

rapport



ISSUE ELEVEN

SPRING 2008

Al Gosling

Extreme success
entrepreneur

Pass Exams

Easily

Using NLP

Mind Mapping

The map may not be the territory

Allergies & NLP

Is it safe to risk it?

THE MAGAZINE FOR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

SUBSCRIPTION ONLY



I love the Spring, when the greyness of Winter reawakens in a plethora of colour – yellow daffodils light up hedgerows and green leaves cover bare branches...what a wonderful impact!

Andy Coote's Mind Mapping article (p13) has had a huge impact on me this issue. I have always had a vague interest in Mind Mapping, and since first reading Andy's article, I have been motivated to get coloured pens AND Mind Mapping software, and I am now organising my notes (and life) in a far more productive fashion. So thank you, Andy.

I find myself being even more grateful for all sorts of things since reading Dr John DeMartini's philosophy for life (p16), and even though I never met David Groves, the inspiration behind Clean Language (p8), I am grateful that he contributed so much to his field, and left us with a legacy that is having a positive effect on so many people.

Thankfully, I have passed that period of my life where exams and revision were the main focus (now there's a positive reframe on getting old!) and yet we probably all know someone who can benefit from Michael Carroll's advice on how to pass exams easily (p18).

And this time of year, with exams round the corner for students around the world, we are reminded that even if life does become temporarily imbalanced, it is important to hold that bigger picture and strive to achieve the work life balance that suits us.

So I will definitely take Eve's advice on page 30 and 'do the things that are important today. Tomorrow may be too late and your grandchildren (or children in my case) may be grown up and gone'. Wise words indeed and ones I do my best to honour when combining my roles of Rapport Publisher, MD of ANLP, house builder and mum to Daniel (7) and Tom (20)!

Enjoy your Spring, and we'll be back in time for the Summer roses and holidays.

Karen Moxom

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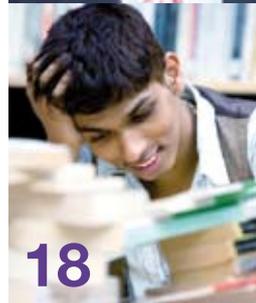
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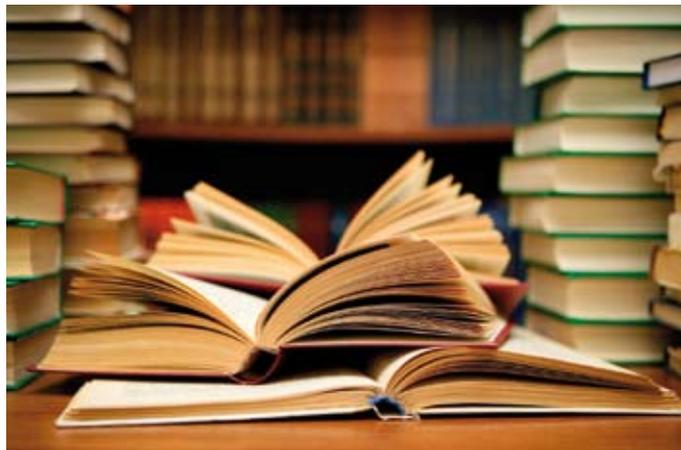
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NLP and Academic Research – an inevitable liaison?

There are some compelling reasons why NLP should be seeking to develop an evidence base for the approach, tools and techniques. There are also some difficulties in producing research that is unbiased and unequivocal in its conclusions. Developing research for NLP whilst avoiding the pitfalls is the subject of this issue's debate.

Andy Coote asked the questions.



In the last issue of *Rapport*, we reported on plans for the first Academic Conference to provide a platform for those working in research and NLP to meet with practitioners and other interested parties. The article prompted some thoughts on how the NLP community should view Academic Research – as welcome or with suspicion. We asked three members of the NLP and Academic community to help us understand the issues.

NLP provokes many reactions amongst the various communities in which we operate. Some of those reactions can be very negative whilst others simply want us to be able to prove the effectiveness of the techniques we use. As it grows in size and scope, there are strong voices calling for NLP to develop into a credible profession. Paul Tosey suggests “it is not likely to progress much further if it doesn’t”. To do that, it is suggested, NLP needs to develop an evidence base.

“In an evidence based environment such as healthcare we need to develop evidence in order to get support.” suggests Suzanne Henwood, “The onus to do this is on the NLP community, because if we don’t then no-one else will”.

Others are more cautious. Daryll Scott has reservations about the approach that research may use. Referring to NLP as an Epistemology (see box), he cautions “normal science is generally observation based. In personal science we have only personal experience. This cannot be observed objectively.” He worries that there are too many variables

involved in the process to rely on the results and quotes a study “in the 60s or 70s where a group of 100 subjects were played a recording of a hypnotic induction. 60% displayed the symptoms of trance – physiological changes that were observable. The conclusion was that 60% of the people involved were susceptible to hypnosis. However that could only be true on that one occasion and although they had removed one variable – the hypnotherapist – they still had variability in that the people in the room may have responded differently to

My belief is that NLP is at least as effective as CBT but quicker

a different hypnotherapist or induction or on a different day.” He accepts that research is probably necessary if NLP wishes to develop further in some fields.

