Transforming Communication

A seminar based on the book

CONTENTS

Core Communication Skills 2

Identify Your Goals	3
SPECIFY A Goal	4
Converting Negative language To Positive Language	5
Rapport	6
Anchoring	7
Setting A Resource Anchor	8
Strategy For Feeling Valued	9
Words Sorted By Sensory System	10
Eye Accessing Cues	11
Who Owns The Problem	12

Skills To Help Others Resolve Their Concerns 14

Roadblocks / Helping Skills	15
Phrases For Emotional States	16
Open Questions and Reflective Listening	17
Using Open Questions	18
Using Reflective Listening	19
Fine Tuning Your Reflective Listening	20
Practice: Guided Solution Finding	21
Solution Focused Questions	22

Skills To Get Your Own Concerns Resolved 23

Aggressive, Unassertive or Both?	24
Assumptions Which Transform Communication	25
I Messages	26
Build An I Message	27
The Two Step	28

Skills To Resolve Conflicts 30

The Partnership Frame	31
Win-Win Thinking	32
A Checklist For Resolving Conflicts Of Needs	33
Win-Win Conflict Resolution Worksheet	34
Power	35
Win-Lose and Win-Win Approaches	36
Using The Method With Young Children	37
Dealing With Superiors / Getting Support	38
Resolving Values Conflicts	39
Thinking Through A Values Conflict	40
The Transforming Communication Model	41
Sharing Transforming Communication	42

Background Articles 43

Win-Win	44
Transforming Conflict	49
Couples	56
Teaching To The Right Sense	61
Tapping Into The Power Of NLP In Business	67
Living Co-operatively With Children	75
Transforming Conflict In Teaching	85

Core Communication Skills

Identify Your Goals

What Challenging Situations Do You Face In Your Relationships?

1._____

_____

2._____

_____

3._____

_____

What Goals do you have for this course?

1._____

_____

2._____

_____

3._____

_____

4._____

_____

5._____

_____

6._____

_____

7._____

_____

8._____

_____

SPECIFY A Goal

1. Sensory Specific.

(a) "What date/time do you intend to have this outcome by?"_____

(b) "Put yourself in the situation of having it. What do you see/hear/feel when you have it?"_____

_____

_____

2. Positive Language. (if stated negatively)

"If you don't have that, what is it that you will have?"_____

_____

3. Ecological.

(a) "What will you gain if you have this outcome?" _____

_____

(b) "What will you lose if you have this outcome?"_____

_____

(c) "Are there any situations do you not want it to affect?"_____

_____

4. Choice increases with this outcome.

"Does this outcome increase your choices?"_____

5. Initiated by Self.

"What do you personally need to do to achieve this?"_____

_____

6. First step identified and achievable.

"What is your first step?"_____

_____

7. Your Resources Identified.

"What resources do you have to achieve this outcome?"_____

_____

_____

Converting Negative Language To Positive Language

Negative	Positive
Don't forget this!	
Don't give up.	
Never say "I don't have nothing." It's bad English.	
Don't make a mistake with this.	
Don't be embarrassed.	
Don't confuse these two things.	
Don't worry about it.	
It's a bad idea to leave your house-work until late in the evening.	

Rapport

1. Voice

tone
timbre
word choice
key metaphors used

2. Eyes

movements
blink

3. Gestures and General Posture.

4. Expiration/Inspiration

rate of breathing
type of breathing

5. Skin

facial expression
pulse rate

Options For Building Rapport

Simultaneous matching: match action as the person does it. (eg body posture) **vs Sequential matching:** match action after they do it . (eg speech, gestures)

Matching: Same position as the other person (eg both cross right leg over left). Less intense; makes you seem "similar" so they can decide separate from you, eg at decision points in a negotiation. **vs Mirroring:** Mirror image position (eg your left leg crossed over right; their right leg crossed over left). More intense; makes you seem like a "reflection" of their own experience.

Indicators Of Rapport: *FLOW*

1. **Feeling** of oneness.
2. **Leading** occurs.
3. **Observable** colour change in skin.
4. **Words** e.g. "You're so easy to work with!" - optional.

Anchoring

In each experience, there are things you see, hear, feel, taste and smell. All these parts of the experience are connected or "anchored" together in your mind. Any one part of the experience can be used to recreate the state of mind you were in at that time.

Seeing	a picture of an old friend may remind you of your friendship.
Hearing	music you enjoyed years ago may remind you of how you felt then.
Feeling	your body in a position you use to relax in can help you relax now.
Tasting	food cooked just the way your parent did may remind you of childhood.
Smelling	popcorn & candyfloss (cotton candy) may remind you of the excitement of a fair.

We are consistently being anchored into states of mind, in this way. Even words (like these) are anchors. The word "anchor" reminds you of the way an "anchor" looks and of the things you've heard about anchors. You can use anchoring to help move yourself or someone else into the state of mind and physiology you want. Many of the powerful change techniques of NLP are applications of this simple principle. Resource anchors can be used (see next page). A strong resource anchor can also be "collapsed" with an anchor for an unwanted response, so that the resources are connected to the situation they are needed in. A new strategy can be "anchored into place", so that the situation that once triggered an unresourceful response now triggers the new strategy.

Setting an Anchor (*SPUR)*

There are four simple things to make sure of when you set an anchor:

1. State Intensity and Congruity. The person must be in the state of mind you want, not "half in that state and half in another".
2. Precise Timing. You must time the anchor to happen while the person is in that state, not before or after it.
3. Uniqueness. The anchor must be something that is not going to happen by accident at other times. It should be unique.
4. Replicable. The anchor must be something you can repeat in exactly the same way, whenever you want to recreate that state of mind.

Examples

1. While someone is remembering a time that they were curious and eager to learn, you might make a special hand gesture, that you do not usually make. Next time you want them to feel curious and eager to learn, you can recreate that state by making that gesture again. Changing people's anchored responses to learning situations is the key to successful teaching.
2. While someone is feeling very relaxed and remembering a time when they were on holiday, they might say to themselves the phrase "Calm and relaxed". Next time they are in an challenging situation, they can say to themselves "Calm and relaxed" in that same tone of voice, and they will then relax. Most advertising is simply anchoring (reminding you of a pleasant experience and then showing the product).

Setting a Resource Anchor

1. The person guiding the other establishes rapport with the person setting the anchor.

2. The guide explains the nature of anchors (assume it's done in the seminar example). Have the person choose a hand gesture to make with the non-dominant hand, as a resource anchor.

3. Ask the person to remember a time when they had the state of Confidence (be aware that the easiest way to remember this state may be by remembering times when they were doing something they enjoy doing, rather than what they describe as "confidence"). Once they remember a time when they had that state intensely and purely, have them "Associate into that memory". To assist,

- Experience the state of confidence yourself as you talk to them.
- Say "Step into your own body in that memory, seeing through your eyes, hearing through your ears, and feeling fully that feeling of confidence."
- Tell the person "Adjust your body now, so that you're sitting the way you sit when you feel that confidence. Notice the kind of voice you use as you feel that confidence."
- Use your sensory acuity to check that the state looks congruent!

4. Tell the person "When you feel that confidence fully, just make that gesture with your hand, so that the feeling becomes totally associated with that gesture. If the feeling isn't as strong at some time, just release the hand and wait till you can feel it fully again," Have the person stand up and walk round, feeling that state of confidence and noticing how they stand and walk in that state. Tell them again to make the hand gesture once they know that the state is strong.

5. Tell the person to release the gesture, and sit down again. Now have them stretch and look out the window, to "break state".

6. Now tell them "Now make that gesture again with that hand, and feel how that gesture now causes the state of confidence." Check that this works, using your sensory acuity. This is testing the anchor. Afterwards, break state (for example by having them release the anchor, take a breath, and think of something they're looking forward to later). If the anchor is working go to step 7. Otherwise repeat steps 3-6.

7. Repeat for other resourceful feelings if you have time, "stacking them" on the same anchor (the same hand gesture).

8. Tell the person "Now, using that anchor, and feeling those resourceful feelings [have them make the hand gesture] think of a future time when you'd like to use that anchor; a time when in the past you would have found it a little challenging to feel resourceful. Notice as you think of it, how that's changed now!"

Strategy For Feeling Loved or Highly Valued

1. Think of a time that is comfortable to think of now, when you felt loved or highly valued by someone. Take the time to fully remember a specific time, a specific moment when you felt that way. If you haven't found one easily in 5 minutes, invent a memory (it will work perfectly anyway).

2. As you remember that time seeing what you saw, hearing what you heard, feeling physically your body at that time check:

   In order for you to feel loved or valued in that way, is it absolutely necessary for a person to
   a) Show you they love or value you (look at you with a certain look, buy you certain things, take you certain places)?
   b) Tell you they love or value you in a certain tone of voice or with certain words?
   c) Touch you in a certain way?

   Which of these three things is absolutely necessary for you to feel loved or valued? Which one is so important that even if the other two weren't happening, you'd feel loved or valued just with that?

3. Usually feeling loved or valued is a one step strategy. Some sight/sound/touch triggers the internal kinesthetic feeling of being valued or loved. When you know this about yourself and your family or colleagues, you can ensure each of you is able to send the message when you need it most. To identify someone else's strategy, ask them the questions exactly as written here.

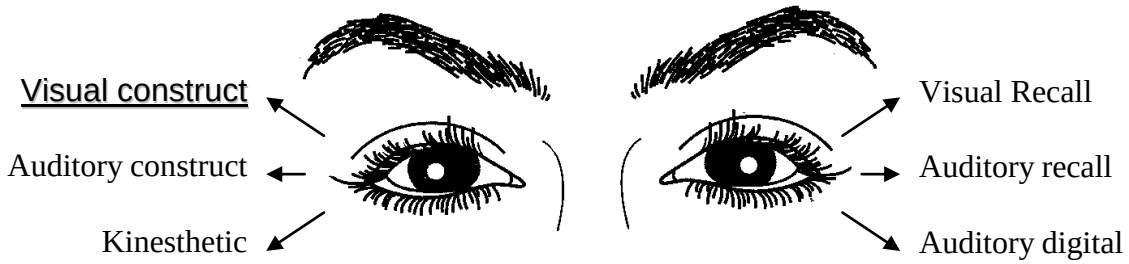
Words Sorted by Sensory System

Unspecified (Ad)	Visual	Auditory	Kinesthetic
attitude	view, perspective	opinion, comment	position, stance
consider	look over	sound out	feel out
persevere	see through	hear out	carry through
demonstrate	show, illustrate	explain	walk through
emit	radiate, sparkle	resonate	vibrate, pulsate
absent	blank	silent	numb
plain	lacklustre, dull	muted	dull
ostentatious	flashy, showy	loud, screaming	striking
attend to	look after	listen in on	care for, support
ignore	overlook	tune out	pass over, let slide
display	show off	sound off	put on parade
understand	get the picture	tune in, click in to	catch on, grasp
identify	point out	call attention to	put the finger on
conceive	imagine	call up	get a hold of
fully perceive	get an eyeful	get an earful	get a handful, gutsful
remind one of	look familiar	ring a bell	strike as familiar
reconsider	review, reflect	repeat, recall	rerun
teach	illuminate	instruct	lead through
refer to	point out, focus on	allude, call attention to	touch on/contact
attend to	look at, focus on	tune into	get a feel for
insensitive	blind	deaf	unfeeling
imitate	reflect, mirror	echo, play back	bounce off, pace
equalised	symmetry	harmony	balance
perceive, think	see	hear	feel
intensity	brightness	volume	pressure
motivate	add sparkle, flash up	tune up	move, get into gear
decide	see the options	hear the options	weigh the options
unperceptive	blind	deaf	numb
require awareness	make someone see	convince	hammer home
innovative	state of the art	last word	up with the play
can be perceived	clear -as day, as crystal	clear -as a bell	solid, concrete
energy frequency	blue/violet↔red	high↔low pitch	hot↔cold
significance	big↔small	long lasting↔brief	heavy↔light
meet with	see	talk to	touch base with
considering that..	in the light of...	on that theme...	bearing in mind...
suggestions of	glimmers of	undertones of	touches of
has ability	has vision	has the gift of the gab	has guts
representation	image, symbol, map	figure of speech	model, structure
influence indirectly	give the wink	put a word in	pull some strings
attend to...	look at...	listen to...	get a load of...
rapport	seeing eye to eye	harmonised, tuned	connected, in contact

Eye Accessing Cues

While most people lump all of their internal information processing together and call it "thinking," Bandler and Grinder have noted that it can be very useful to divide thinking into the different sensory modalities in which it occurs. When we process information internally, we can do it visually, auditorily, kinesthetically, olfactorily, or gustatorily. As you read the word "circus," you may know what it means by seeing images of circus rings, elephants, or trapeze artists; by hearing carnival music; by feeling excited; or by smelling and tasting popcorn or cotton candy. It is possible to access the meaning of a word in any one, or any combination, of the five sensory channels.

