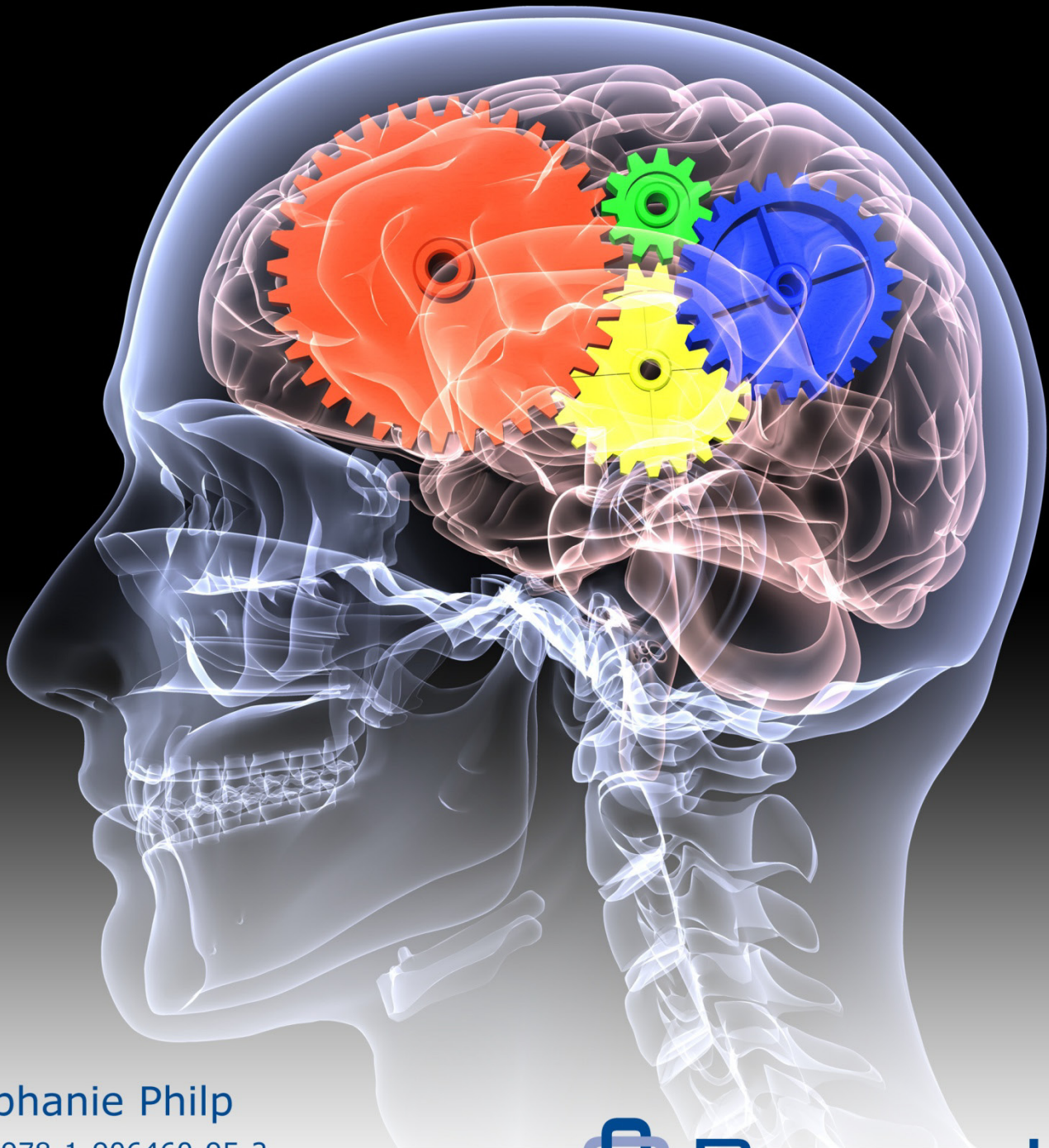


A Useful Guide to Personal Development



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A Useful Guide to Personal Development

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Foreword

I have written 'A Useful Guide to Personal Development' for a variety of reasons ...

I love using NLP in my own daily life and I saw an opportunity to create a multi-media interactive Useful Guide that would allow you to get direct experience of what you read through a series of audio links, stories, pictures and examples. A huge amount of extra value is created by the links to the other media on the Pansophix website that bring to life the text in the Useful Guide by providing real life examples that give firsthand experience. Because of this, A Useful Guide to Personal Development has advantages over a paper book. Some thoughts ...

- I've seen the amazing transformations others have made by learning how their mind works. Once they feel in control of their mind and thus their behaviour they can easily make changes which lead to a happier life and greater success.
- I believe understanding how your mind works and how to take control of it instead of letting it control you is a fundamental human right and essential to personal happiness and fulfilment.
- This Useful Guide will give you a taste of Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) and some insights in to how it might be useful for you in your daily life.
- There are so many books available on the subject of NLP that many people have told me they became confused because they didn't know where to start.
- I've got a vast practical experience in using NLP in business, coaching, training and therapy and I love writing and sharing what I know. Writing this Useful Guide is an opportunity to use this knowledge to provide you with some practical skills that you'll easily relate to and that you can use immediately.

Get the most from this Useful Guide

As you read through the material, you'll notice hyperlinks (words underlined that link to resources on the Pansophix website) at various points in the text. When you click on these they will take you to links where you can explore examples relevant to the topic. Some links will take you to audio clips, others will take you to articles that contain audio clips. I recommend you click on them at the point you see them. Sometimes I'll refer you to articles in the Resources Section at the back of the Useful Guide that illustrate the concepts being discussed.

I'll be taking you on an exploration of some aspects of your thinking processes that you've possibly not thought about consciously before. Then I'll tell you how to harness these processes to really ignite your success. Where there's a suggestion or exercise - please do it! There's nothing like direct experience to enhance your learning.

One of the best ways to learn something is to have a core question at the back of your mind. Questions enable you to link the information you're learning to what you already know. This linking facilitates the growth of new neural pathways. You might ask yourself questions such as ...

- Where can I use this?
- Where else?
- How does this information connect with what I already know?
- How does this apply in my life?
- Where does this apply in my life?
- What's an example of this?



Background and Introduction to Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP)

Early studies

In the mid 1970s there were many different therapies being developed and academics keenly studied how the mind worked. Many were focused on how people became mentally or emotionally unstable.

A different focus

Richard Bandler and John Grinder, the initial developers of NLP, were more interested in how people achieved success. They were driven to find out what was different about someone who was successful, compared to someone else who might have the same qualifications, background and experience and yet was not achieving the same success.

They were initially led to study excellent communicators. People such as Virginia Satir, Milton Erickson and Fritz Perls. Virginia Satir was a highly skilled family therapist. Milton Erickson was a medical doctor who used his own form of hypnosis to help people make changes. Fritz Perls was a Gestalt therapist. Although using different modalities or methods, they were each enabling rapid and permanent change with their patients and clients. Bandler and Grinder didn't just study what these brilliant therapists did, they also wanted to understand the values, beliefs and thought processes that underscored their success.

The modelling of excellence

Bandler's and Grinder's studies of these people paved the way for some remarkable discoveries in the field of communication and therapy.

Not only therapy

However, there was never any intention that NLP should remain solely in the therapeutic domain just because that was where it began. Bandler and Grinder continued to discover how excellence is achieved in many fields through the process of discovering and then modelling excellence.

The Structure of Thinking

They found that 'thinking' has a structure and as such it can be copied and used by others. It follows, then, that adopting the thinking styles used by successful people could enable others to have better, fuller and richer lives.

Some Definitions of NLP

- The study of human excellence
- The science of programming your own brain
- The study of subjective experience – how people know what they know and do what they do.

The question

The question the developers asked themselves, to discover the structure of a person's success was, "How is this possible?" They believed that if something was possible for one person then it was possible for others too. They wanted to discover how someone did something so they could use the skills themselves and/or teach the skills to others.

They used the term "Neuro Linguistic Programming" to emphasise the connection between the neurological processes ("neuro"), language ("linguistic") and behavioural patterns that have been learned through experience ("programming") and can be organised to achieve specific goals in life.

Some Applications of NLP

- Learn to manage your emotional state so you can be your best more often.
- Use the phobia/trauma cure to help someone who has been traumatised by a past event or who has a consistent and debilitating phobic response.
- Help someone replicate excellent performance in other areas of their life.
- Facilitate learning the spelling strategy or employ proven memory techniques for yourself.
- Experience a more optimistic life by discovering and changing destructive beliefs.
- Gain and maintain rapport with anyone. Rapport has been proven to be fundamental to your ability to influence and persuade others - yet it's often overlooked.
- Master the structure of thought and take control of your own life.
- Learn and use processes used by healthy people or those who have recovered from major illness.
- Adopt the thinking processes and tactics used by the world's top athletes.
- Set goals with a 98% chance of success.
- Use a reframing technique to change someone's point of view about a product or service.

- Enhance relationships by finding common values as a basis for co-operation.
- Etc.

Unlimited uses

As increasingly more people become trained in NLP they develop new models that have even wider application. The uses of NLP are limited only by your own imagination and creativity - and even imagination and creativity can be expanded using NLP!

Used in all fields

People around the world recognise the ways in which NLP can assist them to achieve consistently successful outcomes in their lives, whether that be in business, management, education and training, health care, sport or their own personal development. In this Useful Guide you will learn processes, techniques and ways of thinking that will aid your own personal development and allow you to have more control over what you do.

[Read Neuro Linguistic Programming - Frequently Asked Questions \(and the answers!\)](#)

How NLP Applies to You

We've all been 'programmed' throughout our lives; by parents, teachers, the media and, of course, by ourselves. There's nothing sinister about this, it's just the way life is. Most of your programmes are extremely useful. Let's face it if you didn't have a programme for cleaning your teeth you would have to relearn the 'cleaning your teeth' programme every day. You wouldn't have time to learn anything new because you'd be relearning everything from the day before!

A 'programme' is simply a series of steps that leads to an outcome. Let's use the analogy of a computer to illustrate this.

If your goal is to create and save a document, there are some steps you would take to make this happen. The steps would be ...

1. Turn on the computer
2. Find the word processing application you want and open it
3. Select 'new document'
4. Key in information
5. Save it with a logical title
6. Save it somewhere so you can find it again.

You have to follow the steps

Creating a document in this way sounds really simple - and it is once you know how to do it. Yet, if you change the order of those steps - let's say you did step 4 before step 3 - you wouldn't achieve the goal. If you don't do step 5 and save it with a logical title, you might never find it again and if you don't do step 6 and save it where you can find it all your time will have been wasted - or you'll waste time in future trying to find it again.

A recipe example

A programme is also like a recipe; if you follow the process exactly as the recipe says you'll end up with something that looks like the picture in the recipe book. If you don't - you'll get something different. You might improve on the recipe by adding in your own variations or you might mess it up completely!

Our automatic programmes

In a similar way you have many recipes or programmes that you run automatically in your head. As I mentioned earlier, the programmes are mostly useful and get you the outcome you want. For example you probably have a, 'tying your shoelaces' programme, a 'having a shower' programme and a 'locking the door' programme. You've been running these for years and are

particularly skilled in performing these activities. So by now the chances are they're unconscious. They are also useful.

The teeth cleaning, shoelace tying and locking the door programmes are useful and no longer require conscious thought. Sometimes they are so unconscious you might wonder whether you've actually done them at all. If you have you ever gone back to check that you locked the door because you didn't remember doing it, you'll understand what I mean!

Some programmes are not so useful

You might have other unconscious programmes running that are not very useful at all. Sometimes, you might have a programme running that results in you feeling anxious, nervous or unhappy. Let's face it, you wouldn't deliberately set out to make yourself anxious! Most of the time you're not even aware that you're in the middle of one of these programmes because you've run it so often. You're only aware that you don't feel good.

So how do you change something that's unconscious?

That's a very good question! The first thing you need to know is that it is possible to get control of an automatic programme and then change it. Here are a couple of examples.

Example One: Driving a vehicle

Let's say you drive a manual car. When you were learning to drive a car you may have thought it was going to be difficult. You might have wondered how people could drive and listen to the radio at the same time. Let's face it, driving a vehicle is a complex task; you have to use your eyes, your ears, both hands, both feet and of course, your brain. You need to use mirrors inside and outside the vehicle and you need a good awareness of what other drivers are doing.

The individual processes involved in driving a car have to be undertaken in order; putting the car in gear before putting your foot down on the clutch won't do you or the car much good. And pulling out into traffic before you've checked your mirrors and indicated could well cause an accident. So your whole mind and body needs to be co-ordinated and the processes done in the right order for the car to move safely and smoothly.

Once you've passed your driving test you might start to feel more comfortable. Some of the individual techniques, such as changing gear, become automatic. With more experience you can drive, listen to the radio and eat your lunch - all at the same time! (Not that we recommend this!!)

You've become unconsciously skilled at driving a vehicle. In other words you're driving on auto-pilot. All you have to do is focus on where you're heading.

Now, imagine someone comes along and says, "Will you teach me how to drive?" How easy do you think it would be? Your, 'driving a vehicle programme' is no longer under your conscious control. You would really have to think about it before you could competently teach someone else to drive. This would involve consciously assessing every step in the driving process and breaking it down into manageable chunks that could then be taught to someone else. It is possible to do this and it will require conscious thought to ensure what you teach is accurate and follows a logical sequence.

Example two: Making Lasagne.

Let's say you've been making lasagne for years. Everyone loves your lasagne. You've made it so many times you could do it with your eyes shut. You don't have a recipe written down, it's all 'in your head.' Someone asks you to show them how you make it. So you start ...

"Well, first you need minced beef."

"How much?" asks your student chef

"Erm, I'm not quite sure - maybe a pound or half a kilo?"

"Then you need to chop some onions."

"How many onions?"

"Err, maybe a couple."

"Big ones or small ones?"

By now you might be starting to get annoyed and your student is frustrated. You're not trying to be difficult, it's just that you can no longer say how much of each ingredient is needed, you just 'know'. And this isn't easy to explain. Your lasagne making 'programme' is now so refined you don't weigh ingredients. It doesn't matter how much beef you've got you just 'know' how much onion, garlic etc. is needed to make it perfect.

"It's Just Natural."

Have you ever asked someone how they do something you are unable to do? Often they might answer by saying something like, "Oh, I don't know. It's just natural." The problem is, if they believe, "it's just natural" what do you think the chances are that they will be able to teach you? The answer is, none. If what they're doing is 'just natural' how on earth can they teach you? What they will

do is teach you what they THINK they do. They will be perplexed when you're unable to perform the skill that they now do 'naturally'. See the Driving and Lasagne Making examples above.

Success can come in various forms

While you may think of success as the achieving of a desired outcome, this is not always the case. People have a unique ability to be successful at all manner of negative outcomes; continuing to smoke or drink when they don't really don't want to, getting depressed when all they want is to be happy, repeating unwanted behaviours that they've tried to stop or getting anxious without knowing why.

The problem

The reason people can't change these negative strategies and behaviours is because they are now automatic. They no longer know, consciously how they do them.

NLP will give you the tools to change and could well be the way forward, giving you back the conscious control you need to change any negative programming so you feel better and achieve your goals. And that's exactly where we're heading.

Summary

- We all run automatic programmes for the activities we do every day.
- Mostly these programmes are useful and save us time and energy.
- Sometimes our automatic programmes prevent us being happy or reaching our goals.

How Thinking Works

You Think Using Your Senses (Modalities)

Let's start with the basics. You're thinking almost constantly. Yet you may never have really thought about the thinking process itself.

Thinking often involves all your senses - or modalities.

However, you often don't differentiate what type of thinking you're engaged in - all the senses get put together and referred to as 'thinking'.

Visual: Remembering visually (in pictures) things you've seen before, as you saw them. Imagining things you haven't yet seen.



Auditory: Recalling sounds and conversations you've had and calling up sounds and conversations you haven't yet had.



Kinaesthetic: Feeling emotions and/or tactile sensations you've experienced before and getting a grasp of what certain things might feel like in the future.



Olfactory: Recalling or imagining smells.

Gustatory: Remembering or imagining tastes.



Self Talk: Talking to oneself (Also called Auditory Digital. Although this isn't really a sense, it is a modality or means of expression.)



How Modalities 'Work'

To give you an example of these modalities and how they operate, imagine I said to you, "I took my dog out for a walk at 6 o'clock this morning and he started barking."

In response to that sentence you might have ...