There was general agreement that the more extreme critics and sceptics of NLP would be unlikely to be won over by evidence, but it would increase general acceptance by funding bodies in healthcare and education and allow NLP to become more accepted by business and amongst the general population. It should provide a real opportunity for NLP practitioners to make a difference.

As an example, Henwood suggests the areas of therapy for stress and depression. “At the moment CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy)

is well recognised and it has got a fair bit of evidence to support it. My belief is that NLP is at least as effective as CBT but quicker. As the NHS has major funding issues, if we could produce the evidence, then we could get them results more quickly with NLP, so that they can see more patients or discharge less before their course of treatment is completed.”

Tosey suggests that NLP is a practical knowledge system and, as such, “we don’t need a watertight theory to underpin it but until it is defined it will be undervalued by the broader scientific community.” The research that is undertaken also needs to be “open to negative findings and to the need for changes in NLP.”

It seems reasonable to first define NLP and that is less than simple to do. “If we go back to original NLP as set out in *Structure of Magic* – modelling and grammar – is that still what we define as NLP? If so, very few of us are doing that now – it has developed” comments Henwood.

Scott offers a classification of the elements of NLP, “NLP Modelling - a stand alone modelling technology for any unit of human behaviour; NLP Patterns coded from the NLP modelling process (the mapping of tacit knowledge of a genius into an explicit model); patterns unique to NLP and, finally, the practice of NLP.” He cautions that the last element contains “the enormous variable of individual Practitioner competence” an issue we have debated here before and where research may give some assistance.

A research project to define a core of NLP as it is currently perceived by the community may be one of the first areas we need to address. Charles Faulkner has suggested that by defining the core and mapping some of the elements across to other disciplines, it may be possible to discover relevant research that already exists.

What form should the research take? Quantitative research favours numbers and measurements whilst qualitative is more concerned with the perceptions of those involved in the research.

“In a new field – and NLP is only 30 years old and developing all the time – it is often best to begin with qualitative methodologies”, suggests Henwood. “Phenomenology (see box) may offer an approach in the early stages.” She does not rule out quantitative research. “Like a lot of psychological research, there is a lot of qualitative and quantitative data. You could say if a particular strategy only worked for eight out of 10 people, why didn’t it work for the other 2? For me the qualitative element is more important than the quantitative but both have their place.

Tosey can see a mixture of the two approaches working, too. “We can map inner landscapes but we can’t prove exactly what is happening. We could find out much more with NLP and create maps through being consistent in our approach. If everybody uses, for example, the meta model patterns, although the content in each case will be unique and subjective, the structures may well be universal and can be applied consistently to anyone. Therefore they can become comparable across different people and the method becomes transparent.”

Scott has reservations about a quantitative approach, “The danger is that in order to eliminate any bias and variables from the research, the problem will be stripped to the laboratory conditions and that will remove elements that are vital to the examination. NLP is a two-way feedback loop and in my opinion, a quantitative approach is not suitable for the examination of the field”.

Should research be at a macro level, with an NLP practitioner working in a fluid way using the tools in a way that is appropriate to the circumstances they see in front of them or at a micro level, looking at specific techniques?

Scott cautions against the latter. “It is difficult, if not impossible, to remove the variable of the practitioner from research. If Gordon Ramsay creates a beautiful dish in his kitchen, then codes what he has done into a recipe and gives it to chefs of wildly differing abilities, the results will be far more a reflection of the ability of the chefs that it will of the

model for recipe. If we place Gordon Ramsay in a variety of kitchens, we would expect that the model would work with some variations of a nonmaterial nature and if we only use other top level chefs to reproduce Ramsay’s model, there will be some variations which will reflect the preferences of the other chefs, but the overall results will be of high quality”.

Tosey agrees, “reducing research to the elements disregards all the human aspects of experience, communication and relating. I want to work in the spirit of NLP as a method of investigation true to the spirit and how it all began”.

In an evidence based environment such as healthcare we need to develop evidence in order to get support

Henwood is involved in designing research, which whilst not double blind, attempts to randomise results to gain some objective data. The Cardiac rehab research will be undertaken using NLP. Three options will be used for the subjects – standard rehab, a random selection of people who will receive an additional NLP module and a group who do no rehab at all. “We will build the research in such a way that the qualitative comes after the quantitative. We plan to use PHQ questionnaires to measure anxiety and depression and determine an objective score before conducting interviews and asking opinions about what was effective or not.”

With the development of neurological research and brain scanning techniques using MRI scanners, Tosey can see how research may move into observing what happens in the brain when NLP patterns are being used, though it is not his field of study. There is potential for this type of work to move things forward rapidly if the results are favourable.

