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Strategies of Genius - GREGORY BATESON

by Robert B. Dilts

While his influence goes largely unacknowledged, Gregory Bateson made many fundamental contributions to the field of NLP. For instance, it was Bateson who first put Grinder and Bandler in touch with his friend Milton Erickson in the early 1970's (just as he had introduced Jay Haley to Erickson a decade earlier). Moreover, it was Bateson's work in communications theory that provided the theoretical underpinnings for NLP as a discipline.

Beyond his seminal role in the early development of NLP, Bateson contributed to many other fields as well. In fact, the most remarkable thing about Gregory Bateson's contributions to science is that they span so many different fields. As an **anthropologist,** for example, Bateson studied Balinese culture with Margaret Mead (his first wife). Together they published a book on it which was the first to use photography to analyze cultural patterns. In fact, it was his study of trance dancing in the Bali that lead Bateson to his first contact with Milton Erickson in the 1930's (through their mutual friend Aldous Huxley). As a **psychologist,** he formulated the **"double bind" theory of schizophrenia** and pioneered the process of systemic family therapy. As a **systems theorist,** Bateson participated in the famous Macy conferences that give birth to the field of **cybernetics.** In the areas of animal behavior and **communications theory,** he drew from the work of Russell and Whitehead to identify different **logical levels** of communication and learning that explained many of the problems and anomalies in behaviorism.

Ahead of his time in many respects, some of Bateson's discoveries and theories are only now being put into practical use (he died in 1980).

One of the most significant elements of Bateson's mental strategy for problem solving involved his highly developed ability to think using the process of **metaphor** or **analogy** to cross the boundaries typically encountered between the sciences. In his book *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, Bateson describes how as a young man he:

> **"picked up a vague mystical feeling that we must look for the same sort of processes in all fields of natural phenomena - that we might expect to find the same sort of laws at work in the structure of a crystal as in the structure of society, or that the segmentation of an earthworm might really be comparable to the process by which basalt pillars are formed." (pg. 74)**

Bateson describes the essence of his creativity as a guiding feeling (K^1) that the structure of different phenomena

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Anchor Point

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was the same at some deep level. These types of "gut feelings" are often at the root of creativity. Albert Einstein, for instance, reported having a similar type of guiding feeling during the time he was pursuing the theory of relativity.

It is obvious that Bateson's "vague mystical feeling," and the attempt to find the similarities between the phenomena of different fields were the foundation of his work in systems theory and cybernetics which map out the commonalities between the basic processes of all systems. Bateson's search for the general laws of "natural phenomena," however, also led to another important discovery:

> **"that the types of mental operation which are useful in analyzing one field may be equally useful in another - that the framework of science, rather than the framework of nature, is the same in all fields." (p. 74)**

In other words, the "laws" of science were more in the mental strategies for **how** one thought about Nature rather than in Nature herself. Since we can only know the world through the perceptions we have of it and the mental maps of models we make of it, it is as important to study the structure of these maps of the world as it is to study the world itself. The sciences of "physics," "psychology," or "anthropology" are different models of the world that are derived from the mental strategies for experiencing the world used by the people within those fields. Bateson realized that an anthropologist's mental strategy might help a psychiatrist or physicist and vice versa.

The ability to use the "mental operations" from one field to analyze problems in a different field is undoubtedly the source of some of Bateson's most creative inspirations. By applying biological thinking to the field of anthropology, anthropological thinking to the field of psychology, psychological thinking to the field of biology and so on, Bateson was able to contribute unique innovative solutions that specialists in only one field could never have produced.

Another advantage of this cross-field thinking is that it can help bring a more concrete form to abstract problems.

> **"When we compare a social problem with a problem of animal differentiation we are at once provided with a visual diagram in terms of which we are able to talk a little more precisely." (p. 76)**

> **"[This kind of] vague 'hunch' derived from some other science leads into the precise formulations of the other science in terms of which it is possible to think more fruitfully about our own material."**

The "meta" strategy Bateson is describing for how he himself thinks about thinking, involves:

1. An internal feeling (K^i) that leads him to make
2. A visual analogy or metaphor (V^c); that can then be translated into
3. The specific language (A_d) of the particular field in which he is trying to solve the problem.

The level of detail becomes more finely chunked and more precise with each step in the process:

a. The feeling is "vague"

b. The picture provides a general "diagram" from which

c. "Precise" words may be formulated.

The more abstract the general visual analogy allows one to swap strategies between different fields. The specific scientific language allows on one to chunk the diagram into a form that is usable in that field.

Bateson summarizes the entire process in the following way:

> **"My mystical view of phenomena contributed specifically to build up this double habit of mind - it led me into wild 'hunches.' It encouraged looseness of thought and then immediately insisted that looseness be measured up against a rigid concreteness. The point is that the first hunch from analogy is wild, and then, the moment I begin to work out the analogy, I am brought up against rigid formulations which have been devised in the field from which I borrow." (p. 75)**

Bateson's strategy, then, involved the balance and integration of two different levels of chunking:

1. A more general, simultaneous, metaphoric or analogical level of thinking that is primarily kinesthetic and visual (right-brain oriented); and

2. A more precise, sequential, analytical level of thinking that is primarily verbal (left-brain oriented).

This metaphorically oriented thinking strategy seems to have been a major tool used by many of history's most creative scientists. The great inventor Thomas Edison, for example, evidently got the idea for motion pictures by making an analogy from his invention of the phonograph, claiming, "I am experimenting upon an instrument which does for the eye what the phonograph does for the ear." Albert Einstein claimed that he thought almost exclusively in terms of such metaphoric images or "special imaginary constructions" in order to develop his concepts of relativity, quantum theory, and four dimensional space.

Bateson illustrated the difference between this metaphorical way of thinking and the typical logic of science by contrasting the following statements:

1.	2.
Men die.	**Grass dies**
Socrates is a man	**Men die.**
Socrates will die.	**Men are Grass.**

Bateson pointed out that the first syllogism is an example of the classical "correct" logic that forms the basis for scientific theory, whereas the second statement is considered incorrect and "illogical" and has been associated with the thinking of schizophrenics and the insane. He adds wryly that, "most of my thinking takes the form of the second kind of sequence." He contends that the first type of thinking focuses one on objects and categories rather than structure and relationship and can cause a rigidity in one's thinking. The second type leads to more creative thinking and may actually lead us to discover deeper thoughts about reality.

To Bateson, the balance between these two different ways of thinking was crucial to the advancement of science.

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"[W]henever we start insisting too hard upon 'operationalism' or symbolic logic or any other of these very essential [scientific] systems...we lose something of the ability to think new thoughts. And equally, of course, whenever we rebel against the sterile rigidity of formal thought and exposition and let our ideas run wild, we likewise lose. As I see it, the advances in scientific thought come from a combination of loose and strict thinking, and this combination is the most precious tool of science." (p. 75)

The strategy, indeed, seems to be an important element of the genius of many of great minds like Einstein and Edison. Certainly, it was the basis of Bateson's contributions to science. Unfortunately, the second (metaphorical) form of thinking is still not encouraged as part of scientific education today. In fact, it is considered "unscientific" by many teachers. Students of NLP also often forget this important balance between the double descriptions of structure and intuitive thinking.

NLP began as a "meta" model - a model about the modeling process. Too often it is talked about and presented as if it were just another "model." Bateson's strategy is clearly a "meta-modeling" strategy. Perhaps in the future, this process which brought the spark of inspiration to Bateson, Einstein, Edison and some of the world's greatest thinkers will be brought more into balance with standard scientific thinking and produce the renaissance of abilities possessed by Bateson not only for students of NLP but for all students of Nature.

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Bateson, Gregory, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, Ballantine Books, New York, NY, 1972.

Address by Gregory Bateson to Lindesfarne Fellows' Meeting at Green Gulch, June 1980.

This article is comprised of excerpts from Robert's forthcoming book, *Strategies of Genius*.

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Robert B. Dilts is the well known author of many NLP books and articles, including his latest two books *Changing Belief Systems with NLP*, and *Beliefs: Pathways to Health and Well Being* (with Smith and Hallbom).

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THE FOCUS PROCESS: MAKING BUSINESS OUTCOMES REAL
(Using 2 Pieces of Paper, a Bag of Marbles, and a Chocolate Bunny)

By David E. Weber

Few of us in 1990 have fired an 18th-century musket. It takes several steps to shoot a heavy, one-half inch ball at a target as far as one-half mile away. The crucial step involves igniting a charge (comprised of the ball and some explosive powder) lodged in the bore. The shooter pulls a trigger to release the "cock"—a vise clamping a flint—which has been pivoted fully rearward on its mainspring and locked into place. The cock slams forward and down, striking the flint against a steel bar, sending out a shower of sparks. The sparks burn a pinch of powder placed in a penny-sized pan alongside the bore. This heats the charge and propels the ball out of the muzzle.

The shooter may first put the cock into the "half-cock" position. This keeps the cock out of the way during final preparation of the pan, yet not so far back as to generate real striking power. Occasionally, however, it accidentally releases from half-cock, causing weak, unintentional firing. A phrase we still use—"going off half-cocked," meaning acting with insufficient preparation or forethought—comes to us from this experience among 18th-Century musketeers.

How often have you gone off half-cocked, undertaking a venture with less than sufficient preparation, and limited forethought about where you are headed? And yet, how often have you thought that you must take advantage of a particular opportunity, knowing that too much front-end work may diminish the return?

Business people have faced this dilemma at least since the first bazaar merchant decided to trade a relatively small amount of spice for a relatively large load of silk, all the while not feeling completely sure how well the silk might move.

"It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it."

- Aristotle

To reduce this kind of conflict, it is advantageous to streamline the planning process by paying special attention to the first phase of it: identifying the target you want to hit with clarity and specificity.

I would like to offer a technique to accomplish this task by using *The Focus Process*. Many of us know its antecedent: specifying a *well-formed outcome*. *The Focus Process* is not a *planning* process. That is, it is not a guide for determining the tasks necessary to reach a goal, deciding who will be accountable for performing them, and identifying benchmarks for measuring progress. Rather, it is a process for choosing the precise outcome you want to achieve. Planning *how* to reach it is within the scope of other complementary processes.