- Made a picture in your mind of what you think my dog looks like.
- Imagined him barking.
- Perhaps have felt a bit anxious about him barking in the dark.
- Felt annoyed about a barking dog.
- Imagined what a dog feels like to stroke.
- Perhaps even have smelt a doggy smell.
- Hopefully there wouldn't have been a taste!
- Remembered a time you took your dog for a walk.
- Talked to yourself about why the dog's barking.
- Or any number of other variables.

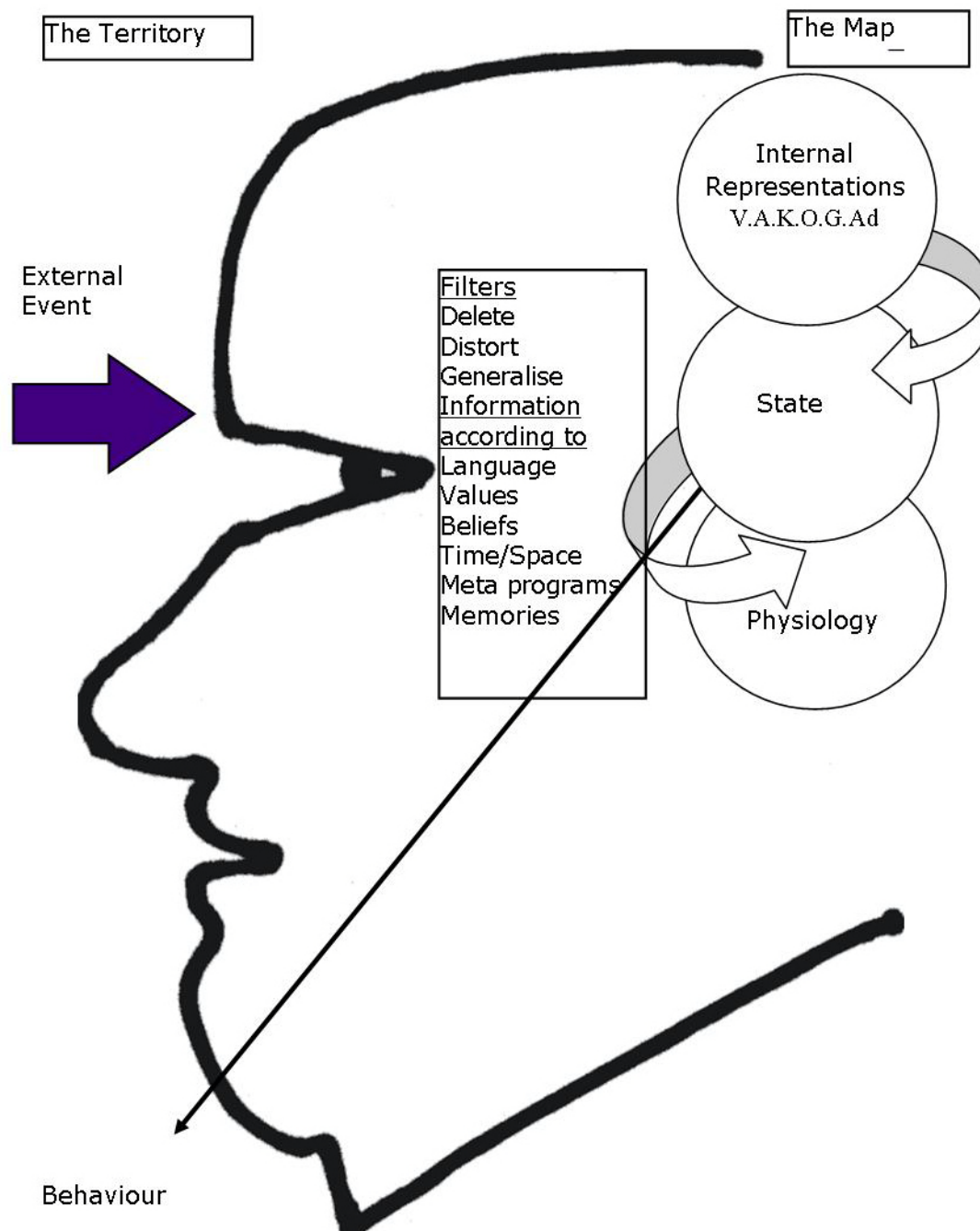
Looking through the bullet points above you'll see that 5 of the 6 modalities i.e. visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, olfactory (smell) and self talk could all have been involved in making 'sense' of that one sentence. And that's just in response to one sentence. Just imagine how much your mind is working when you're involved in a whole conversation!

See the article *The Map is not the Territory* in the Resources Section.

The NLP Communication Model

Click [here](#) to listen to me explain this model. Listening to an explanation and following along with the diagram is a more powerful way of really understanding how communication works.

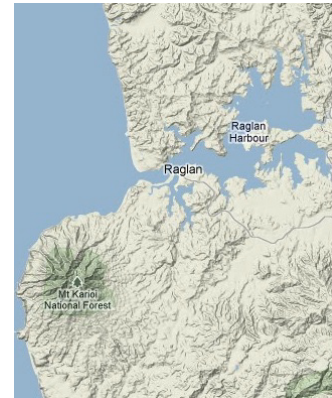
Once you've listened return to the next page to continue.



Mental Maps

Experiences are filtered

Your experiences, filtered by your beliefs, values, memories etc, form your mental 'maps' of the world. Thus, like most maps they do not contain all the information that was available in the original external event or 'territory.' A street map, for example, doesn't show land contours. A geographic map doesn't show schools and museums. All maps leave something out.



Communication requires many omissions

When you communicate with someone, you do so using only the information you have in your map. It's said that our maps contain only about 2% of the information that was available in the original experience. Even if you could convey 100% of your experience you would have to explain everything you heard, everything you saw and everything you felt, smelt, tasted and said to yourself. It would be so boring and long winded that no-one would want to listen!

People make their own maps

This is where things get really interesting! The person you are talking to will make pictures, sounds, feelings, tastes and smells and talk to themselves about your experience as you relate it. In other words they make their own internal map of your map. They do this to make sense of what you've said.

The maps don't necessarily match

So it's probably not all that surprising that the maps they make sometimes bear no resemblance to your map or your original experience. You have different maps. Hence misunderstandings and miscommunication! Even people at the same event will recall that event differently. If you've ever watched a film with some friends and then discussed it afterwards this becomes blatantly apparent; one person will have been focused on the fast cars, someone else on the clothes, another person might have been engrossed in the plot while a fourth fell asleep half way through. In the discussion afterwards it might seem like you all saw a different film!

Summary

- You think using all five senses or modalities; visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, smell and taste plus you talk to yourself.
- Your experiences, filtered by your beliefs, values, memories etc, form your mental 'maps' of the world
- Your mental maps are the way you re-present external events.
- Your map contains only about 2% of the information that was available in the original event.
- You constantly make new maps with the incoming information you receive.
- Your maps concerning an event will probably not match others' maps of the same event.

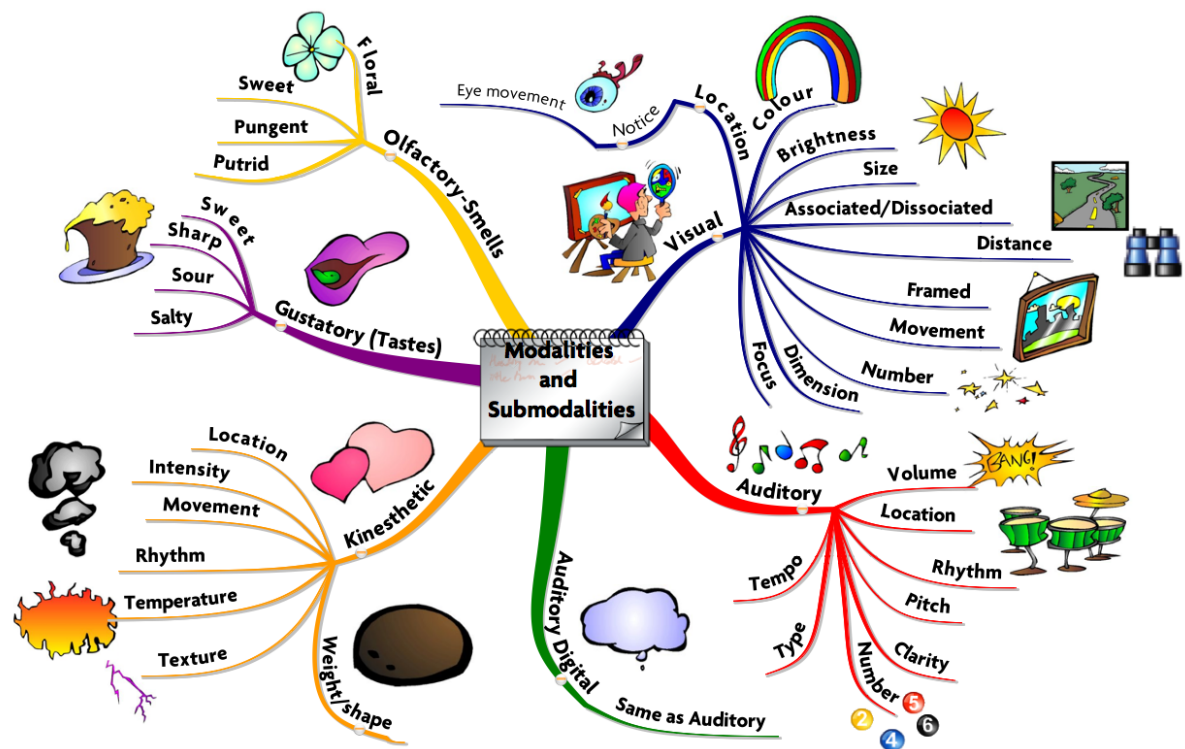
See the articles *The Map is not the Territory*, *"I understand what I think you said!"* and *Why English is Difficult to Learn* in the Resources Section.

The Submodalities

Although we code our maps using the main modalities or senses (Visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, taste, smell and self talk) it is the submodalities, or the finer distinctions of the main modalities which really create the, 'difference that makes a difference.' When the submodalities are changed your whole experience of an event changes too. And this is where things get really exciting.

The finer distinctions

Submodalities are the qualities or the finer details/distinctions of the main modalities. In the Visual modality, for example, colour, brightness and distance are three of the submodalities. You can see some of the other submodalities on the mind map below.



Control Panels of the mind

The modalities and submodalities are like the minds' control panels. Profound and life transforming NLP processes such as the Phobia/Trauma Cure, the Swish, Belief Change and Allergy Cure use modalities and submodalities as key components. As you'll see, hear and feel you can also use the power of submodalities in a variety of ways to amplify your success.

Change the Submodalities - Change Your Experience

When you change the submodality coding of your experience (which is, of course your map), it changes the memory of the experience itself, making it more compelling or less compelling. So when you remember a pleasant experience, the degree of pleasure you have related to that memory could be a direct consequence of the colour, brightness and distance of the visual image you hold in your mind's eye - or in your 'map'.

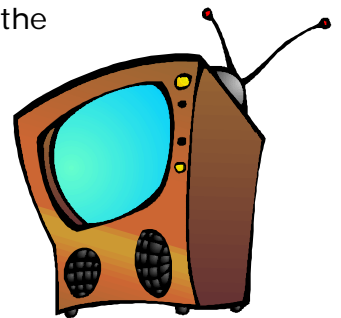
Here's another way of thinking about submodalities.

Imagine you were watching a black and white movie on an old 14 inch TV in your living room. The picture is a bit blurred and the sound is turned down and sounds scratchy. The TV is way across the other side of the room. Trying to watch it under these conditions might make you feel irritated, frustrated, annoyed, or disinterested.

What you see causes a change in how you feel

The way you feel is directly due to the lack of colour, the size of the image, the distance it is away from you and because you can't hear or see it properly.

Now imagine you are seeing an enjoyable film on a 60 inch LED TV, in colour, with surround sound. Imagine you're sitting fairly close. Your viewing experience would be greatly enhanced and accompanied by much more pleasurable feelings.



But what if you were watching a horror film?

If you were watching a horror movie on the 60 inch LCD TV it might appear just a little too realistic and be really scary. While the same movie on the black and white smaller screen version might seem insipid and therefore almost laughable by comparison.

You can make the same adjustments on your 'internal TV'

You can alter the pictures and sounds on a TV by using the control panels. You can alter the pictures and sounds and feelings by using the submodality control panels in your mind. You replicate the functions of the most complex TV continually and often unintentionally, in your mind. In your mind you can make love stories, thrillers or entire horror movies and then add dramatic sound effects.

Your mind doesn't know the difference

It's crucial to understand that your mind doesn't know the difference between something that you vividly imagine and something that's really happening or has happened.

'The mind doesn't know the difference between something you vividly imagine and something that's really happening.'

Your body responds to your thinking

Your body responds to whatever, images, sounds, sensations, tastes and smells you give it, whether real or imaginary. So if you have a particularly vivid imagination you can easily scare yourself silly! Your body responds to the way you think about your experiences (your map), not the experiences themselves (the territory).

A real life example:

A bus driver had been involved in an accident in which an elderly man had broken his collar bone. No one else was injured. Yet the bus driver became terrified as soon as he tried to get back behind the steering wheel of his bus. He'd been off work for several weeks when I saw him. I discovered that in his mind, he was picturing a MUCH more serious accident than the one that had taken place - a sort of worst case scenario. Initially he was only aware of his anxiety once he sat in the bus drivers' seat and not the full colour scary movie he was running in his head. Remember, the mind doesn't know the difference between something you vividly imagine and something that's really happening. His body was just responding to the mental images he was creating. Within a few minutes we'd replaced the horror movie with one of him looking and feeling confident driving his bus. He was comfortable enough then to return to work that afternoon and has been fine ever since.

Your map can leave you feeling lost and frustrated

Just as trying to follow a paper map can sometimes leave you lost, so can your internal maps. It is often the way you have unconsciously 'mapped' your experience using submodalities that keeps you feeling stuck or anxious.

Another real life example

A self employed business person could not make telephone calls to potential customers even though she knew that her business was failing. Every time she looked at and reached for the phone she had what she called her 'mental block.'

By questioning and observation we discovered what the 'mental block' was. Reaching for the phone to call potential customers triggered her to think about a woman who had once verbally abused her on the phone. She realised that she'd created some nasty pictures, sounds and critical self talk that began whenever she looked at the phone! A few 'submodality shifts' and the block was dissolved.

Awareness brings freedom

Once you're aware of what you do in your head, you have choice. And choice brings more freedom and control over your own life. You can control the submodalities of your experience to something that makes you feel better. And that's exactly where we're heading to next ...

Summary

- Submodalities are the finer distinctions of the main senses or Modalities. For example brightness is a submodality of the Visual Modality.
- Submodalities are like the minds' control panels and tweaking them can change the memory of your experiences.
- Your mind doesn't know the difference between something you vividly imagine and something that's really happening or has happened.
- Your body responds to the way you think about your experiences (your map), not the experiences themselves (the territory).
- When you're not feeling the way you want to feel it's usually because of an unconscious programme that's running in your mind.
- You can gain control of these unconscious processes

Let's get some practice

There's really nothing like practical, firsthand experience of a technique to illustrate its value and applicability to your life. So please read through the exercise below and use the form on the following page to complete it.

Submodality Exercise

Aim: To experience using submodality shifts with goals and motivation. Use the Chart on the next page (you might like to print it.)

1. Think about a goal you are highly motivated to achieve. You only need an overview of it, no details. For example, 'I want to run a half marathon' or 'I want to buy a boat.'
2. As you think about your goal and ask yourself the questions in the chart, write down your answers in the first blank column. Answer all the questions for that goal first.
3. Now think about something that you are unmotivated about. As you think about that thing run through the same questions, noting your answers in the second blank column.
4. Now go through the two lists and make a note of the differences between the two and highlight them. I'll bet there are quite a few!
5. Think of the goal you're motivated to achieve again and, 'turn up the submodalities' listed in the chart and see what happens. For example, as you think of that goal now, what happens if you make it brighter? What happens if you bring it closer? Pay attention to how your body feels as you make the submodality adjustments. You can keep any changes that make the goal feel more compelling. Any submodality shifts that make the goal feel less compelling can be returned to how they were.
6. Make a note of the submodality changes that made the goals feel most compelling. You can make new goals seem irresistible by coding them in the same submodalities of the goal you are motivated to achieve.
7. Now think about the goal you are unmotivated about. Try changing the submodalities of it so that they're the same as the submodalities of the goal you are motivated to achieve. Pay attention to your body and how you feel as you make the submodality adjustments.