Tosey also suggests that NLP may have application as a research methodology. “Using meta model categories for analysing interview transcripts for example and as a framework to spot language patterns. NLP and related technologies have not been used in that way before and I think there is an exciting potential for helping researchers make more fine distinctions”.

NLP forms the basis – or at least forms a significant part – of many high profile change

programmes. There is a potential for the imperatives of the business model to hold back the development of the core understanding of NLP - what we might call the professional model. Henwood suggests, “Getting one or two big names on board may be useful. They could be high profile public names or well-known industry figures. Using the evidence from the numbers of people going through some NLP courses in order to test and research may be something that they would be prepared to do”.

Charles Faulkner is involved with the NLP Academic Conference (see below) and Judith DeLozier has indicated support. Steve Andreas and a number of other industry names are involved with the Research and Recognition Project (<http://www.nlpiash.org/dnn/research>)

There is certainly an opportunity, and arguably a need, for NLP to get more intimately acquainted with Academic Research. We have to hope that the offspring are a credit to the parents. ●

To get involved in this debate go to the ANLP website at <http://www.anlp.org/forum/default.asp> and go to the ‘General Interest’ section or write to the Editor.

The first international Neuro-Linguistic Programming Research Conference is being planned for the UK in July 2008. Organised by the University of Surrey in partnership with ANLP International, it is being billed as “independent of any NLP training organisation”. More information and call for papers at www.som.surrey.ac.uk/nlp2008.

Some Relevant Scientific Terms

Epistemology - The branch of philosophy that studies the nature of knowledge, its presuppositions and foundations, and its extent and validity.

Phenomenology – A philosophy or method of inquiry based on the premise that reality consists of objects and events as they are perceived or understood in human consciousness and not of anything independent of human consciousness.

The Participants

Daryll Scott

NLP Trainer, Noggin - <http://www.mynoggin.co.uk/about/practitioners/daryllscott/>

Suzanne Henwood

NLP Master Practitioner, Henwood Associates - <http://www.henwoodassociates.co.uk/>

Paul Tosey

School of Management Studies at University of Surrey - Chair of the University of Surrey NLP Research Conference Committee

ALLERGIES AND NLP

IS IT SAFE TO RISK IT?

by Eve Menezes Cunningham

As an NLP and EFT Practitioner, I know that both techniques can help people with allergies. But as someone with a severe allergy to peppers, I'm especially concerned about the risks.

I don't remember ever eating peppers as a child but, as a teenager, if there were any peppers in my food, I would be sick. I'd also be sick if someone was cooking peppers and the smell was too strong.

When I've accidentally had a tiny trace (when it has been on the plate or the wrong cutlery has been used) I've ended up feeling as if I'm about to die. My head, mouth and throat swell up and it's taken up to 48 hours to feel OK again. I've never been hospitalised and know that peppers are much easier to avoid than nuts but it does make eating out awkward.

So the idea of getting rid of my allergy is appealing but I don't think I'd ever risk eating anything with



peppers in it. Still, it would be brilliant to not have such strong reactions. Then again, the strength of these involuntary reactions is useful in that it's probably what's kept me out of hospital. Nuts don't smell very strongly and I have a friend who has eaten quite large quantities unknowingly (resulting in lots of time in hospital).

INLPTA Trainer, Bob Roberts, MBE, says, "Allergies are to do with the immune system getting out of control. Our unconscious mind has control over our immune system. As we know, when we're run down and stressed out, we're more likely to get a cold, because the stress has depressed our immune system defences. Logically, it follows that as NLP has techniques to connect with and influence our unconscious mind, then NLP techniques can also be a way to directly influence our immune system."

Muriel Simmons, Chief Executive of medical charity Allergy UK, is far from convinced. She says, "I can understand how it could help in cases of intolerance but where the immune system is involved, as it is in an allergic reaction, it's highly dangerous to mess round with that. People could die. NLP could assist someone with a true allergic reaction in helping them to cope."

I know that in the years since I started coaching and using NLP, I've felt more much more resourceful when it comes to going out for meals and stating my needs more assertively.