Underlying the concept of a well-formed outcome —a clear, specific, achievable goal, expressed positively —are these presuppositions: you can have a well-formed idea of a result you seek; or you can have a vague, ill-formed one. The well-formed idea will enable you to achieve that result more quickly. The value of a clearly identified target is that you have a specific direction to go and destination to end up at. As Carl Larson and Frank LaFasto write in *TeamWork* (Sage Publications, Newbury Park, CA, 1989):

> **"Clarity [of a desired outcome] implies that there is a specific performance objective, phrased in such concrete language that it is possible to tell, unequivocally, whether or not that performance objective has been attained."**

The Focus Process is built on the same premise. It is a series of questions. If you answer them clearly and simply, a goal will appear in focus. As a result, any action can be easily framed as on-target or off-target, and selected or rejected on that binary basis. This ultimately streamlines planning as well as execution, and bridges action and opportunity.

Here are some situations in which you can use *The Focus Process*:

- Developing a sales or marketing campaign;
- Undertaking a recruitment effort in your organization;
- Preparing for making a major purchase;
- Identifying individual performance objectives (for example, in a performance appraisal or job description);
- Beginning a long- or short-term project of any kind;
- Preparing personal or professional goals;
- Setting long- or short-term goals for your organization; or
- Identifying/clarifying your organizational mission/vision.

You can adjust the process to accommodate the subtleties of time, the context you're working in, and the complexity of the proposed target. (I have even used it in a hip-pocket way to develop a last-minute change in a conference or a sales presentation.) In the example below, the process is oriented toward a group of stakeholders in a business setting — for example, a management team or committee meeting.

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Get Your Materials Ready

Before beginning the process, have a pen and two sheets of paper handy. Label one piece of paper Sheet 1 and the other Sheet 2. (In a group setting, a white board is a useful substitute or addition.) Fold Sheet 1 into four horizontal sections. You will use this first sheet in answering the first five questions.

⌐ Sheet 1/Section 1

Question one in the process is "**What outcome do we want to achieve?**" The answer will identify, in a broad way, the target you want to hit. The answer should have the following components, and be written in the top section of the quad-folded sheet:

- A basic statement of the outcome;
- A description of precisely when you want it in place.

Make sure you express yourself in *positive* language in the answer to this question (and subsequent ones). Your answers will be more useful if they follow a pattern like this: "By the end of the third quarter of this fiscal year, I want to increase sales revenues 10% beyond what they are now, thereby reaching a level of X dollars." If all you can come up with is something like "In the third quarter, I don't want a repeat of this quarter's sales performance," you only know what you don't want, which implies that anything other than replicating this quarter's performance is OK.

⌐ Sheet 1/Section 2

Sections 2 through 4 will answer the question "**How will we know when we have achieved the outcome?**" This enables you to flesh out the basic outcome statement and identify the specific phenomena, data, or experience you expect to encounter when the outcome has been reached.

In the second section of your sheet, write precisely what you will **SEE that indicates you've achieved the outcome.** Some examples of effective answers at this point: "We will **see** charts illustrating X dollars in sales coming in. We will **read** a minimum of Y purchase orders brought in by members of our sales force. We will **see** our sales professionals going out on Z sales calls per person each week."

⌐ Sheet 1/Section 3

In Section 3, write what you'll ***HEAR*** **when you have achieved the outcome.** For example: "The sales manager will **tell us** of at least X oral or written referrals from existing customers, leading to Y purchases by first-time customers."

⌐ Sheet 1/Section 4

In Section 4, identify what you'll ***FEEL*** **when you achieve your outcome.** Your target may be: "I will **feel** the same satisfaction—the smile, the **erect posture,** the **warmth** in my stomach—I had in 1985 when we increased sales by 20% by year's end; I will personally **shake hands** with at least seven new customers cultivated by our sales force." These indicators or roadmarkers give you the sensory-based characteristics of your target. If you see, hear, and feel something other than these roadmarkers, you probably have not hit the target yet.

Now Turn Sheet 1 Over

⌐ Back of Sheet 1

On the backside of Sheet 1 answer the question: "**What impact will this outcome have on the organization?**"

The Focus Process

SHEET 1

1. What outcome do you want to achieve? (Be specific & positive)

2. What will you SEE that indicates you've achieved the outcome?

3. What will you HEAR when you have achieved the outcome?

4. What will you FEEL when you achieve your outcome?

Backside: What impact will the outcome have on the organization?

SHEET 2

1. What stops you?	***2. What resources do you need?***	***3. What resources do you have?***

Backside: What is your commitment level?

This allows you to check the personal and organizational ecology that will be effected by achieving the outcome. This may lead you to *reconsidering* the target you identified in the preceding steps. There is nothing inherently wrong with that. I have found many people reluctant to question the outcome when an ecological concern arises. Instead they resubscribe to the desired outcome when in truth they would rather bite off and chew something else. Obviously, if one or more people cannot congruently sign off on a target, that person or those people will not go after it with fervor. In this kind of situation, you can cycle back through the questions to alter the outcome. You could also decide that it is not ecologically problematic, and then make the necessary adjustments to "go for it." (In addition, you can always choose to live with the ecological discomfort.)

Now take the second sheet of paper and fold it into 3 vertical sections.

⌐ Sheet 2/Column 1

The question to be answered in Column 1 is **"What stops us from currently having this outcome in place?"** This question implies that if you had already achieved this goal, something would have had to be different from current conditions. What are those conditions? List each condition that holds you back in Column 1. Your answers will typically cite problems: "We don't have a personal computer," "I don't understand double-entry bookkeeping," "Sales and production functions don't get along," "We need to transfer our filing system to a digital database." Reread each point that you listed. Determine whether or not it truly stops you. If it does, keep it on the list. If it actually doesn't (perhaps it is an excuse, or reflects an ecology issue that can be resolved by immediate negotiation), delete it from your list.

⌐ Sheet 2/Column 2

In Column 2 answer the question **"What resources do we need in order to hit the target?** This question will offer solutions to the problems you cited in Column 1. Write your responses one after the other in the Column 2 across from the applicable problems that stop you from your outcome that are written in the Column 1. Reread your list from that question. Consider what resources you must acquire or develop to make current conditions hospitable to achieving the desired outcome.

In response to your problem in the Column 1: "We don't have a personal computer."

Your solution to resources needed in Column 2 would be:

-We need to select a system.

-We need to get the system on line by second quarter.

In response to your problem in Column 1: "I don't understand double-entry bookkeeping."

Your solution to resources needed in Column 2 would be:

-I need to enroll in an accounting class within the next 5 weeks.

⌐ Sheet 2/Column 3

Begin your list in Column 3 by answering the question **"What resources do we already have?"** This further shapes your solution to the Column 1 question on this page "What Stops You?"

In filling in your responses in Column 3, keep your language positive. Use "can" or "will" as operators that impel you to take action at the appropriate time. Also, the more sensory-based you can keep the content (seeing, feeling, hearing), the more attractive and performable the activities become.

List whatever resources you have immediately available that will help you develop hospitable conditions in Column 3. Perhaps your organization has good morale and high energy; list them. Perhaps you have more tangible assets, such as available funds; list those. Build a list that empowers and excites you to the point that you feel confident of making current conditions as soon as possible supportive of hitting the target.

(Notice that your answers to questions on the front on Sheet 2 will serve as a framework when you actually plan how to hit the target. For the moment, and with this process, keep your focus on identifying what that target will be.)

⌐ Back of Sheet 2

On the backside of Sheet 2 answer the last question: **"What is our commitment level?"** The answer serves two purposes:

1. Another ecology check; and

2. A "reality" check ("Are we really going to do this?" "Are we willing to go to the mat with this?").

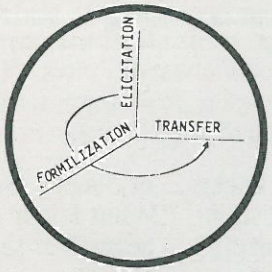
With a group, this final step is particularly important. Each one of us has experienced being less than fully committed to "someone else's outcome." It is important, therefore, to be able to negotiate or discuss just what blocks agreement, unanimity, or consensus. You may cycle back through all of the preceding questions and answers to identify a target to which all stakeholders can commit.

It is a good idea to ask "What is our commitment level?" throughout *The Focus Process*. It isolates ecological concerns, questions, and differences of opinion during each step. If you handle these distractions as they surface, agreement becomes congruent, promises bankable, and group cohesion strong.

Editors Note: The secret technique of the bag of marbles and the chocolate bunny will not be revealed at this time. However, Mr. Weber does function as a consultant and also may reveal these solutions in his forthcoming book.

David E. Weber started and operates Orenda Consulting, a training and organizational development enterprise. Since 1977, he has assisted organizations in the public and private sectors in developing effective planning processes, leaders, teams, and communication patterns. He has a M.S.Ed. from the University of Southern California. He also has Master-level certification in NLP.

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Smart Stuff-*Ghosts of Learning*

By Diane Faminao Lutzinger, M.A.

In the August 1990 issue we looked at the concept of "learning ghosts," how our past experiences can have a negative effect on our learning state. This month we will further explain and illustrate NLP "ghost buster" techniques. In addition, we will look at the ways in which current concerns can interfere with the way we process information.

I have mentioned "process" and "state." I agree with Eric Jensen, author of *Superteaching*, that state and strategy are the most important factors in our learning. And I believe that our strategies (process) effect our states and our states effect our process. Whether or not we have efficient thinking skills can depend on how we feel physically and emotionally. Most of us have had the common experience of being in a rush to an important appointment, only to discover we can't find our car keys. The more upset we get, the more our memory fails us. If we relax, often we are able to remember where we put the keys (unless, of course, our spouse or child walked off with them! That is another matter!)