Bandler and Grinder have observed that people move their eyes in systematic directions, depending upon the kind of thinking they are doing. These movements are called eye accessing cues. The chart (below) indicates the kind of processing most people do when moving their eyes in a particular direction. A small percentage of individuals are "reversed," that is, they move their eyes in a mirror image of this chart. This chart below is easiest to use if you simply superimpose it over someone's face, so that as you see her looking in a particular direction you can also visualise the label for that eye accessing-cue.



Vr Visual remembered: seeing of things seen before, in the way they were seen before. Sample questions that usually elicit this kind of processing include: "What colour are your best friend's eyes?" "What does your coat look like?"

Vc Visual constructed: seeing images of things never seen before, or seeing things differently that they were seen before. Questions that usually elicit this kind of processing include: "What would an orange hippopotamus with purple spots look like?" "What would you look like from the other side of the room?"

Ar Auditory remembered: remembering sounds heard before. Questions that usually elicit this kind of processing include: "What is the last thing I said?" "What does your alarm clock sound like?"

Ac Auditory constructed: hearing sounds not heard before. Questions that tend to elicit this kind of process include: "What would the sound of birds singing a rock song sound like?" "What would your name sound like backwards?"

Ad Auditory digital: talking to oneself. Questions that tend to elicit this kind of processing include: "Say something to yourself that you often say to yourself." "Recite a memorised quote."

K Kinesthetic: feeling emotions, tactile sensations (sense of touch), or proprioceptive feelings (feelings of muscle movement). Questions to elicit this kind of processing include: "What is the feeling of touching a pine cone?" "How does it feel to run?"

Adapted from Tranceformations by J. Grinder & R. Bandler, Real People Press, 1981.

Who Owns The Problem?

Different communication skills work in different situations. Learning communication skills is no help unless you also learn when to use which skills. One interesting question to ask any time you are talking, or spending time with another human being is, 'Who here is not feeling happy right now?' If the answer is 'no-one', that's great! In that situation *no-one owns a problem,* to use a new piece of jargon. If the answer is 'me', then I *own a problem,* in this sense. And if the answer is anyone else, then *the other person owns the problem.* This way of understanding situations was developed by Doctor Thomas Gordon, author of *P.E. T Parent Effectiveness Training* and many other books. Notice that this way of using the words 'own a problem' is different from the way many people use the phrase. For now, I'd like you to get used to this new way of thinking about it. When I talk about someone 'owning a problem', I don't mean that it's their fault, and that they should fix things up or anything like that. I mean that they are the ones who are not feeling happy about things. They are the ones who feel angry, hurt, sad, frightened, resentful, embarrassed, or otherwise unaccepting of the situation. The following diagrams are developed by Dr Richard Bolstad to explain this model as it is used in this training.

No Problem Area	**Other Person Owns A Problem**
I Own A Problem	**Both Of Us Own A Problem (Conflict)**

The Problem Ownership Model

No Problem Area	

The aims of the Transforming Communication seminar

Rapport	**Helping Skills**
Problem Solving & Assertive Skills	**Conflict Resolution Skills**

The skills which achieve these aims

Who Owns The Problem?

Objective: To practise using Thomas Gordon's Problem Ownership model to identify which skills will be appropriate in a situation.
Instructions: Read each situation. If you think that in the situation as described **so far**, the other person/s own the problem (are upset, unhappy, not getting their needs met etc) note it in the "Other owns a problem" column. If you feel the behaviour described causes you to own a problem, note it in the "I own a problem" column. If neither has a problem check the "No Problem" column.

Situation	Other Owns A Problem	I Own A Problem	No Problem
1.The person who shares your workspace plays a radio at a high volume, making it difficult for you to concentrate.			
2.A colleague tells you she is worried about failing an important staff evaluation.			
3.Your family often have political debates, such as discussing whether Ronald Reagan was a good or bad economist.			
4.Your partner expresses disapproval of your taking a training course.			
5.A repair shop has failed to meet three consecutive promises to have your car ready.			
6.A worker in your department complains that her responsibility level isn't challenging enough.			
7.Your partner looks increasingly worried and tense and tells you they "can't cope with it all."			
8.One of your family members is increasingly late getting the dishes washed, and you end up waiting to be able to use the bench space.			
9. Your child fails to turn up on time for a dental appointment that you must pay for anyway.			
10.A lot of your work time is spent willingly giving advice to less experienced staff.			

Skills To Help Others Resolve Their Concerns

Roadblocks

Roadblocks are responses intended to be helpful, but which are high risk responses when someone else owns a problem. Thomas Gordon lists twelve such responses. Imagine how it would feel for you if you asked the instructor to explain something in the course and got a response like this...

Solution Giving

Commanding: "Just shut up and calm down will you!"
Warning: "If you carry on interrupting I'm not having you in this course."
Moralising: "You should have more consideration for those who did understand."
Lecturing: "Research shows that a state of uncertainty is a valuable learning aid; it helps you pay attention to the next part."
Advising: "Why don't you go out of the room and look it up in the book."

Judgments

Blaming: "There's no-one to blame but you for that is there?"
Name-calling: "We really do get some idle-brained people on the course don't we."
Analysing: "I'm sure I was quite clear. Are you looking for a bit of attention?"

Denying

Praising: "Good on you for making an attempt to get it. That's the main thing."
Reassuring: "You poor old thing. Hang in there; it's bound to make sense later."
Distracting: "Maybe we should play a game at this point."

Interrogating

Questioning: "Do you always have trouble with learning? Is there something outside the course that's distracting you tonight?

Helping Skills

Attending & Matching

- Mirror body posture; match breathing & voice tonality
- Face the person, and adjust distance and height to suit them
- Nod, and have your eyes available for eye contact
- Avoid other activities

Minimal Encouragers

- ”Mmmm”, “Ah-huh”, “Right” etc

Open Questions

- ”Tell me about...” , “How...?”, “What...?”

Reflective Listening

- ”So for you...”, “When... you felt...”, “The way you see it...”, “Sounds like...”

Phrases For Emotional States, Sorted by Sensory System (Described Ready For Reflective Listening)

Emotional State	Visual	Auditory	Kinesthetic
Confused (You were… disoriented, puzzled, helpless, lost etc)	It dazzled you You were in the dark You couldn't see the way forward You lost your focus	You couldn't hear yourself think You couldn't find the words to describe it	You felt mixed up You felt paralysed You felt pulled two ways
Frightened (You were… insecure, scared, intimidated)	You were exposed This problem shadowed you You could see the shadows closing in	There were scary undertones You had a sense of being threatened	You felt jumpy You were on edge You felt shaky
Angry (You were… annoyed, frustrated, resentful, furious etc)	You saw red	You wanted to scream You really clashed with what was happening	You felt explosive You were fed up That really burned you up
Sad (You were… depressed, miserable, unhappy etc)	Things seemed pretty gloomy You were blue It was a dark time	Life was muted The music was gone You were discouraged Things were off key	It was painful You felt low You felt down You felt upset
Vulnerable (You were… weak, overwhelmed helpless)	You had the colour bleached out of you You were a shadow of your usual self	You couldn't find your voice It was as if someone unplugged your speakers	You felt fragile You felt powerless You felt overloaded
Happy (You were… cheerful, excited, pleased, delighted)	You were radiant Things brightened up You were in the pink	It was a resounding success You were switched on	You felt thrilled It warmed your heart You were really up You were on a high
Strong (You were… confident, determined, powerful)	You had the spotlight on you	You were tuned up It was a resounding success	You felt energised You felt solid You were firing on all cylinders

Open Questions

These are questions which cannot be so easily answered by a simple “yes”, “no”, or another single word or number. They invite the person to talk further, and direct their attention to a specific aspect of what has been said. Open questions which start “How...” elicit better information that those which start “Why...”.

Open questions can ask for more sensory specific information (eg in response to a student’s claim that “My English teacher is always putting me down!”, an open question might ask “How, specifically, does your English teacher put you down?”, or “When, specifically, does she do that?”).

Open questions can ask for more information about the person’s desired outcome (eg “How would you know if this problem was solved?”, or “What needs to be different for you to feel right about this?”).

Reflective Listening

This skill involves reflecting (restating, verbally pacing) feelings and information from what you heard the other person saying.

Colleague: "I'm in a real stew over this class presentation we've got on Monday."
You: "You're worrying about how your presentation will go?"
Colleague: "Well I told my friend I'd meet him for an early lunch at that time. I thought I'd just skip the project session. I didn’t realise it would be important."
You: "It's changing your plans at this time that’s hard?"

Reflective listening is an extremely useful helping skill, and to use it well, you need to be feeling free enough of your own problems to focus on the other person. You also need to trust the person to find good solutions rather than wanting to convince them of your own. This is not a skill for when you want to influence the person. Reflective listening also requires the person to be willing to talk: you can't force them to open up. Also, of course, when simple information is required, you need to give it, not just listen empathically.

Reflective listening tells the other that you are interested in their concerns, that you can accept them having problems and trust that they will solve them. It deepens your relationship, as you will really start to hear what clients and colleagues say. That is its risk, and its beauty. As a spin-off benefit, colleagues may benefit from your modelling and start to reflectively listen to your concerns about them.

Reflective listening is even more effective when you match the sensory system (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, unspecified) of the person you are listening to. For example, if the person said “My week has been so gloomy.”, you might say “It’s hard to see the light at the end of the tunnel.” If the person said “My week has been out of tune.” you might say “You’ve had difficulty finding the theme.”

Using Open Questions

In each of the following situations, the listener has asked a closed question. Write an open question which would give you a fuller response.

Situation	Closed Question	Open Question
1. A colleague has been discussing his resentment of the evaluation his supervisor gave him.	Do you usually get on Okay with that supervisor?	
2. Your daughter has been telling you that she doesn't enjoy mathematics.	Don't you like anything at school?	
3. A subordinate is discussing her feelings of resentment about one of the other workers.	Have you told him about this?	
4. Your partner/spouse has just explained that as a teenager he hated sports.	Do you hate sports now?	
5. An unemployed friend tells you he is trying to get a job at your company.	Do you want me to ask the CEO about it?	
6. A colleague explains that he didn't get the promotion he wanted so he's applied for a job at another company.	Do you want to work for them?	
7. Your child stops in mid sentence and begins to cry.	Are you Okay?	
8. Your partner/spouse discusses her feelings of depression after her parents separation.	If you could be the way you wanted, would you feel happy about their separation?	

Using Reflective Listening

Objective: To recognise the feeling state in another's message, and write replies which reflect those feelings to the other.
Instructions: Read each statement. Write down a word for the feeling state you think the other might be experiencing and expressing. Then write a sentence which you could say back to the person which acknowledges these feelings (reflective listening).

1. Why did my grandmother have to die *this* year? It's such a mess.
   Emotional State:_____ Sensory System_____
   Reflective Listening:_____
   _____

2. I don't want to show my face in his office tomorrow. I'm presenting my design proposal, and I just can't see how I'll manage it.
   Emotional State:_____ Sensory System_____
   Reflective Listening:_____
   _____

3. Can you just go over this with me for a minute. I'm really in a stew.
   Emotional State:_____ Sensory System_____
   Reflective Listening:_____
   _____

4. I wish you would tell me how I'm doing more often. I always wonder if I'm making a major mistake, and everyone's so quiet about it.
   Emotional State:_____ Sensory System_____
   Reflective Listening:_____
   _____

5. Do you think it's fair the way Billy leaves all this mess around like this?
   Emotional State:_____ Sensory System_____
   Reflective Listening:_____
   _____

6. Well, wouldn't you do the same thing if you stood in my shoes? What else could I do?
   Emotional State:_____ Sensory System_____
   Reflective Listening:_____
   _____

7. I'm really sick of all the noise around here. I can't hear myself think with everyone crashing around all afternoon!
   Emotional State:_____ Sensory System_____
   Reflective Listening:_____
   _____

Fine Tuning Your Reflective Listening

Once you have the basic idea of reflective listening, you will want to improve your skill. The following eight “near misses” are identified by Thomas Gordon as common areas to improve in reflective listening:

Colleague’s statement - "I don’t know if I can cope with this meeting."