Muriel says, "There has to be an acceptance that there isn't a cure for allergies at all. The nearest hope we have is for people suffering from hayfever and that's immunotherapy. By steadily increasing dose of the allergen you're allergic to – e.g., grass and cats. At one time, it meant going into hospital for weekly



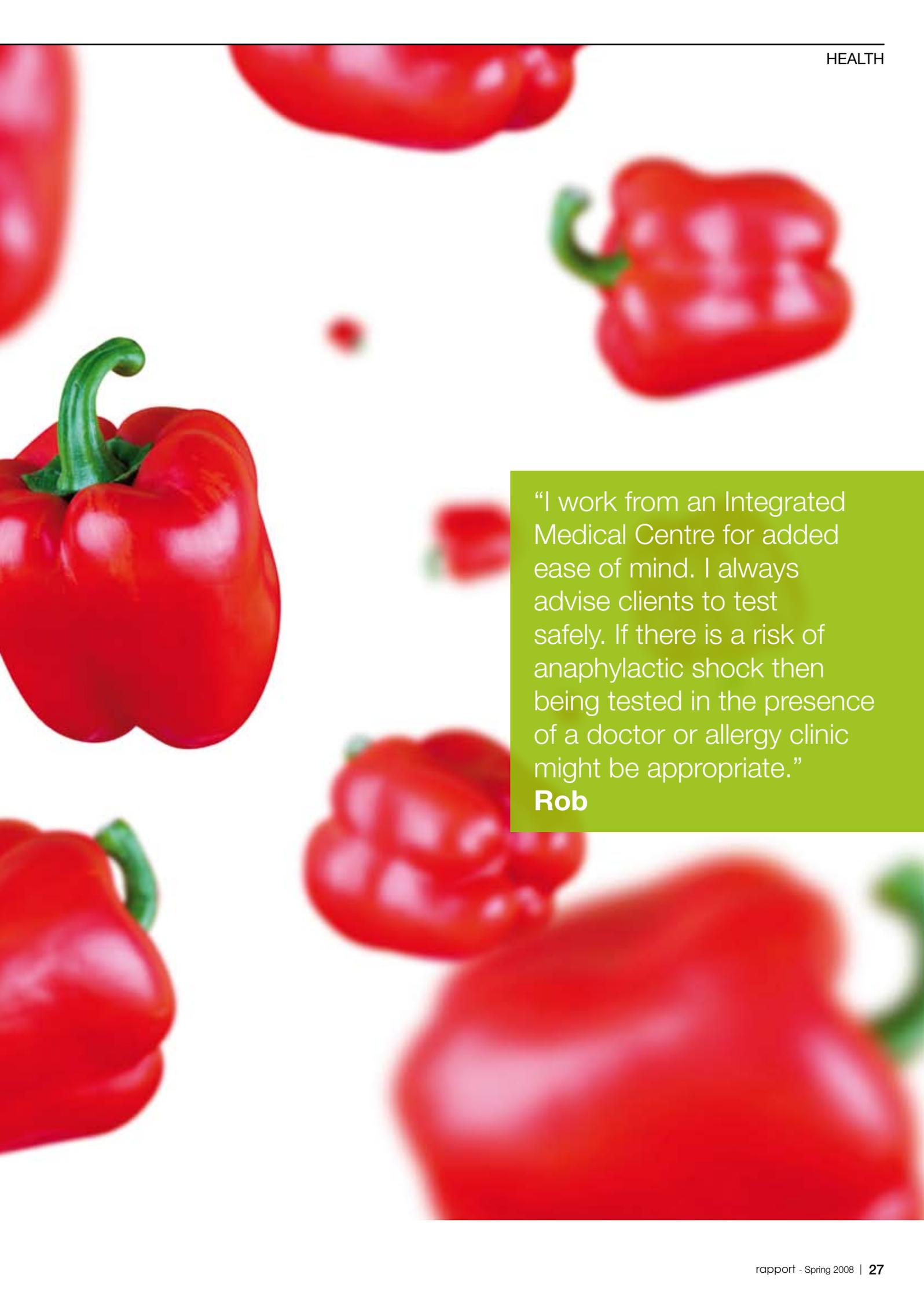
or monthly injections. It is reckoned to stop the allergy for five years and by this time, the immune system has usually righted itself."

Muriel is highly allergic to garlic. She says, "It is used in so many things and so commonly used that it makes eating out a nightmare. And as it is not one of the most common allergens, I go round the supermarket with a magnifying glass. I pre-order meals when I can from restaurants."

June Sayer runs the Sunningdale Complementary Health & Training Centre in Southend on Sea, Essex and offers allergy and intolerance testing. She says, "Testing for intolerances with the Vegatest machine is a painless, non-invasive procedure. The client holds a cylindrical electrode in one hand and the practitioner holds a pen-type stylus. Light pressure is applied to an acupuncture point on the client's finger or toe initially identifying their neutral reading. Because an allergy is caused by an abnormally high response of the immune system, we have found that using a combination of homoeopathic remedies and nutritional advice, our clients report a reduction in their sensitivity." June doesn't recommend this for children under 8, pregnant patients or anyone with a pacemaker. She also warns that being dehydrated can skew results.

Rob Mesrie of Allergy Alternatives is an NLP Master Practitioner and a member of the Institute for Advanced Studies of Health (IASH) and The Prince's Foundation for Integrated Health. He has been helping people with allergies since 2003.

Rob says, "There are various medical tests – blood tests, RAST tests and others – that indicate whether there is an allergy or not. They are only indicators but I have to recommend that those who used to have severe



“I work from an Integrated Medical Centre for added ease of mind. I always advise clients to test safely. If there is a risk of anaphylactic shock then being tested in the presence of a doctor or allergy clinic might be appropriate.”