Let me give you examples of some events that can cause learning problems, if not, learning disabilities. These kinds of "ghosts" are especially important to search for if the student does not TEST to be LD (learning disabled) or PI (perceptually impaired), but is not consistent in school performance or suddenly "under performs."

One girl I recall was doing o.k in the sixth grade, until she came down with a mysterious "illness"—an illness that caused her to become nauseated and sick to her stomach ONLY AT SCHOOL. She would go to school and about 9:30 would become ill. She would be sent home. By evening, sometimes, she would be fine and return to school the next day, only to repeat the process. Sometimes she would remain ill for a day and a half or remain well for a few days at a time.

The doctors could not find out what was wrong. She didn't appear to be anxious or neurotic, she didn't whine or complain about school or anything. So the doctors suggested a bland diet and sent her home. Eventually the pattern passed. Not until her later years in high school was she able to discuss the fear that had caused her upset stomach—she was afraid of WAR.

This girl was me. It was the 1950's and bomb shelters were being built. Edward R. Morrow bellowed "You ARE there!" as heinous images of concentration camps, bombings and destruction glared out of the T.V. The situation was made worse at school by the

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regular excursions into the hall to "duck and cover," lie against the wall, in response to imaginary air raids. I was terrified.

Oh, yeah, but that was the 50's, that doesn't happen NOW. In April, 1984, *Psychology Today* had the following cover story: "Nuclear Fear, growing up scared...of not growing up." They quoted a youngster 6-years old, wondering every time he heard a plane overhead if it was "a war plane." Can you imagine taking a test, a plane flying overhead, and being expected to recall information about photosynthesis? I can. It was pretty impossible, and made me sick to my stomach.

With the current crisis in the Middle East, I wonder how these fears of our youth may be escalating. According to *Psychology Today*, these fears are incredibly common with all ages of students. They believe that the worries of young people are compounded by the fact that the "doom" saying media tends to paint the worst picture and that adults don't mention or discuss" the worries with children and often even discount them.

"A conclusion is the place where you got tired of thinking."
- Arthur Block

Students in my private practice presented less global, though just as devastating, fears which manifested in learning problems and "school" phobias. Two such children were in the same family. There were three boys, ages 13, 8, and 6, and their mother. Their father had committed suicide 18 months prior to my seeing the first boy, Brian (actual names are not used). Brian had been an excellent student, a dutiful son, and an enthusiastic scout. However, during the school year after his father's death, he was apathetic, unmotivated, sullen, and uncommunicative. He still helped his mother with the other two boys, but Scouts and school seemed to be irrelevant.

Brian's teachers knew about his history, but felt he should be bouncing back by now—it had been nearly a year. What they didn't recognize, unless they had lived through a complete first year of grief (and some after that) was the fact that it would be Brian's first Thanksgiving and Christmas without his father. These are milestones for people grieving and very emotional. However, treating Brian turned out to be much easier than I had anticipated.

In an attempt to build rapport, we began talking about the things he "used to like," pacing his current state. He had a flat tone in his voice and no animation on his face. Remembering the "flat" feeling of grief one experiences, I said, "All this stuff, school and all, must seem pretty unimportant since your Dad died, huh?" He looked me in the eye, with tears in his, and said, "Yes, it does." I went on to "mind read" that sitting in class, thoughts of his Dad were much more important than cell division or math and that "nobody understands that, do they Brian?" The tears continued gently to fall and, like a flower blooming, Brian began to describe his lonely experience in school. His energy was channeled into "talking to my Dad" and trying not to cry. "I've gotta be strong for my Mom and little brothers." Again, I ask, could YOU, reader, pass a test under these circumstances? Especially if you did not know how to change your state?

Brian needed a way to "manage" his grief, not deny it. As we discussed his goals, he really did want to do well in school, but "just couldn't think straight" with his Dad on his mind. Recognizing the positive purpose for his behavior, we designed a time that would be more useful for him to "talk to" his Dad. He decided that if he could feel better in school, and DO better, he could go home to his room and tell his Dad all about his day. His Dad "was" proud of him and would like that.

To manage his feelings during the school day, we gave him a calm, "paying attention" anchor. (His choice of resource) Whenever he would begin to get anxious because some of his feelings of grief started to well up at time that wasn't "useful" to him, he would tell himself, "It's o.k. that I'm missing my Dad, but I want to PAY ATTENTION now." His words became a trigger for a calmer feeling that served him in the moment, most of the time. Sometimes, he just had to grieve. By acknowledging his grief, it lost some of

it's power to throw him off balance. I used the analogy that trying to ignore real feelings is sometimes like holding a beach ball under water—it will keep popping up!

In the following sessions, Brian learned how to change the pictures he was making up about the way in which his father had committed suicide. He did this with submodality adjustments. (Submodalities are the aspects of the visual and auditory FORM of an internal representation.) For Brian, a picture would flash in which he was with his father at the suicide and "could have helped him." We first dissociated Brian from that picture, so that he had feeling about it, rather than feeling it was happening now. Brian's family was very religious and they spoke of God and Heaven quite naturally. I suggested an alternate ending to his movie—"after your Dad dies, can you see the part where he goes up to Heaven to be with God?" Brian could "see" that very easily and it made him feel MUCH better. He even wondered why he had not "seen that part before." (The current motion picture "Ghost" visually depicts this kind of scene beautifully!)

We worked a few more sessions giving Brian a safe forum in which to process his feelings about his father. He learned that he did not "make" his mother cry when he talked about his own sadness and that it even helped her to be able to share feelings. None of them need to "be strong" all the time. "Crying lets the sad out," I suggested.

His school work had already begun to improve before we stopped our sessions and much of his enthusiasm was returning for Scouts. He still felt sad sometimes and that was natural, I assured him. He did learn to "manage his feelings" so that he felt more in control in a way that was not rigid denial.

Shortly after Brian stopped seeing me, his mother brought in his little brother, Jimmy. Jimmy had "school" phobia, the school nurse suggested. He was in the first grade and had been eager to start school to be "grown up" like his brothers. However, one day when his mother dropped him at the front of the school, he refused to walk up the long sidewalk to the entrance. The more she urged, the more fearful and tearful he became. He did this daily for two weeks, forcing her to either take him home or go into the school with him for a little while. She was now employed, trying to support three young boys, and could not afford to be late to work on a regular basis.

His mother tried to ask if it had anything to do with his Dad and he said it didn't. He'd say he was "scared to go to school." Now this seemed pretty illogical to everyone, except Jimmy. Thank goodness for the understanding of "models of the world" and that each of us lives in our very own version of reality. Again, starting with rapport, I asked Jimmy what he liked to do. He reported he liked playing in the dirt with his trucks, wrestling with his brothers, and watching T.V. and movies.

A serendipitous choice on my part, I asked him about "which movies he had watched recently." He began to tell me about a horror film his brothers had rented. This is the one in which the character had pins sticking out of his skull and ghoulish things happen to those who come in contact with this creature. Now THIS is a learning ghost, for sure! As Jimmy began to tell about this movie, he appeared to be associated ("in the movie"), breathing more rapidly, talking in a higher pitched voice, generally appearing petrified. As a breaker state, I asked him to "turn off the movie and go to the water cooler with me. We can talk more in a minute."

By the time we chatted to and from the cooler, Jimmy had shifted states and was onto a happier topic. We kept chatting and even giggled and laughed. I anchored this state by a squeeze of his shoulder. Returning to the office, we sat on the other side of the room. I was positioning the space in which he had visualized the horror movie so it would be on the other side—getting some distance from it.

We had a short discussion about imagination and making up things in his head—"can you do that?" He was eager to demonstrate and became even sillier and "gigglier." I anchored that state in the same place as the previous anchor,

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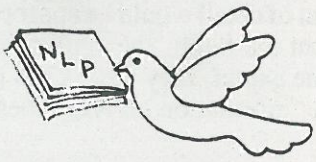
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thus stacking more "power" into this state. Then I explained that I would teach him how to be the director of his own movie—the guy who decided how everything ended. He was curious about this process. We had him "direct" the ending of several different adventure movies he had watched, until he was feeling confident and had a sense of what it was like to be a director.

Then I set up a classic Visual-Kinesthetic Dissociation in which the scary movie he had seen was projected on the screen across the room. As he began to run the movie, I fired the positive "giggle" anchor and made suggestions for changing the colors and other submodalities. He made the blood yellow, "like I saw from a bug." Taking his cue, I said, "Can you change those pins into worms, pink wiggly ones." He began to rock with giggles. He took the suggestion to make the creature talk like Donald Duck. His creativity was turned on then and what had been a horror film became a comedy.

At the end of the session, I asked him if he thought he would feel like going to school the next day. He congruently said "yes" and I believed him. However, I had no idea if this movie had anything to do with his phobia. For all I knew, we hadn't addressed his "school phobia." He certainly had not reported a connection. I was operating in response his phobic reaction, right in my office, to the movie he was describing. I just thought we'd wait and see and made another appointment for a week later (unless his mother felt he should come in earlier, watching him for any behavior changes).

The following week, Jimmy came in to tell me all about his wonderful week at school. He hadn't cried one single time and was very proud of himself for being such a "big guy." In an attempt to understand what had happened, I asked if he could tell me what was different this week. He said that the "wormhead guy doesn't scare me when I walk into school anymore." Somehow, the long sidewalk up to the front door of the school triggered flashbacks of the horror film and his little imagination must have expected mayhem when he entered school. I don't know what in the movie set up this anchor, and I don't intend to watch the movie to find out!!

As these two cases illustrate, "ghosts" can take many forms. While teaching a "college learning skills" class in Dallas to adult black women working toward their high school equivalency, I heard many reasons for not studying or not focussing on the work assigned. The most powerful was one woman's report that she and her baby were behind the couch most of the evening because bullets were ringing out in her project!

Distractions to learning can happen less dramatically. For teens, their ability to learn can be effected by not being elected to cheerleader or not being asked to the Prom by the right person or even an untimely ZIT! We may chuckle. They do not!

