

## CONTENTS

## creative

#### **APPLICATIONS OF NLP**

- **Basic NLP** A Bright Future
- **Education** Orchestrating success at school
- **Health & Well-being** 10 Top Tips for World Mental Health Day
- 10 How To Add a Book Review to the Recommended Books List
- 12 Lifestyle
  Using NLP for parties
- 14 Business Vision, Decision, Result!

### **NLP FOR PROFESSIONALS**

16 NLP Legends

Joseph O'Connor - Coaching for Great Performance with a Flashlight!

**20 NLP** 

Managing Internal Dialogue: Part 1

**24 NLP** 

First Steps to Influence the NLP Way... Using filters to influence results

- 26 NLP News
- **28 NLP**

Talking Your Talk How To Enjoy Public Speaking

32 Author Interview Dana's Walk: A Personal Reflection

#### **BUSINESS ADVICE**

- 34 Book Reviews
- **36 Business Development** Plan Properly to Avoid Pitfalls and Potholes
- 38 Coaching

Soul trader - Putting the heart back into your business 6: Creativity

- 40 Professional **Development** Coaching Tips and Secrets
- 42 Best Practice Fthical NI P
- 44 Research Grounded Theory
- 47 Endnote

Achieving Success through **Emotional Intelligence** 











#### 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 How long before this one is out of date, I wonder?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 quidelines 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

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Company Reg No. 05383959

ANLP International CIC Apsley Mills Cottage, Stationers Place, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP3 9RH

Design: Square Eye Design / www.squareeyedesign.co.uk

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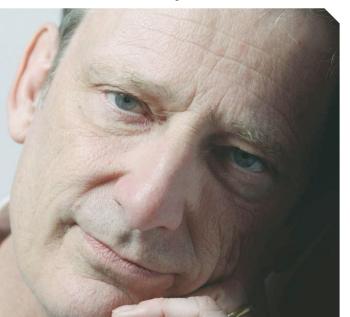
# Coaching for Great Performance

## with a Flashlight!

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.

oseph 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.'



## 66To teach people in the way that they want to learn is something different 99

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 lan 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. How can that happen? '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



**66** We are a creative partner of the world; we are in the cast, not in the audience **99** 

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.'

## Managing Internal Dialogue: Part 1

The Zero Point (Recognising patterns in your internal dialogue)

By Joe Cheal



Joe Cheal

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



**66** We find our Zero Point, the place where we become truly present **99** 

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.



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.

- 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).

**Relationship Sorting:** thinking about how things are different or the same as other things.

These meta-programs could be imagined as continuums 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.

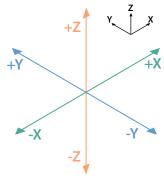


Figure 1.

The Zero Point model is the three dimensional X-Y-Z axes of the Time, Motivation and Sorting metaprograms. The *actual* Zero Point is the centre-point of all the axes. It is here that we are in the present moment, being in 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.

## 66 Sit quietly; you may begin to notice your internal dialogue 99

Axis/Meta-program	-	+
X: Time Orientation	Past then, if only, earlier, yesterday, this morning, wish I had/hadn't, nostalgia: how things used to be.	Future then, next time, later, next day, tomorrow, tonight.
Y: Motivation Direction	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 ****.	Affirming experience, this is good, better, great, ok, I want more of this! Nostalgia: I miss X and want it back again.
Z: Relationship Sorting	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.	Same, similar, alike, as before, connected, akin, linked. This is like that. This is the same. This equals that. This means that.

Table 1: Example 'Linguistic Indicators' of being somewhere other than the Zero Point.

#### 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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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: joe@gwiznlp.com.

## 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,

## **66** The most important thing is to start working with people immediately **99**

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.