Rob

conditions are tested by allergy medics. But the real proof is in the pudding – when a person (accidentally or otherwise) actually comes into contact with the allergen. Often, medical tests show whether there are antibodies in the blood. When a person who was allergic to egg has an omelette and is OK, this is the real proof as to NLP's ability to make a difference.

“Before beginning to look at the concept of an NLP intervention, it is important to get a basic understanding of what goes on in the immune system when a person has an allergic reaction. Allergies are a response by the immune system to a perceived threat. That threat isn't as real as one might think. Dr Michael Levi described an allergy as a ‘phobic’ response of the immune system. And as we

“I can understand how it could help in cases of intolerance but where the immune system is involved, as it is in an allergic reaction, it's highly dangerous to mess round with that. People could die. NLP could assist someone with a true allergic reaction in helping them to cope.” Muriel

know, NLP has great ways of dealing with phobias.

“So an allergy occurs when the immune system detects what is perceived as a threat and then fights against it. The rash, swelling and all the symptoms are a result of this (excessive) reaction of the body to a perceived threat. If we change the perception of an allergen so that the body thinks of it as safe rather than harmful, then there is no more allergy and no more allergic response.

“The Fast Allergy Process was designed by Robert Dilts, Tim Hallbom and Suzi Smith to teach the immune system to behave more rationally. At the heart of a process is an anchor collapse. Although the process itself is rather simple, there are a few things that can get in the way. I find the biggest of these is a belief that allergies are somehow untreatable, ‘beyond help’ or ‘beyond nlp’.

“This is constantly reinforced by the media and the medical profession. So the whole idea that an allergy can be treated (let alone the concept that there are no drugs, injections or the like), can be hard to believe. So often the first step is loosening a clients model of the world and transforming their limiting beliefs.”

When I asked Rob about the caution needed and explained my own allergy and anaphylactic shock reactions even when a pepper has just touched my plate, he responded, “Hmmm - am I smelling the tails of a limiting belief?”

And I agree to a degree. But while it's a limiting belief that I feel is very useful for me, I also think the work being done with less severe allergies is quite inspiring. And Rob's not cavalier about the risks.

He says, “You are right that allergies should be approached with caution. I work from an Integrated Medical Centre for added ease of mind. I always advise clients to test safely. If there is a risk of anaphylactic shock then being tested in the presence of a doctor or

allergy clinic might be appropriate. With most clients, touching the allergen on the back of the hand might be a good first start. Then on the inside of the wrist, the outer lip, inner lip etc. For some, it may never be appropriate to test.

“One GP I worked with used to have reactions to mushrooms that were so severe that he would collapse unconscious in excruciating pain within minutes. Testing medically seemed like an appropriate step after our work. Before he had a chance to do the formal testing however, he was accidentally given soup containing mushrooms. It was only when he found some at the bottom of his bowl that he realised his mistake. Fortunately for him, the process had worked well and was a great convincer. In the process itself, its advisable to disassociate or double disassociate to make sure that it goes ahead safely.”

While I had assumed that it would be much easier to work with food intolerances than allergies, Rob says, “Food intolerances are a very different type of immune response to a food allergy. It's called an IgG rather than IgE response. To be honest, I don't find one easier than the other to work with. You are still

changing the response ‘from that’ to ‘this’.

“The only difference in the way I treat it is around the framing and the strength of the belief that this is a condition that can be treated. For a severe allergic response, ironically this is a good sign that the immune system is strong. Unfortunately it's just a little misguided.

“Be honest with yourself about any beliefs you may have around letting go of your allergy. Is it possible? Is it possible for you? Could it be easy? Your immune system learns new behaviours by itself every day. We are just giving it one extra lesson. Go through the process either with another practitioner or on your own. Suzi Smith has some CDs to lead you through the process and I'm recording a DVD. I have found the NLP Health Practitioner Course to be invaluable in my work with allergies and also with health issues in general. Test your results with an imaginary allergen. The success of the process is about treating the cause rather than the symptoms. If you really want to be of service, however, you might want to work with the cause of the cause - the cause of the conditions that led to the immune confusion.