Overshooting (exaggerated feelings) "You're in total panic about it"	↔	**Undershooting** "This meeting bothers you a bit."
Adding (putting in new information) "You can’t really manage any of the things we’re doing here; is that it?"	↔	**Omitting** "You're having a bad week."
Rushing (anticipating next thoughts) "You'd like to cancel the meeting."	↔	**Lagging (going back to old material)** "You said last week that there are a lot of things going on in your life now, right?"
Analysing (guessing deeper) "Sounds like you’re avoiding dealing with something here."	↔	**Parroting** "You don’t know if you can cope with this meeting, huh?"

It is also important to match the other person non-verbally as you reflect, including:

- Voice tone, speed, volume
- Gestures and general posture
- Breathing
- Facial expressions such as smiling or frowning

Practice: Guided Solution Finding

(Combining Reflective Listening and Open Questions)

Instructions: Find someone who has a problem they seem to want to talk about, and use your helping skills of Attending, Open Questions, and Reflective Listening until the problem situation is clarified for them. Often this is enough for people to feel the problem is no longer a worry, but if they are still interested in talking further then you can begin to guide them through the other five steps of solution finding below. After asking each question here, use more Reflective Listening to help them clarify their thoughts fully before moving on to the next question.

(1) **Define the Problem in Terms of Underlying Needs and Goals**
eg. "What's the problem? What do you really want and need instead of that?"

(2) Generate Alternative Solutions to Reach these Goals
eg. "What ways to get that have you considered? What else? What else? What else?"

(3) Evaluate Each Solution
eg. "What are the likely consequences (the pros and cons) of that option?" Repeat.

(4) Choose the Best Solution
eg. "So overall, which solution will you use?

(5) Plan to Implement the Solution
eg. "How will you go about that? What is your first step? Then what? Then what?"

(6) Plan to Evaluate the Solution
eg. "How will you know when it has worked? When will you check this?"

Fine Tuning Your Open Questions

Solution Focused Questions

Questions direct someone's attention. If your open questions focus only on the problems the person has, they will be directed to think more about what's gone wrong. If your questions focus on the solution they want, the person will think more about what they want to achieve. This in itself enables them to become more resourceful, and take charge of making the changes they want. Steve de Shazer, Insoo Kim Berg and others have developed a model of change called the Solution Focused approach, based on this understanding. The following are examples of their questions, which guide the person to identify what they want and how to get it.

a. Ask for a description of the person's outcome. For example:

- "What has to be different as a result of you talking to me?"
- "What do you want to achieve?"
- "What would need to happen for you to feel that this problem was solved?"
- "How will you know that this problem is solved?"
- "When this problem is solved, what will you be doing and feeling instead of what you used to do and feel?"

If the person has no goal of their own in coming, but has been required to come and see you, or has been sent to talk with you, then ask "Since they sent you here, what will you need to be doing differently for them to realise that you don't need to come back?"

b. Ask about when the problem doesn't occur (the exceptions). For example:

- "When is a time that you noticed this problem wasn't quite as bad?"
- "What was happening at that time? What were you doing different?"

c. If there are no exceptions, then ask about hypothetical exceptions using the "Miracle" question: "Suppose one night there is a miracle while you are sleeping, and this problem is solved. Since you are sleeping, you don't know that a miracle has happened or that your problem is solved. What do you suppose you will notice that's different in the morning, that will let you know the problem is solved?"

After the miracle question, you can ask other followup questions such as:

- "What would other people around you notice was different about you?"
- "What would other people around you do differently then?"
- "What would it take to pretend that this miracle had happened?"

Reference: Insoo Kim Berg, Family Based Services: A Solution-Focused Approach, W.W.Norton & Co, New York, 1994

Skills To Get Your Own Concerns Resolved

Aggressive, Unassertive or Both?

Being Unassertive: the I Lose - You Win Attitude

When someone owns a problem but resentfully puts other's needs first then they are being unassertive. They may be a martyr who pretends everything is fine, or angrily expect others to guess what they are upset about ("You should know why I am upset - I shouldn't have to tell you").

The likely results for someone of repeated unassertive behaviour are:
a) resentments build up until they have an explosive outburst (aggression)
b) they shut down their feelings (depression) or become ill (from the stress)
c) others avoid them because they can't work out what they want or 'who they are'
d) others take advantage of them because they are a pushover

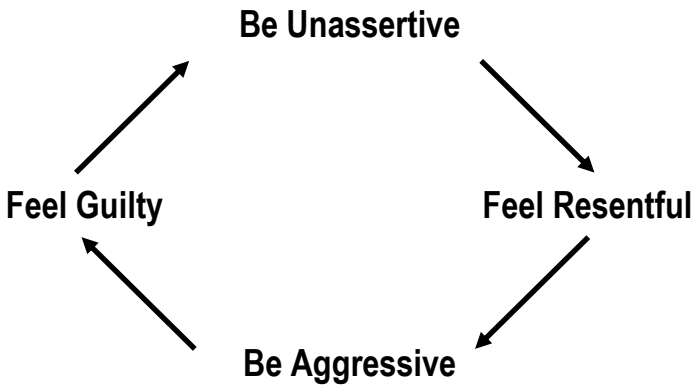
Being Aggressive: the I Win - You Lose Attitude

When someone owns a problem and insists on attempting to meet their needs without regard for anyone else's, they are being aggressive. They may do so subtly (hiding information, secretly getting their way) or with obvious force (imposing their solution, being abusive or violent).

The likely results for someone of repeated aggressive behaviour are:
a) they feel guilty about overdoing it and become unassertive in cycles
b) they become anxious about other's resentment
c) others avoid them because they feel abused
d) others take them on in competitive power struggles

The Unassertive - Aggressive Cycle

Although unassertive and aggressive behaviour seem very different they are really just opposite sides of the same coin, both based in the belief that only one person can 'win' their needs being met. People can get stuck in one or other approach, or swing like a pendulum around the cycle…



Assumptions To Transform Communication

The amazing communication skills of Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) are based on a set of core assumptions. While NLP does not claim these assumptions are "true", it does suggest that they are *useful*. To understand this difference, imagine two people. Person A assumes that people are basically friendly, and person B assumes that people are basically unfriendly. They both go out to the same party. We can be sure that they will get different results. NLP would say that person A probably has a more *useful* assumption. That assumption might not be "true". But even if it was not true (even if people could be proved to be mainly unfriendly) person A's assumption might still be more useful. To get better results, you don't have to *believe* these Assumptions, you only need to act as if they're true.

1. **The map is not the territory.** This means that what you believe is true is always your own "map" of the area you have been travelling through. Someone else will have a completely different map. In communicating with them, listening skills help you understand their map. I messages help you explain how you came to have your map.

2. **The most important thing to know about your communication is what it means to the person who receives it.** You may know what you meant, but other people use their own "map" to understand or "decode" what you meant. If they didn't get the message you intended, it makes sense to restate it in whatever way will best get your real message across to *them*. Treat their response as valuable feedback.

3. **Resistance is a result of a lack of rapport.** When someone doesn't co-operate with you, it lets you know that you have suggested something that doesn't "fit" with their map of the world. If you take more time to understand their map of the world (to build rapport) they will be more likely to cooperate.

4. **People make the best choices they can** given the map of the world they have at that time (what they believe is possible etc). You have always done the best you could at that moment. Now, you can develop new and better maps and skills, so that next time you will make even better choices.

5. **All behaviours that you (and others) have done are motivated by an attempt to meet some intention or need** (to avoid pain, to find more happiness etc). These higher intentions are what really motivate you and others. If you can find someone's intention, you can help them meet that in ways that may be even more effective than the behaviours they have been using.

6. **Flexibility succeeds better than consistency**. If what you have been doing so far doesn't work, try something different.

7. **Relationships are Systems.** What you do affects what the other person does, just as what they do affects you. If you want to change their behaviour, consider in what way the things you have been doing might have supported or justified their behaviour. When you change yourself, the system will change.

-Adapted from NLP Trainer Robert Dilts, in "Skills For The Future"(Meta Publications, 1993) p28-37

I Messages

What does an I Message do?

A three part confrontive I message (proposed by Thomas Gordon):
(1) Has a high chance of changing the behaviour of another person when you find that behaviour unacceptable.
(2) Protects the self esteem of the other person.
(3) Preserves the quality of the relationship between you and the other person.
(4) helps the other person to understand what goes on between you better, and to improve their performance.

When can I Messages be used?

I Messages can be used to explain your concern when you own a problem, and other types of I Message can be used to share your views and feelings when there is no problem. "You messages" used when the other's behaviour is unacceptable tell them:
"You're too stupid to figure out what to do here."
"Something is wrong with you because you're making me unhappy."
"I'm not going to tell you honestly how I feel about this."

A confrontive I Message can have four parts

(1) a sensory specific description of the behaviour; what actually happened.
(2) the actual, concrete, tangible effects of that behaviour on ME.
(3) how I feel about the behaviour and its effects.
(4) reflective listening to the responses (especially the “resistances”).

Why I Message don’t always succeed immediately:

(1) The message was sent to a child too young to understand cause and effect, or too young to follow the meaning of your message.
Action: You may need to initiate the solution with a very young child (e.g., remove the child from the problem area).

(2) Problems with the message.

(a) The I Message was incomplete.
Action: Check that you have explained what the behaviour was, how it affects you, and especially how you feel about it.

(b) The “resistance” was not dealt with.
Action: Reflective listening.

(c) The other person has strong needs/concerns of their own; reasons why helping you with your concern seems to create a problem for them.
Action: Resolve as a conflict of needs.

(d) The other person does not consider they are causing you a real concrete problem. They don't believe the situation tangibly affects you and is your right to have solved.
Action: Use skills for resolving values conflicts.

Build An I Message

Objective: To build a three part I Message you could send to a colleague, family member or friend, when you have a problem related to their behaviour.

1) Choose a situation you have recently experienced where you would have liked to confront the other person about the problem you experienced with their behaviour. Describe the other's BEHAVIOUR without using blaming language (e.g., avoid "when you are so inconsiderate..." or "when you never...." or "when you selfishly..."). Be sensory specific (ie describe what you could see, hear or touch.
2) Then list the actual concrete EFFECTS that this behaviour has for you (if there aren't any; if you feel unaccepting of the behaviour but can't see how it concretely affects you, this is possibly a values collision. Keep that situation in mind, but choose another for this exercise).
3) Thirdly write down how you FEEL about the behaviour and the effects it has for you (you could use the list of feeling states on Page 10).
4) After listing the three parts, write out a complete I Message combining all three. Avoid adding a solution or you message.

EXAMPLE:
Behaviour: doesn't do the dishes as arranged.
Effects: I end up doing them at a time when I'm wanting to cook a meal, or have a rest..
Feelings: resentful, frustrated
I Message: "When you don't do the dishes you've arranged to do, I end up needing to do them in order to be able to cook in the kitchen. I resent the extra work."

