed from design, photography and legal advice to websites. You can build a powerful team through this and similar ways. But you must also spot the times where you need to put your hand in your pocket to hire the services that you need – especially where you have weaknesses. My first investment was my accountant. I knew I needed to focus on going out there and generating an income, but I had to have someone to help me manage my finances and get it right.

Be honest: where are your strengths and weaknesses?
- Where are the gaps in your knowledge?
- What type of expertise do you need?
- What support could really help you?

This will help you to map out and build the basis of your team.

Use this together with the previous Co-operation article in this series to help you. And the Soul Trader book also has exercises in it to help you to really start gaining opportunities from this.

As you start getting creative about building a team do not forget other NLP practitioners. You may feel that they are competitors but perhaps you can connect, collaborate, support each other and thus punch beyond your weight.

The secret to all this is always looking for the win-win.

**Good ideas, challenging ideas, crazy ideas**

Here’s a little bit of fun, grab three pieces of paper:

1. on one page, write a list of all the good ideas – that could help you further your business
2. on a new page, list challenging ideas – that you’d do if you had the courage to follow through
3. finally, on the third page, list crazy ideas – anything, however far-fetched, don’t edit yourself, put it down.

Come back to these three pages later on in the day and gently consider which of these:

1. you could easily introduce – if so then put them into place
2. require effort and support – briefly identify the time, energy and resources they require
3. need time/need to be parked – spot the ideas that need to be put aside for now.

When it comes to being creative, it’s essential you know yourself. If you’re very creative then you must learn when to flow with your creativity and when you need to avoid being sidetracked, and to use that energy to address immediate priorities that will bring in cash and customers.

**Your two-page business plan**

Business planning is very important. If large companies use strategies and three to five-year plans then you should too. But many business plans are lengthy and are never read again once completed. One of the tools I use to help business owner-clients set up and progress forward is a two-page business plan template that you use as a working document to drive your business or practice forward and to stay on track week by week.

- **Page one:**
  - list your vision, mission and services
  - now list specific, measurable one to five-year financial, marketing and operational goals.

- **Page two:**
  - list your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
  - Action Plan – list specific finance, marketing and operational actions to progress the goals you identified on page one.

You’ll find a full template, guidelines and pointers for this tool and others in Soul Trader.

**Use your time and energy wisely**

Running your own NLP practice effectively means that you need to manage yourself, your work and your life effectively. Key to this is being shrewd with your time and energy.

- Schedule in regular time to review your business goals.
- Know what things and which people energise and drain you and manage them wisely.
- Use technology to support, not distract you.
- If you need help with tools and technology get a skilled friend or associate in your network to help you, or get some training.

**Framework and flexibility**

To me, creativity and utilising it is about the magic blend of framework and flexibility that works for you and what you do. It is about the marriage of structure and serendipity, mind and heart that works for you. Key to this is watching, learning and trusting what works for you, your industry, your clients and your life. If things aren’t working – and indeed even when they are – don’t be afraid to mix things up, ask for help and make it fun. Good luck with your next steps.

**Next time**

In the next article in the series we will be exploring compassion.

Rasheed Ogunlaru is a leading life, business and corporate coach whose clients include entrepreneurs, entertainers, teachers, healers and creatives. For more information about Rasheed or to get your copy of Soul Trader – Putting the Heart Back into Your Business visit www.rasaru.com/soul-trader. He also runs a Soul Trader workshop each month at The British Library.
Coaching Tips and Secrets
By Kris Hallbom

Five mistakes that life coaches make when starting a private practice
I have been a professional coach since 1996. In more recent years, I have done a lot of business coaching with beginner coaches, who are in the process of trying to start a private practice. I’ve also had the opportunity to work with a variety of coaches who are highly successful in their practices and make a lot of money in the process.

I would like to share with you five common mistakes that I see beginner coaches making, that successful coaches rarely make. Whether you’re a seasoned coach or a newbie to coaching, my hope is that you will learn something new to help you be even more successful in your coach practice!