“Often, with food intolerances, there is a long term emotional need that isn't being met. So as well as collapsing the anchor, it is important to address this and give strategies for meeting this need in the future.” Rob gives the example of an unusual allergy: “I once had a woman come to me with an allergy to ice cream. Not milk - just ice cream! When I asked her what would happen if she let go of her allergy, she told me she would devour ice cream and put on several stone. With that she got up and ran (before we had a chance to explore other possibly better strategies for staying thin).” ●

Resources

Steve Andreas has produced a video demonstrating interventions with wheat intolerance. Visit www.steveandreas.com

For information and support about allergies, visit www.allergyuk.org/

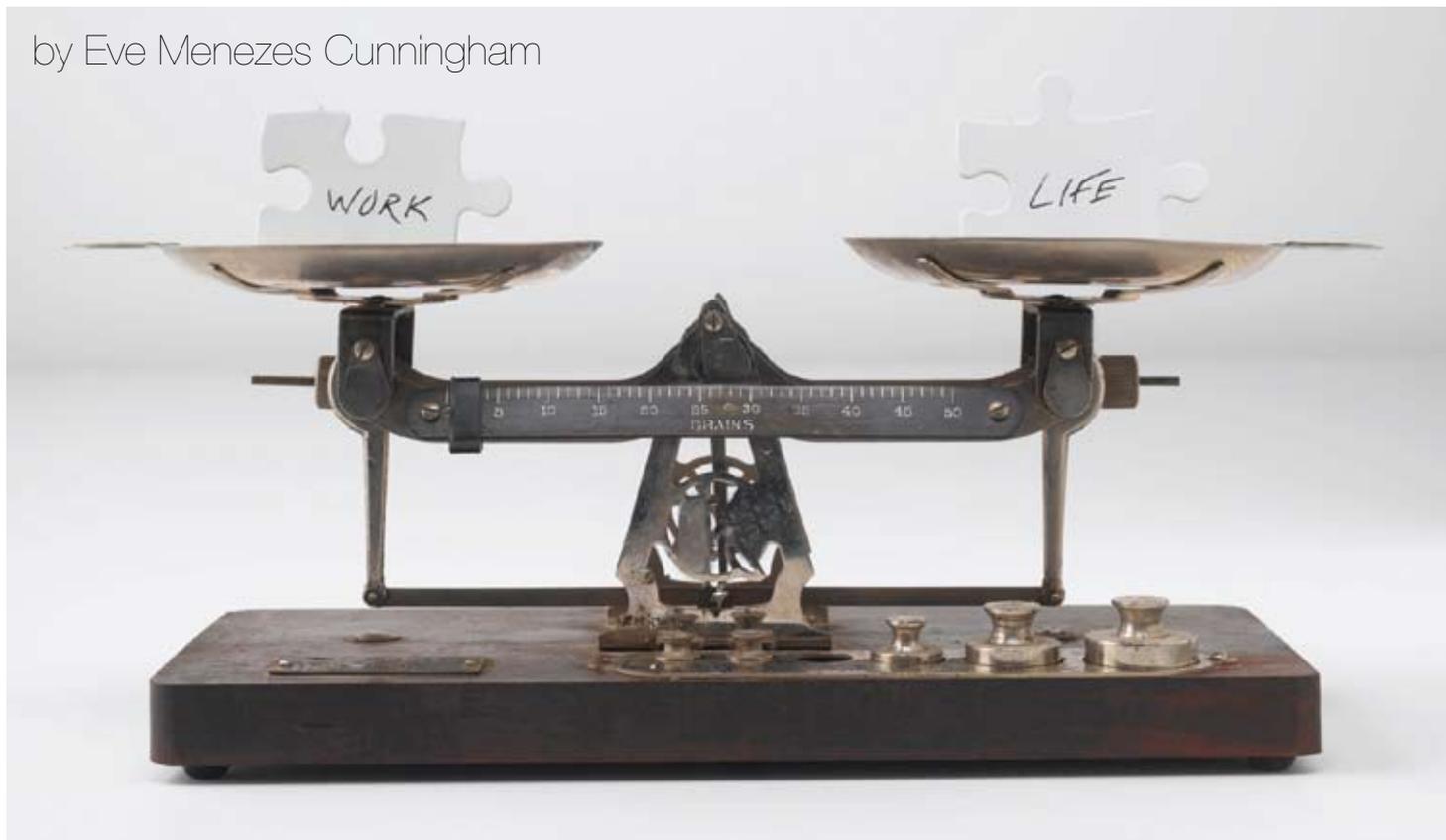
Contact Rob Mesrie through his website www.allergy-alternatives.com

Read *Beliefs: Pathways to Health and Wellbeing* by Robert Dilts, Tim Hallbom and Suzi Smith.

Find out more about allergy testing with June at www.sunningdalecentre.co.uk

Do you have a good Work-Life balance?

by Eve Menezes Cunningham



When you're out of balance, you'll have symptoms but you may not necessarily recognise it as a simple need to tweak things.

This is your life and you are the only one who can decide what's important and what's not.

Work/life

Balance sounds simple but it's an ongoing challenge for most people.

From statistics about people missing work through stress to

mothers alternatively being told they should be working outside the home and then that they shouldn't do anything but be a mum, work/life balance issues regularly make headlines.

Yet the right balance for one woman and her family would be completely wrong for another. Fathers struggle with it, too. Many men put in all the hours available at work to earn as much as

possible to support their families. They then miss out on valuable bonding time as babies grow up and move away. But like mothers, every father needs to make the right choice for him and his family rather than caving in to other people's judgments about what he "should" be doing.