1. Behaviour: _____
_____

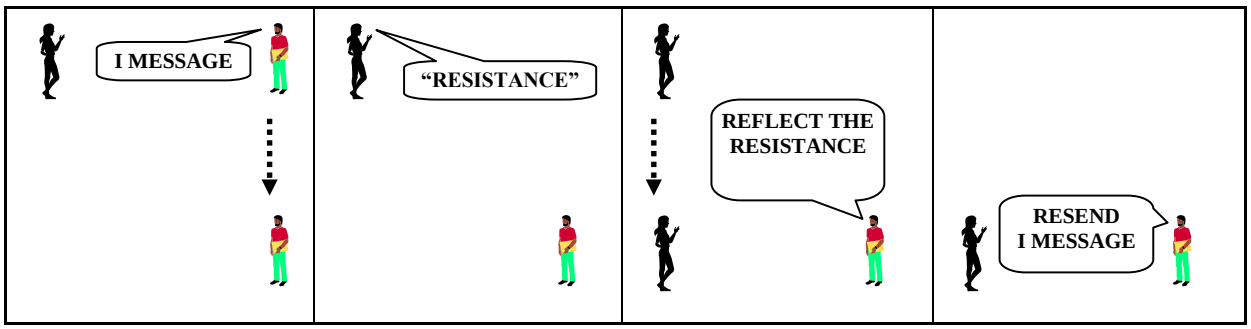
2. Effects: _____
_____
_____

3. Feelings:_____
_____
_____

I Message:_____
_____
_____
_____

The Two Step

This is a way of clarifying the need to alternate sending an I message and reflectively listening. As the person sends an I message, a psychological distance is created (they step out of rapport). The reflective listening process brings the other person back into rapport so they are more able to consider the I message.

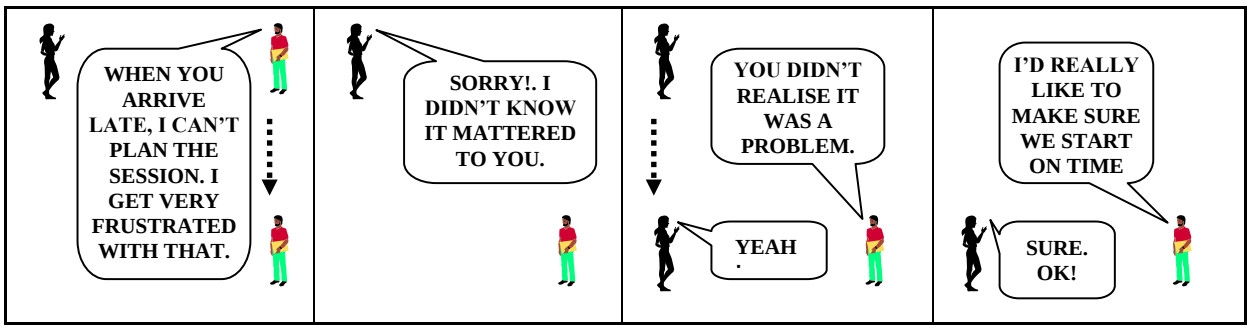


Jack sends his "I message" and takes a step away from Jane to show that they are "out of rapport".	Jane responds to the I message ("resists").	Jack reflective listens until Jane signals " I feel understood". and takes a step. This signal (a head nod usually) is the key to the process.	Jack resends the "I message" bearing in mind what Jane said.

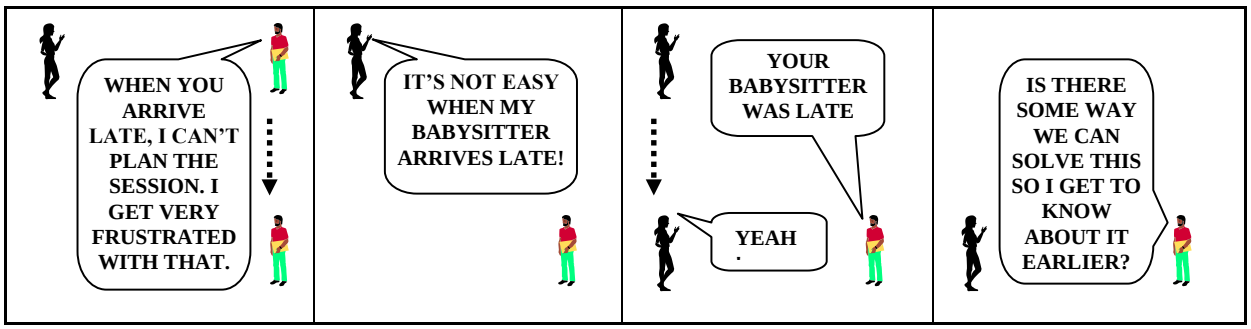
This process may need to be repeated two or three times until a clear result is obtained. See the next page for examples of the three possible results.

The Two Step Process Is Run Until One Of Three Outcomes Is Reached

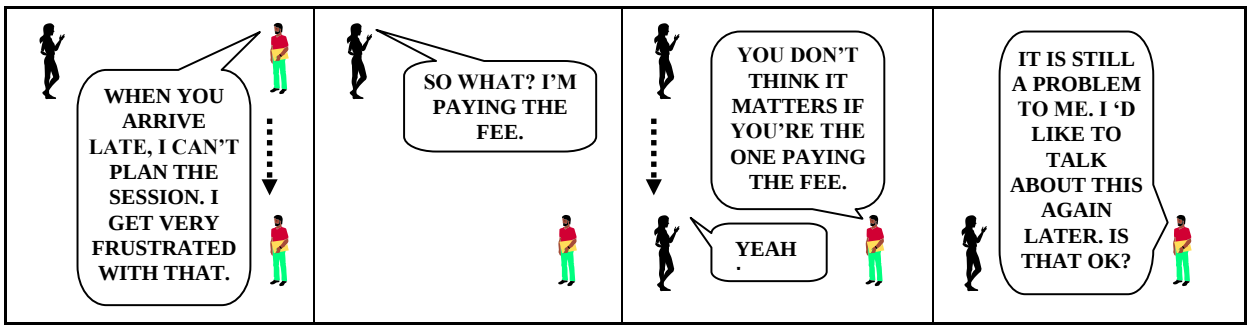
1. Jane agrees congruently to change to solve Jack's problem.



2. Jane and Jack identify that they both own a problem. While Jane can understand that their behaviour concretely affects Jack, she is not willing to change because it would cause *her* a problem. (Conflict of Needs)



3. Jane considers this matter to be "none of Jack's business". Jane is thus not willing to negotiate the issue. (Conflict of Values or Metaprograms)



Skills To Resolve Conflicts

The Partnership Frame

Dr Dudley Weeks has worked with conflicting parties in over 60 countries including Rwanda and Bosnia. He emphasises the importance of viewing conflict as one part of a relationship; a part that sheds light on the rest of the relationship, and that can best be resolved by bearing in mind the resources of the rest of the relationship.

Although Weeks acknowledges the importance of identifying the individual needs and goals of conflict participants, he also considers it important to identify the shared needs and goals (even when these are as simple as needing to resolve the conflict and get on with life). Weeks emphasises the (solution focused) idea of reorienting the participants to the future, using the past only to learn how to effectively create solutions that will work. He also emphasises the value of finding "doables" –solutions which don't necessarily solve the whole problem but create a shared plan for the participants to cooperate in. A similar approach to facilitating conflict resolution is discussed in the text *Transforming Communication*, page 202-204. Weeks calls it the Partnership approach. His 8 steps to conflict resolution focus heavily on the relationship building which happens before and behind the problem solving stages. The steps are:

1. Create an effective atmosphere
2. Clarify perceptions
3. Focus on individual and shared needs
4. Build shared positive power
5. Look to the future, then learn from the past
6. Generate options
7. Develop doables –stepping stones to action
8. Make mutual-benefit agreements

The initial opening comments have a lot to do with setting the "frame" or atmosphere within which conflict resolution occurs. While opening comments need to be short enough not to sound like a monologue, and naturally phrased, Weeks suggests that these comments can:

- establish partnership "I believe we are in this together, and need each other to work it out"
- refer to the whole relationship "This is only one aspect of our relationship."
- Affirm possibilities "I'm sure together we can generate many options for solving this."
- Accept disagreement "Disagreeing doesn't mean we can't remember things we agree on."
- Acknowledge specific difficulties "I know in the past we've had trouble due to our tendency to.... This time lets experiment by..."

Think of a conflict you have been involved in and write an opening comment that sets a partnership frame in this way:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Weeks, Dudley, Ph.D., The Eight Essential Steps To Conflict Resolution, G.P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1994

Win-Win Thinking

Situations	Your needs	Other's needs	Possible Solutions
1. You are a parent who enjoys having the family's evening meal together with your children. You plan it for 6pm when your partner gets home from work. Lately your children are complaining that they want to watch the TV at that time. They have begun missing the meal altogether, or eating it quickly and with angry looks!			
2. Your manager has organised a weekly review meeting at 3pm on Friday. Originally promised to last only one hour, this meeting has extended itself to 5pm, when the office closes. To make sure you get everything done before the weekends, you and some of the other team members have started arriving later at the meeting. Your boss demands this stop.			
Your example:			

A Checklist For Resolving Conflicts Of Needs

(A) Preparation

- ❑ Include only those concerned.
- ❑ Give a description of the problem that respects all involved, and invite others to join you in the search for a mutually acceptable solution (don't keep pushing for previous solutions).
- ❑ Explain how conflict resolution can enable all to win, and explain the steps. Agree not to slip back to the use of win-lose methods.
- ❑ Check that the time is acceptable, or arrange one that is.
- ❑ Get something to write down ideas on (pen and paper, blackboard).

(B) Defining the Problem in Terms of Needs/Goals

- ❑ Use I Messages to explain your own concerns, needs and basic goals.
- ❑ Use reflective listening to hear and acknowledge the others' needs and basic goals.
- ❑ Take time to check that people are talking in terms of needs and outcomes, rather than specific solutions, or less basic presenting problems.
- ❑ Don't accept sudden promises not to cause the problem.
- ❑ Check you have a mutually acceptable definition of all needs and goals, without hidden solutions, before moving on. Use the agreement frame (AND) “So you want… AND I want… . Is that right?” This sets a “conditional close” (“So as long as we meet those needs of yours and these of mine, we’re done; right?”)

(C) Generating Alternative Solutions

- ❑ Explain that the next task involves thinking of any and all possible ways to solve the problem so as to suit everyone; that there will be time to evaluate *later*.
- ❑ Discourage criticism (stops creativity) and advocacy (may appear manipulative). Instead feed back other solutions with reflective listening.
- ❑ Encourage as many ideas as possible to be listed. Restate the needs or outcomes agreed on to help.
- ❑ Write down all ideas suggested.

(D) Evaluating Solutions

- ❑ Test solutions thought of by asking "Will it work?" "Does it meet all the needs or outcomes listed?" "Are there any problems likely?"
- ❑ Don't accept solutions for the sake of speed.
- ❑ Carry on using reflective listening for others concerns, and I Messages.

(E) Choosing the Solution

- ❑ Test for agreement if it seems close. Don't vote, seek a consensus.
- ❑ If agreement seems difficult: Summarise areas of agreement. Restate needs or outcomes, and look for new definitions of the problem which offer more solutions.

(F) Implementing the Solution

- ❑ Get agreement on who does what by when.
- ❑ Write this down and check all agree to it.
- ❑ Refuse to remind or police the solution - seek others commitment to it. Refuse to build in “punishments” for failure - suggest renegotiating.
- ❑ If you want to set criteria for success, work out these now.

(G) Evaluating the Solution

- ❑ Carry out agreed method of checking for, or wait to see if the conflicts seems resolved in practise.
- ❑ If the agreed upon solution doesn’t work, remember it is the solution that failed, not the person.

Win-Win Conflict Resolution Worksheet

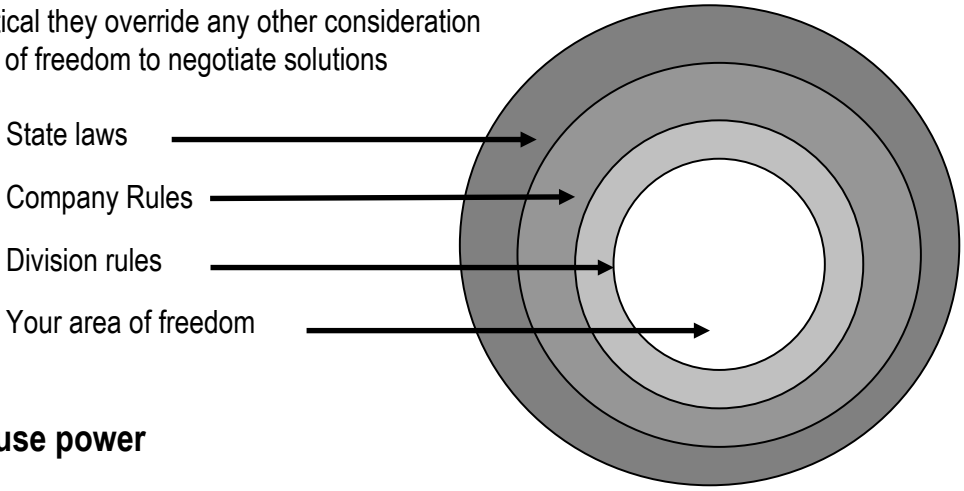
2. Brainstorm Solutions 3. Evaluate Solutions	**1.**		**6. Evaluate results:**
	Solution 1. **Solution 2.** **Solution 3.**		
0. The Partnership Frame: "Let's find a way to solve this that works for everyone." **1. Define problem in terms of Needs/Outcomes …**	**Person B:** **Original Solution:** **Basic needs/Outcome**	**Shared (Relationship) needs:**	
	Person A: **Original solution:** **Basic Needs/Outcome:**		

Power

When would I consider power to be justified?