1 Unwilling to do free sample sessions
One of the best ways to launch a coaching practice is to start doing free sample coaching sessions with as many people as possible. Typically, a free sample session will run anywhere from 30–60 minutes long, and is a good opportunity for prospective clients to see how you work. There are several benefits to doing this, which includes: gaining practical experience in coaching other people; becoming more confident as a coach; and getting the word out that you are working with people. Plus, some of your free sample session clients will ultimately roll over into full paying clients, who will refer other paying clients to you!

Keep in mind there will always be a few beginner coaches who do not need to do free sample sessions when first starting their practices. Typically these are the people who are already working as a high paid consultant or executive, and have an impressive network of people they can tap into who are willing to pay top money for their services. Unless you have such a network, then you might consider doing free sample sessions to let people know you are in the coaching game now, and to create a positive buzz around your practice.

2 Spending too much time obsessing about your website and your brand
I’ve seen a lot of beginner coaches spend all of their time on marketing and not enough time seeing clients. Again, when starting a practice, the most important thing is to start working with people immediately. This is why doing free sample sessions are so important, because you will get a lot of practice working with clients, become more confident in the process, and begin to build out your network – which will ultimately lead to you having a full schedule of paying clients!

3 Being too picky about the types of clients
The more people you can work with in the beginning, the more skilled and confident you will become as a coach. Of course, there will always be those clients who are inappropriate for you to work with such as people who are clinically depressed, have severe psychological challenges or medical issues. However, in general, try to challenge yourself to working with people who are outside your comfort zone. If you start doing this, then in due time, you will become an incredibly talented coach as a result of working with so many people – and you will have the luxury of being picky about who you work with, because you will be in such high demand. You will also need to increase your coaching fees, because you will have a waiting list of people to see you!

4 Fear of failure
Many beginner coaches are overwhelmed with fear that they’ll do something wrong when working with a client, or they’re afraid they don’t have enough experience to be coaching people. This is a really common fear for many beginning coaches. The only way to overcome your fear is to practice doing coaching with as many people as you can. Again, this is the beauty in doing free sample sessions, because they help build your confidence and experience as a coach. Another benefit of doing free sample sessions is your client’s expectations won’t be as high of you and they’ll be more forgiving of you. Plus, if you do a really good job, then they might feel compelled to sign up as a regular paying client!

5 Not dealing with your own limiting beliefs and issues
One of the fastest ways to turbocharge your career as a coach is to consistently work on your own personal development. Whenever you feel like you are not getting the results you want in your career or life, then consider this a secret opportunity to work on your own personal growth and evolution. The very best coaches I know are consistently working on their own limiting beliefs and issues, and have a team of talented coaches and healers to keep them on top of their game.

Kristine Hallbom is the co-founder of the NLP & Coaching Institute, and has been actively involved in the field of NLP for over 25 years. She has been working as a professional NLP Coach since 1996, and has done thousands of hours of professional coaching with her clients and students throughout her career. She is also co-founder of the Academy for Coaching and NLP, which was the first NLP-based program to be approved by the International Coach Federation (ICF) in North America in 2001.
ACUITY VOLUME 4

ENHANCING AND ADVANCING NEURO LINGUISTIC PROGRAMMING

Acuity is the anthology of shared findings and learnings published by the ANLP. It is designed to sit between Rapport magazine and the Current Research in NLP journals. It is a forum where the field can be enhanced and advanced; it is a place where pioneers can share ideas and like minds can discover developing dimensions around the NLP world.

Vol. 4 of Acuity includes:
• Macabre Metaphors
  James Lawley & Keith Fail
• Science and the Presuppositions: Scientific support for the foundations of NLP
  Richard Gray
• Modelling and a Development of the Satir Categories
  Joe Cheal

CURRENT RESEARCH IN NLP VOLUME 3

Current Research in NLP Vol 3 contains proceedings from the International NLP Research Conference held at the University of Hertfordshire in 2012.