If there's no change in how you feel about the goal you're not motivated to achieve, that's O.K. There could well be good reasons you're not motivated to achieve it! (See [The 9 Traps that Prevent You Reaching Your Goals](#).) Remember the main aim of the exercise is to experience what happens when you change the submodalities.

Submodality	Highly Motivated to Achieve Goal Title	Unmotivated to Achieve Goal
What's the picture you have in your mind when you think of that goal?		
Where is that image located in the space around you? E.g. in front, to the right etc.		
Is it in colour or black & white?		
Is it bright or dim?		
How big or small is the image?		
How far away is the image?		
Do you see it as if through your own eyes or do you see yourself in the picture?		
Is it framed or open at the edges ?		
Is it moving or still?		
What sounds are there associated with that picture?		
Are they loud or soft?		
What feelings do you have		

in your body when you think of that picture?		
Where are those feelings located?		
What are you saying to yourself when you see that picture?		
What tone of voice are you using?		
Any tastes or smells?		

For Read Out loud readers: The table has changed

Now you've had a quick overview of the impact that submodalities can have, you're probably excited about how you can enhance other aspects of your life by changing the submodalities of the way you think about them. Congratulations, you've reached the tip of the iceberg! Read on for the next thrilling instalment ...

Taking Control

There are ways you can take conscious control of your automatic programming. The way to begin is by paying attention. You can pay attention to the pictures, sounds and feelings and the way you talk to yourself. Taste and smell are generally less important and are not drivers for how you're feeling.

Submodality language

The language you use is not coincidental. Noticing how you describe your experiences will give you amazingly accurate information about what you're doing in your mind or map. Some people find it easier to listen to others to start with. Listen for submodality language because within the language is the technique to resolve it ...

1. It started off as a **small** issue but then **I blew it out of all proportion**.
Solution: Make the issue small again so you can see the whole issue and all the parts of it.
2. I can't seem to focus on the solution. **Solution:** Bring the issue into **sharp focus** and see what solution appears.
3. I need to get a **different perspective** on the problem. **Solution:** Look at the issue from a **different perspective**, perhaps think about it being closer, or look at it from the side or even pretend you're someone else, perhaps a complete stranger examining the problem.
4. I need to **get some distance** on the problem. **Solution:** Move it further away.
5. I can't get that **picture out of my mind**. **Solution:** Try turning the brightness down so you can't see a picture or turning it up so it just becomes white light, make it tiny and fire it off into the distance.
6. My life is so **drab**. **Solution:** Try adding some **colour**.
7. I need to **brighten up my life or add some colour**. **Solution:** See 6.
8. I'm feeling **overwhelmed**. **Solution:** Get it out of your head. Write down the things that are overwhelming you - preferably in a mind map format. It's much easier to see how things connect and influence each other when they're not going around and around in your head.
9. He's **in my face**. **Solution:** Move the picture further away, or down, or behind you.
10. I keep beating myself up about it. **Solution:** Stop it!
It's your mind and you're in control!



Summary

The language you use can give you a good indication of how you've coded your experience and which submodalities you can use to change any unhelpful programming.

Your Mind and Body Connection

Systems are vital to Optimal Functioning

A system is something that maintains its existence and functions as a whole through the interaction of its parts. Each part of a system may influence the whole system. So when you change one element there are always side effects.

Examples of systems are ...

- Your sound system
- Computer system
- A team
- A family
- A community
- A road traffic system
- You.

Systems depend on the individual parts of the system functioning correctly. If the structure of the system changes the behaviour changes. A fault or breakdown in any part of the system results in the whole system malfunctioning. For example a loose wire in your sound system might mean you receive only intermittent sound. A family member who is sick will affect the rest of the family in some way and a faulty traffic light can bring thousands of commuters to a grinding halt.

Your mind and body work together as a system.

The way you think affects how you feel. The way you feel affects how you think. That's how systems work. Each part of a system affects other parts of a system. Refer back to the NLP Communication Model to review how your mind/body system works.

Here's an illustration of how your thinking might affect how you feel:

- You see and/or hear something that you don't like, let's say it's a couple arguing.
- You judge that they shouldn't be arguing in public.
- You feel upset by it.
- You make pictures of times you've argued with your partner.
- You feel worse.
- You really 'step into' those old memories and completely relive them.
- You feel terrible.

You get the idea!

Even if you're not initially aware of your thoughts, your feelings give you a very good idea of what you're doing in your mind. If you're feeling bad, it is because of the way you're thinking - the map you're making. Remember how you feel has very little to do with events occurring outside you. It's how you interpret them (your map) that causes you to feel how you feel.

Change your map and you'll change how you feel.

Remember 'thinking' encompasses the pictures, sounds, feelings, tastes, smells and how you talk to yourself. Because your mind responds to whatever internal images, sounds and feelings etc you give it, it makes sense to focus on positive words, tones, pictures, etc. if you want to feel good.

Words and your body

Words themselves can have a profound positive or negative effect on your body. Long term, words can also affect your health.

Words affect your health

If you've ever used the childhood chant, 'Sticks and stones may break my bones but names can never hurt me' to respond to unkind taunts from kids at school, I'm sure you'll remember that words do indeed hurt!

How we 'make sense' of words

You use your five senses to 'make sense' of what you're told. You make a representation in your mind of the word you hear. For example, reading the word 'restaurant', your internal representation might be a picture of your favourite restaurant. You may recall the sounds of friends laughing or the kitchen noises in a restaurant, the feel of the napkins, the comfort of the chairs, the ambience of the place or the smell and taste of the food. You might talk to yourself about exactly which restaurant is your favourite. Or you might do something completely different in your mind! All the senses (modalities) as well as many submodalities might be engaged to make sense of that one word.

The representations you make in your mind can alter your state.

Internal representations occur almost instantaneously and for the most part unconsciously. You might only be aware of how you feel (your state). But your state is the result of the internal representations you made in your mind in response to what was said.

Positive Words = Positive Feelings

Positive words generally create good internal representations, resulting in positive feeling states. While negative words have different associated feelings.

Click [here](#) to listen and get some firsthand experience of how words impact your body.

Watch what you say!

I'm sure, deep down you understand the effect of harsh words. You are probably careful about what you say to others. But do you use the same care when you talk to yourself? Whether you say the words out loud or say them to yourself, they still have an effect.

What type of words do you use when you talk to yourself?

Imagine how you'd feel each night as you climbed into bed, if you'd used negative language to yourself all day long. Long term, negative thinking contributes to depression and ill health. On the other hand, positive conversations and positive self-talk contribute to good health and well-being. You could monitor your internal language using 'Steph's rule' :)

What's 'Steph's Rule'?

**Only talk to yourself the way you'd talk to
someone you really care about.**

This is such a simple concept it would be so easy to read it and not really take it on board. Yet, it is easily one of the most profound and life enhancing processes you could do for yourself. It could be challenging. If it is challenging - all the more reason to do it. It's so important I'm going to repeat it.

**Only talk to yourself the way you'd talk to
someone you really care about.**

Summary

- Your mind and body are a system
- The way you think affects how you feel. The way you feel affects how you think.
- When you change your thinking, how you feel changes
- Words trigger 'internal representation'
- Positive words = positive feelings.
- Use **Steph's Rule**: Only talk to yourself the way you'd talk to someone you really care about.

See the articles *How to change that Negative Self Talk* and *How to Sabotage the Night Terrorist*.

Silencing the Internal Terrorist

Your self talk has submodalities too. Do you have one of those nagging voices? You know the one, it just drones on and on telling you that you should do this or you ought to do that? Or it berates you for what you've done wrong, a mistake you've made, something you missed out on? I call it the internal terrorist!

You can use submodalities to change this too.

Think about that voice criticising you about something and get it clear in your mind. Got it? Great! Now go right ahead and make the changes below and notice what happens. Remember that adjustments can be made either way, so if a modification doesn't make you feel better, change it back to how it was.



- **Volume:** Check the volume. If it's loud turn down the volume, if it's soft turn up the sound. Does that make you feel better or worse?
- **Pitch:** How high or low is the pitch? If it's high pitched make it LOW PITCH and vice versa. How are you feeling now?
- **Clarity:** How clear is the sound? Can you muffle it or make it sharper? How does that feel?
- **Type:** Is it your voice or someone else's? What if you made it a voice like Donald Duck or another cartoon character? How's that feel? Not so easy to take it seriously now? Try a deep sexy voice ordering you around, "You know you really ought to put out the rubbish!"
- **Tempo:** Is it fast or slow? Speed it up so it sounds like the Chipmunks or slow it down so it's like a drawl.
- You could also slow down any accompanying pictures so that they're in slow motion or speed them up so they look like an old movie.

Maybe your terrorist has one of those chattering voices that starts as you climb into bed. It reminds you of what you haven't done today or what you need to do tomorrow, or repeats every conversation from the whole day's events. Try slowing it right down... because ... you ... know ... it's ... not ... very ... easy ... to ... stay ... awake ... when ... the ... voice ... is ... really ... slow ... and ... if ... you ... get ... it ... to ... go ... slower ... and ... slower ... and ... slower ... sooner ... or ... later it'll ... come ... to ... a ... complete ... stop!

There are two articles in the Resources Section at the end of this Useful Guide. One will help you change your negative self talk and the other will help you sabotage the Night Terrorist.

Summary

- Your self talk has submodalities as well
- Try changing the submodalities of any negative self talk and see what happens.

What's meant by Positive Thinking?

Positive thinking means different things to different people. In this context it means three things ...

1. Thinking about past and future events in a positive way.
2. Focusing on what you want.
3. Having Positive Expectations.

1. Thinking about past and future events in a positive way

The events in your life are just events. They are generally not positive or negative in and of themselves. It is your thinking - how you interpret those events - that result in different types of feelings and beliefs about good or bad, positive or negative. In other words it's the map you have created around the event that is positive or negative.

Optimistic people tend to focus on the positive side of most occurrences. They may have a basic belief that things happen for the best and can often look back on past events and remind themselves how things have changed for the better since then. They try to use positive language when they talk to themselves and search for something useful in even the most negative event. They take note of what they've learned-and move on.

Without this self awareness it would be easy to keep replaying the negative event in your head, beat yourself up about it using negative language and generally feel worse and worse as the day went on.

2. Focusing on what you want

You can't NOT think about something until you've thought about it first.

You might need to read that again.

Positive thinking also means focusing on what you want, rather than what you DON'T want. Focusing on what you don't want for any period of time is actually negative thinking.

Try this as an illustration of what I mean:

For the next 30 seconds try not to think about a clown ...



What happened?

Probably you thought about a clown! You created internal representations of what NOT to think about. Weird isn't it? This is because your mind can't easily process negations. It responds to whatever representations you give it, whether positive or negative. You cannot NOT think about something until you've thought about it first! Trying NOT to think about a clown probably didn't do your psyche much damage - unless you have [coulrophobia](#). But, if you're constantly thinking of horrible that things you don't want to happen, your body will respond by making you feel awful and anxious.

More examples?

What happens if you focus on 'NOT being late'? Far better to concentrate on, 'being on time.' And what about when you give a young child a drink with the instruction, 'Don't spill it!' only to watch them do exactly that!

This simple fact has far reaching effects.

If you persistently focus on what's missing, what's gone wrong, or what you don't want, you programme your mind to filter for things that match what you're thinking about. The more you concentrate on what you don't want, the more you notice those things and the worse you'll feel. And the more likely you are to get exactly what you don't want! Remember your mind responds to the internal representations you give it. It doesn't differentiate between what you want and what you don't want. And it can't tell the difference between something that you vividly imagine and something that's really happening. So negative thinking attracts more negative thinking. Now you understand how that occurs you can change your internal language, the pictures and sound track of your mind so you get better results in your life and reach your goals more easily. But more about goals later ...

3. Having Positive Expectations.

You'll remember from the NLP Communication Model that your map is the result of how you filter your external experiences. When you expect certain things to be true then a part of your brain called the RAS (Reticular Activating System) focuses your attention so you notice those things showing up in your life. The more you focus positively on what you expect, the more you'll see them in your life.

You can read an article in the Resources Section called *How Expectations Create Your Life Experiences*. It explains this process in more detail.

Some Ways to Use Submodalities:

- Once you have set a goal, make it more compelling by putting yourself fully into the picture. You can do this by imagining stepping into your goal at the time you've achieved it. Notice what are you seeing, hearing and feeling. Now turn up the submodalities. For instance, make it brighter, turn up the volume.
- Change submodalities to ensure your goal is so compelling that you feel completely drawn towards it.
- Change the submodalities of unpleasant experiences or blockages.
- Find out what people do in their heads and help them change things that are not supporting their goals.
- Change the submodalities of any self sabotaging voice.
- Add your own ideas below

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Summary

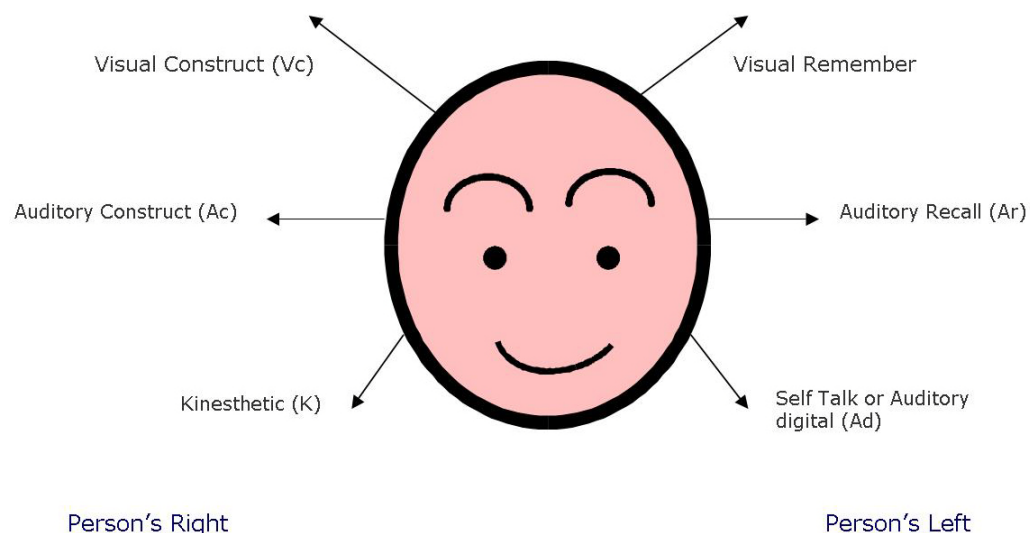
- Events are just events. They are not positive or negative in and of themselves
- Optimistic people tend to focus on the positive side of most occurrences and learn what they can.
- Focus on what you want - not what you don't want.
- Focusing on what you don't want will get you more of the same.
- Having positive expectations programmes your mind for success.

The Eyes Have it

You already know people think using their senses or modalities. You see images (visual), hear sounds (auditory), taste tastes (gustatory) smell smells (olfactory), feel sensations and emotions (kinaesthetic) and talk to yourself (auditory digital). Generally, you put all these sensory representations together and call the result, 'thinking.'

You can tell the type of thinking someone is engaged in

People move their eyes in different directions depending on the type of thinking they are doing. By watching someone as they are talking to you you'll notice their eyes move in different directions. The diagram below shows the eye accessing of about 90-95% of the population. In a small percentage of the population the pattern below will be reversed, which means they'll move their eyes like a mirror image of the diagram below.



- Vc Visual Construct:** Seeing images of things not seen before or seeing things differently from how they were seen before.
- Vr Visual Remember:** Seeing things that have been seen before, in the way they were seen before.
- Ac Auditory Construct:** Hearing sounds and words not heard before.
- Ar Auditory Recall:** Remembering sounds heard before.
- K Kinaesthetic:** Feelings, emotions, tactile sensations (touch) and proprioceptive feelings (tiny muscle movements).
- Ad Auditory Digital:** Talking to oneself.

Test it out

Obviously it's not that easy to check your own eye accessing preferences by looking in the mirror! What you can do is get together with a friend or family member and ask him/her some of the questions on the next page. Notice where he/she looks first. Then get him/her to ask you a few of the questions and to pay attention to where you look.

You can only tell the type of thinking

Remember the Eye Accessing chart only tells you the type of information a person is searching for - not specific thoughts. He or she may not follow the logical pattern above. For example, let's say you asked them an 'auditory' question such as, "Which is the loudest - a fire engine siren or a police car siren?" If someone prefers representing information visually they may look in Visual remember first. They might do this even though you asked them an Auditory Remembered question.