Do the things that are important today. Tomorrow might be too late and your grandchildren may be grown up and gone

Even if you don't have a family and children, life can be a huge juggling act. I work from home and balance my coaching and writing work in a way that works really well for me. I usually make time for friends and family as well as regular swimming, yoga, cycling and general life.

But things are never static and one of the

most important things NLP has taught me is the need for flexibility. Take a little time each evening to reflect on the day. What went well? What could you have done differently to help you feel more balanced? By noticing things you can change tomorrow, you'll be constantly bringing more equilibrium into your life.

My current schedule is manic. I had a house fire a few weeks ago and between dealing with all the debris, sorting things out, cleaning them, dealing with the insurance, builders and so on while meeting my deadlines and other work commitments, tonight will be my first evening "off" since it happened.

And part of me feels that I should cancel. That when I finish work, I should go back home (I'm temporarily living across the street) and sort out ____, ____ and _____. The other day, I started at 6.30am and didn't stop until after midnight. But I know that this chaos is temporary and that, ultimately, things will be nicer. It's at the stage now where I feel much better about all the progress.

Sue Cotter is the Central Essex Regional Director for the Athena Network. She also runs www.womensbusinesscoaching.co.uk. Sue says, "If someone wants to work 24/7 and doesn't have family and likes doing that, then that's fine. I used to feel guilty for not working. When you're running your own business, you've got so much you want to achieve that it's hard. It's not like shutting an office door at 5pm on a Friday night."

For long term balance, Sue says, "Do the things that are important today. Tomorrow might be too late and your grandchildren may be grown up and gone. Think of the whole jigsaw puzzle of your life."

When you're out of balance, you'll have symptoms but you may not necessarily recognise it as a simple need to tweak things. You may find yourself snapping at people when normally, you couldn't be more gracious. You'll then probably snap at yourself for being so grumpy. But if you can just notice "Oh, I'm feeling especially snappy today, I'll definitely take a lunch break tomorrow...", you'll get yourself back into resourcefulness and balance much more easily.

You'll also probably be noticing strained relationships at home or work or both depending on where the neglect is most apparent. If you don't deal with imbalances early, you'll have to handle more serious consequences like burnout, addictions, ill health. Some people only find balance after illnesses.

With difficult decisions, use your NLP Future Pace the results of the decisions you're struggling with. How will you feel about saying Yes (or No) tomorrow? Next week? Next month? In a year? A decade? This will help you prioritise what's really important.

Life can be incredibly hectic but, if you're doing things – with your family, at home and at work – that energise you, everyone will benefit. Where things are draining, take it as a sign that something needs to give.

Yes, everyone needs to make certain compromises but you have more choices about the way you live your life than you probably realise. Think about the times when time has just flown by because you've been so engrossed in whatever you've been doing (whether that was baking cookies with your children or fishing or an aspect of your job). How can you create more time for this kind of activity?

When was the last time you used the Wheel of Life yourself? Try it now and see what comes up. Rating different areas (fun, career,

wealth, family, spirituality, personal development, love and health) using a scale of one to ten is a great quick way to measure balance overall.

Are you tempted to dismiss certain areas? (Do you think, 'Fun? Work is fun! I don't need more fun!') This is your life and you are the only one who can decide what's important and what's not. If some of the categories feel irrelevant to you, amend it so it reflects the kind of balance you'd like.

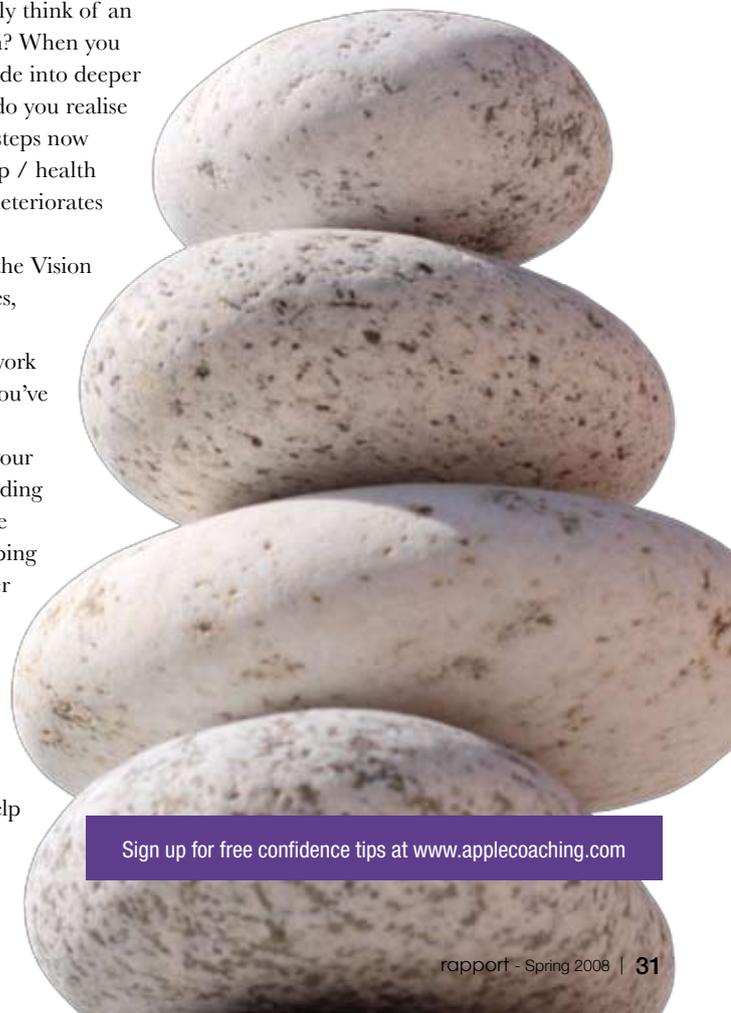
Things will depend on the stage of life you're at, too. If you're in a new relationship, the Love area may rank much more highly than the staid job you've been meaning to do something about for years.