There are some situations when the use of power may seem worth the price (of damage to the relationship, resentment, loss of other's self esteem etc) Eg:

(a) Clear and present danger
(b) No way to get compliance by logic or understanding
(c) No time to explain
(d) Your needs so critical they override any other consideration
(e) Outside your area of freedom to negotiate solutions



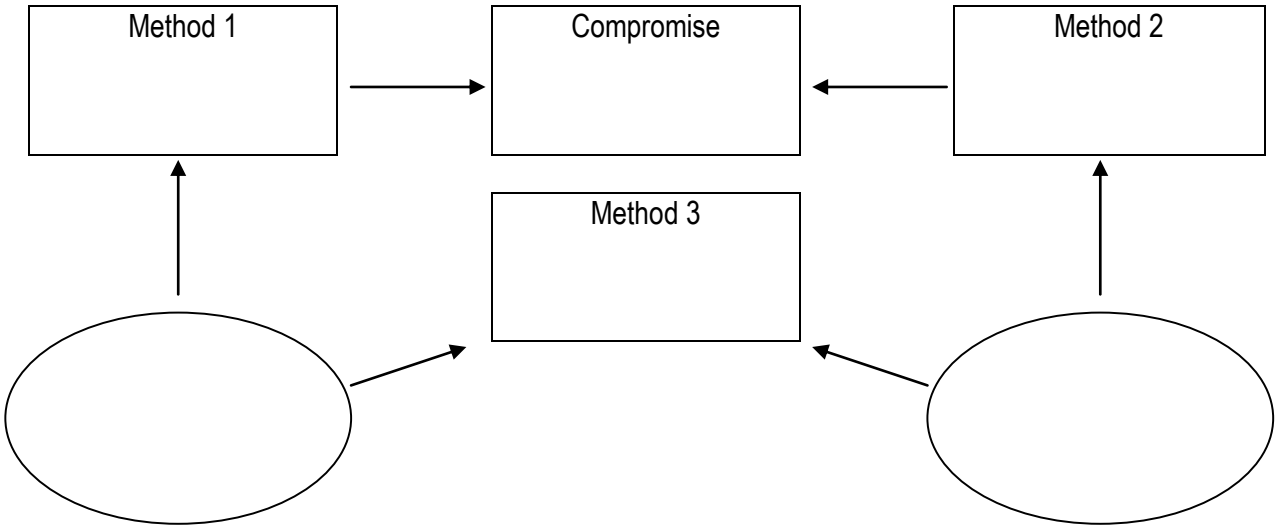
If you choose to use power

It is advisable to think carefully of ways to minimise the damage after. Eg:
(1) Explain why you used power
(2) Apologise. Reassure the other it is not your general aim to walk over them
(3) Reflectively listen to any resentment
(4) Offer to do something to re-establish the relationship
(5) Plan jointly to avoid similar binds in the future

What Are The Effects Of Using Power?

Adapted from Thomas Gordon "LET Leader Effectiveness Training"

Win-Lose and Win-Win Approaches



Beliefs behind Win-Lose Approaches

- Conflicts are best solved by competition
- The parties are adversaries, in search of ways to win over each other
- Mutually acceptable solutions will be scarce
- It is a situation of you OR me, us OR them
- People want to be negative and obstructive

Costs:

- Low quality decision (some needs ignored)
- Poor commitment and follow-through
- Requires constant selling and policing
- Initial speed undone by later problems

Beliefs behind the Win-Win Approach

- Conflicts are best solved by co-operation
- The parties are partners in search of mutually acceptable solutions
- Mutually acceptable solutions are abundant
- It's a situation of you AND me, us AND them
- People want to be agreeable and cooperative

Benefits:

- High quality decision "more heads are better"
- Better commitment and follow-through
- Requires less selling and policing
- Faster results overall

Using The Method With Young Children

I've never yet met a person of any sex or age who prefers to have their needs overridden. Its certainly true that some people are wiser, more knowledgeable and more experienced than others. But no amount of experience means you know more about how someone else feels, or what their problem is, than they do. On that subject, they are always the expert. You can use reflective listening with a child of any age. You can send I Messages at any age, but will need to back them up with action to meet your needs, until the child can make the connections. You get better decisions by understanding everyone's actual needs than you will by using only your own knowledge. Remember, win-win conflict resolution doesn't mean you have to compromise or give in. If you feel like you've lost something, then you don't yet have a real win-win solution, and it would be best to sort it out again.

Dr Thomas Gordon's Parent Effectiveness Training teaches parents the win-win method described here. Our experience working with hundreds of parents is that the method works even with very young children. In a review of 26 separate studies comparing P.E.T. to other methods, (by Robert Cedar of Boston University) the P.E.T. approach was significantly more successful, especially in increasing children's self esteem and willingness to cooperate with their parents. Even with a child too young to discuss their needs (say younger than three years old) you can still use the win-win attitude when in a conflict. This means asking yourself 'What was this child's more basic need or goal, and how could I help them meet that in a way that suits me too?' Here are examples of using this win-win attitude (discussed in Aletha Solter's book "The Aware Baby" 1984, pp. 160-209) with younger children:

Situation	Parents' need	Child's need	A possible solution
Child pulls things off supermarket shelf while shopping.	Not to have to put things back on the shelf.	To feel he is involved and helping.	Point out one or two things he can get down for you.
Child refuses to let parent put clothes on her. Parent is in a hurry.	To get out as soon as possible.	To put on her own clothes.	Find one or two items of clothing she can easily put on herself.
Child draws on the wall with crayon.	Not to have to repaint the wall.	To enjoy drawing on a large surface.	Get some cheap newsprint (from a newspaper) and pin it up over an area of bedroom wall for her to use.

Dealing With Superiors

Many large corporations use the win-win method as a standard process for making decisions. Pehr Gyllenhammar, president of the Volvo corporation reported that its use in his Swedish plant resulted in absenteeism dropping by 50%, employee turnover being cut to 25% of previous levels, and the quality of the product improving (described in the book *Leader Effectiveness Training* by Thomas Gordon). It is important to be clear that in an organisation, you can only use the win-win method to resolve conflicts within your own sphere of decisionmaking freedom. Outside that area, you can attempt to advocate for win-win conflict resolution with those who have wider decisionmaking power. If you are negotiating with a person in a superior position who doesn't understand the method:

(1) Carefully prepare and present your case in I Message format, explaining your win-win intention.

(2) Use reflective listening to help your boss handle your I Message. Always reframe the other person's behaviour as 'the best way they can understand right now to meet their needs'. No matter how aggressive their words or actions may seem, when you reflectively listen to them, restate their basic intention as being to solve their own problem, rather than believe their aim is to cause you problems.

(3) If this fails to achieve your goal, ask your boss to arrange a meeting with the person above him or her in the system to get help in resolving the conflict between the two of you. If this is refused, explain that you are going to do this, and invite your boss to come. If your boss still won't come, see the person you were trying to arrange a meeting with, and explain the situation and what you have done so far.

(4) Protect yourself from being pushed into an agreement you don't want to live with. To do this ask yourself 'What would I do if I couldn't reach a satisfactory agreement?' Once you know what your best option outside the conflict discussion would be, compare any of the possible solutions to this 'best outside option'. In so doing, you can tell whether it's worth continuing to work with the person in power, to create solutions you both accept. Knowing your other choice, you are less likely to start giving up on your own needs, or accepting the other person's way of defining the issues. You can help give yourself more equal power by strengthening the 'best outside option'

Getting Support

If direct communication skills are not getting results, then talk the situation over with a trusted friend or colleague. Choose someone who will actually help you to decide what to do next, rather than someone who will just join you in a complaining session. This person could also become your support who accompanies you if you need to take it further. If you still can't resolve it yourself, the next person to approach is your immediate team or section leader. If your problem is actually with this person and they are not responding, then go to their superior (and so on). Of course your organisation may have people specifically nominated to help you out, as may your union. It may become an issue for mediation or disciplinary action, so keep notes of your concerns and what happens when.

Resolving Values Conflicts

Utilising Shared Values

Once you have identified what values you and another person share, you can often use conflict resolution to develop solutions which work because they meet these shared values.

Modelling

Modelling involves demonstrating by the way I live that my own values are valid ones. If our relationship is a good one, and if I really practise what I preach, there is a high chance that others will come to share my values. The impact of this skill is far greater than usually expected.

Consulting

A consultant in the business world is someone who is hired to offer their views to a company about a particular issue. When I have a values collision with another, they may be willing to consider my point of view in a similar way. Thomas Gordon identifies the skills of good consulting as:

1. That I know the facts about my issue
2. That the other is willing to listen - to "hire" me
3. That I share my opinions respectfully, using I Messages
4. That I listen to the other's opinions using active listening, and
5. That I leave the final decision to the other, and resist the temptation to "hassle".
   Continually representing my concern will be seen as an attempt to use power

Again the impact of this skill is easy to underestimate. Sometimes a person will disagree at the time you offer your view, but change their value later on after some thought. Your willingness not to use power <u>increases</u> your ability to influence other's values.

Qualities Of Excellent Influencers

Recall a situation where you accepted/welcomed the influence of another person in your life.

Person you were influenced by: _____

In what way did your behaviour change as a result? _____

_____

_____

What qualities did this person have which enabled you to accept their influence? _____

_____

_____

_____

Thinking Through A Values Conflict

Choose a person whose values you would like to influence positively.

Name of person:_____
What you would like to change:_____
_____

What is a shared value around which you could build your relationship with this person?_____
Give an example of an activity which you could engage in jointly which would build on this shared value_____
_____

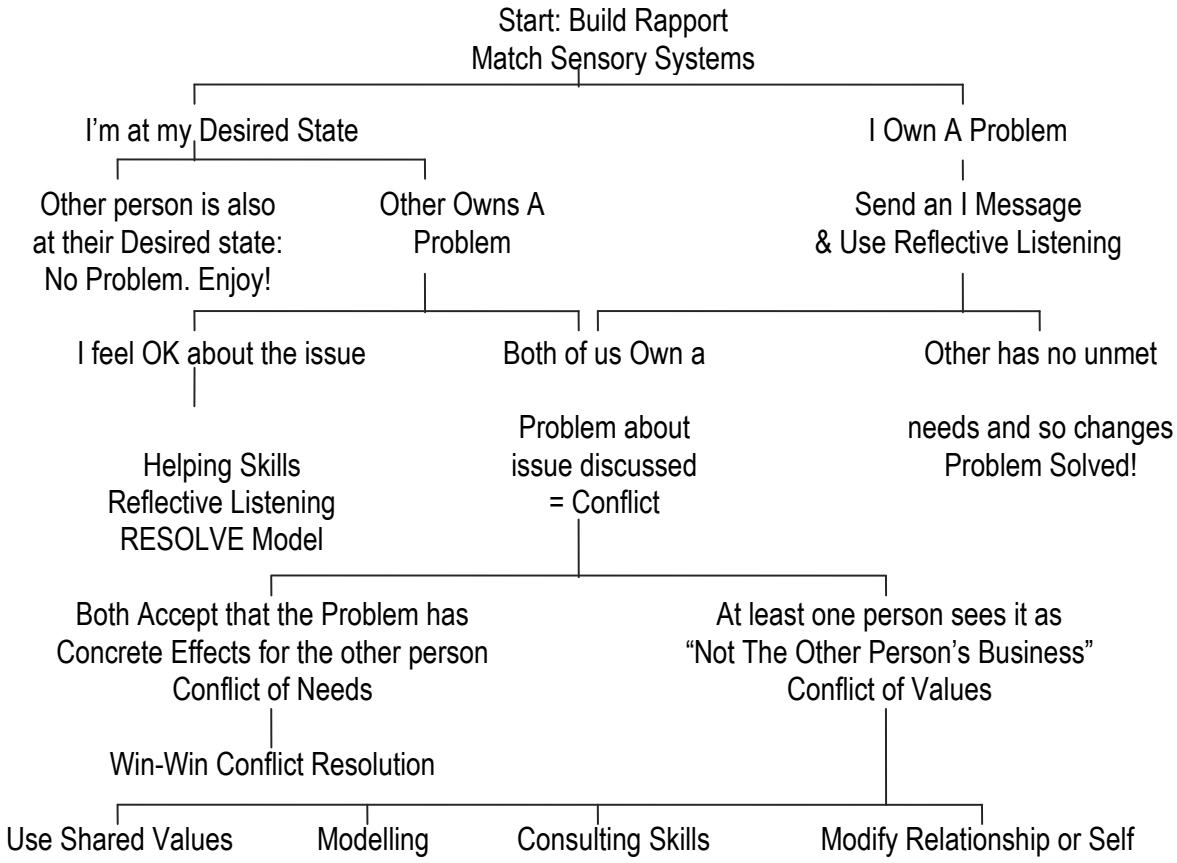
How could your behaviour more fully model the behaviour and values you want this person to adopt?_____
_____
_____