The papers in this journal contributes to the widely-acknowledged need for a research-minded approach to NLP. The papers illustrate the welcome diversity of NLP usage and include papers by both academic and practitioner researchers, across sectors including education, health, business and psychotherapy. They report variously on NLP practice, conceptual issues and applications of NLP as research methods.

Vol. 3 of Current Research in NLP includes:
• What counts as evidence when researching neuro-linguistic programming (NLP)?
  Dr Voldis Kudliskis
• Benchmarking coaches’ skills: experiences of benchmarkers and of trainees being benchmarked
  Dr Susie Linder-Pelz
• It’s My Life: a case study exploring the role of the therapy relationship
  Lisa Wake

These publications are available to purchase on the ANLP website: www.anlp.org/spartcart/
As a networking event last night, a stranger (who didn’t know I was an NLP Master Practitioner) told us about an NLP person she’d recently met who was promising weight loss without any kind of diet or lifestyle changes.

I didn’t say anything (the conversation moved swiftly on to something else) but felt my heart sink. Why do people think that making outlandish claims is a good idea? It discredits the entire NLP community. Of course, now I wish I had gently said something.

Weight loss is one thing but the knock-on effect when NLP professionals make casual claims around trauma and phobia work can be even more dangerous.

While NLP can be a wonderful tool which works really well for many people, we need to work ethically and ensure that not only do we not promise more than we can deliver but also that we don’t further pathologise someone who’s already feeling vulnerable by blaming their ‘limiting beliefs’ (as per one horror story I heard).

Someone else told me about a client who had attended an NLP training, become triggered during the session and, while re-traumatised, saw the trainers’ sense of panic. Rather than being able to contain him, they told him that he shouldn’t have chosen an issue that had the potential to be triggering (he had had no idea that the technique would take him anywhere near traumatic material) so he left feeling shamed as well as re-traumatised.

‘I’ve been a therapist since 1991 and coaching since 1999,’ says Linda Aspey (www.coachingforleaders.co.uk). She works integratively as a coach-therapist and her broad background includes Transactional Analysis (TA), Solution-focused, psychodynamic, systemic, person-centred, Rational Behaviour Emotive Therapy (RBET) and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT). While not an NLP professional herself, Linda did some training in NLP a few years ago.

‘It was really good and I enjoyed it,’ she says. ‘But yes, I remember feeling some concern when we were taught a technique that involved turning the brightness up and down. One of the things I did in my early years of counselling work was working with trauma. I worked with retail outlets where there had been armed robberies. I know NLP does work but it was being presented as a quick fix for something that was quite profoundly impacting on people at a cellular level.

For any personal development work, there is potential to make the vulnerability worse. Trauma can surprise people. If you asked someone, “how would you react if you had a car accident?” their answer would be different to how they might actually react. It’s the guilt and shame around trauma which are harder to unpick. A box of tricks and tools can give any practitioner, whatever the discipline, a feeling of power.’

While Linda talks about that being a helpful power which people can use to assist people with shifting things, she points out that an immediate shift isn’t necessarily the right thing. Things need to be processed and someone without therapeutic skills may rush to ‘fix’ things rather than allowing the client to sit with what’s happening and to be more of an agent in their own recovery.

While such techniques have helped some, it’s fine if it doesn’t work for them.
NLP was presented as a quick fix for something that was profoundly impacting on people.

But that doesn't mean that these tools and techniques should be buried and forgotten. Linda says, 'First of all, before working one to one, know the signs of mental distress. Know what good mental health looks like. You must be able to see when someone has a mental health issue and to be aware that it's within your own competence or to refer them on. We talk about this overlap a lot within the Association of Integrative Coach-Therapist Professionals (AITCP): What is the contract you've offered? What does the person think they're getting? Ensure they never feel to blame. Where you talked about someone being told that her limiting beliefs were getting in the way, reframe. If the client wants to work with that, get permission. Contract constantly, keep asking, "Is this ok for you? If we do this, it's likely that this might happen – is that ok for you?" Keep looking at the contract. Not infantilising but checking, "Is this ok?" from an adult to adult perspective. "Is this working for you? It doesn't matter if it doesn't, it doesn't work for everyone."