It is difficult or impossible for educators to handle all of these problems. They shouldn't be expected to. An article in the *Dallas Morning News* reported that some teachers were quitting because many felt students needed Social Workers, rather than teachers, since they had so many problems. The problems students had seemed overwhelming and these teachers were reporting "burnout." On the other hand, if we could teach students at an early age (and their teachers) ways in which they can be in charge of their states to some extent, they could be empowered to cope with some of life's problems and banish learning problems that are emotionally triggered. It is really easier than we imagine. Just ask Brian and Jimmy.

Diane Faminao Lutzinger, M.A. is President and Developer of The Learner's Edge Programs for students and teachers. She is a certified Trainer with 13 years experience in the field. She has been a consultant to business and education and has taught internationally and on television. She may be reached at The Learner's Edge, 12830 Hillcrest - Ste 111, Dallas, TX 75230 USA or phone (214) 401-2906

Book Review

Metamedicine: Power Medicine The 21st Century Way

By Vita C. Baron, M.D. - Barez Publishing Co., P.O. Box 23555-322, San Diego, CA 92123
1990, 205 pgs. $14.95

The logo for *Metamedicine* resembles a horizontal figure eight with an M in each loop - an M&M. This says a lot about the book - brief and quite sweet.

The contents present applications of NLP presented in a medical context. The level of detail would be appropriate for naive readers with no prior information about the field. The applications make sense and seem plausible enough. To some extent, they have a too good to be true flavor but still seem believable. The information on NLP doesn't make this a useful primer however.

Mixed in with the applications was the author's personal success story. This was accompanied by an endorsement of the strength of belief systems in influencing the course of illness. The theme was somewhat relentlessly upbeat much like a pregame pep talk.

If I had to give this book to someone, I'd give it to a nursing student in preclinical years. I'd say, "This might interest you. If you became interested, you could take a workshop one weekend." I wouldn't give it to an M.D. The back cover hype seems excessive and is a turn off. The content falls far short of the expectations aroused. The first illustration is a sine wave!

This book was written by someone who felt quite good about self, NLP, work, etc. She's sharing the good news. The target for this good news eluded me somewhat. If you know NLP ideas now, this book won't offer you anything.

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Focus Point

Humor in Therapy: Getting Off the Disturby Derby

By Valdeane W. Brown, Ph.D.

I think about language a lot. In fact, most of my professional life is either spent speaking to other people, or thinking about the interesting and novel ways we use language. Sometimes, a phrase which is just exquisite, floats up out of the therapy dialogue and captures some ironic, or comedic aspect of living.

I remember a session I had with a couple back when I was first working as a (Ta da!) PSYCHOLOGIST. Back then I believed that I had to appear to be the all-knowing, all seeing fount of enlightened wisdom, or else no one would want to work with me. The couple was engaged in a wonderful dance of escalating tension and verbal abuse. She said he was being irresponsible, he said she was nagging; she said he drank too much, he said with a wife like her, who wouldn't drink. All fairly usual stuff.

I, in the infinite wisdom built upon the stones of systems theory and communication technologies like NLP, offered the idea that perhaps there was some sort of pattern to their communication which was less effective than they might desire. The wife looked at me sternly and said, "Of course there is you dolt, this is our Disturby Derby, and don't you go screwing it up with your psychobabble."

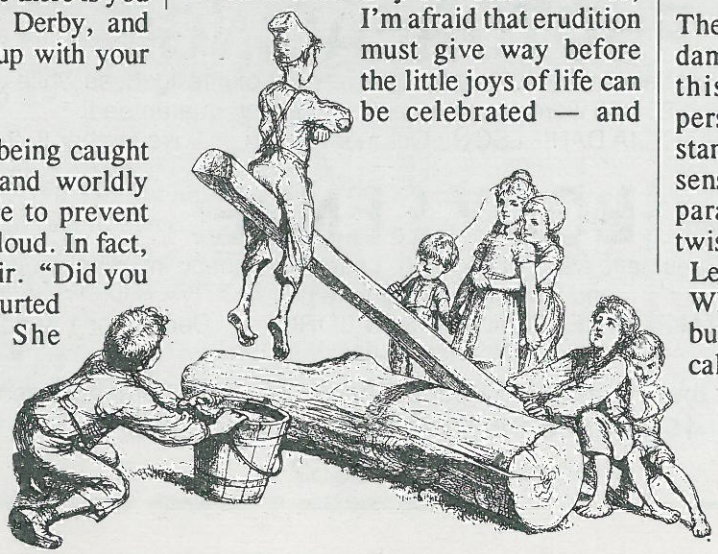
Stunned though I was at being caught while posing as a wise and worldly professional, I was unable to prevent myself from laughing out loud. In fact, I almost fell out of the chair. "Did you say Disturby Derby?" I blurted out between laughs. She nodded yes, and I laughed even harder saying, "That's great; I've got to remember that one!" And at that they both started to laugh: first at me, then at each other, and later on at their shared situation.

Needless to say, my laughing became associated (via unintended anchoring) with the auditory and visual cues of their Disturby Derby. The "intervention" I literally fell into turned out to be highly successful. Whenever they began to escalate like that, they both began to laugh — which broke the pattern — and then, they could actually listen to each other.

So it seems to go in therapy: I seem to frequently do my best work when I don't have a clue as to what I'm doing except that I and the client are having fun, laughing together about life.

I think that most of us have been taught to be much too serious...so we miss the opportunities for sharing the jokes and joys of life with clients. Of course we need to be present to the client's pain and to take their suffering seriously. Yet, I think we are usually not trained to go beyond that. For example, for all of your training in effective therapeutic technique, how many of you have been taught how to use humor well (if only to preserve your own sanity)?

Most of us have been taught to search out and help our clients resolve the sad and stuck places in their lives: after all, no pain, no problem, no goal, no therapy...no practice. However, we are generally not taught to value the successes and joys of clients' lives, even though the skillful use of those experiences is a wonderful way to enhance and solidify self-esteem. Yes, I'm afraid that erudition must give way before the little joys of life can be celebrated — and humor is one of the best ways to get past a rigid, intellectualized perspective, whether it belongs to you or your client.



Two Kinds of Humor: Hockey Pucks and Fire Escapes

Let me give you a brief introduction to humor, and then we'll explore how you can use it in your therapy work to increase your effectiveness.

There are basically two different kinds of humor. The first is the kind of humor used by many stand-up comics and share the same structure: someone gets hurt or put down. Have you heard the one that goes: How many therapists does it take to change a light bulb? Answer: One, but the light bulb has to really want to change. Now before you laugh too loudly — or start throwing things — recognize that this joke only works if you are *different* from the people mentioned in the joke. (You know, I'm Chevy Chase and you're not).

The problem with this form of humor is that it actually does put others down, either subtly or blatantly. Even if your clients laugh, when you use this kind of humor they will notice your disregard for others and rightly question your compassion and sense of fairness. Once you've crossed that line, it is very difficult to cross back over it. If you like that kind of humor, that's great! I do too — at times. But would you really want to go to Don Rickles for therapy? Would you want to be called a hockey puck, even if you are one? I don't think so.

The second kind of humor is fundamentally different in character. In this form, you are given a new perspective or framework for understanding some aspect of life. In this sense, humor of this kind is similar to paradox: your usual view of life is twisted around and radically shifted. Let me give you a few examples. Why is it that we park on driveways, but drive on parkways? Why do we call it a **fire escape;** shouldn't it be called a people escape? By the way, wouldn't we all prefer it if we could get the **fire** to

escape from the building? It would be so much easier to clean up afterwards since all the water and smoke would be outside.

This humor shifts reality and when our collective noses get tweaked just a little, and we see how silly some of our ideas and concerns are. After all, once you understand that your life and death struggle with the stupidity of your spouse is a Disturby Derby, it's just not the same old horse race any more. The recognition that it is a contest takes away the prior experience of seriousness. How serious can it be if we're both running this race to see who can get the other more upset?

Humor as Celebration: Integrating Ecology and Respect For The Client

Regardless of our all too obvious differences, humor used effectively in therapy becomes a celebration of the wonderfully crazy qualities of living that we all share. Part of being human is that we are sometimes at our best when we are at our worst, and can only do the most when we have the least with which to work.

I remember the first time I was confronted in a family session with blatant, unacknowledged double-bound communication. Everyone was deathly still as the father pronounced that if the daughter went out she was bad for breaking the rules, but if she stayed home (only to follow the rules) then she was also bad because she didn't really accept them. What a wonderful dilemma to be in: all dressed up and nowhere to go without getting into trouble.

I thought for a moment, then my mouth opened and I said slowly, with a slight frown, "You know, if you're damned if you do and damned if you don't, then..." I paused, took a breath and begin to smile as I continued with, "...you can do any damn thing you want." The giggles began, and even dad found himself having to laugh. From that beginning, I could then help the entire family develop new rules and agreements. Compromises developed balancing the adolescent's desires for freedom and responsibility, while giving the parents direct ways to maintain control and feel comfortable with their daughter's uncertain steps to adulthood. They were no longer caught in the web of impossible rules and demands.

Without the commitment to faithfully exploring and respecting the entire family's ecology, such an intervention could easily become a stand-up routine that would insult rather than liberate. With a commitment to empowering clients and respecting their ecological constraints, humor becomes enlivening. I could say to that family with a smile that which could not even be hinted at in earnestness before I used a little humor. To paraphrase R.D.Laing, they were now able to see **through** the family myth rather than see through the family myth.

Be Humorous Without Using Any Steps

I can't give you a step by step template for humor, because I don't believe there are any steps per se. It's a little reminiscent of the **"Be spontaneous"** paradoxdescribed so well by Watzlawick et al. at the Mental Research Institute. However, I do have some activities that you can do and ideas that you can use to allow for a little celebratory humor to emerge out of your work. (In a later column I will describe the structure of paradox and lay out the steps for utilizing it in therapy: paradox and celebratory humor follow much same pattern.)