What Consulting I Message would you use to describe your opinion or concern to the person?_____
_____
_____
_____
What facts do you need to check before offering this opinion?_____
_____
_____
How would you check that it's OK to offer this opinion (get hired)?_____
_____
_____
What is your guess as to their response (which you will reflectively listen to)_____
_____
_____
_____

How could you modify your relationship with this person so that their behaviour no longer creates problems for you?_____
_____
_____

Are there any circumstances under which you would consider that the use of power was appropriate in this situation?_____
_____

The Transforming Communication Model



Sharing Transforming Communication
(Using Consulting Skills)

Name of person/group you most want to share Transforming Communication with _____

_____

Your goal with that person/group (eg to get them to do a seminar, to get them to experiment with the Win-Win method on one issue)_____

_____

_____

What you'll say to ask permission to discuss the issue (get hired)_____

_____

_____

_____

Consulting I Message you'll use to share your opinion_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Facts/Evidence you need to have as backup information (Check Win-Win article following)_____

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Your guess as to their response (which you may need to reflectively listen to)_____

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Background Articles

Win-Win

© Richard Bolstad & Margot Hamblett

An ordinary family situation: You as a parent want to have your evening meal together with the kids at 6pm. That happens to be the time the children's favourite TV programmes are on, so they complain. Who will win?

A common workplace challenge: You like to have relaxing music playing in the background as you work. Your colleague in the next room says it distracts her from thinking. Who wins?

As we'll show in this article, the answer to such questions can affect your motivation to acheive success in life, your feelings towards the people who are central in your life, your sense of self-esteem, and even your life expectancy.

Much of what we do in the field of Neuro Linguistic Programming assumes that we are working towards a model of conflict resolution where both people win. Bandler and Grinder (1982, p 147) say "When you use this format you assume that people want to communicate in such a way that they get what they want, *and* that they want to respect the integrity and the interests of the other people involved. That assumption may not be true, but its a very useful operating assumption, because it gives you something to do that can be very effective. If you make that assumption, its always possible to find another solution -not a compromise- that satisfies both parties." This is radically different, as they note, from compromise (where both lose a little so you can both win a little), or a permissive-submissive approach (giving in to the other person), or an authoritarian solution (making sure you win at any cost). Here, we want to be more explicit about those differences, and their wider consequences.

Our belief is that getting clear about the value of the win-win approach is essential to the future of NLP and of our planet. Virginia Satir, who was one of the original models for NLP, concludes her book *Peoplemaking* by emphasising "I think we may be seeing the beginning of the end of people relating to each other through force, dictatorship, obedience and stereotypes.... It is a question of whether the old attitudes will die and new ones be born or that civilisation dies out. I am working on the side of keeping civilisation going with new values about human beings. I hope that now you are, too." (Satir, 1972, p303-304).

Some Working Definitions

In order to discuss conflict resolution, we need some specific enough definitions of possible behaviours. Just getting clear what we mean is an important step to deciding which actions are likely to be successful. Words such as "conflict" and "power" are used in varying ways by different authors. Here, they will have the following meanings:

Conflict Any situation where one person ("A") believes that another person ("B")'s behaviour (or anticipated behaviour) makes it difficult for them (A) to meet their personal outcomes or needs. Person B may or may not be concerned about or even aware of the situation.

Win-Lose Any method of resolving a conflict where at least one of the people feels satisfied and one of the people feels their needs or outcomes were not fully met.

Win-Win Any method of resolving a conflict where all participants feel satisfied that their needs and outcomes were fully met.

Compromise A Lose-Lose method of resolving a conflict where both people feel that some of their outcomes or needs were met and some were not.

Power Power is the ability to permit someone to gain some of their needs or outcomes (to reward them), or to prevent them gaining some (to punish them). Power exists in all human relationships (there are always needs or outcomes of yours that I could help you with, and vice versa). The problem with power is not that it exists, but that people choose to use it as part of a Win-Lose or Lose-Lose method of resolving conflicts.

Use Of Power Intentionally using rewards or punishments to ensure that another person acts in the way desired by you (to ensure that they "obey"), even though they might prefer not to. The use of power is a necessary requirement for the enforcement of Win-Lose conflict resolution. The mutual and balanced use of power is the basis for Compromise.

Examples

Win-Win conflict resolution is often so elegant that the participants would not retrospectively call their situation a conflict. When two people both want the

same orange, it's a conflict. When they get half each, that's compromise. When one gets the orange and the other doesn't, thats Win-Lose. When they discover that one of them wanted the orange peel to grate into a cake mix, and one wanted the juice, they both get what they want. That's Win-Win; but of course it might happen so easily that no conflict is noticed. In that sense, Win-Win is more than a method of conflict resolution; it is simply a method of living that maximises cooperation.

In the family situation at the start of this article, Win-Lose solutions could include insisting that the kids eat their meal and miss the TV program, or letting them watch TV and feeling resentful about it. Compromise might include having the kids watch half their program and then eat desert with the family. Win-Win solutions might include videoing the program to watch later, or eating the meal while watching TV, or changing meal time to suit. Check out the workplace situation from paragraph two above, to ensure you are clear on the differences between the types of solution.

An NLP model for creating Win-Win solutions is given in Reframing (1982, p162) and clarified by Terry Bragg (1995, p23) as:

Four Step Conflict Resolution;
1. Identify Interests of Disputants
2. Identify Higher Levels of Interest
3. Create Agreement Frame
4. Brainstorm For Solutions Together

In our book *Transforming Communication* we describe a sensory specific methodology for putting this into practice. Here, our intention is more to advocate the need for it. In every area of human interaction, from child rearing to corporate management, from the training room to the bedroom and on to the "halls of power", the research points clearly to the superior results of Win-Win thinking. For those of us in NLP who share Virginia Satir's dream, this article is a collection of evidence to back up what we know.

Obedience

For a win-lose solution to be carried out, one person needs to be obedient. Perhaps the clearest demonstration of why obedience is a problem is given by Stanley Milgram's experiments at Yale University in the 1960s (Gordon, 1989, p96-97). In these experiments, a subject is told to administer increasingly severe electric shocks to a strapped in "learner" whenever he gives a wrong answer in the learning task. Unknown to the subject, the "learner" is an actor, who doesn't receive any shock, but convincingly acts as if he does; pleading to stop the experiment, screaming, and then finally collapsing as if dead. The real aim of the experiment is to find out how many people would obey the experimenter in his white coat, as he calmly tells the subject to torture and kill another human being. The experimenter never threatens the subject, but does offer more money if they are reluctant. The answer, for male and female subjects in many different cultures, was always that over 60% of subjects would kill the person. Subjects told the experimenter that they wanted to stop, they trembled, stuttered, laughed nervously, groaned and showed other signs of stress... and went right on obeying until the person was "dead".

Obedience is not a virtue. It is the death of all virtue. The cult of obedience explains a number of problems in society, including (Gordon 1989, p97) why children are unable to challenge sexual abuse. Theodore Marmot of Britain's Tavistock Institute has identified another serious result. He performed a study of health data from 10,000 British civil servants over 20 years. Over this time, mortality for clerical workers was 3.5 times that for senior administrators. The higher the person's status in their organisation, the less likely they were to die. Previous studies have postulated that this effect was due to income, but all those studied by Marmot were on good incomes. Professor David Aldridge comments on this and Marmot's other findings that "There is something correlated with hierarchy that influences health.... In regard to heart disease, for example, people who are exposed to unpredictable and uncontrollable demands, who are given little place for individual discretion in responding to those demands, and who are underutilised in terms of capacities and skills, show higher rates of disease and death" (Aldridge, 1997, p74). To extend Milgram's metaphor, obedience does not only kill the experimental "learner".... Longer term it also kills the subject.

Punishment

The evidence about the results of Punishment is very clear. Consider the researched results of punishing children, for example. People who receive high levels of punishment as children are 4 times more likely to beat their spouse than those whose parents did not hit them (Gordon, 1989, p72). One study of boys showed that those whose parents gave them high levels of restrictiveness and punishment show strong tendencies towards self-punishment, suicide and accident proneness. In another study, children with lower self esteem were shown to have parents who used more punishment and less reasoning (Gordon, 1989, p90). Columbia psychologist Goodwin Cooper found that adults who had been subjected to more punishment as

children showed poorer relationships with others (including those in authority as well as partners), higher anxiety, and higher levels of guilt and unhappiness (Gordon, 1989, p91). E. Maccoby and J. Martin found that children of more authoritarian parents show less evidence of "conscience", poor self control and more withdrawn responses (Gordon, 1989, p91).

B.F. Skinner demonstrated in his research back in the 1950s that these sort of results are found consistently in the punishment of both animals and people. John Platt summarises Skinner's findings that "punishment is ineffective unless applied immediately every time... and the punished behaviour always comes back, along with such additional behaviour as attempts to escape, or to evade punishment, or to retaliate. Skinner says this is why windows are broken in schools and not in drugstores. There are also general behavioural effects. The punished animal or child cowers and loses confidence and creativity, or else he becomes defiant; and the punished child aquires long lasting anxiety and guilt feelings." (Platt, 1973, p29)

The damage to the person who controls and punishes is also significant. Marilyn French notes "The dominators of the world never have a day off.... To keep a slave in a ditch, one must stay there oneself, or appoint an overseer to guarantee the slaves obedience.... The urge to control others backfires; it cannot be satisfied and it entraps the controller." (French, 1985). Thomas Gordon quotes the president of a large company saying "When I was using power to resolve conflicts, I prided myself on being a person who could make decisions quickly. The trouble was, it often took ten times as long to overcome all the resistance to my decisions as it did to make them." (Gordon, 1989, p75).

Rewards

The danger of punishment is fairly commonly understood. Interestingly, many people believe in response that rewards must work better. Such an idea makes sense to a B.F. Skinner, rewarding his research pigeons with food and punishing them with electric shocks. But in real life, the difference between rewards and punishments is non-existent. Ask any child who has been threatened with missing out on the movies if they don't behave. Research reveals that parents who use more punishments use more rewards, and vice versa. The same is true of teachers (Kohn, 1993, p51). Rewards and punishments are just two sides of the coin of power.

Alfie Kohn has amassed a volume of evidence that rewards are resented by the subjects, and that they damage relationships, discourage risk taking and reduce results. A study of children's interest in maths games is typical. (Kohn, 1993, p39) Experimenters rewarded children for playing with a randomly chosen set of maths games, and ignored their playing with the other maths games. Of course, the children opted for the rewards. At the end of 12 days, the rewards were stopped and the children became less interested in the games they had been rewarded for than they had been before the experiment. Numerous studies (Kohn, 1993, p42-43) show that children who are rewarded for correct answers will become less able to find the answers, and will enjoy the task less (their focus shifts from the task to the rewards).