'You also need to think about the context for the work. If you're coaching someone in a coffee shop, you can't be working with trauma and phobias. Similarly, working with people in a young person setting will be different. What's your supervision arrangement? This is particularly important when working with trauma as vicarious trauma can affect you. Supervision will help you be aware of potential parallel processes and the impact of the trauma on you. What's the capability of the client to take what's on offer? If you offer too much, they may feel worse about you. What's the capability of the client to take what's on offer? If you offer too much, they may feel worse. Ensure they never feel to blame. Where you talked about someone being told that her limiting beliefs were getting in the way, reframe. If the client wants to work with that, get permission. Contract constantly, keep asking, "Is this ok for you? If we do this, it's likely that this might happen – is that ok for you?" Keep looking at the contract. Not infantilising but checking, "Is this ok?" from an adult to adult perspective. "Is this working for you? It doesn't matter if it doesn't, it doesn't work for everyone."

The importance of supervision

Almost everyone I spoke to stressed the importance of supervision. Although NLP professionals aren’t, at this point, required to have supervision in the same way psychotherapists and counsellors are, it’s a growing trend and can help you flourish as a practitioner.

Unlike counselling and psychotherapy where you might organically meet a wonderful supervisor as part of your training, you may need to experiment with a few different styles, people and approaches. If you offer more than NLP, you’ll likely want someone who can supervise your other work, too. Make sure you feel comfortable bringing your fears and mistakes to them – it’s about growing and we can only do this by shining a light on things that need more attention. Pretending to be perfect helps no one.

Watch your language

In your marketing and during sessions, however tempted you may be to use positive language and embed positive states, be particularly cautious when dealing with vulnerable client populations such as those struggling with trauma and phobias. Make it clear that while such techniques have helped some people, it’s perfectly fine if it doesn’t work for them at this time. It’s something you’re trying. It shouldn’t need stating but is obviously not the client’s fault if they don’t feel ‘cured’ – set up realistic expectations and ensure you are there as a supportive presence, rather than someone who could potentially make something someone’s already seeking help for feel even worse.
In this article we look at Grounded theory and you may find it useful to reflect on its relationship to the NLP Modelling Process as you read. Grounded theory is found within a ‘progressive’ qualitative research framework which suggests there is a relationship between the researcher, the participants and the context allowing the researcher to be part of the research setting. This acknowledges that we have some effect on what is being studied, especially with regard to encouraging participants to share their vulnerabilities. It is different to the more traditional ‘naturalist’ approach which sees reality as fairly straightforward, observable and verifiable by fact, similar to a positivist approach. Like NLP Modelling it suggests that people are individual products of social interaction, and that personality, beliefs, values, preconceptions, drivers, etc., may be the results of this social interaction. A completely positivist approach would assume they exist in the same way within all people which is at odds with the NLP pre-suppositions.

There are several considerations in the design, and in social science research a lack of quantifiability is not now considered to be a problem although there is an opposing belief, that knowledge can be gained by observations made as though the investigator is outside the study with no preconceived notion of what is being observed. I dispute this, as humans cannot be objective and a researcher is likely to hold some expectation, belief or values when conducting research and the participant may pick this up. The result is that people can and do construct their own maps of the world as NLPers are aware.

Grounded theory does not aim to provide any final solution(1) although, it is expected that as a result of the study, recommendations for developing practice can be discovered. The aim is not to test any specific hypothesis although some hypotheses could emerge during coding and could lead to further testing and verification.

Grounded theory can be traced from the 1940s to Glaser and Strauss(2) who came up with the systemic analysis of large amounts of qualitative data. Use of terminology such as ‘coding’ and ‘comparison groups’ has left their work open to criticism of neo-positivism(3) and this could be justified if strict rules are followed with no flexibility.