Rapport & Humor

The first issue is to be sure of being in rapport with your client before you try anything humorous. Have you ever tried to explain a joke to someone who didn't get it? If you are out of rapport with your client, *they may not get the joke* and you will be left having to explain both the joke, and also why you told it in the first place. Test rapport by shifting your behavior and seeing if your client follows you. For example, shift posture and see if the client mirrors your shift. If they follow your lead you can go on; if not, wait until you have a firm and testable rapport with your client.

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"God not only plays dice. He also sometimes throws the dice where they cannot be seen."

- Stephen Hawking

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The second idea is to remember that using humor is an expression of your personal power. Therefore, you must be thoroughly congruent when doing it or else you risk breaking rapport and losing your credibility with your client. Be sure that your gestures, breathing, word choice, rate of speech, etc. are all in sync with and supportive of your use of humor. If you're not fully behind your humor, your client will probably not be influenced by you or share in the celebration: they will instead see you as a gonged contestant on the *Gong Show* and wonder why they are paying you when it isn't even funny.

Laughing WITH Them

Before using humor, associate into the client's position and use the humor on yourself. Does it still seem interesting, enlivening, caring, and freeing? If so, use it — if not, write it down and send it off to Don Rickles... he may be looking for material. This is a concrete way to make certain that you will be **laughing with** your clients about life, rather than **laughing at** them and their life. Remember, the fundamental difference between the two types of humor concerns the degree to which you respect the other person. Respect them and value their integrity and the humor will be successful. See it as a cute way to get past their resistance and your humor will probably end up killing two professions with one joke.

Be prepared to junk the humor if it doesn't work. One sure sign of this is when the client starts getting angry, or throwing things, like your furniture. When that happens, your client probably feels insulted...usually not the best way to influence a client (unless, of course, you're doing therapy with Morton Downey, Jr.).

I understand that in her seminars, Leslie Cameron-Bandler frequently tells the story of a time when she was really annoyed with something her husband Michael did. Now I don't remember all of the details but apparently she went up to him, obviously angry, and said something like, "What's wrong with you? ...etc." Michael listened for a moment and then quickly replied, "Oh, I was just being suicidal." What a great use of humor and respect within a pattern interrupt. How could she and he not stop and realize how special their relationship was and then celebrate it with a shared smile or laugh. If you know how to back out gracefully, then you can probably be a lot more forward.

"There are times when you have to choose between being human and having good taste."

- Bertolt Brecht

Pacing & Leading

Use all of your pacing and leading skills to set up, deliver, and then extend the power of your humor. Just like in paradox, there is a very particular use of pacing and leading that accentuates your power. Watch some of the highly skilled therapist/comedians who do not put others down. Watch Lily Tomlin (especially her performance in Jane Wagner's *The Search For Signs Of Intelligent Life In The Universe*), Robin Williams, or Billy Crystal to see how they use linguistics and gestures to sharpen their humor. Use modeling, trance identification, astral introjection, or whatever other technique you know to incorporate patterns of excellence into your own repertoire. Just be careful who you choose to model.

Become a student of the absurd. Collect stories of absurd, contradictory, whimsical, and paradoxical resolutions of situations. There are many sources for this data: Chuang Tze's stories, the stories of Nasrudin, or *People Magazine*, for instance. You'll laugh when reading them, and you may be able to develop useful metaphors from them to use in your work with clients.

Getting the Right Balance: Using Humor and Seriousness Flexibly

Most often in life it's not what you do so much as how you do it that makes the difference. In helping clients to change rapidly, it's usually not the content of the story that you tell, but how well you tell it that makes the difference. Both seriousness and humor have a place in therapy. The question is how to arrange them effectively so that you can facilitate the greatest change for your clients, so they can reach their goals. In this sense, I'm reminded of one of Chuang Tze's stories entitled *Three in the Morning*.

The monkey keeper went to his monkeys and told them that they would receive three cups of nuts in the morning and four cups in the evening. At this the monkeys became quite upset: they felt like they weren't getting enough. The monkey keeper thought for a moment and then said, "Very well, you're right, that just isn't enough. Therefore, you will instead get four cups of nuts in the morning and three cups in the evening." At this the monkeys rejoiced: now they finally were going to get just as much as they wanted.

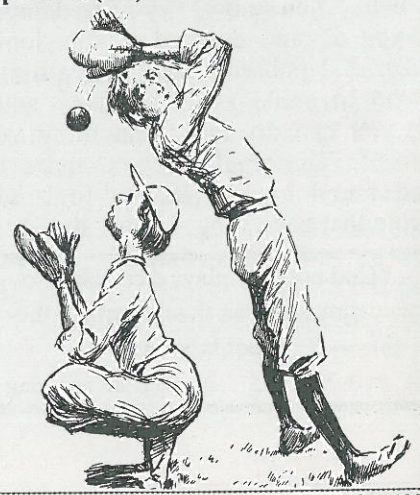
Well, I've presented some starting points for you to consider as you begin to explore the use of humor in therapy. It may seem confusing and intimidating at first so please remember, it's supposed to be FUN! If it doesn't seem to be fun or enjoyable, then put aside your attempts to be humorous. Go read a good book, see a funny movie or whatever and try again. Like any of the other skills of rapid therapeutic work, I'm sure that your use of humor will improve with practice and experience.

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Valdeane W. Brown, Ph.D. is currently director of Psychological Consultation Associates, P.C. He has been using and teaching NLP and other skills of rapid therapeutic change for over 12-years. He can be reached at 401 Shady Avenue, Suite C-207, Pittsburgh, PA 15206, or by phone at (412) 362-6150.



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Back To Basics:

The Artful Pace of Leading

By Rachel Beth Hott

When writing a basics column there are a few types of readers to whom I am addressing my thoughts. There are the new NLPers and the old highly studied NLPers and the somewhere in between NLPers. Basically I am addressing the content to the new NLPers and the form to all others. For some who want a simple review please continue reading it that way. For those who have just become familiar with NLP, please continue reading. For those of you who prefer more complex articles, pay attention to the form of this article or move on to the other wonderful articles in this journal.

Whether you are a health professional, business professional, artist, or scientist, there are people who you have to interact with on a daily basis. Many times you want to help, educate, and influence these people. Integrating this fundamental NLP technique of pacing and leading into your behavior will aid you in developing rapport with these individuals, assisting people to make the changes they want (or need) while helping you to achieve your own personal goals.

When I first learned about pacing and leading, the image and feeling of improvisational dancing came to my mind. My favorite dance partners were the ones who could follow my steps, take the lead and then come back to my steps. As this process continued, eventually our dance steps blended and we no longer knew who was following or leading.

Another analogy for pacing and leading is from my experience studying Aikido, a Martial Art. When an attack is delivered rather than meeting the attack with similar force, you blend with the energy of the attacker. Rather than developing muscular force, the emphasis was on the developing energy. It can appear as an alignment of our body with the other person's or that you go with as opposed to against their energy. After you align or go with the energy, you then take the lead. In Aikido, this would mean throwing or pinning the attacker.

Some of you may have identified my primary pattern in those two examples.



I predominantly represented my understanding of pacing and leading through movement (kinesthetics). This is all very well and good; however, in order to pace and lead you need to verbalize. Or do you? Actually there are **two ways of pacing** and leading; **Verbally and Non-Verbally.** Pacing and leading can relate to content as well as form. Here is an example of how to non-verbally pace a lead form:

Rob, a manager I worked with, identified his boss's tempo (form) as being much faster than his. This typically make Rob nervous and his thoughts would become scattered. Rob decided to pace and lead his boss's tempo. Although it was not comfortable for Rob to speak fast, he managed to pace his boss's tempo. After about 5 minutes, Rob slowed down his tempo. His boss slowed down and Rob continued to slow down until he was comfortable. Upon observing his boss, Rob concluded that his boss was truly a flexible person. Perhaps even more so than Rob.

In addition to pacing and leading tempo, you can pace and lead volume, tone, gestures, posture, breathing, representational systems and eye-accessing cues. Basically you identify a pattern in the other person. Mirror that pattern and then subtly change the pattern. Observe with eyes and ears as to what happens. If the person does not follow, you then resume the pace and try again momentarily.

A common statement in a new NLP training group is, "I have enough difficulty paying attention to content and now you want me to also observe their gestures and change them!" Yes it is true when you first begin it is difficult to pay attention to more than one thing. However, it will eventually become automatic with practice—just like walking and talking.

Another statement is, "What advantage is it really to pace and lead form?" One advantage is that you can identify nonverbally whether you are in rapport with the person if they follow you. Another is to deepen rapport with the other person. For those of you who like options, you can also pace the form without leading and then pace and lead the content.

"Beware of the Truth. If you find a Truth it can demand that you make painful changes."

- Frank Herbert

For example, pace the tempo and pace and lead the content. This is what it would sound like (Imagine a quick tempo).

Jack: "Hi Rob what can I do for ya?"

Rob: "Well Jack, first I want to say hello and how are you?"

Jack: "Me, well you know I am stuck with a lot of detail work and am pressed for time as usual.

(Here comes the context pace and lead.)

Rob: "I didn't realize you were so caught up with the details. Given that you don't have a whole lot of time, let me identify the problems I foresee for today's operation."

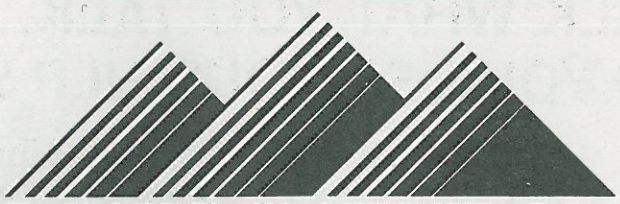
Jack: "Well actually Rob, I really don't have the time to discuss today's operation."

(Content pace and lead)

Rob: "So you really don't want to discuss it, great! I will just bullet it out, 1,2,3, and you can read it over in the next half hour."

Jack: "O.K. Rob you seem so gung ho, lets give it a shot."