In studies of problem solving by adults, those who are rewarded take twice as long to solve problems as those who are simply asked to do the task.Weight loss programs and smoking cessation programs have found that after an initial boost, the result of rewarding participants for their success is a collapse of the program, with smokers smoking more than they did previously and lying about their results (Kohn, 1993, p39-40). Richard Guzzo's meta analysis of 98 studies of workplace incentive schemes indicates that there is no correlation with overall productivity, or with staff retention and absenteeism.

Competition

The whole win-lose approach to conflict resolution is based on the belief that for one person to succeed, another must fail. This notion is actually enshrined in the popular western admiration for Competition. In his book *No Contest*, Alfie Kohn sets out to answer the question, "Do we perform better when we are trying to beat others than when we are working with them?" He reports David and Roger Johnson's 1981 meta-analysis of over 100 studies of this question. They found 65 studies showing that co-operation worked better than competition, 8 which suggested that competition was better, and 36 which showed no difference (Kohn, 1986, p48). In general, then, people succeed better when they are not competing (as any athlete who has ever looked over their shoulder to check the competition can tell you).

Even the personal trait of competitiveness (the metaprogram behind win-lose thinking) is damaging to success. Robert Helmreich studied large groups of PhD. scientists, businesspeople, students, and airline pilots showing that competitiveness was negatively related to achievement in every case. He was particularly shocked by the business results which he points out "dramatically refute the contention that

competitiveness is vital to a successful business career." (Kohn, 1986, p 52-53).

The Advantages Of Win-Win

The other side of all this is that cooperation and win-win thinking is highly successful. Pehr Gyllenhammar, president of the Volvo corporation, reported that the use of win-win conflict resolution by managers in their Swedish plant resulted in absenteeism dropping by 50%, employee turnover being cut to 25% of previous levels and quality of product improving. (Gordon, 1978, p 1-4). Charles Manz and Henry Sims study the use of power-free self-managing teams in industry, reporting "productivity gains and cost savings that typically range from 30 to 70 percent when compared with traditional systems." (Manz and Sims, 1995, p17).

Robert Cedar of Boston University reviewed 26 separate research studies on win-win conflict resolution in parenting showing that it is significantly more successful than all other models of parenting studied, especially for increasing childrens self esteem and co-operativeness.(Cedar, 1985). Six months after training in win-win conflict resolution, parents continued to show greater understanding, positive feelings and respect for their children, and their children had higher self esteem and considered their parents to be more accepting of them. Other studies show that children whose parents use win-win methods have increased IQ results, while the results for children whose parents give in to them remain static, and the results for children whose parents are autocratic actually drop (Baldwin, Kalhoun and Breese, 1945).

In each area of human relationship, the results are similar. Psychologists Marc Kessler and George Albee reviewed all the existing literature (381 studies) on what causes emotional disturbances, and concluded "Everywhere we looked, every social research study we examined, suggested that major sources of human stress and distress generally involve some form of excessive power.... -it is enough to suggest the hypothesis that a dramatic reduction and control of power might improve the mental health of people." (Gordon, 1989, p230).

How far can you go with the win-win method? Would it work in whole communities? Could it one day replace much of what we now call government?Amory Lovins (reported in Robbins, 1986, p 400) is director of research at the Rocky Mountain Institute, in Snowmass, Colorado. His particular political interest is promoting environmentally safe energy projects. He achieves this with the use of, what he calls, 'Aikido politics'. He finds out the basic goals of the electricity companies and the public and works to prove to them that things such as nuclear power aren't very good ways to meet any of their needs. In one case he spoke at a hearing where a local council was planning a huge nuclear power plant. The company had already spent US$300 million (twice that in NZ dollars) on this plant, but Lovins convinced them that smaller, alternative energy sources would work better for them and the public. The company accepted its $300 million loss and took up his suggestions. Since then he has been hired as a consultant by other electricity companies. In another case, a local council decided to start a drive for fuel conservation and weather-proofing houses. This cut their use of electricity drastically, so they paid off their debts and made three rate cuts over the next two years. Meanwhile customers saved $1.6 million in fuel costs each year.

Always?

Is a win-win approach always the "best" solution? Of course not. There are situations where the negative results of win-lose decisions will be outweighed by another value of yours. For example, if I was crossing the street and didn't see a car approaching me, you might grab me and pull me back "against my will." I hope you would, in fact. This in no way contradicts the evidence above. It reminds us that even the most successful guides to behaviour do not explain everything. However, a simple story helps to demonstrate that such cases are rarer than we think.

When the two authors (Margot and Richard) were first friends, and lived in separate houses, each of us was a single parent. One night, Richard was visiting Margot, and it was later than the bedtime his 6 year old son Francis had arranged (they'd arranged this using the win-win method. Francis liked to be read a short story to help him relax at bedtime; Richard didn't want to be reading or entertaining him after 8 o'clock. Having a regular 8 o'clock bedtime suited them both). On this occasion, Richard had chosen to visit Margot, and planned to talk with her. Richard figured he'd be willing for Francis to stay up later this one night, so he suggested Francis watch TV while Margot and Richard talked.

Unfortunately, Francis seemed to want to climb over Richard as the two talked (being climbed on is an occupational hazard of early parenthood). Richard explained "You can go and sleep in Margot's spare bed, or you can watch TV, but I'm trying to listen here and I can't do it when you climb over me." "'Well," Francis said "I'd really like to sort this out so we both get what we want."

Now, Richard had been all set to order him out of the room (after all, there are some times when maybe you have to use power, he figured). But this statement of Francis' really hooked him. This was a bit embarrassing, in front of Margot, but Richard knew there weren't any other solutions so he told Francis, "Yeah, I like to sort things out that way too, usually, but there isn't any other way this time."

"Well, I'd like us each to say what the problem is", he suggested.

"Okay", Richard agreed thinking he'd quickly prove to Francis that the win-win method couldn't work, and get back to talking with Margot. "My problem is I want to be able to talk with Margot, and yours is you want to play with me. Right?"

"No," he replied, "I'm really tired. I'd like to go to sleep but I don't want to sleep in the spare bed because it's a strange room and it scares me. But I don't want to watch TV."

This was a surprise to Richard. "Fair enough," he countered, "but even so, we still can't solve it. Either you watch TV or sleep in there."

"Do you have any other ideas for solutions?" Francis asked. "No", Richard replied, annoyed at such a silly question.

"Well, I have a few", he offered, and then listed five possible solutions, each of which would solve both their concerns. Richard was more than a little surprised.

"Okay, do any of those", Richard agreed.

"Well, I think we should check which one will work best", Francis suggested.

So they did. The solution they chose was for Francis to wrap up in a blanket and lie down on the floor by Richard's feet. In five minutes he was asleep, safe and rested; therefore, perfectly meeting his need and Richard's. Naturally, the next day Richard checked how the arrangement went. "Well I guess I solved that problem last night pretty well, eh Francis?" There was an amused smile.

Richard Bolstad and Margot Hamblett are the developers of Transforming Communication. Margot died in 2001 and Richard can be reached at phone/fax +64-3-337-1852, E-mail tc@transformations.net.nz, Home page http://www.transformations.net.nz

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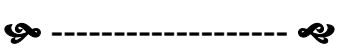
Transforming Conflict

The Effectiveness Training Method



What is Missing In Most Attempts To Resolve Conflict

Most people agree that conflicts can be sorted out most effectively by reaching agreement. Most people agree that respect, understanding, and good will are useful to achieve this goal. What we are missing is not the vision of a better way, but the ability to put this vision into practice. We call this missing piece a "methodology".

Effectiveness Training: A Methodology That Works

We would like to give you an example of what we mean by a methodology. We have been trainers of instructors for Gordon Training International, an organisation teaching a win-win conflict resolution model called Effectiveness Training in 37 countries. Outside of the Effectiveness Training organisations, their methodology has been well researched. Pehr Gyllenhammar, president of the Volvo corporation, reported that its use by managers in their Swedish plant resulted in absenteeism dropping by 50%, employee turnover being cut to 25% of previous levels and quality of product improving. (Gordon, 1978, p 1-4). In a two year study of its use by teachers in Virginia state schools, it produced results such as a 90% reduction in school discipline problems. Robert Cedar of Boston University reviewed 26 separate research studies on its use in parenting showing that it is significantly more successful than all other models of parenting studied, especially for increasing childrens self esteem and co-operativeness.(Effectiveness Training Newsletter, 1995)

We believe that there are many important new advances in communication skills technology (particularly in the field of Neuro Linguistic Programming). However the core of the course we teach (Transforming Communication) owes much to the previous work of Effectiveness Training. Here we will explore the Effectiveness Training "methodology" for resolving conflicts.

Thomas Gordon

Thomas Gordon says that his career as an advocate of conflict resolution began during the Second World War. He was a trainer of Army Air Corp flight instructors at Montgomery, Alabama. At that time, Army Air Corp instructors had an authoritarian style of teaching that Gordon says "usually instilled so much fear and tension that students didn't perform well." (Gordon, 1995, p315). Having been a graduate student and friend of counselling developer Dr Carl Rogers, Gordon believed that a more accepting approach would be more successful. He set training goals with this in mind, assigned other trainers their tasks in line with these, and evaluated their progress. He says "To my surprise and puzzlement, within a few months morale was bad, resistance was high, production was low, creativity was nil, and open and honest communication ceased between the group members and me." Ironically, while his intentions and the content of his changes had been co-operative, the process he had used to impliment change had been authoritarian. In response, after being confronted by a friend, he began to develop a totally different model for his work. "This changed leadership style had startling and enduring effects: creativity flourished, communication opened up, tension decreased, and the work became enjoyable and satisfying to all of us."

After the war, Gordon went back to graduate studies and began to write a book about his learnings (Gordon, 1955). This gained him a job with a large industrial company in Davenport Iowa. When they adopted his model in their factory, again "Cooperation increased, morale shot up, and the foremen were happier, worked harder, and were more creative. Productivity increased." The book catapulted Gordon into a career as a consultant and therapist, but he continued to feel that his work was remedial, and what was really needed was an intervention at an earlier stage in social events. In the late 1950s he hit on the idea of designing a leadership training program for parents. This course (Parent Effectiveness Training or PET) was the first of a number of specific packages of this training designed for salespeople, women, young people, teachers, clergy and others.

An Overview

A series of language patterns connected by three very simple decision points form the core of Gordon's model. The seven key language patterns taught in his books have become common knowledge in conflict resolution circles (passive

listening, door openers, active listening, I messages, 6 step problem solving, consulting and modelling),. However, the three breakthroughs which enable these patterns to be selected and combined for any particular situation are unique to the Effectiveness Training model, and essential to what I'm calling a "Methodology".

Here we will present these three concepts, and show how they transform random "communication skills" into a powerful strategy for creating and sustaining successful relationships. In doing so we'll briefly describe the seven language patterns.

The three concepts are:

1) The Problem Ownership Model, a system which identifies the most useful starting point for using communication skills.
2) Shifting Gears, a system for shifting focus between my own position and the other person's position
3) Conflict Differentiation, a system for identifying and selecting skills based on the type of issue involved in a conflict.

Problem Ownership

To begin using the methodology of Effectiveness Training in any relationship situation, one simply checks whether at this moment ones own present internal state is desired or not (a "problem", as Dilts notes in Dilts, 1993, p193, is any distance between present state and desired state). One then steps into second position and checks whether the other person's internal state is desired by them or not. There are four possible results to these checks (Gordon, 1974, p38-39):

1) Neither of us owns a Problem. If both states are desired, then no problem exists, and the focus of communication can be towards individual and mutual enjoyment. In the situation where neither of us owns a problem, a larger range of language patterns will be safe to use (safe in the sense of preserving both of our self esteem, and preserving the relationship). This area offers the most potential for us to grow personally, as each of us has energy free from problem-solving to focus on our goals and on discovery.

If one of the people is in an undesired state, then they "own a problem" in Thomas Gordon's terms. This does not mean that they are "at fault" or "should" change something, concepts which are understood not to be wellformed both in NLP and in Effectiveness Training. It simply means that they are not in their desired state. Possible results 2), 3), and 4) relate to this situation.