Why?

It's usually because with a visual preference they need to visually remember, or picture, a police car and a fire engine before they can tell you which is louder (auditory).

What if the person looks straight ahead?

If a person looks straight ahead and their eyes defocus, they are visualising something, usually something that is familiar. If you want to get them to look somewhere other than straight ahead, ask them something that requires them to access more detail or the more of the submodalities. For example if you asked him the colour of his first car and he looks straight ahead and says, "blue", ask him, "What shade of blue?"

Another way of telling someone's sensory preferences is by the sensory words they use ...

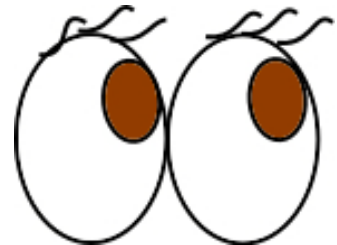
- A person using their visual sense may say, "That looks really clear to me, I can really see how focusing on that particular aspect will show off the whole project."
- A person using auditory language may say something like, "Let's talk it through because I'd like your opinion on this new product. If we're on the same wavelength I'll call the office and sound out the boss about it."
- Kinaesthetic language might be, "I need to come to grips with this and I'm not quite getting the drift of it at the moment. We'll be skating on thin ice"

if we try to present this to the boss without being really concrete about our intentions."

Eye Accessing Elicitation Questions

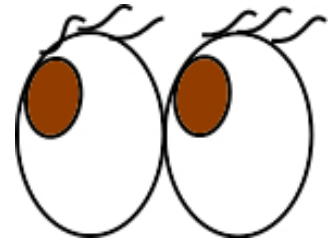
Visual Remembered

- What colour is at the top of a traffic light?
- What was the colour of your first car?
- How many windows are there in your lounge?
- What colour top did you wear yesterday?
- How many chairs are there in your house?



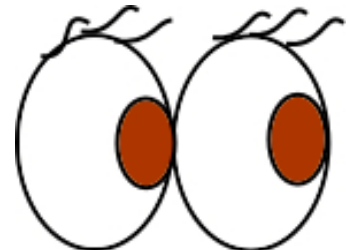
Visual Constructed:

- What do you look like sitting in that chair?
- What would a giraffe with purple hair look like?
- What will you look like in 30 years time?
- What will you be doing tomorrow?
- How would your lounge suite look in your bedroom?



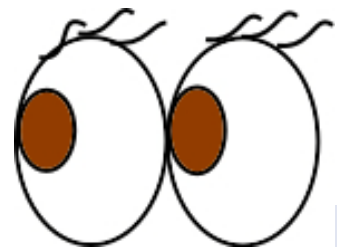
Auditory Remembered:

- Which is louder, your car door slamming or your front door slamming?
- Think of your favourite piece of music.
- What was the last thing I said?
- What does material sound like when it rips?
- How does a lawnmower sound when it's starting up?



Auditory Constructed

- What would a group of people clapping, turning into the sound of thunder, sound like?
- What would a whistle sound like in space?
- What would your best friend sound like with a squeaky voice?



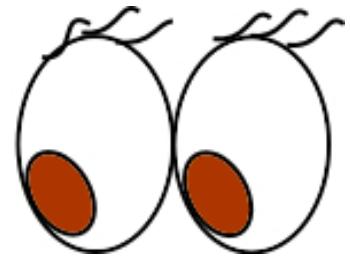
Auditory Digital (Self Talk)

- What's the 7th word of the National Anthem?
- What do you say to yourself to psych yourself up?
- Recite, "Mary had a little lamb" to yourself.



Kinaesthetic

- What would your hand feel like if you plunged it into a bucket of ice?
- What does it feel like to be wrapped in a big, warm, fluffy towel?
- What does it feel like to stroke a cat?
- What does your favourite chair feel like?
- How does your favourite piece of clothing feel?



How to Use Eye Accessing and Sensory Language

Until now you might have been totally unaware that people looked in different directions when they were talking. Perhaps you noticed it but hadn't given it much thought.

Begin to pay attention

You could just begin noticing how people access different senses by moving their eyes and seeing if they have a preference. Asking the questions on the previous page will give you a good idea of this. Pay attention to your own preferences too.

How do you talk to yourself?

Observe HOW you talk to yourself when you look down and to your left (self talk). Are the words positive and affirming, so that you feel good? If not, change the words, the tone and the speed and check if you're feeling better!

Strengthen your auditory sense

Listening to the tone, rhythm and the actual words used by someone when you're on the phone will strengthen your auditory sense. Sometimes it helps to isolate just what you can hear, by closing your eyes so you're not distracted visually. Do the same when you're listening to music.

Remembering

If you want to remember a particular piece of information or how to spell a word, try visualising it in your visual remember (up to your left). Visualising is also important for creativity and quicker than the other senses. You can see a picture all at once whereas listening to someone tell you about the picture would take a long time and be dependent on your interpretation of their words.

Physical and emotional awareness

You can be more aware of how your body feels (kinaesthetic) by noticing internal and external sensations and emotions. What are you feeling right now? For example are any parts of your body tense? Can you feel your clothing against your skin? How do you feel emotionally right now?

Summary

- People move their eyes in different directions when they think.
- You can tell what 'type' of thinking they're engaged in by where their eyes move.
- People also use visual, auditory or kinaesthetic words when they talk.
- Notice how you speak to yourself when you look down and to your left.

Get in a Great State

You saw in the NLP Communication Model how your state affects your thinking, your physiology and your behaviour. The way you think affects your state and your state affects how you think.

You've probably met people who believe that other people, problems, circumstances or the environment cause them to feel a certain way. But you know that you control your own emotional state by your thinking.

Many people who are successful long term have learnt to control their emotional state and physiology.

How useful would it be to have another way to change your state so that you could, for example be relaxed at the dentist or confident when talking to your boss or in an interview? What about having focused attention when working on a key project?

Ta Dah! Introducing Anchoring

An easy way to achieve a great state is through a simple technique known in NLP as anchoring.



A Natural Occurrence

Anchoring is something that occurs naturally in many situations all day long. The definition of an anchor is: A stimulus (anchor) in one sensory system that causes a reaction in another sensory system, which is then associated with the stimulus. For example, hearing a song brings back a feeling of a past (or current) love. You know the one? The one you have the same automatic reaction to every time you hear it?

We make these associations throughout our lives. Some are positive, some less positive and some downright negative!

More examples:

- Hearing a favourite song or tune that evokes feelings of romance, memories of a previous or current love. Smelling popcorn might remind you of the last movie you saw.
- Seeing a photo will bring back all the memories of the time the photo was taken. In fact that's why we take photos — they're a way of encapsulating memories, including the feelings that were present at the time.

- Revisiting a place you haven't seen in a while and feeling excited like you did when you spent time there as a child.
- Putting on your slippers might make you relax.
- Feeling the comfort of your bed may cause you to fall asleep.
- Tasting a certain food reminds you of the person who used to cook it for you.
- Smelling the dentist's office might make your stomach churn.

Advertisers use anchoring

Words themselves can be powerful anchors too, especially when linked with visual and/or auditory suggestions. By watching images, hearing words and music together with seeing a product, we associate one with the other. When we experience them together more than once we get anchored. This is how advertisers convince us to buy their products.

Do-it-Yourself Anchoring

Would you like to anchor yourself into being relaxed, as easily as you're anchored into remembering a brand name? Or bring back a state of confidence just by making a discreet gesture? Might be useful? Keep reading to learn how to achieve this.

4 Keys for Successful Anchoring

Before we get to the anchoring exercise there are 4 keys that it's useful to know and that will help you get the most from the exercise.

1. Choose a unique gesture.

I recommend pressing the thumb and middle finger of your non-dominant hand together as long as this isn't a gesture you use anywhere else. It's discreet as well which is important for key number 2.



2. You must be able to repeat the gesture when you need it.

Pressing your thumb and finger together is easy to repeat in exactly the same way when you want to feel relaxed. It has the added advantage of being something you can do without others noticing. It is possible to set anchors on other parts of your body. For example you could press on your kneecap. However, it's important to remember where you might want to use your anchor in the future. It might be OK to press your kneecap if you're sitting down but it might not look so cool if you're standing or

walking! You need to use the anchor in exactly the same way for desired state to be triggered. If you press a different place it won't work.

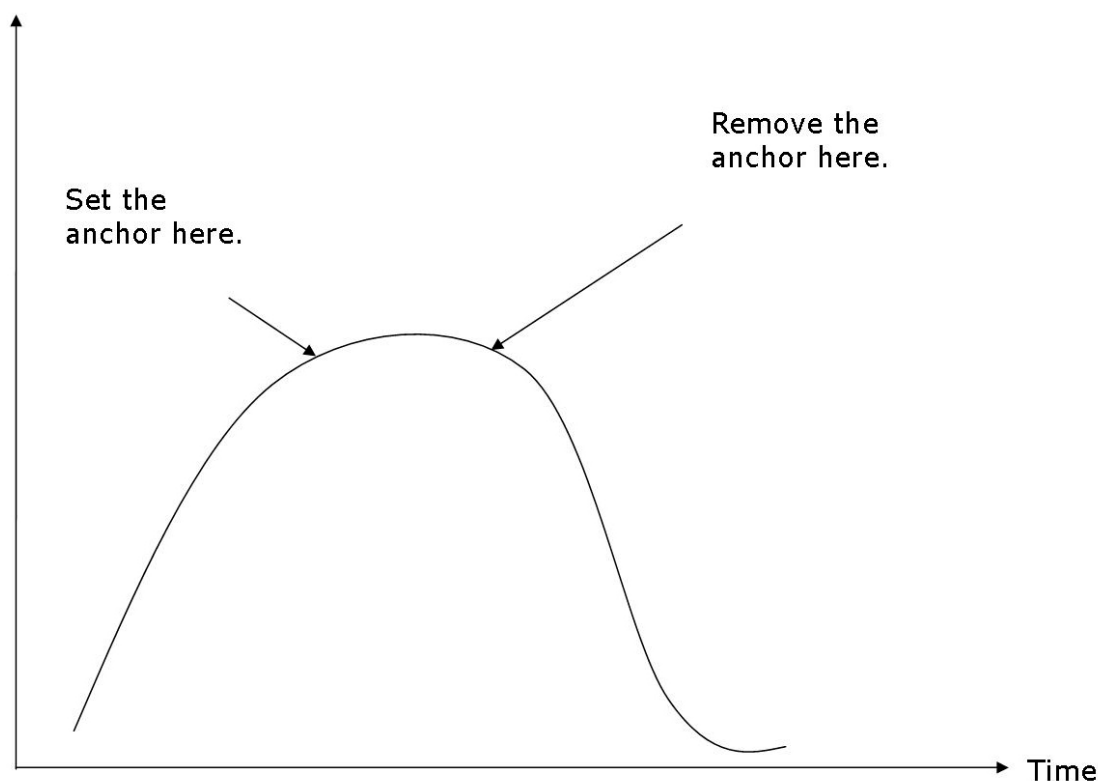
An auditory example of this: Think back to the song that evokes that feeling of romance or love. When you hear a different version of that song, perhaps sung by another singer, it just doesn't have the same impact does it? The words and music are the same but somehow it's not quite 'right.'

3. You must be properly in the desired state when you make the initial gesture.

So if you want to be confident you'll need to find a time in the past when you felt totally and completely confident. If you genuinely can't find a time like that you can use your imagination to make one up. Remember, your mind can't tell the difference between something that's real and something you vividly imagine.

4. Timeliness is important.

In setting an anchor for confidence it's important that you are confident when you set it. When you're really feeling confident, hold the gesture for 10-15 seconds at the peak of the experience and then let go.



Anchoring exercise

We're going to use a physical anchor of pressing the thumb and middle finger of your non-dominant hand together (not just yet though!).

So, if you're left handed you'll use the thumb and finger of your right hand, and if you're right handed you'll use your left thumb and finger. If you're ambidextrous, just pick either hand.

When we've finished the exercise it will mean that whenever you want to feel confident, you'll simply make the same gesture (pressing your thumb and finger together) and the feeling of confidence will return. OK, ready?

1. Think back to a specific time when you felt confident.

Now imagine stepping into your body at that time and notice the information that was available in each sensory system or modality ...

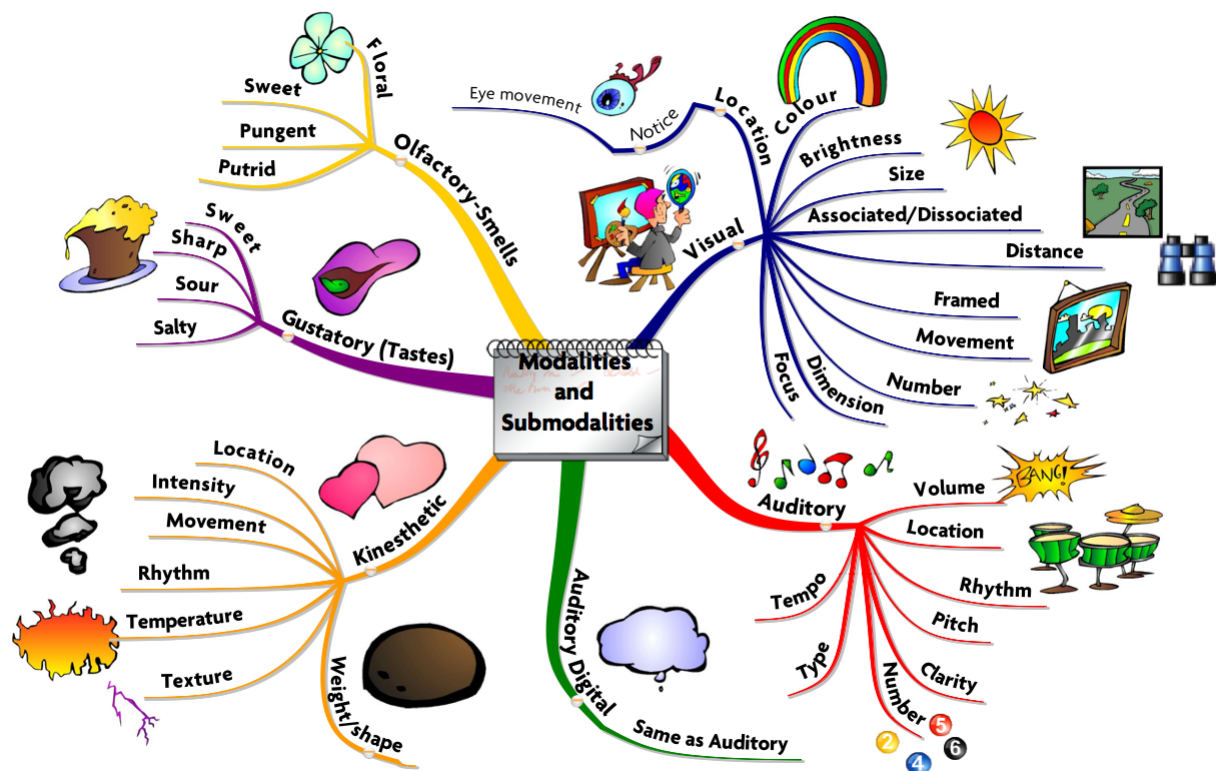
- What you could see at that time?
- What you could hear?
- How did it feel in your body, (you may want to adjust your posture to reflect that feeling of confidence)
- Were there any tastes or smells present?
- What were you saying to yourself when you had that confidence and how did your voice sound when you spoke out loud?

2. Try adjusting some of the submodalities (see Submodality Mind Map below) and check if it makes the feeling stronger.

(For example, does making it brighter or bringing it into sharp focus make the feeling stronger).

Going through each of your sensory systems in this way will make the feeling stronger.

When you're feeling the feeling of confidence really strongly, just anchor it with your chosen gesture, releasing it once the feeling peaks.



3. Now get up and move around and put your mind on something else for a few minutes
4. Finally, make that gesture again and notice the feeling of confidence come flooding back!
5. Whenever you need confidence in the future you can just make that same gesture and that wonderful confident feeling will permeate your body.

Make it more Powerful

You can make your anchor and thus the state more powerful by "stacking" it.

How do you do this? You can do two things.

Firstly, go through the exercise again using another experience of when you've felt confident.

Secondly, in future, when you notice yourself feeling confident, go ahead and anchor the confident state at the time on the same anchor you created previously. Then anytime you want to access confidence all you'll have to do is duplicate the gesture and all the feelings of confidence will come flooding back!