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When pacing the content, you can *respond* to the words being said or the feelings/thoughts that are implied. An important factor is to respond as opposed to react. If you are responsive, the other person experiences you as someone who is listening. When people feel they have been heard, a rapport is developed. A trap you may fall into is the great ability to pace and pace and pace and pace. When I work with a client, I pace (backtrack) their feelings, thoughts and behaviors. As I am doing so, I am also asking myself, "Where are we going or where do we need to go in this session. What does this person need. Do they need to be paced today or do they need to be paced and led today." At that point, I ask a leading question related to these inner thoughts and the dance or sparring begins. Once you lead you do go back to pacing and continue the process throughout. The various ways of pacing and leading are dependent upon the desired effect you want to create for your client.

The title of this article is "*The Artful Pace of Leading.*" Artful refers to which level will you pace and then eventually lead. When dealing with content, you may want to pace the surface level of the statement or pace your interpretation of their feeling level. (Your Mind Reading-meta violation may be at work during this time). For example, a woman said to me, "I have nowhere to go with my career. I didn't do what everyone else now has the opportunity to do. I had a kid and stayed home." In order to pace the surface level I said, "So you feel as though there is nowhere to go." Pacing the feeling I added, "In some ways it is as though you missed out on something and it's not fair." As I said this statement she nodded a yes, and then I added (the lead), "Since it wasn't fair what can you do now to begin to make it fair." This led us towards discovering some realistic goals that she could do for her career development.

The title also places an emphasis on **leading.** A mistake (of course we know there is no such thing as mistake only feedback) that many non-NLPers and probably some NLPers perform is leading without pacing. This typically ends up in some verbal battle or someone feeling not listened to. As a change agent, whether it is in business or counseling it is my responsibility to lead at some point. However, I have to be careful not to lead too fast. One of the changes that I have worked on is pacing statements verbally before leading. In the past, I would hear someone's comment, pace it is my own internal dialogue, and then proceed with a leading question. I knew I was pacing but the other person hadn't a clue.

As I have attempted to pace you dear reader, I do hope you have felt paced. I have been thinking of you. As a leading conclusion, I offer you this simple exercise. Give yourself the task to pace five statements (either from five different people or all five statements from one person) before leading with a question, giving advice or identifying your position. Then lead five new statements without pacing. Notice the differences. Lastly, remember to pace yourself.

Rachel Beth Hott is Co-Director of Advanced Communication Training, Inc. (ACT) with Steven Leeds. ACT offers practitioner and master practitioner trainings, business consultations, and private therapy work. Rachel can be reached at 31 Washington Square West, Penthouse B - New York, NY 10011 or you can call her at (212) 529-9227 or (201) 509-9599.

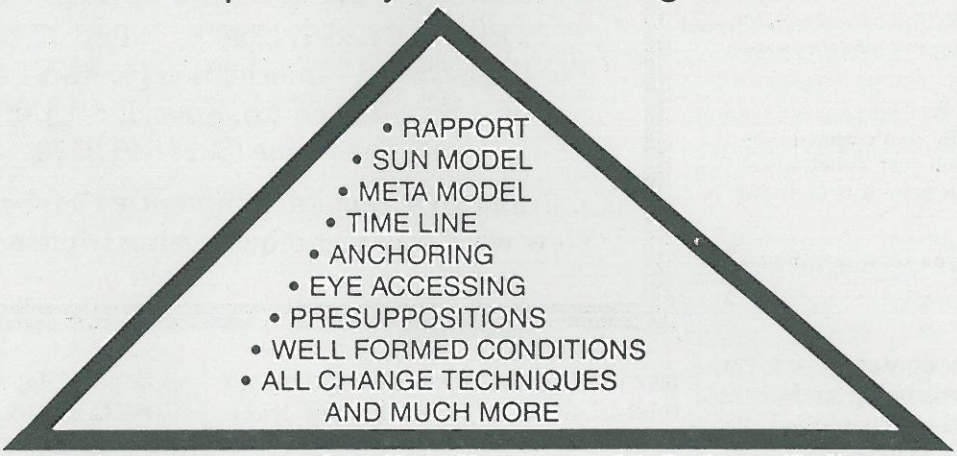
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The Sausage Factory: So You Want To Write A Best-Selling Book

By Pat Wagner

I don't eat hot dogs or breakfast sausage much anymore. Years of adhering to a low-salt, and low-fat diet have killed my taste for these childhood favorites. Sometimes, however, I will make my own batch with hot peppers, thyme, garlic, fennel and turkey meat. I know what I put in the mixture and that knowledge makes me even more cautious about the kind I buy in the store—I know what is possible.

And, I remember the adage concerning the making of sausage: if you knew the workings of a hot dog factory, you would never eat a hot dog again.

My life has been immersed in the book publishing world for over 20 years. I have been a printer, typesetter, book designer, bookstore manager, publisher, and an author. I have worked with best-selling writers, successful book agents, publishing houses, distribution companies, professional associations, book fairs, artists, and paper companies. Currently, I am a columnist for a national book review magazine; my focus is nonfiction, particularly science and consumer-oriented books.

I love books, but I know what goes into making one. The difference between a well-crafted, serious text and most best-sellers is the difference between my tasty, healthy homemade sausage and the unspeakable microwaveable horrors available at many convenience stores. It is not just a matter of cost and preference, it is a matter of intention.

"The best way out is always through."
- Robert Frost

In future issues, I will share some ideas with you about the book industry, particularly as it applies to the NLP community. I also will suggest some significant contributions I believe NLP practitioners can make towards improving the quality of information available to the public.

What is it about how most books are produced that reduces their usefulness?

The overriding goal of most authors, agents and publishers is to produce best-sellers with sales in the hundreds of thousands. Although this policy finally has brought several giant publishing houses to their knees (inflated advances with poor sales is one reason), the star mentality is prevalent. Every decision that goes into choosing, writing, producing and marketing books is skewed by this goal.

The result?

1. The book proposal is more important than the book.

You must first do market research to see if your book can sell, what audience you are writing for and how to package the book so it sells. I am a fervent supporter of the free market system and I do not agree with this advice when it comes to selling shoes and oranges. But in the marketplace of ideas, it means that the person who can sell will be heard, not necessarily the person who can think.

In the self-help market, this creates a commercial atmosphere that can filter some of the best work.

If you are planning a book to be published by a large publisher, you must catch the attention of the editor with a book that has FLASH! SEX APPEAL! MARKETABILITY! If you were to think about the seminal books of our culture, how many of them would have survived the book proposal stage?

2. Complex ideas and ambiguity are sacrificed because the American audience is seen as semi-literate.

If you are thoughtful about your work and are trying to explain some of the deeper ideas that are woven into the fabric of your philosophy, you can forget most major publishers. (Thank goodness that regional and academic publishers are thriving these days). However, if you are willing to simplify your work past recognition, you might have a chance.

3. More money is put into marketing than in research.

The idea of the book comes before the research and writing. This means that if you come up with a great premise, and you sell the idea, then you get your advance, and you start doing the research, and you find out that you were wrong. You have probably reached an interesting dilemma. In most cases, the



publisher will not want to hear about your change of heart. I know several cases where the writer was told to write the original book or return the advance.

Many authors learn to cut corners. They will only look for material that substantiates their position and will ignore the people who question their ideas. Worse yet, authors will delve into the raw data of a report and carefully pull out of context those bits and snatches that prove their point, even though the vast bulk of the report refutes their theories.

I know of one best-selling author who quoted a dead philosopher to prove the significance of the introduction of Buddhism into the United States. When asked when the philosopher made the comment, she confessed that she had gotten the information third-hand and the sources were sketchy at best. But she did not hesitate to present the quote as if she had first hand knowledge of its veracity.

Many popular books on science and the mind, especially so-called New Age books, present their wares as scholarly tomes, but, in truth, the author could be writing for grocery store tabloids for all he or she cares about the truth.

4. Ideas outside of the mainstream have a difficult time finding a foothold.

NLP practitioners know how difficult it has been to find much interest in the popular press for their work, which is one reason why many NLP books are self-published. NLP is still under attack by groups who lump it in with the most unscientific practices, and conventional psychologists and therapists are often overtly hostile. The response is sometimes strident.

How much better if the author and publisher had a more modest goal. A little more humility and a little better financial planning could reap outstanding rewards. Here are a few suggestions for readers who are contemplating or are involved in publishing material about their work.

1. Realize that not every idea is worth a book.

Many terrific ideas can be expounded in magazine articles in many different markets. If your purpose is to influence the culture, consider writing, or having written for you, brief articles focusing on specific theories and practices. These can be published in a variety of business, management, psychology and popular culture magazines and newsletters.

If you don't know where to start, look at the magazine *Writer's Digest* or their annual directory, *Writer's Marketplace*. If you are not a writer and are not sure where to find one to help you, you can start with the lifestyle page editor of your local newspaper. He or she will know where to find reliable local talent.

2. Make yourself a media source.

Make contact with the local print and electronic media people, and offer yourself as a resource for information and ideas. Be friendly and useful, and don't demand on-the-air or in-print recognition. The members of the media have a great deal of power and can be exceedingly useful to people they like.

3. Be a letter writer.

Write the local paper when NLP is maligned. Write an author if you think he or she is making mistakes. Write a communist when you like what she says, write and thank an editor for a good editorial. One paragraph letters can have extraordinary influence on people.

4. If you are publishing, publish frequently.

Five small pamphlets, publishing over 2 years time, are better tools for information dissemination and marketing than one good-sized book that is out-of-date and forgotten in 6 months.

5. Use electronic publishing tools to publish on demand.

Instead of incurring the expense of formal publication, why not sell a "virtual" book which you only print out of your computer when you receive an order? Treat the book like a workbook or work-in-progress and offer a three-ring binder. This is a great way to test the market or present ideas while you are still in the process of working on the theories.

6. Publish an in-house newsletter or monograph series.

You can have an impact with your ideas without being sucked up into elaborate publishing projects or into book contracts in which you are forced to compromise your principles. Then, when it is time for the big project, you will experience, publishing credential and the clout to have it your own way.