And, again, rather than getting tangled up in other people's ideas of work / life definition, think about your own. To help you do this, create an Ideal Schedule and account for every single hour in the week (including weekends, evenings and at night when you're asleep).

How much sleep do you need as a rule? How much time do you want to be spending at home with your family? What does your perfect weekend look like? What kind of work days would eliminate any need for your snooze button?

What do you currently spend most of your time and energy dealing with? Is this a good balance or can you immediately think of an area that needs more attention? When you think about letting this area slide into deeper neglect, does that feel OK or do you realise that you ought to start taking steps now before your work / relationship / health / financial or other situation deteriorates beyond quick repair?

Another tool you can use is the Vision Board. Gather together pictures, photographs and inspirational words that reflect the kind of work life balance you'd like. When you've finished it, put it somewhere to help bring more balance into your life. So if you're currently spending too much time at home and are longing for a career boost, keeping it in the kitchen may be a better reminder than allowing it to gather dust in your home office. Or if you haven't seen your kids for ages, including them in your vision board and hanging it (discreetly if you share the space) at work will help you get home to tuck them into bed. ●



Sign up for free confidence tips at www.applecoaching.com

The Reframe Game

and How to Win It

by Mindy Gibbins-Klein

As NLP practitioners, we understand the importance of reframing things in a positive way. But how often do we get a chance to really test this in our own lives? I saw a brilliant example of reframing last week that really made me think. I was staying at a hotel in Colorado and I saw a pile of new books on a coffee table. Naturally, I had to take a look, in a strictly professional capacity, of course. There was a little note near the books which said ‘Book by local author. Please take one – free of charge.’ I thought, ‘How generous!’

Then the plot thickened. I noticed another pile of the same book in a different room in the hotel, and behind

the note there was an even bigger pile of books. I wondered how the local author could afford to give so many books away – there were literally hundreds of books there, with copies being taken every day by hotel guests.

Finally I saw a different note near the second pile which explained that these were ‘first edition’ copies and there were some minor typographical errors in them, which were being rectified in a second edition. The note invited me to look up and buy the second edition on Amazon if

I wanted! It also mentioned that the author would appreciate introductions to agents and traditional publishers. I have heard so many people complain about typos in books and yet here was an enterprising self-published author who turned a negative situation completely to her advantage. She realised that the book was not going to end up in bookstores with errors in it, so she decided to give away the 1000 or 2000 copies she’d had printed to people who would read it, possibly review it on Amazon and if they liked it, maybe they would buy more copies of the new version for friends. I just checked and she has many 5-star reviews of

the book, probably written by people who appreciated a free book and a good read. If you want to know more about the book and this ingenious campaign, just drop me a line.

Now think about the last time things didn’t go according to plan for you. Perhaps a client cancelled or you didn’t get the result you wanted during

a session or a workshop. Maybe you planned to accomplish a lot more than you have in the first quarter of this year. How did you react? Did you get upset and angry? Did you complain or blame? Even skilled and experienced

practitioners can forget that things have a way of presenting themselves the way the universe wants, and not according to our master plan.

If we could model ourselves on that author who turned her mishap into an opportunity, we could reframe the negative situation and make it work for us. What’s great about the fact that you are not working with that particular client? Why is it a blessing? And what other opportunities will open up for you now?

I actually set out to accomplish two things in this article: to make you aware of a very clever book marketing strategy and to encourage you to remember what you already know about reframing situations. There are literally hundreds of ways to market yourself, your books, your events and your coaching services.

Some of the ideas that we try don’t work out the way we want. I’d love to see us really practice what we preach and be role models, quickly transforming the less-than-ideal occurrences in life into something amazing. ●

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