Look out for anchors

Now that you're aware of anchors you'll be able to notice lots of anchors in the world. Watch basketball players, 'high five' each other before and during a game. They may not realise it but they're triggering the powerful feelings and

emotions necessary to play with confidence and passion that they anchored at the end of their last winning game. If you have pets or children it's interesting to observe what they're anchored to. My dog only has to hear me pick up the car keys for him to appear from nowhere and, as soon as I make moves to leave, my parrot starts saying, 'Bye, bye'!

How long do anchors last?

I'm often asked about how long anchors last. To satisfy your curiosity, think back again to that song; how long ago did you first hear it? Whether it was 5 or 50 years ago it obviously has the same impact today and will probably continue to have that effect for the rest of your life.

How many anchors can I have? Is there a limit?

There isn't really a limit, but you will need to remember what they're all for! You will probably find it most useful to anchor several states together using the same gestural anchor. Relaxation, calm and peace would naturally go together and you could stack similar states (perhaps tranquillity or ease) on the same anchor. Choose a different gestural anchor and stack a combination of highly energised states together; anticipation, excited, energised etc. A third anchor could be a highly focused state; perhaps concentration, calm and steadiness could be anchored together. For most people, three anchors are sufficient. Just don't put them all on the same gestural anchor or they will just cancel each other out!

Do the gestures have to be very different?

The gestures do not have to be that different. They just have to be in a different place. So you could use your thumb and first finger for one anchor and your thumb and second finger for another. You could also set an anchor by pressing a knuckle or by squeezing your ear lobe. Remember that anchors can occur in any modality so the anchor could also be something other than a gesture. E.g. ...

- a particular word that is meaningful to you
- an object such as a lucky charm
- a song or piece of music
- a particular smell or taste.

The main thing is to pick something that is unique and that is always available. This is why words and gestures are most popular - you always have your body and mind with you!

Want some help to set an anchor for creating instant confidence right now? Click [here](#) to listen to an audio and I'll take you through the exercise.

Setting an Anchor for a Desired State

Here is the full anchoring exercise without all the explanations.

1. Decide what type of state you would like to have. It might be confidence, calm or relaxed for example. You can use your preferred state in every instance where it says, 'state' in the exercise.
2. Choose a gesture that is unique and easily replicable. This will be the resource anchor. One you could find useful is pressing together the thumb and middle finger of your non dominant hand.
3. Now remember a time in the past when you felt (state). If you genuinely can't remember a time, then you can invent one. It will work just as well. Once you can remember a specific time, put yourself back into that memory by ...

Stepping into your own body in that memory, seeing things through your eyes, hearing through your ears and feeling that feeling of (state) completely now. Adjust your body posture so that you're sitting or standing the way you do when you're feeling that (state) now. Notice what you say to yourself when you have that (state) and the kind of voice you use. Notice how your voice sounds when you speak out loud. **Optional:** You might like to walk around noticing how it feels to be in that state and how you stand and walk when you are (state). You could also alter the submodalities and notice how that improves the (state).

4. Wait until you're feeling that (state) strongly and fully, then just make that gesture, so that the feeling becomes totally associated with that gesture. (Pause) After the feeling feels as if it's peaked, just release the gesture.
5. Now, have a stretch and look out the window. Focus on something you can see or hear for a few seconds to get yourself out of that state.
6. **Test the anchor:** Make the gesture again and notice how making that gesture causes the feeling of (state) to return. Check that this works by noticing yourself feeling and behaving (state), then get yourself out of the state again by getting up, checking the time or noticing what's happening outside. If the (state) felt strong, continue with step 8 and/or 9. If not, repeat steps 3-7.
7. **(Optional)** You can repeat the process for other similar or associated resourceful feelings such as concentration, enthusiasm, etc, if you have time, 'stacking' them on the same anchor. Make sure the states are

associated. For example; peaceful, calm and relaxed could all be anchored on the same anchor. However, you wouldn't anchor, energised on the same anchor as peaceful because they'd counteract each other!

8. Now think of a time in the future, a time where in the past you would have found it a little challenging to feel (state). When you've found a specific time make and hold that gesture again and run through the event in your mind, noticing the feeling of (state) come flooding back and how you're being in (state) changes the whole event in a positive way.

If you'd like help to anchor a state of confidence, click on this [link](#). It will take you to an audio on the Pansophix web site where you can hear me take you through the process.

More about Anchors

Not all anchors are positive. As I mentioned earlier people can also be anchored negatively ...

- Students may be anchored to negative feelings they experienced in a classroom as children. So when, as adults they find themselves in a learning environment, all the old feelings surface again, making it hard for them to learn.
- Couples may respond in unhelpful ways to certain looks or tones of voice.
- Being summoned to the boss's office can bring up feelings of dread.
- The smell of the dentist's office may make your stomach churn.



Phobias are extreme examples of negative anchoring.

Identifying and changing either the stimulus and/or the response to the stimulus is part of successful personal change work.

Anchoring techniques allow you to access resourceful states of mind and body when and where you want them so that you feel more in control of your life. You can gain control over your emotions and positively influence the effect you have on others.

How you can use Anchors

In the exercise above you created an anchor for a particular state you'd like to make use of.

You might already have a confidence anchor that you weren't aware of!

Let me explain. One thing that many people do when they've achieved something worthwhile is to make a fist, clench their arm and say an enthusiastic, "Yeess!"

If this is something that you do, you've already got an anchor! Let me prove it. Stand up, make that gesture right now, say, "Yeess" in the same voice tone as you did when you last made the gesture. Notice those positive feelings that you anchored to your achievement come flooding back! You could use that anchor anytime to bring back great feelings - but if you don't want to answer awkward questions you might have to do it in a cupboard!

Other ways to use Anchors ...

- You could remember a time when you felt particularly relaxed and get back into that state. As you re-experience that state you could anchor it with a word, phrase or with a gesture.
- At a time when you're experiencing a particularly useful state such as deep concentration, you could anchor it at the time of the experience.
- In a team meeting when everyone is paying attention and is really curious you could anchor those states by using a particular gesture that you don't normally use.
- You might create a group anchor aligned to a highly energetic state – such as a 'high five.'
- In business meetings you might anchor good feelings by using a particular handshake which you can use again at the beginning of the next meeting.
- You can use words, voice tonality, facial gestures, even tastes and smells. You can anchor things spatially and create anchors associated with objects.
- Use anchors to train your pets.

Summary

- You control your own emotional state by the way you think.
- You can also change how you feel through the technique of anchoring.
- Anchoring is a naturally occurring phenomenon.
- You can anchor a positive state to a simple gesture.
- You can anchor several similar states to one gesture.
- Gestures, words, music, objects, tastes or smells can all serve as anchors.
- Anchors can occur in any sensory system (modality).
- You can enhance the feeling state by adjusting the submodalities.
- You can make an anchor more powerful by 'stacking' it.
- Anchors can last a very long time.
- Not all anchors are positive
- Phobias are extreme examples of negative anchoring
- You probably already have anchors that you weren't aware of previously

When Tempers Flare... (Say Goodbye to Anger)

Is Anger really so bad?

While anger is often thought of as being a negative and destructive, it can also be useful and constructive. Anger can propel you to make changes; to your own lifestyle, to a community or even a country or continent. Many positive law reforms have been put in place in response to anger over injustices. So anger has its place. Gandhi and Nelson Mandela spring to mind as people whose anger at injustice was controlled and channelled to fuel positive change.

The Destructive side of Anger

Anger is really just another of the emotions we're capable of experiencing as human beings. When anger is out of control it can create many problems. Anger that's felt emotionally but restrained and not dealt with can cause problems too.

Most people experience other emotions prior to feeling anger. Frustration, resentment, jealousy, hurt, annoyance, despair, overwhelm and upset are some of the emotions that will likely precede anger. If you become angry frequently it's most likely that you're not dealing effectively with these other, less destructive emotions.

The Build-Up

When negative emotions are not successfully dealt with they act like another filter of your experience. They focus your attention on what's wrong - so you begin paying more and more attention to what's wrong. And of course, the more you do this, the more you'll notice what's wrong. Each time you notice what's wrong, the negative feelings bubble up getting stronger and stronger until you just 'explode'.

Reasons for Anger

When you experience anger it means you disagree or disapprove of something or someone. It might be that you oppose a point of view, you don't like someone's behaviour or, to be more general, you're not getting what you want or think you deserve.

Anger triggers the body's fight or flight response. Whether anger is outwardly expressed or kept inside, there are some serious, destructive short and long term health problems linked to anger ...

- Headache
- Digestion problems, such as abdominal pain
- Insomnia
- Increased anxiety
- Depression
- High blood pressure
- Skin problems, such as eczema
- Heart attack
- Stroke.

Source: [State Government of Victoria, Australia.](#)

Apart from these problems there are other issues that result from anger; the breakdown of relationships, feelings of guilt and remorse, verbal or physical violence and severely limited career options.

Recurrent and inappropriately expressed anger could well be reflecting problems in the way you think and respond to the world around you and the people in it.

The Short Fuse

If you believe you have a 'short fuse' or a quick temper it means you have been unsuccessful in dealing with the lesser emotions described earlier.

What is Temper?

Temper is an instantaneous emotional and angry response to a situation or person. It's often irrational and it's a learned behaviour. It's easy to think of the three-year-old having a tantrum in the supermarket when he/she can't have what they want. Temper surfaces because of this frustration.

What's the difference between a three-year-olds temper tantrum and the tempers experienced by adults?

The only difference is the age. The three-year-old has no verbal way of expressing his frustration. Or he has learned that he gets what he wants by having a tantrum - so the tantrum becomes a means to an end. The adult, like the three-year-old has not learned appropriate ways to express his frustration. Or he's learned that he gets what he wants by losing his temper - so the temper becomes a means to an end.

Habitual Patterns of Behaviour

If you get angry it can seem as if your anger is caused by other people and situations. If you've read this far in this Useful Guide you will have long ago realised that you create all your emotional states (including anger) moment by moment by the way you interpret external events. Uncurbed anger is caused by inflexible thinking. Basically, you have expectations about how others should behave or how situations ought to evolve and when your expectations are not met, you become angry. To put this another way you interpret others' behaviour and how situations evolve according to a fixed set of criteria in your own map. When your map doesn't match with what's expected, you snap.

You've already seen from the NLP Communication Model that there is only a very slim chance of your map matching someone else's map. Once you are aware of this it becomes easier to acknowledge that others do think differently to you - and that that's O.K. This acknowledgment will develop flexibility in your own thinking and you'll find yourself experiencing life in a calmer, healthier way.

Anger is a control issue

If you're an angry person, you want things your way. You believe that if everyone behaved according to your way of thinking, the whole world would be perfect. So you try to control people and circumstances so that the world can be perfect. This isn't a bad thing in itself - just completely unrealistic. The first irony is that you would probably fight the hardest if you thought someone was trying to control you. The second irony is that when you've lost your temper, you are no more effective than a puppet on a string. Everything that doesn't comply with your way of thinking 'pulls your strings' by triggering those emotions that contribute to anger.

The Real Victim

When you try to control those around you, you become a victim of your own emotional states, often suffering guilt and remorse as a consequence of 'losing the plot'. After an outward display of anger and when you're sufficiently calm, you use negative self talk and often resolve to do something different 'next time'. However, each subsequent bout of anger seems to reinforce your anger cycle, contributing to the health problems outlined earlier.

Why Anger 'Management' doesn't work

Over time anger becomes an instantaneous and automatic negative response. In other words, it seems as if you have no control. You're in no position to 'manage

your anger' when you're experiencing it. And anyone who suggests you do so is liable to trigger even greater anger. Automatic anger like this becomes anchored to whatever triggered it; a voice tone, words, a look etc. (See Get in a Great State)

10 Ways to stay Calm

There are several ways to change how you feel so you respond to events and people in a more relaxed manner ...

1. Identify the triggers
2. Don't try to control everything and everyone
3. Learn more flexible ways of thinking
4. Change your self talk
5. Stop trying to be perfect or make the world perfect
6. Stop mind reading
7. Learn self awareness and communication skills
8. Focus on you
9. Allow people (including yourself) to make mistakes
10. Be happy rather than right.

Let's take a nice, gentle stroll through each one so you can determine those that will work best for you.

1. Identify the triggers

You might want to start by listening to the explanation of the NLP Communication Model again. Click [here](#) to listen while you look at the diagram of the model. The audio explains how you control your own emotions by how you interpret external events. If you get angry easily it can feel as if the anger is automatic and outside your control. And, of course, once you are angry you're in no frame of mind to change that.

What you can do, when you're calm, is think back to the last time you got angry. What frame of mind were you in before you got angry? Were you already feeling frustrated for example? Notice what it was that you saw or heard immediately before you became angry or frustrated. Some things that typically trigger these emotions are ...

- Certain words or phrases
- A look on someone's face
- A particular tone of voice
- A comment that you disagree with
- Someone behaving in a way that you didn't expect

- A touch
- Even a smell or a taste can all be triggers.

Once you've noticed what the trigger for your frustration or anger was, what happened next? What happened in your mind, that is; what did you interpret the trigger to mean?

Often it can appear as if your response is automatic. This isn't true – it's just habitual.

You've done the same thing so often that it just feels automatic. To discover the process that you go through in order to get angry, it's useful to slow things right down in your mind – imagine it happening in slow motion.

Here are some examples ...

- a) You heard someone talk to you in a certain tone of voice that you didn't like and you felt resentful. When, in your mind and after the event, you slow the process down you notice that you interpreted the voice as being patronising.
- b) You saw a look on someone's face. You interpreted the look as disagreeing with your point of view and you felt angry because you thought you were 'right'.

O.K. So you've identified the trigger and your immediate response. Remember it's your interpretation that's causing the anger, not what's happening external to you. You can't blame others for how you choose to feel. You can think about ways that you can interpret events differently and change your responses. It's your mind and you're in control of it. If you think others cause your emotional outbursts you've gone back to being that puppet I talked about earlier. So question your interpretation. Let's use those previous two examples to illustrate how you might do this ...

- a) You heard someone talk to you in a certain tone of voice that you didn't like and you felt resentful. When, in your mind and after the event, you slow the process down you notice that you interpreted the voice as being patronising. You could ...
 - i. Ask yourself; "What else could that tone of voice mean?"
 - ii. Listen to what the person is saying rather than how they' re saying it.
 - iii. Think about how you could respond differently.
 - iv. Create and use an anchor for calm or another appropriate state.
(see Get in a Great State)

- v. Change the submodalities. So if you still think the person was being patronising, change the voice tone in your mind; perhaps give the person a Donald Duck voice or a squeaky, high pitched voice. Notice how doing these things changes how you feel. It's not easy to be annoyed with someone who talks in a squeaky voice! Be creative in using other submodalities so you begin feeling more resourceful.
- b) You saw a look on someone's face. You interpreted the look as disagreeing with your point of view and you got angry because you thought you were 'right'. You could ...
 - i. Ask yourself: "What else could that look mean?" "So what if people disagree with me? Everyone's entitled to have an opinion, that's the way democracy works."
 - ii. Think about how you could respond differently.
 - iii. Create and use an anchor for calm or another appropriate state. (see Get in a Great State)
 - iv. Recognise that disagreement is healthy and natural. How would you feel if you HAD to agree with what everyone else said?
 - v. Give up needing to be 'right'. There's no such thing! There are only different interpretations and 'maps'. If you insist on always being 'right' you'll soon have no friends 'left'!

2. Don't try to control everything and everyone

Anger is the result of you trying to control things that are outside your locus of control. The only thing in life that you ultimately have control over is yourself. Although, if you don't have control of your emotions, then you don't even have control over yourself. It's important to know that most behaviour is motivated by positive intention. So, rather than trying to become the next World Ruler, you could define the positive intention that's driving your behaviour. How do you do this?

- a) You can do this by asking yourself some questions such as ...
 - i. "What would happen if everyone thought the same way as me?"
Once you have an answer to that question, ask, "Then what would happen?" Repeat the last question on your answer. Here's an example ...

What would happen if everyone thought the same as me?

There would be no more arguments.

Then what would happen?

People would all think the same way.

Then what would happen?

Everything would be peaceful.

Then what would happen?

It would become boring after a while.

Then what would happen?

There wouldn't be any new thinking.

Then what would happen?

We'd all feel stuck.

etc.

- ii. Here's another question: "Why is that important?" Again, repeat the question based on your last answer. Another example ...

Why is it important that everyone agrees with me?

I get to be right!

Why is being right important?

Because I feel good.

Why is feeling good important?

Because I feel in control.

Why is feeling in control important?