Pat Wagner and her partner Leif Smith own Pattern Research, an information systems design company. Pat is a columnist and contributing editor for The Bloomsbury Review. She is also a trainer and speaker and has conducted over 600 workshops in communication theory and practice.

Book Review:

FLOW: THE PSYCHOLOGY OF OPTIMAL EXPERIENCE
By Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi
Harper and Row, New York, NY, 303 Pgs, $19.95

What makes people glad to be alive? What are the inner experiences that make life worthwhile? The author of this new book has been studying states of "optimal experience" or in lay terms, *happiness*, for more than 2 decades. He describes this as " being in the flow," feeling in control of our actions, with a sense of exhilaration and enjoyment which becomes a landmark for what all of life could be like.

NLPers will find this work interesting for its findings about excellence in achieving happiness and for the process by which the subjective experience of more than 100,000 persons (quite a sampling!) from different parts of the world was collected.

FLOW, more than a new buzz word, is "expected to become one of the most productive areas of psychological research during the next decade, with practical application ranging from the treatment of autistic children to management training to the design of museums," to quote the dust jacket.

In the beginning, Mr. Csikszentmihalyi (professor and former chairman of the Department of Psychology at the University of Chicago) and his research team collected data from interviews and questionnaires from individuals in many different walks of life. It was a surprise to find that "the flow experience" was described in similar terms regardless of age, cultural differences or economic status.

To achieve greater precision in measuring "the quality of subjective experience" (author's words), the Experience Sampling Method was devised. People are asked to wear an electronic paging device for a week and to write down how they felt and what they are thinking about whenever the pager signaled. The pager was activated by a radio transmitter about eight times each day at random intervals. At the end of the week, each respondent provided what amounted to a running record made up of this cross-section of life.

The conclusion is that this optimal state of inner experience happens when psychic energy—or attention—is invested in realistic goals, and when skills match the opportunities for action. It seems that concentrated attention in pursuit of a goal during which everything else is forgotten leads to the most enjoyable times of life. And this process, repeated for higher and higher stakes or challenges, results in ever more complex levels of being.

The key element is that the optimal experience is an end in itself; it is autotelic, a self-contained activity, in which *the doing is its own reward*. It is described by those who experience it regularly as a sense that one's skills are adequate to cope with the challenges at hand, in a goal-directed, rule-bound action system that provides clear clues as to how well one is performing. Concentration is so intense that there is no attention left over to think about anything irrelevant or to worry about problems. Self-consciousness disappears, and the sense of time becomes distorted.

When was the last time you or I felt such a "flow?" And can this experience be modeled so as to be reproducible at will? Ah yes, states the author, if you

Please Turn To The Next Page ►

understand the eight major components. The surprise is that such enjoyment did not seem to depend on the nature of the activity or on culture. The "what" among the subjects was vastly different; the "how" or process was almost identical.

The phenomenology of enjoyment then has eight major components, although all do not have to be present.

1. The experience usually occurs when we confront tasks we have a chance of completing.
2. We must be able to concentrate on what we are doing.
3. Concentration is possible because the task undertaken has clear goals, and
4. Provides immediate feedback.
5. Deep involvement removes from awareness the worries and frustrations of everyday life.
6. Enjoyable experiences allow people to exercise a sense of control over their actions.
7. Concern for self disappears, yet sense of self emerges stronger after the flow experience is over.
8. The sense of time is altered—hours pass as minutes, or minutes can stretch out to seem like hours.

The book leads us through many examples of how people experience flow in various internal parts. The first and easiest step toward improving the quality of life is simply learning to control the body and its senses. But this is a holistic approach which involves the mind as well.

Next is the exhilaration of mental tasks—thinking for its own sake. Work and the activities of "free time" can lead to flow or to apathy and ennui. The difference seems to lie in how the person takes charge of each, with challenge, variety, control, balance.

The studies on flow demonstrate that quality of life depends most of all on how we experience *work*, and our *relations with other people*. Implicit in this, however, is how we control our consciousness even when we are left to our own devices—with our own solitude.

In the midst of this comes "chaos" — that which would cheat us of our happiness. The "autotelic" personality however is one that easily translates threats into enjoyable challenges (reframes?). Such a person transforms potentially entropic experiences into flow by: setting goals, becoming immersed in the activity, paying attention to what is happening, and learning to enjoy immediate experience.

The final chapter brings various dimensions together at the level of "so what?" Meaning brings what "is" and what "could be" in sync around a life theme. As the autotelic self becomes more complex, it moves from concern for happiness to a generalized concern for others or mankind as a whole. To put our hard-won individuality into a cooperative role in the universe is like "the exile returning home." The individual merges with the universal or even cosmic flow.

This is a book written for the lay person, yet contains enough challenge for good conversation and rereading and pondering. The 40 pages of notes documenting the statements and the 20 page bibliography will guide the scholar who gets into flow with exploring the subject in greater depth.

In NLPland, we are interested in how to transfer excellence. So, if you are wondering how you can bring "flow" into your life and others' lives, this book will not give you a list of dos and don'ts. In fact, the author promises no short cuts, but rather general principles, along with concrete examples of how some people have transformed boring and meaningless lives into ones full of enjoyment. No small achievement! I think you will find this work profitable, challenging, and rewarding reading. You will be lending it to your friends!

Martha Wiglesworth is a member of the Satir Avanta Network, an NLP Practitioner and a family life educator. She is the founder of the Potentials Network.

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Real People Press, Box F - Moab, UT 84532 or call (801) 259-7578.

Connecticut Teachers Learn NLP

The first Connecticut State-sponsored training in NLP is being taught by Norma and Thomas Salter. Their course proposal, "*Thinking: The Inner Game of Reading and Writing*" was awarded a grant by the Connecticut Institute of Teaching and Learning and was taught to 25 teachers in August.

The State Institute offers a number of innovative courses each summer and proves them without charge to the State's teachers—all in a concerted effort to achieve and maintain a high-level of competence in Connecticut.

The Institute course will train teachers in some fundamentals of NLP that apply to the school setting. They will also learn the strategies elicited from gifted students and learn teaching techniques developed from this modeling research.

The Salters are both Master Practitioners in NLP and have spent the past 6 years developing teacher training in NLP based on their experience working in classrooms. They believe that NLP holds the key to transforming education in America.

Coming Events

ACCELERATED LEARNING INSTITUTE OF NEW ENGLAND
79 Westchester Road - Newton, MA 02158
(617) 964-0160

Oct. 27	PhotoReading Begins (Albany, NY)

ADVANCED COMMUNICATION TRAINING, INC.
31 Washington Square West Penthouse B - New York, NY 10011
(212) 529-9227 or (201) 509-9599

Oct. 5	Free NLP Intro (Montclair, NJ)
Oct. 12	Free NLP Intro. (New York City, NY)
Oct. 19	Free NLP Intro. (New Paltz, NY)
Oct. 20-21	2-Day NLP Intro. (New Paltz, NY)
Oct. 27-28	2-Day NLP Intro. (New York City, NY)

ELAYNE ANSTIS ASSOCIATES
500 Willow Street - Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7J 0C9 CANADA
(306) 665-7824

Oct 4-8	Transformations - Intensive Training in Ericksonian Hypnosis and NLP Begins (Dr. Michael J. Banks)

AUSTRIAN TRAINING CENTER FOR NLP
Teybergasse 1/19, A-1140 Wein, Austria - Europe 43-1-894 0017 Fax Ext 17

Oct. 4-7	Trancearbeit nach Milton Erickson II, Vienna

THE CASCADE CENTER, INC.
P.O. Box 2351 - Kirkland, WA 98083 (206) 820-1312

Oct. 17-21	Ericksonian Hypnotherapy Techniques

CENTRE QUEBECOIS DE PROGRAMMATION NEURO LINGUISTIQUE
3826 Saint-Hubert - Montreal, Quebec H2L 4A5 CANADA
(514) 281-7553

Sept. 21-23	Health and Belief System
Sept. 28-30	Basic NLP I
Oct. 5-7	Practitioner IV
Oct 13-14	2nd NLP Quebec Conference
Oct. 19-20	Basic NLP II
Nov. 1-4	Practitioner and Master Practitioner I
Nov. 16-18	Practitioner V
Nov. 22-25	Advanced Ericksonian Hypnosis
Dec. 7-9	Practitioner and Practitioner II
Dec. 14-16	Practitioner VI

FUTUREPACE, INC.
P.O. Box 1173 - San Rafael, CA 94915 (415) 485-1200

Sept. 14-16	Self-Esteem: The Personal Strength that Supports You
Sept. 27	Imperative Self Analysis Certification Extended Program Begins
Oct. 5-7	Personal Empowerment: The Power that Produces Success
Nov. 2-4	Relationships that Work: Creating Quality and Fulfillment
Nov. 30-Dec. 2	Emotional Choice: For Freedom and Power

FAMILY PSYCHOTHERAPY PRACTICE OF SEATTLE
DAVID CALOF PROFESSIONAL TALKS AND WORKSHOPS
Family Psychotherapy Practice of Seattle
2722 Eastlake Avenue East, Ste. 300 - Seattle, WA 98102 (206) 329-9101

Sept. 21-22	Adult Children of Incest and Child Abuse: Clinical Demonstration and Consultation/ Supervision Intensive (London, England)
Oct. 12	Adult Children of Incest and Child Abuse: Holograms of the Intergenerational Family (Pittsburgh, PA)

Coming Events

GEORGIAN BAY NLP CENTRE
Box 1210 - Meaford, ON N0H 1Y0 CANADA
(519) 538-1194

Sept. 22 Practitioner Training Begins (Owen Sound, ON)
Sept. 26-27 Stressmap (Toronto, ON)
Sept. 28 Practitioner Training Begins (Toronto, ON)
Oct. 27-28 Language and Behavior Profile (Toronto, ON)