The key process in using grounded theory is the coding; breaking data down into component parts which are given names. Data are coded as they emerge, being a main difference to quantitative work which requires the data to fit into preconceived codes. We are looking for continuous and descriptive evidence from which to draw patterns and understand what the aggregated experiences are telling us, rather than asking the individual to interpret their own experience. This is helped by one of the strengths of grounded theory in that it gives the freedom to consider other influences which affect behaviour, e.g. meta-program styles. It is important to be able to incorporate these influences, of which participants may be unaware, while not falling into the ‘researcher as expert’ role.

This is a methodology which is participatory and collaborative, recognises ‘difference’, ‘perceived truth’ and ‘reality’, includes evolution rather than static accounts and provides a partial account of the current state of the context. It allows us to compare data as results emerge, in order to formulate emerging concepts, whilst providing rigour through procedures, and gives a sense of comfort in the findings. It can be difficult to know when to stop because the context is moving forward through a period of exceptionally rapid change.

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Grounded theory does not aim to provide any final solution

By Dr Sally Vanson
How do we do it? The core of grounded theory is the coding. Strauss and Corbin(4) devised a system of coding practice to reduce transcripts into meaningful chunks or categories and bring together patterns. There are three stages, each progressively interrogating the data for more specificity as we would do with the Meta Model.

1. **Open codes**: highlighting key passages from the transcripts, assigning passages to concepts, working through all the transcripts collecting quotes to saturate the concepts and then chunking down into categories by refining the concepts and deleting and amalgamating some.

2. **Axial codes**: making connections between the categories and linking them to each other, to sources and to consequences. These are the ‘real world’ phenomena.

3. **Selective coding**: which selects the central or core categories from the most common and revealing codes, relates and compares them with other categories and provides the backbone of the storyline from which the results are derived or in modelling terms ‘the difference that makes the difference’.

Quotes taken from interview transcriptions provide evidence within individual open codes. The quotes can vary in length from a word to a paragraph. Some quotes could be used across a range of codes where multiple possible concepts(5) are found to exist. Considering these multiple quotes is important, as the quotes could have various characteristics which impact on the open codes given, so we need to go back and review the context in the transcript and put the quote against the code it most reflected. We are continually checking whether we are discovering anything new or different when making categorisation decisions from the labels given by participants and by ourselves, checking whether these labels produced any differences to the meaning.

Eventually codes and content become repetitive, adding no new information and at that point we reach ‘saturation’ and stop. The outputs are best presented diagrammatically, however the diagrams produced by coding software such as NVIVO can be too unwieldy and cumbersome for inclusion in our reports.

Although criticised for reducing the data to a level of variables very like the quantitative methods it is supposedly a reaction against, the process of repeatedly returning to the data ensures that the
results are firmly grounded in the participants’ experiences. This does help keep faith with participants’ stories while checking whether their comments are individual, repeated across the sample group or are only related to one situation which is not seen to be significant.

The relationship of the interviewer and interviewee is a distinguishing feature of grounded theory. The grounded theory approach is a useful, general and flexible strategy for analysing data in complex areas. Bulmer cited in Bryman(*6) has questioned whether it is possible for the researcher to suspend their awareness of relevant theories and concepts until a quite late stage in the process of analysis. I would suggest that the sensitive researcher will be aware of emergent themes early in the data analysis and this is influenced by personal filters from beliefs, values, curiosity and previous experience. However, the professionalism of the researcher will enable him/her to suspend judgement and approach the study with an open mind, although the sensitivity can provide a focus and enable a building on the work of others.

In conclusion, the grounded theory approach means we are not aware of some of the concepts until quite late in the data analysis and in a study of this type, we need to be conscious of playing into the hands of critics of NLP and the dangers of reliance on unproven anecdotal evidence. This is done by using multiple codes and comparisons to reduce the effects of random error and to ensure that both the accuracy and the precision of the data are addressed. The high intra and inter-participant data convergence suggested that the validity (see Table 1) would be high.