Because it means people agree with me.

And why is people agreeing with you important?

Because I feel superior.

And why is feeling superior important?

Because I feel respected.

And why is being respected important?

Because I feel as if I belong.

And why is feeling like I belong important?

Because then I feel loved and valued

Now you've arrived at what is really driving your anger. It's pretty clear that getting angry is driving you further and further away from being loved and

valued. But what if you could feel differently when you saw or heard people disagree with you? The good news is that you can. The way to do this is ...

3. Learn more flexible ways of thinking

Once you understand that everyone thinks and processes information differently you've taken the first step to becoming more flexible in your thinking.

Other ways to develop flexible thinking include ...

- a) Listen! Really listen to what someone is saying. Give him the same amount of attention as you would expect from him when he listens to you. Don't just listen until you have enough 'evidence' to come up with a counter argument. Listen with the intention of understanding what he's really trying to say.
- b) Formulate and ask some questions that will give you more information.
- c) Notice your own language. How do you talk to yourself? Do you use positive and affirming language or do you metaphorically 'beat yourself up'?
- d) Think win/win. This will be a real challenge to your flexibility as a thinker. How can you have what you want while the other person also gets what they want?

Example

OK. Let's say your partner wants to go out with friends but you want to go to a meeting. You only have one car. How many ways can you think of that you can both do what you want without one having to stay home?

- i. You take the car and drop her off at one of her friends' homes, picking her up after the meeting.
- ii. She drops you off and you arrange a lift home with someone who's also at the meeting.
- iii. You both go to the meeting and then go out with friends.
- iv. She takes a taxi there and gets a lift back
- v. You both walk
- vi. Etc.

NB. It doesn't matter whether any of the ideas will work, initially. The thrust of the exercise is in brainstorming possibilities where everyone can win, thus developing flexibility in your thinking.

By developing your flexibility as a win/win thinker, you won't have time to get angry!

- e) Get out of your normal routine. Do something different and spontaneous.

4. Change your Self Talk

If you've listened to the [short audio](#) about how words affect your body, you'll understand the impact that negative language has physically. By talking to yourself using more affirming language and with a more pleasant tone you'll start to build your own self esteem.

When you have good self esteem, you have no need to put others down or keep them under control. Do you use these words when you talk to yourself, must, ought, got to, need to, have to, should? These words cause stress and anxiety and even changing these can make you feel more motivated and relaxed. Click [here](#) to listen to a short audio where I explain this in more detail and give you a firsthand 'experience'.

(See the article *How to change that Negative Self Talk* in the Resources Section.)

5. Stop trying to be perfect or make the world perfect

Underlying your need to be 'right' is often a need to be perfect. It's ironic really that in order to be perfect, something needs to have a certain amount of flexibility built in - which means it's no longer perfect. 'Perfect' is also a bit like beauty – it's in the eye of the beholder.

Imagine if you lived with someone who was perfect in every way. Go on ... take yourself away in a daydream and imagine for a moment that your partner was totally perfect in every way.

How boring would it be after a while?

How hard and stressful would it be for you to match that perfection?

We're all human. We make mistakes. No one's perfect. Live with it.

6. Stop Mind Reading

After listening to me explain the NLP Communication Model you've no doubt realised that you can't mind read. Sure, you can try, but the quicker you stop trying and start asking questions or being curious about how another person's map is different from yours, the quicker you'll achieve calmness and ease.

(See the article *How Mind Reading Damages Your Personal Relationship* in the Resources Section)

7. Learn Self Awareness and Communication Skills

Reading this Useful Guide will have given you more self awareness. You now know the process of thinking and how your thinking affects your body. You also

know that others think differently to you. Anger is often the result of an inability to express yourself appropriately.

If you're keeping the anger inside and saying nothing, or having a temper 'tantrum' you're not expressing yourself appropriately. While most people were taught English at school, they often weren't taught ways to get their needs met without the use of power or control.

Learn ways to express yourself without blaming others. Taking responsibility for how you feel and expressing it without blaming other people is a great first step. Notice when you feel frustrated, resentful or overwhelmed as those feelings will only build up to anger if you don't deal with them.

8. Focus on you

Instead of thinking about how wonderful the world would be if everyone just obeyed your rules and did as you ordained, you could begin to focus on how you could change you.

What changes could you make so you begin to feel calmer and more at ease? One way of doing this is to set goals for how you want to behave in different situations. Let's say you want to be relaxed and focused when you're in a meeting where someone disagrees with you. You could use the goal setting technique outlined in How to Set Compelling Goals and visualise yourself listening, asking questions and seeking win/win resolutions to problems.

(Remember you can't set a goal for a state but you can set a goal for how you would like to behave.)

This is also mental rehearsal so you can include things that have been triggers in the past and visualise yourself responding appropriately. Because your mind doesn't know the difference between something you imagine and something that's real, you'll find yourself behaving in the real situation the way you've imagined. You can also establish a powerful anchor for how you'd like to be in the trigger situations, and then use the anchor when you find yourself in those situations. Better still, use the anchor, the mental rehearsal and set the goal!

9. Allow people (including yourself) to make mistakes

People who experience anger are usually far too hard on themselves and on others.

Making mistakes is a way of life and the most successful people are generally those who have made the most mistakes. Although you can try and tell people what to do, when they make their own mistakes they learn a lot quicker. So

lighten up - making mistakes makes us human! Apply the same rule to yourself. When you make a mistake, rather than beating yourself up about it ask yourself what you learnt. Then move on. There's no point in spending any more time on the issue.

10. Be happy rather than right.

"For every minute you are angry - you lose sixty seconds of happiness." - Ralph Waldo Emerson

Being 'right' won't keep you warm at night. Being 'right' means everyone else must be 'wrong' by definition. How does it feel to be made wrong? Is that how you want those around you to feel? See 3d above and try thinking win/win.

(See the article *Anger and Anchoring - 3 Ways to Stop People Pulling Your Strings* in the Resources Section.)

What are the chances of you becoming a calmer more flexible person?

The chances are excellent! And here's why ...

As you learnt way, way back at the beginning of this Useful Guide, your mind deletes distorts and generalises information.

Generalising – that's the key word for overcoming an anger issue.

As you learn and apply the techniques mentioned in this chapter, your mind will begin to generalise those changes to the many contexts of your life. At the start it might take some diligence on your part, but in a short space of time, you'll become aware that it's easier and easier to be the person you want to be.

You'll notice that people react more positively towards you when you have control of your emotions. Those responses will reinforce that you're doing well and encourage you to continue. Some might be a bit suspicious at first about whether you've really changed - but just give them time and continue making the changes. The speed of change will accelerate the more you practice. And then you'll get to a point where you're no longer practising.

Calmness and flexibility will have become part of who you are.

Summary ...

- Anger can be useful when it motivates change
- Out of control anger or anger that's restrained can cause problems
- Anger is usually the result of not dealing with less destructive emotions
- There can be many triggers for your anger
- Anger can become an habitual pattern of behaviour
- Anger is a control issue
- You can't 'manage' your anger when you're angry
- You can learn ways to change and flexible ways of thinking
- Changing gets easier and quicker the more you practice.

See the articles *How Mind Reading Damages Your Personal Relationship* and *Mood Management* in the Resources Section.

How to Set Compelling Goals

Yes, yes, I'm sure you've done goal setting before and, if you're like most people, you've also been successful. However, have you ever set a goal you've failed to achieve? If so this next part of the Useful Guide will probably highlight why you weren't as successful as you would have liked. Better still, it will show you what to do to make sure you're successful in future. And the process uses many of the skills you've been learning about.

Why bother setting goals at all?

It's true that some people go through their whole lives without setting goals and seem to do OK. I think that human beings have a natural instinct to learn and grow. One way of learning and growing is by setting goals that stretch and challenge you. It's often in the process of accomplishing the goal that you learn and grow the most. You're most happy in these circumstances and striving towards something positive contributes to a feeling of achievement and vitality.

Some goals are easy

You've probably had times in your life where you've achieved a goal so easily that it seemed totally effortless. You established a goal and then it just seemed to arrive, as if you'd picked it out of a catalogue, placed your order and it was delivered to you at just the right time, all wrapped up and nicely packaged.



And some were not-so-easy

And there might have been other times when you've set a goal and it felt like you were scaling the face of Mount Everest to achieve it. Unless of course the goal was to scale Mt Everest! You start out with great intentions and a positive



outlook only to find a few weeks later that you're completely lost and off track. You feel worse than if you'd not bothered to set a goal! Other goals can feel like a real battle. Nothing seems to go right for you and it appears like you're crawling towards them at a snail's pace and on your hands and knees - over broken glass!

So how come?

How come some goals seem easy and pleasurable and others just make you want to give up?

Well, I've done a bit of informal research on this and I've found that people often get caught in one or more (often several) of nine traps.

Ways to avoid the pitfalls

So it might be useful to identify those nine traps that prevent people reaching their goals and give you some clear insights into how you can avoid them. This means that in the future you'll be able to look back confidently on just what you have achieved and look forward with anticipation to everything you know you'll achieve easily in times to come!

The 9 Traps

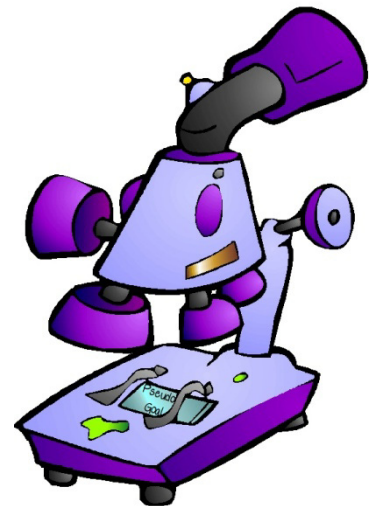
1. The goals aren't really goals
2. The goal is stated negatively
3. The goal is not written down
4. The goal is too vague
5. The goal does not have any sensory information
6. The means required to achieve the goal have not been identified
7. The goal is not compatible with other areas of your life
8. The goal is not your goal
9. There's no realistic date and time for accomplishment of the goal

On the following pages we'll take a look at each one and the strategies you can take to avoid them ...

Trap Number One

The goals aren't really goals.

Some people set pseudo goals. What's a pseudo goal? It's a goal that, at first glance looks achievable. But, under closer inspection, falls apart like a soggy tissue! If you set a goal that goes something like, 'I want to be happy/confident/more relaxed/focused etc.' you are creating a pseudo goal. You're not setting a goal at all, just setting yourself up for failure. Being happy/confident/more relaxed/focused etc.' are not goals but emotional states; states of mind and body.



States Change

It's not easy to remain in any of those states for any amount of time. States are appropriate for the circumstances occurring in your life or for the context you find yourself in. You wouldn't want to feel happy hearing about a close friend's recent misfortune, for instance.

States are dependent on contexts and appropriateness.

Setting a goal of being in a particular state for the whole year only serves to give you a metaphorical stick to beat yourself with when you don't achieve it!

Key Point: Make sure the goal is a real goal and not a pseudo goal or an emotional state. If you want to change your state, change your internal map and/or use the anchoring technique you've learned.

Trap Number Two

The goal is stated negatively.

You state the goal as being something that you don't want, e.g. ...

- a) "I don't want to do this job anymore."
- b) "I want to lose 10 kg."
- c) "I don't want to argue with my partner."

These goals have the wrong focus

The reason these goals fail is because of where they focus your attention. As you've already learnt, your mind responds to whatever thoughts you give it, whether those are positive or negative. If I ask you NOT to think about a clown, you first have to think about a clown. So if your goal is NOT doing your current job anymore, your focus of attention will be on doing your current job.

Example b) above, "I want to lose 10 kg." appears on the surface to be a positive goal.

It isn't.

It's the word LOSE that's the problem here. What would you do if you lost your car keys or your purse? Undoubtedly you'd LOOK for them, you'd try to find them again! How many of us have tried to lose weight only to find it all again – plus a bit more! Better to concentrate on the end result. This might be an end weight, a size of clothing you'd like to fit, a fitness goal you'd like to achieve.



The third example above once more concentrates on what the person is trying to eliminate, i.e. arguing. The way to change these to positively stated goals is to ask, "If I don't want that, what do I want instead?"

Changed to positive outcomes the above example might now read ...

- a) I want a new job.
- b) I want to weigh 70 kgs.
- c) I want a loving and respectful relationship with my partner.

Key Point: State your goal in a positive way.

Trap Number Three

The goal is not written down.

[Research](#) shows that goals that are written down have a much greater chance of being achieved. Reading them regularly also contributes to them being achieved because that helps you get in the right state of motivation and to maintain a clear focus on the outcome you want.

Key Point: Write your goal down.



Trap Number Four

The goal is stated too vaguely.

Let's look again at example a) again, 'I want a new job.'

Although it's now stated positively, it's still very vague. It raises more questions that really need to be answered, such as ...

- What type of job?
- What do you want to do?
- Where do you want to do it?
- Etc.

A specifically stated goal stands a much better chance of being accomplished. The goal needs to be described clearly and in as much detail as possible. If we do this, the goal might then read something like, 'I want to be working in a production planning role for a manufacturing company located within a 4 kilometre radius of where I live.'

Key Points ...

- Be specific about what you want.
- Where and when do you want it?

Trap Number Five

The goal does not have any sensory information.

As you've discovered, when you use your senses to imagine in detail what you'll see, hear, feel and say to yourself (and sometimes even taste and smell), your goal starts to feel compelling. If you don't feel drawn toward it, and motivated and excited by it, then your goal will remain as just words on paper.

Make your goal compelling

To make your goal compelling, answer the question ...

**'How will I know I have this goal – what will I see,
hear and feel that will let me know I have it?'**

Then imagine stepping into your body and the time you will have achieved the goal. Now write down your answers to the question in the present tense - as if it's happening now, use the Submodalities Mind Map to make it as vivid and as appealing as possible. Adding sensory information to the 'new job' goal above, it might now read: 'I am working in a production planning role for a manufacturing company located within a 4 kilometre radius of where I live. I am involved with a variety of people including shop floor workers, senior managers and colleagues in other departments. I'm seeing the factory floor, the faces of people from many different backgrounds and cultural groups, the office in which I work, the computer and the programme I'm working on. I'm hearing people talking to me about production needs and I see people listening as I'm talking to them. I can hear the noises of the factory machinery. There's lots of laughing and joking and a happy and productive atmosphere. I feel challenged, happy and motivated.'

Now check if there are any smells or tastes associated with the goal. Notice what you're saying to yourself as you experience the goal fully. Again do this as if you're experiencing having the goal right now. Write down those things too. They will add vibrancy and a sense of reality. For example ...

'I can smell daffodils in the office so it must be spring, I can taste the coffee that I'm drinking while I chat over morning coffee. I'm saying to myself, "I love this work and the people are great!'

Key Points ...

- Imagine having the goal now.
- Then write down what you are seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting, smelling and even what you're saying to yourself when you have the goal. Then notice how it begins to feel really exciting and compelling.

Trap Number Six

The means to achieve the goal have not been identified.

You often need different types of resources to help you achieve something. Resources might be things like money, support or help from people, equipment or time. You might already have some resources on hand. It will be useful to explicitly identify those.

Resources you might need to obtain

You'll also want to identify other resources you might need that will help you achieve the goal. Using the above example again, the resources available might be worded ...

'I have six years of experience in this field and a recognised qualification from XYZ. I have good references and a couple of people in senior management who have said they will be referees for me.'

Resources needed might be ...

'I need to get a new CV done, start looking at job sites and getting the newspaper. I might need to find out about public transport to other areas or think about buying a bike to ensure I can get to work each day. Jim works at ABC company, I could ask him if there are any vacancies there.'

Key Point: Identify the resources you already have to achieve the goal and any others it would be useful to have. These may be things like money, support or help from people, equipment or time, etc.



a) What will you gain when you have your goal? (Be specific)

b) What are you gaining now, by not having your goal? (By the way, you'll always be gaining something by not having your goal, so don't just skip over the question. You might be gaining time, freedom, etc as examples)

- c) What are you losing out on now, by not having the goal? (The same applies here, you'll always be losing something by not having your goal, so don't just skip over this question either. You might be losing, the opportunity to get ahead, more money, better health etc.)
- d) Does having this goal give you more choices in your life? (If 'no', it means it's not ecological. Go back to the start and reword your goal so it will give you more choices. Do not collect £200 😊)
- e) Are there any areas you don't want it to affect? (For example your relationship with your partner or children? Or do you want it to affect all areas of you life?)