THE HUMAN SOLUTION
5440 Franklin Rd., Ste. 203C, Boise, ID 83705 (208) 343-0097

Sept. 28 Practitioner Certification Training Begins

IEP WORKSHOPS
Staringstraat 1, 6511 PC Nijmegen, Holland Tel. 080-230837

Sept. 10 The Structure of Emotions Videotape Showing
Sept. 11-12 Imperative Self with David Gordon
Nov. 18 Provocative Therapy with Frank Farrelly

LEAD CONSULTANTS, INC.
P.O. Box 664 - Reynoldsburg, OH 43068 (614) 864-0156

Oct. 29-Nov. 2 Level One Training/Basic Skills, Meta Model
Dec. 3-6 Level Two Training/Fundamental Techniques of Intervention

THE LEARNER'S EDGE, INC.
12830 Hillcrest Rd., Ste 111, Dallas, TX 75230 (214) 401-2906 or (800) 234-4853 or 725 Twin Brooks Court, Marietta, GA 30067

Sept. 15-16 Language of Cooperation (Dallas, TX)
Sept. 22-23 Certification Training (Atlanta GA) Metaphors with Francis Wiggins
Oct. 13-14 Change Techniques of NLP (Dallas, TX)
Nov. 3 Certification Training Begins (Atlanta, GA)

MID-ATLANTIC INSTITUTE OF NLP
402 Fifth Avenue - Huntington, WV 25701 (304) 522-0485

Sept. 8 Practitioner Training Begins (Huntington)
Sept. 15 Practitioner Training Begins (Charleston)
Sept. 22 Master Practitioner Training Begins (Huntington)

MIDLANTIC INSTITUTE OF NLP
A Division of the American Hypnosis Training Academy, Inc.
8750 Georgia Ave., Ste 125E - Silver Spring, MD 20910 (800) 343-9915 or (301) 565-9179

Nov. 8-11 & Dec. 6-9 Ericksonian Approaches to Hypnosis and Brief Psychotherapy Begins

THE MID-SOUTH INSTITUTE OF NLP
2906 Garth Road, S.E. - Huntsville, AL 35801 (205) 881-0884

Sept. 27 Basic NLP
Nov. 30-Dec. 2: Intermediate Ericksonian Hypnosis and Uncommon Therapy

MIDWEST INSTITUTE OF NLP
702 West Colfax - South Bend, IN 46601 (219) 232-1405

Sept. 15-16 2-Day NLP Intro Seminar (Milwaukee, WI)
Sept. 15-16 2-Day NLP Intro Seminar (South Bend, IN)
Sept. 21-25 3rd Ericksonian Hypnotherapy Residential Training for Therapists (South Haven, MI)
Sept. 29-30 Belief Systems with Robert Dilts (Chicago, IL)
Oct. 18 PhotoReading Begins (Chicago, IL)
Oct. 13-14 2-Day NLP Intro Seminar (Indianapolis, IN)
Oct. 20-21 2-Day NLP Intro Seminar (Chicago, IL)

NEW ENGLAND INSTITUTE FOR NLP
RFD #3-AN, Pratt Corner Road - Amherst, MA 01002-9805
(413) 259-1248

Sept. 21 Emotional Choice Program Begins
Oct. 6 Practitioner Certification Training Begins
Oct. 6 Master Practitioner Certification Training Begins
Oct. 12 Photoreading Begins

NEW YORK TRAINING INSTITUTE FOR NLP
155 Prince Street - New York, NY 10012 (212) 473-2852

Sept. 14 Freedom from Compulsive Eating/Dieting
Sept. 20 Trainer Training Begins
Sept. 21 Master Practitioner Training Begins
Oct. 5 Practitioner Training Begins
Oct. 27 PhotoReading Begins

NLP AUSTIN
8500 N. Mopac, #604 - Austin, TX 78759 (512) 328-3333

Oct. 26 Practitioner Certification Training Begins

NLP CENTER FOR COUNSELING AND TRAINING
1703 Waterview - Richardson, TX 75080 (214) 234-5699

Sept. 21-23 Once Upon a Metaphor

NLP COMPREHENSIVE
2897 Valmont Rd. - Boulder, CO 80301 (303) 442-1102

Oct. 12-14 The Aligned Self

THE NLP CONNECTION/NLP PROFICIENCY ASSOCIATES
P.O. Box 7818 - Santa Cruz, CA 95061 (408) 425-3614

NLP of Southern California - Los Angeles (213) 254-3841
Sept. 15 NLP Practitioner Certification Begins
The NLP Connection 3820 St. Charles Ave., Ste. One New Orleans, LA 70115 (504) 891-1212
Sept. 21 NLP Practitioner Certification Begins

NLP INSTITUTE OF BERLIN
20 Althoffstr. 1000 Berlin 41, Germany 01149-30-792-08-05

Sept. 8-9 NLP fur Gruppen
Sept. 15-16 Master Practitioner (Sub Modalities)
Sept. 22-23 Practitioner Training Begins
Oct. 13-14 NLP im Unterricht I (NLP for Teachers)
Nov. 17-18 Master Practitioner (Timeline Therapy)
Nov. 24-25 NLP im Utterricht II

NLP INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO
P.O. Box 25184 - Chicago, IL 60625 (312) 271-9578

Sept. 14 Master Practitioner Training Begins

NLP OF OHIO
676 Everwood Avenue - Columbus, OH 43214 (614) 457-6766

Sept. 21-14 Beyond Co-dependence: Healing the Trauma with Lara Ewing
Sept. 29 Practitioner Preview (Toledo, OH)
Sept. 30 Practitioner Preview (Mansfield, OH)
Oct. 6 Practitioner Preview (Cincinnati & Columbus, OH)
Oct. 7 Practitioner Preview (Dayton & Cleveland, OH)
Oct. 12 Practitioner Training Begins (Columbus, OH)
Oct. 20 Practitioner Preview (Akron, OH)
Oct. 26 Practitioner Training Beings (Cleveland, OH)

NLP OF SUN VALLEY
Box 1100 - Sun Valley, ID 83353 (208) 622-3634

Sept. 28-30 Beyond Co-dependence: Creating Your Own Future with Lara Ewing
Oct. 1 Professional's Training

NLP OF WESTERN COLORADO
2302 North Avenue - Grand Junction, CO 81501 (303) 245-3235

Sept.-Nov. Basic NLP Training on Tuesdays
Oct.-Nov. Metaprograms: Reading a Person Like a Book

Coming Events

NLP PRODUCTS AND PROMOTIONS
13223 Black Mountain Rd., #1-429 - San Diego, CA 92129
(619) 538-6216

Oct. 20-Nov. 1	Hypnosis Certification (State of California)

PACE PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT
86 South Hill Park - London NW3 2SN England 01-794 0960

Oct. 20	Autumn NLP Foundation Skills Intensive
Dec. 8-9	Autumn NLP Foundation Skills Certification

THE SHERLCO CORPORATION
2022 31st Street S.W., Calgary, AB T3E 2N2 Canada
(403) 240-3565

Sept.	Master Certification Training Begins

SOUTH CENTRAL INSTITUTE OF NLP
P.O. Box 15757 - New Orleans, LA 70175 (504) 895-3665

Sept. 15-16	The NLP Approach & Problem Solving With NLP
Sept. 22	The NLP Approach
Oct. 12	Practitioner Training Begins (Biloxi, MI)
Nov. 2	Master Practitioner Training Begins (New Orleans, LA)
Dec. 1-2	Beliefs & Your Health with Robert Dilts

SOUTHERN INSTITUTE OF NLP
P.O. Box 529 - Indian Rocks Beach, FL 34635 (813) 596-4891 or (800) 633-4891

Sept. 22-23	Dream Resolution Therapy
Oct. 4-8	Hypnosis Residential
Nov. 8-11	Integration and Certification (Tampa, FL)
Nov. 28-Dec. 7	Masters in Modeling Residential (Tampa, FL)

SPECTRUM
938 West Fifth Street - Winston-Salem, NC 27101 (919) 761-0650

Oct. 13	NLP Certification Program begins
Oct. 27	Alumni Day

UPSTATE CENTER FOR NEURO-LINGUISTIC PROGRAMMING
61C Monroe Ave./P.O. Box 426 - Pittsford, NY 14534
(716) 586-6773

Sept. 27	Intro. to Hypnosis
Sept. 28-30	Hypnosis Certification Course, Part 1 (Adam Burke)
Oct. 13-14	Access and Management of Resources I
Oct. 25	What is NLP? Answers to Your Questions
Oct. 27-28	Access and Management of Resources II
Nov. 22	What is NLP? Answers to Your Questions

WESTERN STATES TRAINING ASSOC./NLP OF UTAH
1569 East Waterbury Drive - Salt Lake City, UT 84121
(801) 278-1022

Sept. 14-16	Strategies of Creativity and Genius (Robert Dilts)
Sept. 27	How to Influence Others Effectively
Sept. 28	Free Preview - Business Applications of NLP
Oct. 19	Practitioner Certification Training Begins
Oct. 10	Free NLP Preview
Nov. 16-18	Developing Training and Presentation Skills

CONFERENCES

Seasons of Change - 1990 Rocky Mountain NLP Conference
Co-sponsored by ANCHOR POINT...

Sept. 28-30, 1990 in Denver, Colorado

Keynote Address by Robert Dilts
(*Wisdom Toward Global Community*)

For information write:
Rocky Mountain NLP Conference
c/o ANCHOR POINT
P.O. Box 150217 - Denver, CO 80215
or Call (303) 985-3522

●

Peaks of Wisdom - Mountain States Regional NANLP Conference

Oct. 6-7, 1990 in Park City, Utah
For information: Linda Oester (801) 546-2570

●

4th Annual Canadian NANLP Conference

Oct. 27-28, 1990 in Moncton, New Brunswick
For information: Maritime NLP Institute/Attn: Aruna Patel
Box 6104 - Grand Falls, NB E0J 1M0 CANADA
(506) 473-6008

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Northeast Regional NANLP Conference

Nov. 16-18, 1990 in Hartford, CT
For information:
Thomas Salter
Eastern Connecticut State University
Willimantic, CT 06226
(203) 429-7850

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