To sum up, there are competing views regarding grounded theory(*9) which can be argued to be objectivist in that it aims to uncover a reality that is external to social factors (the world exists despite the human being), or constructionist, where social reality is not independent of human action. Whilst Glaser, Strauss and Corbin may neglect the role of the researcher and focus on the generation of data, this does not imply that they are indifferent to the constructivist approach which can be invaluable when collating the data and taking the NLP modelling concept to the next level.

As we have explained previously; you can contribute to this series too. What else would be helpful for you to know in order that you can begin to be even more confident reading research and applying it in practice? Do you have an example of a research study you would like us to discuss? Send your suggestions to Suzanne Henwood at shenwood@unitec.ac.nz. We look forward to hearing from you.

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**Table 1**

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<th>Positivist</th>
<th>Phenomenologist</th>
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<td><strong>Validity</strong></td>
<td>Do the measures correspond closely to reality?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reliability</strong></td>
<td>Will the measures yield the same results on other occasions?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Generalisability</strong></td>
<td>To what extent does the study confirm or contradict existing findings in the same field?</td>
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Dr Sally Vanson DBA, MSc, ChCIPD, PCC, Certified Master Trainer of NLP. Email: sally@theperformancesolution.com.
Achieving Success
through Emotional Intelligence

IQ + EQ = Success

By Nicholas Hill

Smarts and creativity abound. In a corporate setting, for instance, there is no scarcity of talented and intelligent people who adequately know their trade and efficiently accomplish their tasks. But the most curious thing happens when some of these people are given a managerial role; for some reason, not all of them are able to successfully take on leadership duties. Now, how exactly do we explain this phenomenon?

Daniel Goleman, a noted author, science journalist and psychologist, came up with a name for the seemingly elusive attribute that separates effective leaders from inefficient ones. He called it emotional intelligence – a concept made even more popular after the release of a 1995 Time magazine article, which labelled it as the most reliable predictor of success.

According to Daniel Goleman, emotional intelligence is comprised of five major components and they are as follows.

Five components of emotional intelligence

1 Knowing one’s emotions. Emotional intelligence starts with proper recognition of one’s emotions. If in the past, discussing emotions in a workplace set-up was considered taboo, these days it is generally considered as an essential factor in maintaining a healthy and productive office dynamic.

2 Managing emotions. It is not enough to merely have a precise name or label for one’s emotions. The next challenge is to be able to manage these emotions in a way that they do not unfavourably affect one’s leadership duties.

3 Self-motivation. Arguably, one of the most important of emotional intelligence’s components is the ability to keep a healthy work pace or momentum, especially during demanding circumstances.

4 Recognising other people’s emotions. Teamwork is compromised when a member, or a leader specifically, is too absorbed with his/her own emotions to recognise that he or she is working with individuals who themselves succumb to the same emotional bouts and triggers. Therefore, sensitivity – the kind which allows people to know the needs and concerns of those around them – is a crucial ingredient for successful team shepherding.

5 Keeping rapport. Lastly, emotionally intelligent leaders are aware of how to maximise a team’s potential through exceptional management of each of its member’s strengths and weaknesses, and consequently, fosters mutual trust and respect from his or her colleagues.

Emotional intelligence and communication skills

People who possess an advanced level of emotional intelligence are able to maximise such aptitude and translate it into practical exercises such as proper communication with team members. Communication skills in congruence with emotional intelligence have three basic indicators: active listening, proper utilisation of I-messages, and conflict resolution. These indicators are closely related and tend to overlap, hence it is important to ascertain where their boundaries lie in order to ensure improved understanding of their key concepts.

Individuals can learn or hone their emotional intelligence through emotional intelligence training courses. Although how it is measured is still widely debated, emotional intelligence is already an accepted and valued principle in relation to leadership. This has led to the development of leadership training modules and exercises especially directed toward educating participants concerning the basic tenets and pragmatic application of this leadership essential.
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