- f) What will you lose when you have your goal? (Again you will always lose something, although that something might also be a thing you want to lose, depending on your goal. Examples? The awful job I have now, weight, the arguments.)
- g) How can you overcome what you'll lose and still achieve your goal? This question is optional depending on your answer to f). By identifying the potential obstacles, you'll also have an opportunity to work out ways to get past them.
- h) What are the consequences of not achieving your goal? It's worthwhile considering this because it can also help drive you forward.

- i) How does this goal fit with any other goals or outcomes you may have?
Consider other areas of your life and whether achieving this goal will affect those areas in positive or negative ways.

Key Point: Make sure the goal fits into whatever else you have going on in your life by fully considering and answering the above questions.

Trap Number Eight

The goal is not your goal

A real goal is one that you have control over, that you choose for yourself and that you're responsible for achieving.

Others' Goals

Some people try to set goals which involve others and then get upset when they can't be achieved. One man tried to set a goal, 'To have my partner play golf with me every other weekend.'

Look at the goal again.

The man was setting a goal to have control over someone else's time and behaviour! We explored his reasons for having his partner play golf with him. He said he wanted to build a closer relationship with her.

Having established this, he set a new goal that was within his control to accomplish. It was, 'To improve my listening and communication skills.' (Yes, a slightly different goal!)



Another Example

Setting goals like, 'Winning Lotto' or 'Being crowned Miss Universe,' are generally not under your control.

Key Point: Make sure the goal is really about you and what you intend to achieve and that you're in control of its achievement.



And lastly ...

Trap Number Nine

A realistic date and time isn't set

A realistic date and time for accomplishment of the goal is not established or a start date identified.

Specific date

When you set a goal make sure it has a specific date, including the year, for example, 15 September 2011. Without the year, your mind constantly puts it in the future.

Too far or too near

If you set the goal for too far off in the future without some intermediary steps to get you there, it will seem intangible. If the date is too close or imminent it becomes overwhelming. Having worked through the other guidelines for setting an achievable goal outlined in this Useful Guide, it should now be relatively simple to set a realistic timeframe that will make the goal both challenging and doable.

Do something immediately

Once you have your goal written down following these steps, identify something you will do straight away as the first step towards achieving your goal. This can be something relatively simple and easy like making a phone call or doing some internet research related to your goal. This first step firmly establishes the goal as being underway in your mind and creates excitement and momentum. Don't wait for a Monday, the start of a new month or a new year - begin now.

Key Points ...

- Set a realistic time and date based on the answers to the previous questions and include the year.
- Identify the first steps you're going to take to get your goal
- Start on the first step within an hour.

Summary - Goal Setting Process

Here's the whole goal setting process. Just write down your answers to these questions and check them to make sure you won't fall victim to any of the nine traps ...

1. Make sure it's a real goal and not an emotional state.
2. State your goal using positive language.
3. Write your goal down
4. Make it specific
5. Include as much sensory information as you can. What will you see, hear taste and smell? What will you be saying to yourself as you imagine having accomplished it?
6. Identify the resources you have and need to acquire to achieve the goal.
7. Make sure the goal is 'ecological', that it will be compatible with other areas of your life.
8. Make sure the goal is your goal and that you have control over its achievement
9. Set a time and date, including the year, for accomplishing your goal. Do something towards it within an hour.

That's it ...

NOW - get on with it!

**Go out and achieve your dreams and
live your life on purpose!**

Afterword

I hope the contents of this Useful Guide and the accompanying mp3 files inspire you to try some of the techniques to enhance your own life. You might like to consider training in NLP or reading other NLP books. There's a book list in the Resources Section.

In the meantime live your life like a movie in which you're the leading star - and the director - because you are! So make it up close and personal and with surround sound or with whatever submodalities it takes to turbo-charge your success. I sincerely hope you've enjoyed this Useful Guide and that you'll continue to discover all the possibilities and potential you have.

Resources Section

In this section you'll find more information to help you in your personal development; articles that reinforce what you've been learning, a reading list to further pique your interest in NLP and something for pure amusement.

The Map is not the Territory*

I used to have a bit of a reputation for being somewhat 'spatially challenged'. In other words, I'd struggle to find my way out of a paper bag! A few years ago a friend of mine was visiting from overseas. We were journeying to see some friends on the outskirts of a country town. Although we were using a map we still managed to get lost and, as darkness fell, we got even more lost. We seemed to be going around and around in circles. It was annoying and frustrating that we just couldn't get where we wanted to go. Eventually I figured there was something wrong with the map. I checked the date it had been printed and found it was about 10 years out of date!

Your internal maps might also need updating

If your internal maps are outdated you might also find yourself going around in circles seemingly in the dark! If you're not going where you want to go in life, getting frustrated or annoyed that's a good sign that your maps might need updating!

The Map is not the Territory

What the phrase means, simplistically, is that the way you think about the world (your map) is not the world (the territory). This is not only fundamental to understanding how your mind works but also to NLP as a practice.

If I show you a map of New Zealand it's very clear that it's a flat, 1 dimensional piece of paper that represents New Zealand. So you wouldn't try and buy a corner of it and set up a farm! You recognise that it's not really New Zealand - just a representation of New Zealand.

You process your external world (the territory) through your 5 senses. In the process you naturally delete MOST of the incoming information. I say naturally because you are bombarded with about 2 million pieces of information a second. If you tried to process that amount consciously you'd go mad. So, deleting most of the information keeps you sane.

Not only do you delete information you also generalise and distort it. These processes occur with everyone and are filtered by, amongst other things, your values, beliefs, memories and language.

All maps leave out information

Any map must leave out information; an oceanic map leaves out land masses, geographic maps leave out streets and street maps omit land contours. Thus your own internal map has many deletions, distortions and generalisations.

By the time the external information in the 'real' world is processed by your nervous system and coded in your mind as pictures, sounds, feelings, self talk, tastes and smells, it bears little resemblance to what was in the 'territory' originally. What you're left with is your map - the information that remains after this processing of your external world is complete.

There is no Truth

If everyone realised they were constantly going through this process the entire time they are awake they would no longer argue about what is the Truth. That's because clearly, based on the ways they filter and process external information everyone has their own truth. This is why you can see a movie with friends and, in the discussion afterwards, wonder if you all went to the same film. You would each have focused on different elements of the film, and, in doing so, completely missed features that were important to the others. It's the reason why, when you get together with family you're oblivious to events about which your siblings seem to have perfect recall.

Here's an example

John worked in a customer service role and was highly respected by both senior management and his colleagues. He had an ability to turn even the most negative customer into a raving fan with lightening speed. Within a few minutes he'd have them laughing and singing his praises.

Yet Jim's marriage was in trouble.

His wife complained that he was withdrawn, argumentative and didn't listen. Jim said he didn't know what to do. He loved his wife but felt he had no skills for being in a relationship. I suspect that even as you're reading this you can quite clearly see that Jim's skills in customer service would apply equally well in his marriage.

Jim's maps around marriage were outdated. He behaved with his wife the way he'd seen his father behave with his mother. That was his 'map' of how marriages worked. We talked about some of the skills he used at work and how they might apply in his marriage. In other words, he acquired some new, up-to-date maps. The new maps helped him find his way through what had been

marital hazards to discover a more loving, attentive and humorous side that transformed his marriage.

While the above example may seem incredibly obvious when you read it, it's not so obvious when it's you that is experiencing problems. You can't solve your own problems at the level that you created them. In fact, for the most part you don't even know that you have created them. You just know that things aren't quite right. You need a higher level of thinking or someone who experiences life with a different map to pinpoint what's wrong.

And sometimes some help to fix it.

As darkness fell, my friend and I got completely fed up of going around and around in circles. We had to rely on asking local people how best to get to our destination. Our first task next morning was to buy an up-to-date map.

* The saying 'The Map is not the Territory' has become a general figure of speech often discussed inside and outside NLP circles. The phrase originated in 1933 in a book called *Science and Sanity: An Introduction to Non-Aristotelian Systems and General Semantics*. The author, Alfred Korzybski was the originator of general semantics.

Korzybski also coined the term 'neuro-linguistic', referring to the connectedness of our nervous systems and physical responses to our thoughts as structured by the language we use.

Anger and Anchoring - 3 Ways to Stop People Pulling Your Strings

Some clients of mine, let's call them John and Sue, came to me because of anger issues.

John responded to a certain look he sometimes got from Sue. As soon as he saw "the look" as he called it, he'd think, "Uh, uh here we go again." His voice tone would change in response to Sue's expression and, as he described it, "all his hackles went up".

Sue, on the other hand was unaware of 'the look'. But she was aware when John's voice tone changed. She became anxious and wondered what she'd, "done wrong this time".

Both John and Sue became defensive from that point onwards and suffice to say that whatever happened next almost inevitably escalated to a verbal, angry fight.

This example is both simple and quite typical, in my experience. Sometimes it's not that easy to find the initial trigger. Sue said that John's voice tone triggered her feeling defensive while John would say it was 'the look' he got from Sue that made him feel angry.

So how do you resolve these seemingly automatic negative responses? ...

1. **Identify the triggers.** A tone of voice, a particular look, certain words or phrases, a touch, a behaviour, even a smell or a taste can all be triggers. Often, just by identifying the trigger you're half way to neutralising its effect.
2. **Recognise that you're in charge of your own emotions** and no-one can really wind you up unless you allow them to. You choose your own responses. So what would happen if you responded differently?
3. **Neutralise the trigger.**

How do you neutralise the trigger?

1. Talk about it with the person if possible.

Establish what the intention is behind the trigger. In other words, what's going on for the person at the moment they do or say the trigger. The situation in the example above was relatively easy to diffuse.

During our discussion Sue became aware of the look she was giving her husband that he interpreted as disapproving. It turned out that she was reacting to a

particular word he used that bought back extremely unhappy childhood memories. (Just goes to show how long anchors can last!) The expression on her face that he interpreted as disapproval was actually a look of anxiety. When his voice tone changed Sue became more fearful and he took her look of fear as further disapproval. This got John's hackles up as he prepared himself for the 'fight' that would eventuate.

Once this was talked through and both spouses became aware of how they were each contributing to the problem, it was all but resolved. The only thing left to do was to neutralise the anchors. In future, the look from Sue would trigger compassion in John which would soften his voice as he responded. He tried to avoid the word which triggered anxiety in Sue and, when he forgot, Sue remembered to see John as her loving husband whom she had chosen to spend her life with.

2. Use a positive anchor to 'collapse' the negative one.

Think about how you would prefer to feel when you experience the trigger. So if you're becoming anxious, you might want to be calm instead. Then you can create an anchor for calm (See, Get in a Great State - it only takes a few minutes.) The next time you experience the trigger you use your new anchor to neutralise the negative feelings previously associated with that situation. John and Sue each established an anchor. John set one for feeling compassion towards Sue whenever he saw 'the look'. As a result he realised straight away that he had triggered a bad memory for her and could respond in a supportive way. Sue reminded herself of how much she loved John and set an anchor for feeling loving. Then if she heard the word that had been a problem before, the new anchor made her feel loving, effectively neutralising the previous anxious response.

"I understand what I think you said!"

When you speak the same language as someone else it's easy to believe that all parties have the same interpretation for each word.

You use language unconsciously

You use language for the most part unconsciously. In other words you don't think about every single word you're going to say. In fact, if you're like me, it's often only when you say something that doesn't come out quite right or you're being particularly cautious, that you really think about what you're saying.

Same Words - Different Meanings

In English there are hundreds of words (possibly more) that are spelt the same but that have different meanings. The meaning is often dependent on the context. For example "He lives in Germany" and "their lives were intertwined." Then there are words which sound the same but are spelt differently, like pair and pear.

See the next page for some funny examples.

If this doesn't make life difficult enough, then consider other kinds of words which don't have such concrete and specific meanings. Words like relationship, communication, attitude, are a lot vaguer. They are not so easily defined and other people may very well have meanings for those words which are different from your own understandings or interpretations.

An Example

Some time ago a friend rang me to check if I'd emailed her. I said that I had and was wondering why I hadn't heard back from her. She said, "Oh the computer's packed up."

So I asked what had happened to the computer.

"Nothing," she said, "it's packed up."

"So what's wrong with it?" I reiterated, thinking she hadn't heard me the first time!

"Nothing," she replied, "It's packed up in the spare room!"

(See, just because I teach this stuff, doesn't mean I'm immune to my own stupidity!)

It's worthwhile keeping in mind then, that no matter how clearly you think you've communicated you're only successful if the other person UNDERSTANDS the message in the way you intended.

Why English is Difficult to Learn

Double meanings of the English language.

- The bandage was wound around the wound.
- The farm was used to produce produce.
- The dump was so full that it had to refuse more refuse.
- We must polish the Polish furniture.
- He could lead if he would get the lead out.
- The soldier decided to desert his dessert in the desert.
- How can I intimate this to my most intimate friend?
- A bass was painted on the head of the bass drum.
- When shot at, the dove dove into the bushes.
- I did not object to the object.
- The insurance was invalid for the invalid.
- Since there is no time like the present, he thought it was time to present the present.
- They were too close to the door to close it.
- The buck does funny things when the does are present.
- A seamstress and a sewer fell down into a sewer line.
- To help with planting, the farmer taught his sow to sow.
- The wind was too strong to wind the sail.
- After a number of injections, my jaw got number.
- Upon seeing the tear in the painting, I shed a tear.
- I had to subject the subject to a series of tests.
- There was a row among the oarsmen about how to row.

How Mind Reading Damages Your Personal Relationship

You trust complete strangers

It is true that every day, people trust complete strangers in fast cars to abide by the road rules and stay on their side of the road. Yet, when it comes to listening to what their partner says and playing by the rules of good relationships, the same people throw trust out the window and 'mind read' bad intentions.

What's mind reading?

Mind reading is exactly what you think it is (see that's mind reading in action!) It's assuming that you know what someone else is thinking and then acting or responding as if it were true.

Most 'mind readers' read the minds of those closest to them (especially those with whom they are most intimate). They don't presume to know what strangers are thinking. (If they do it's usually called paranoia - but don't tell anyone in case they get you! 😊)

Mind Reading can be useful

When you're close to someone you get ideas about how their mind works. This is useful; you know your nearest and dearest loves to unwind with a cuppa when they get in from work, so if you're home first you get one prepared. That's fairly positive mind reading and unlikely to bring you to grief.

... And not so useful

Negative mind reading creeps in when the relationship between you and partner has hit a few speed bumps. One starts to question the others' intentions - or worse still – assume bad intentions. So instead of giving him or her the benefit of the doubt, as you may do with complete strangers on the motorway, you begin ascribing ulterior motives.

Negative thinking precipitates negative mind reading.

Here's an example ...

Sue is involved in an exciting work project which means she has to work late for several weeks on end. Bruce starts to feel left out and neglected, especially as his partner is constantly talking about the project when they get together.

After a few weeks when he's found nothing else to occupy his time in the evenings, Bruce begins to wonder if maybe something more than just the project is happening at work. He allows his imagination to run wild without doing a reality check with Sue. He starts believing that something other than work is going on when Sue is late every night.

And with that belief, he begins to look for, and comment on, things that support it. He asks Sue pointed questions and makes sarcastic comments that stop the conversation dead in its tracks.

Sue feels that whatever she says it will be misheard and/or misunderstood. She stops talking about work altogether.

Bruce is then convinced something's going on at Sue's work. Conversation is strained and this increases suspicion which makes conversation more strained which increases suspicion which ... you get the idea.

With the level of trust at an all time low, it will be difficult to get the old relationship back when Sue's project is finished.

It's still possible to turn things around

So if you're an avid mind reader - how do you turn things around? Well, it's very simple.

You just STOP!

That's right, you stop. You don't interpret what's said, you don't put your own spin on things and you don't stay inside your own head and have your own little mini-conference.

Now put in two checks

Check One - Your own Beliefs

First of all you check your own beliefs. What do you believe about your partner? You've made the decision to live with this person so do you believe they have your best intentions at heart and that you can trust him or her? If so, then you will keep this in mind when they talk to you. Notice how it affects your perception of what they say.

Check Two - Your Understanding

You can also check your understanding of what he or she is saying. Reflect back to your partner your understanding of what he's said - without sarcasm - so you can check that you're both still on the same wavelength.

Trust Good Intentions

When you trust your partner's good intentions for you and follow the rules outlined above you'll keep your relationship on the right road and prevent it from the messy results of veering into ongoing traffic.

Summary

- Trust that your partner has your best intentions at heart
- If you find yourself mind reading something bad - STOP!
- Do the two checks - check your own beliefs and check it out with your partner - reflect it back and avoid sarcasm
- Take action - the longer you mind read the worse things will get.

How to change that Negative Self Talk

Having read this far you'll have a pretty good understanding of the impact that talking negatively to yourself can have on your health.

So how do you change it?

Great question! The first thing is to become consciously aware of that Internal Terrorist!

I think most people have one and for some he certainly shows up more frequently than for others! He's an inner critic who's ready to comment on every little thing in a destructive, nagging and negative way.

Once you're aware of him or her then you're on your way to disarming him - but you need to be vigilant. No doubt he's been around a long time and is not about to give up easily!

Most people who avoid conflict often don't realise they're avoiding it. Because they don't recognise conflict, they also don't realise that their avoidance contributes to their problem.

So, once you're aware of your internal voice the next thing to do is to STOP. Yes, just stop! You can do this by saying STOP out loud or in your head, imagining a STOP sign or a red traffic light or doing something to distract yourself like taking a sniff of your favourite oil or perfume. You could start singing or say something out loud. Whatever it takes to STOP.

Challenge the thoughts

Now you can objectively challenge the little monster by asking questions such as ...

- Is this really true? Be objective about this. If the answer's yes, what evidence do you have?
- Is it always true? What percentage of the time is it true? Again be objective about this.
- What can I learn from this?
- And if I learn that, what will that mean?
- What's the positive intention of the internal voice? (Believe it or not there usually is a positive intention.)
- How can I achieve that positive intention in another way?

O.K. Time for an example

Let's say your inner terrorist comments on a mistake you made, "Gee, you're useless, that's another mistake. You're always making mistakes, blah, blah, blah etc.," Running the questions above might go something like ...

- Q:** Is it really true? "In other words, Am I really useless and do I ALWAYS make mistakes? "Well, no actually I've got quite a lot right today, so no, it's not always true. In fact on a scale of 100 I've got about 98% right."
- Q:** What can I learn from this? "Well, I've learned that if I do 'zappo', then I get 'whammo'. However if I do 'bing' then I get a better result."
- Q:** And if I learn that, what will that mean? "It means if I do 'bing' in future I'll get consistently better results."
- Q:** What's the positive intention of the internal voice? (Just ask - you'll get an answer.) "Hmm, it's to make me aware of the mistake so I can learn from it and not repeat it."
- Q:** How can I achieve that positive intention in another way? "I could just stop and acknowledge when I've made a mistake, take note of the positive things I've learned from making the mistake and then move on!"

Move your butt!

It's also often useful to physically move. Get up and move out of the spot where the negative self-talk or worry is occurring. If possible go outside or to a window. Look up and out and put all your attention on what you see - when your attention is outside yourself you won't be doing the self-talk.

If necessary begin commenting to yourself on what you see and hear, looking and listening for more and more detail.

For example, "I can see the trees, they're blowing around quite a bit at the moment... I can hear the wind whistling through the trees...oh, and there's a robin sitting on the branch... ... there's a plane off in the distance...etc.' This need only take a few seconds. Then go back to where you were with a fresh mind.

Congratulate yourself

Start noticing and congratulating yourself on all the things you do well, even little things that you notice and comment on positively and consciously can make a big difference to your self esteem.

Adopt 'Steph's' Rule

What's Steph's rule? It's very simple. It's that you only talk to yourself using the words and tone that you would use to someone you really care about. Now there's a challenge for you!

Mood Management

(Or how to avoid people in white coats)

He was literally doubled up. First he coughed, then he spluttered then he erupted into a staccato 'yuk,yuk,yuk' that sounded like a machine gun firing. At one point he was gasping for breath and could hardly breathe.

I love it when I get this kind of response to a joke!

Naturally a few minutes later he stopped laughing and we continued our conversation. If he hadn't stopped laughing then events might have taken a slightly different turn. People in white coats might have appeared and put him in a special cardigan with sleeves that tie at the back! Then he would have been taken away - to the funny farm.

Laughter results from a particular state of mind.

Other states of mind include sadness, confidence, calm and Texas (no, sorry - that's a different kind of state).

To maintain a state you have to keep reinforcing it.

So to feel sad, you would have to keep reminding yourself of reasons to be sad. To feel happy you'd have to remind yourself of your reasons for being happy and to be moody you'd have to remind yourself of the reasons you're in a mood.

People create their own moods.

In my experience the fundamental causes for moodiness are ...

- a lack of self-awareness and
- an inability to express oneself clearly and appropriately

1. Lack of self-awareness

The moody person might not be aware of HOW they make themselves moody, and that's part of their problem. Without self awareness they have no idea how they 'do' their mood.

Moods seem to descend on them like a fog or rain.

But unlike a fog or rain, moody people do have some control of their moods. The moody person usually blames something or someone for the way they feel. They don't realise it's their own way of thinking that's keeping them stuck in the mood.

Negative thoughts attract more negative thoughts.

To become moody you start by having a negative thought about something. Then that negative thought attracts more supporting negative thoughts until pretty soon there's a whole gang of negative, poisonous thoughts just lying in wait ready to hijack the next person who dares make conversation.

Moods can be switched on and off

Here's an example: I was working on a project with a colleague who, for some reason, was in a bad mood. My questions and suggestions were met with blunt one or two word responses or grunts. My attempts to lighten his mood were met with glares which were easy to mind-read as, 'Why don't you just drop dead?' The situation was tiresome, childish and unprofessional.

Enter the boss.

At one point the boss came into the room. For a moment I thought she must have been some kind of fairy godmother. Her entrance had an almost magical effect on my colleague who took on a whole new persona for the 10 minutes the boss was with us. He was lively, fun, confident, even a bit flirty. The minute the boss left, it was as if she'd taken his good mood with her.

The darkness returned

The black cloud came back, along with the one word responses and dirty looks! If you've ever been around someone who's moody you might have experienced something similar.

The fact that a mood can be interrupted like that is a testament to just how much control people really have over their state of mind.

2. An inability to express oneself clearly and appropriately

As you saw from my example, a mood can be targeted towards one or two people. This is usually because the moody person hasn't got the communication skills needed to say what they want to say to whomever they need to say it. They haven't learnt how to say how they feel without blaming someone else for those feelings.

Punishment

Being moody becomes a way of punishing everyone the moody person holds responsible for their feelings - plus a few others (this is a really great confusion tactic because then no-one really knows who is guilty of upsetting the moody person!)

So what are the antidotes to moodiness?

There are several ...

- Take responsibility.
- Tell other people about it
- Remember others cannot read your mind.
- Develop self-awareness.

Take responsibility.

Recognise that moodiness is a choice. No-one can make you feel unhappy unless you allow them to. You don't blame others when you're happy do you? So why would you blame others when you're unhappy?

Tell them about it

If you believe someone has done or said something to deliberately upset you, tell them about it. If you think you can't tell them, learn how to, or write them a letter. Better to get the issue off your chest than keep it inside eating away at you. If you believe the misdemeanour was not deliberate, then why are you getting upset? Forgive the person and move on!

Remember others cannot read your mind.

They don't know what you're upset about. So if you don't tell them what's upsetting you they might easily and perhaps unwittingly upset you again.

Develop self-awareness.

Become aware of your own thought processes. How are you making yourself moody? Observe the negative thoughts that are making you moody. Then, one by one begin changing them to support a better mood.

You could use the same process to feel good

Yes, you can use the same process but use different words.

To make yourself moody you need to keep remembering something negative and searching for other things that you believe justify your moodiness.

So use the same process but remember something that was funny. Replay it over and over in your mind. Notice the pictures you make in your mind and words that make it funny and start laughing all over again. Then think of something else that's funny and have a giggle about that too. However, don't do this for too long - remember those people in white coats with their special cardigans.



How Expectations Create Your Life Experiences

An Experiment

In an experiment in the USA, a teacher was given a group of under-performing students to teach for a year. Although the students were considered 'slow' the researchers told the teacher that the children were the crème de la crème; naturally gifted and expected to excel.

The teacher accepted what she was told and expected top performances from every child. Her brain had been 'programmed' by what she'd been told and thus what she would experience.



A part of your brain determines what you experience.

The Reticular Activating System (RAS) at the back of the brain consists of a bundle of densely packed nerve cells located in the central core of your brain stem. Millions of bits of information bombard your five senses every second; smells, tastes, images, sensations and sounds. Obviously you can't consciously pay attention to everything without going crazy!

The RAS filters the incoming information

So the RAS determines the type of information that gets through to your conscious mind. The information that gets through is programmed and filtered according to your expectations, your interests and what's of value to you.

Some examples perhaps?

Common examples that illustrate this point are ...

- thinking about buying a specific car model and then suddenly noticing how many other drivers have the same model.
- being at a noisy party yet still hearing someone say your name.
- being able to screen out a huge amount of distraction when you're engrossed in a good book or project.

Negative expectations focus your attention

Your expectations focus your attention. If you expect someone to be untrustworthy then you'll be watching and noticing anything they do or say that might indicate untrustworthiness. Yet you won't notice anything that might indicate the opposite to be true. Your expectations affect the way you behave with that person. Your body language will change and you might be guarded in

how you talk or in what you tell him or her. The person may sense this guardedness and feel uneasy. And you interpret the uneasiness as distrustful behaviour!

Expectations can be positive or negative

If you begin to consciously expect good things, you set the filters of your RAS to focus and search for the good. Then you'll start to notice more good things. By noticing more good things, you reinforce the expectation. So by expecting only the best from others you set the filters of your RAS to notice the best. And when the best is reinforced - you get more of it.

That's what happened to the teacher

The teacher who taught the under-performing children for a year expected them to be brilliant. During that time she noticed every way in which the children were brilliant and reinforced it. At the end of the year the children were transformed from unintelligent under-performers to become the crème-de-la crème of the school. All thanks to the skills and the positive expectations of one teacher.

How to Sabotage the Night Terrorist

(And Stop The Little Monster Ruining Your Peaceful Dreams!)

You might have already met the night terrorist

He might turn up after you've had a particularly busy day. You're tired. Your muscles ache and your head is spinning. As the evening progresses you think longingly of your bed. It's big, cosy and comfortable. You can hardly wait to sink into it and relax. You're so tired you know you'll be asleep as soon as your head touches the pillow. So you climb into bed and shut your eyes preparing for that delicious, beautiful, restful ...

And that's when the night terrorist shows up!



He (or she) sits on your pillow and starts reminding you of everything you didn't manage to get done during the day, all the items you'd forgotten about (until you got into bed!) and every tiny detail of what you need to get done tomorrow - and the next day! And then the little monster begins reprocessing all over again - but more insistently!

The more insistent the reprocessing, the more you toss and turn.

The more you toss and turn the more restless you get. And the more restless you get, the further you get from the sleep you so longed for. So you try to focus on sleep and ignore the terrorist.

But focusing on sleep won't let you get any!

Nah! The more you focus on going to sleep the more wide awake you become. The terrorist won't be ignored. And now you're beginning to get more than a little annoyed as you start bashing the pillow and rearranging the bed like someone demented.

Give the terrorist some attention

That's right, as much as you might begrudge spending any more time 'thinking', you need to give the terrorist some attention. Because the terrorist thinks he's being helpful.

The terrorist sees himself as your friend

We all have a terrorist inside. When he shows up at midnight and interrupts our well deserved sleep, we never see him as our friend. But he has friendly intentions.

His intention is to keep you safe

Safety can involve ...

- Reviewing the day so you take out what you needed to learn.
- Helping you remember things you might otherwise forget.
- Reminding you of things you have to do so you don't get in trouble ('Remember to get petrol in the morning. Don't forget the bosses report!')

That's the terrorist's job.

So why does he remind you about things when you can't do anything about them?

It's true that you can't do much about many of the things you get reminded of late at night. The reason you get reminded is often because this is the first time your terrorist has got your attention!

When you're busy doing other things your attention is elsewhere.

During the evening you've probably been watching TV, reading, doing the washing, ironing, been on the internet etc. But when you go to bed, your mind relaxes - and your night terrorist/friend seizes the opportunity to do his job.

How do you sabotage your night terrorist?

The answer is that you don't sabotage your night terrorist. You befriend him instead - and give him some time to talk. Just spend 5-10 minutes during the evening doing nothing. No TV, internet etc. Sit quietly and you'll notice that the chatter you've been getting at midnight (when you're trying to get some shut-eye) will come to you at this quiet time.

Take some action

Take some action by writing down what comes into your head, preferably in your diary. By writing things down you only have to remember to look at it the following day. And your terrorist knows you've got it sorted. Then when you go to bed you and the terrorist can sleep peacefully together knowing you're no longer sleeping with the enemy.

Summary

- The night terrorist is really your friend.
- Give him some time and attention before you go to bed.
- Take some action by writing things down that spring to mind.

Further Reading

For Read Out loud Readers: The following table has 3 columns and 20 rows

Title	Author	Publisher
Introducing NLP	Joseph O'Connor & John Seymour	Crucible
Using your Brain For a Change	Richard Bandler	Real People Press
NLP The New Technology of Achievement	Steve Andreas & Charles Faulkner	Quill
Unlimited Power	Anthony Robbins	Ballantine Books
NLP Business Masterclass	David Molden	Pearson Education
Transforming Communication	Bolstad & Hamblett	Longman
Successful Selling with NLP	O'Connor/Prior	Harper Collins
Influencing with Integrity	Genie Laborde	Syntony Publishing
Practical NLP for Managers	McDermott/O'Connor	Gower Publishing
Heart of the Mind	C & S Andreas	Real People Press
Visionary Leadership Skills	Robert Dilts	Meta Publications
Training with NLP	Joseph O'Connor & John Seymour	Thorsons
Magic in Action	Richard Bandler	Meta Publications
Phoenix	David Gordon & Maribeth Meyers	Meta Publications
Time Line Therapy & the Basis of Personality	Tad James & Wyatt Woodsmall	Meta Publications
Words that Change Minds	Shelle Rose Charvet	Kendall/Hunt Publishing

Persuasion Engineering	Richard Bandler & John La Valle	Meta Publications
Beliefs	Robert Dilts et al	Metamorphous Press
Training Trances	John Overdurf & Julie Silverthorn	Neuro Energetics
NLP at Work		Sue Knight
Skills for the Future	Robert Dilts	Meta Publications
Rediscover the Joy of Learning	Don Blackerby	Success Skills
Super Teaching	Eric Jensen	Turning Point Publishing
Dynamic Learning	Robert Dilts & Todd Epstein	Meta Publications
Know How	Lesley Cameron Bandler, David Gordon, Michael Lebeau	Real People Press
The Phone Book	Richard A.Zarro & Peter Blum	Metamorphous Press
Awaken The Giant Within	Anthony Robbins	Simon & Schuster
Change Your Mind and Keep the Change	Richard Bandler	Real People Press
Sourcebook of Magic	L.Michael Hall & Barbara Belnap	Crown House Publishing
My Voice Will Go With You	Sidney Rosen	W.W.Norton
Frogs Into Princes	Richard Bandler & John Grinder	Real People Press
Effective Presentation Skills	Robert B.Dilts	Meta Publications

Tools Of the Spirit	Robert Dilts & Robert McDonald	Meta Publications
The Hypnotic World of Paul McKenna	Paul McKenna	Faber & Faber

For Read Only Readers: The table has frozen

Feedback

As we are always trying to improve our Useful Guides we would appreciate any feedback you can give us on **A Useful Guide to Personal Development**.

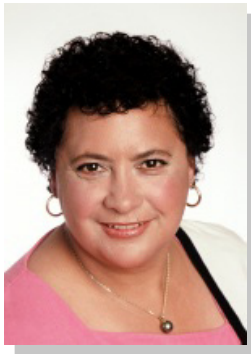
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About the Author



Stephanie Philp, author of this Useful Guide and [A Useful Guide to Being Influential](#) and is based in beautiful Raglan on the wild west coast of New Zealand's North Island. It's a good central base from where she can take off in any direction - and frequently does! Stephanie is an internationally recognised certifying trainer of NLP and trains NLP in New Zealand and in most places she's invited! She's also a certified Coach through IANLP. She's passionate about making it easier for you to get the changes you want in your

life.

Stephanie doesn't believe you need 'helping'. People are generally very competent at getting what they want, one way or another. What she can do is show you ways to get what you want more quickly, more easily and more elegantly than you ever imagined.

When she's not writing or delivering training Stephanie is coaching solopreneurs around the world to get the best out of themselves and their businesses. Or she's enjoying the laid back Raglan lifestyle, walking her dog on the beaches or enjoying a coffee with friends.