2) The other person owns a problem. If I am in a relationship where at this moment I feel okay, and the other person does not (ie they are in an undesired or "problem" state), it can be useful to focus my attention on assisting them to reach their desired state. This process, called Helping, is of course a common one when you are assisting a client to change. It also occurs when you are listening to your spouse talking about a difficult day, or when you offer to assist your co-worker to learn how to perform a new work task. The most effective skills for Helping will be ones that linguistically identify the problem space and the desired state as existing inside the other person's experience (I will say, for example, "So what you want to change is..." rather than "So what I think you should change is..."). In Effectiveness Training, these skills include:

- passive listening (the equivalent of NLP rapport skills),
- door openers (open questions),
- active listening (the equivalent of NLP's verbal pacing, and Reflective Listening).

These skills avoid patronising the person by suggesting what they "should" aim for, "should" feel and "should" be able to cope with. If assertive skills were used in the helping area they would come across as overbearing and controlling (a response which sometimes occurs when someone does an assertiveness training course, and with the hammer of assertion assumes that every problem is a nail to be driven in) (Gordon, 1974, p61-75).

3) I own a problem. If I am in a relationship where at this moment the other person feels okay, and I do not (ie I am in an undesired or "problem" state), it can be useful to focus my attention on finding a way for me to reach my desired state. This process could be called Problem Solving. As we know in NLP, people own a problem in response to particular internal representations. If the representations related to my problem state are about the other person (if I'm upset or angry or hurt "about something they did", for example) then this process of problem solving is called Assertion. For example, I own a problem where I'm frustrated about my spouse's failure to wash the dishes, or where I'm resentful that I ended up doing extra work when my co-worker didn't attend a meeting. I also own a problem at times when a client forgets to turn up to a session. The most effective skill for Assertion will be one that linguistically identifies the problem and the desired state as existing inside my own experience ("What I want to change is..." rather than "So what you might want to do is..."). In Effectiveness training, this skill is called an "I message" (Gordon, 1974, 139-145). In a conflict, a clear I message identifies:

-the sensory specific behaviour that is the subject of the concern,
-the internal state (emotion) which I have generated in response to this behaviour,
-any sensory specific effects on me of that behaviour.

An example of the format for an I message would be "When...[sensory specific behaviour], I feel...[congruent description of my internal state] and the effect on me is... [sensory specific effects of the behaviour]". This structure avoids insulting or blaming the other person, and avoids patronising them by telling them what they "should" do. By not suggesting one specific solution, it leaves the process of generating solutions until the other person's situation has been heard and can be taken into account (as in examples below). Helping skills by themselves will be ineffective in the area where I own a problem, suggesting to the other person that it's up to them what solution is reached. (a response which sometimes occurs when someone does counselling training and sees the other as a "client" even when the other doesn't "own a problem").

4) We both own a problem. This situation implies that some combination of linguistic skills will be useful (So what you want is... and what I want is...). Where we both own a problem in response to related internal representations, then this situation is, in Effectiveness Training terms, a "Conflict". This doesn't mean that we are necessarily opposed to each other, or that one of us must win and one lose. It simply means that we both are upset, angry, hurt etc about related issues (eg I think we should spend more time together and the other person wants more space. I want to use the company car tomorrow and so does my coworker) Such situations benefit from a combination of the helping and assertive skills, as well as from specific conflict resolution skills (including in Effectiveness Training the 6 Step problem solving process, consulting and modelling).

Shifting Gears

The situation would be very easy if problem ownership stayed constant throughout any conversation. If this was the case, in the "no-problem" situation, a conversation would involve simply exploring positive states and outcomes together. In the "other owns a problem" situation, a conversation would involve simply pacing the other person's dilemna, assisting the other person to clarify what their outcome is, and guiding them through processes to assist change towards that. In the "I own a problem" situation, a conversation would involve simply asserting my position and identifying the changes I want.

In real life, it is more useful if I continuously monitor the changing internal states of myself and the other person, and adjust my language use to best represent the shifts of problem ownership, many of which are of course a result of my own previous communications. For example, in the midst of helping a client solve his problem, I may discover that I myself am uncomfortable with the way he insists that I listen to his complaints about what goes wrong, and does not shift to an outcome (solution focused) frame. From using Helping skills ("So for you the problem is..." and "So what you want is...") I would then shift to using Assertive skills ("One thing I'm finding frustrating about the way you're talking is..." and "I'd find it easier to help if...").

Most particularly, once I have used an Assertive skill, the most common outcome is for the other person to shift into the problem state themselves (to feel uncomfortable in response to my communication). When a person hears my I message "I resented the way you didn't get that report to me on time as we'd arranged. It involved me in a lot of extra work" it is rare for them to respond with congruent joy and enthusiasm to improve next time. If you think of times when someone has, however skilfully, asserted themselves with you in this way, you'll notice that you're more likely to experience feelings of embarrassment, discomfort, hurt, annoyance, and mismatching responses. That is to say, you're more likely to own a problem about the message, and possibly about the issue.

If I've used an I message (Assertion skill) and the other person owns a problem about that, the next step to getting my problem solved will be to shift back from Assertion, and help them solve their own problem. To do this, I simply use active listening (a Helping language pattern), to pace their concern (eg "You think I'm over-reacting..."). As NLP points out, there is no resistance, only a lack of rapport. Once the other person feels fully heard in their own problem state (evidenced usually by a nod of the head), then it becomes possible to restate my I message taking into account their comment. As they have now been heard, their "emotional temperature" is reduced, and they are more able to hear my concern and respond positively to it. The use of a "broken record" style "assertiveness", where one simply repeats one's I message like a broken record, is simply an example of failure to monitor the ongoing problem ownership situation. It is ineffective to restate my I message until the other person indicates (with a nod or verbal agreement) that I have accurately paced their situation.

The process of resolving such a situation by alternating between I messages and active listening is called shifting gears in Effectiveness Training (Gordon, 1974, p145-147). Here's how it might sound in practice, in a discussion where Joan is using the model in a concern with her work colleague, Frank (notice that if Frank knew the model, the process would be even more fluent, but Joan can use the model regardless of this):

Joan: Frank, I have a problem I'd like to discuss. You handed in a report to the Director yesterday and suggested that new filing system I had recommended to you last week. I see reading the report that you've described it as a new idea of yours, and I guess I feel a bit resentful that I didn't get acknowledged.	Joan "owns" a problem: she is the one who is concerned about what has happened, so she uses an I message. Frank is feeling Okay, so initially he doesn't own a problem.
Frank: [sighs] Lighten up Joan. What counts is that the idea gets through to him.	Frank responds indicating that he owns a problem, so Joan "shifts gears" and active listens him.
Joan: You think I'm over-reacting, and the system will be working anyway.	
Frank: [nods] Sure. It's no big deal.	Frank's nod indicates he feels paced/understood, so Joan shifts gears again and restates her I message.
Joan: Well, when my ideas don't get acknowledged as mine, that work I've put into planning them comes across as yours, and I do also want to know that my contribution is valued.	
Frank: Look, I just wrote it out quickly, and I wasn't thinking about who "owned" what idea.	Frank is now apologising. As he's still not feeling totally comfortable, Joan again acknowledges his comments before thanking him for changing his approach.
Joan: So you were doing the best you could with the time you had.	
Frank. [nods] Yeah. If it's important to you, I'll be more careful.	
Joan: Thanks. I would appreciate your help with that.	
Frank: Okay. It was a good idea. I just wasn't thinking. Sorry.	
Joan: Great. Thanks for passing it on, anyway. Adding my name will solve it for me.	

Conflict Differentiation

The shifting gears process will lead to one of three outcomes. Depending on which outcome occurs, you can easily identify which steps to take next to most effectively resolve the conflict.

Outcome 1) The shifting gears process itself resolves the conflict. Such conflict could be considered a simple miscommunication. In the example above, for instance, once Frank has clearly heard what Joan's problem is (which is assisted by her use of I messages and active listening -both her use of clear first position and clear second position) the problem is solved. Conflicts of the type described as Closed Calibration Loops by Bandler and Grinder in the book *Changing With Families* (see *Transforming Communication* p 160-162) are of this type. No further action may be needed.

Outcome 2) As a result of the shifting gears process, it becomes clear that both people have a concrete problem. Both people can understand that the other person has a problem, though they are reluctant to solve the other person's problem as this would leave them with their own difficulty. Thomas Gordon calls this a Conflict of Needs. In NLP terms it is a conflict which both parties have agreed to keep at the neurological level of environment, behaviour or capability (their values and sense of identity are not a subject of discussion, only how and where they do what). In such a situation, Gordon recommends the skilled use of his 6 step win-win conflict resolution model (Gordon, 1974, p217-234), which is an analogue of NLP's 6 step Reframing. Gordon's six steps are:

1. Identify the problem in terms of two sets of needs, rather than two conflicting solutions. Needs are more chunked up descriptions than solutions, and are comparable to evidence procedures in NLP ("How will you know that this problem is solved?" rather than "What specific way would you suggest to solve this problem right now?")
2. Brainstorm potential solutions which could meet both sets of needs.
3. Evaluate the ability of these proposed solutions to meet both sets of needs.
4. Choose a solution or more than one solutions to put into action.
5. Act
6. Evaluate the results.

An example would be if the conversation between Frank and Joan went like this:

Joan: Frank, I have a problem I'd like to discuss. You handed in a	Joan "owns" a problem: she is the one

report to the Director yesterday and suggested that new filing system I had recommended to you last week. I see reading the report that you've described it as a new idea of yours, and I guess I feel a bit resentful that I didn't get acknowledged.	who is concerned about what has happened, so she uses an I message. Frank is feeling Okay, so initially he doesn't own a problem
Frank: [sighs] Lighten up Joan. What counts is that the idea gets through to him.	Frank responds indicating that he has a problem, so Joan "shifts gears" and active listens him.
Joan: You think I'm over-reacting, and the system will be working anyway.	
Frank: [nods] Sure. It's no big deal.	Frank's nod indicates he feels paced/understood, so Joan shifts gears again and restates her I message.
Joan: Well, when my ideas don't get acknowledged as mine, that work I've put into planning them comes across as yours, and I do also want to know that my contribution is valued.	
Frank: Look, I just wrote it out quickly, and I wasn't thinking about who "owned" what idea. How am I supposed to know if your idea is important enough to be considered private property anyway?	Frank now understands that Joan has a concrete problem, but if he agreed to help her, he'd have a problem of his own (trying to guess what issues were serious enough for her). This is what Thomas Gordon calls a Conflict of Needs.
Joan: So you didn't realise the idea was important to me.	
Frank. [nods] Yeah. I have enough things to do without trying to guess which things you're considering that way.	
Joan: You need to have a way of knowing which things are important.	
Frank: Sure. If I knew, I'd have mentioned you.	
Joan: OK. So we need a way that you can know that and then you'd be happy to help with my concern. [Frank nods] Any suggestions?	Joan sums up the two sets of needs, and invites Frank to begin 6 step problem-solving to identify a solution which will meet both sets of needs.
Frank: Well, yes actually. If you made a point of writing me a memo about each idea that's important to you that way, then I'd know to include your name about that issue.	
Joan: Excellent. That works for me. Thanks.	
Frank: No problem. I'll drop the Director another note about this time.	

Outcome 3) As a result of the shifting gears process, it becomes clear that at least one person believes that the conflict involves their deeper beliefs, values or sense of identity. In Robert Dilts' NLP model these are disagreements at a higher neurological level (Dilts, 1993, p 55-56). Such a person will be reluctant to engage in the sort of conflict resolution demonstrated above because their values are "non-negotiable". Put another way, Person A *believes* that Person B is trying to change Person A's values/identity, which Person A considers is really "none of Person B's business". This is what Thomas Gordon calls a "Values Collision" (Gordon, 1974, p283-306). Note that in this situation it is less likely that a satisfactory solution will be reached in one session. Skills that are recommended by Thomas Gordon for influencing others values include values consulting, and modelling. Modelling involves demonstrating, in ones own behaviour, the effectiveness of one's values. Values consulting is a skilled linguistic influencing process which requires (Gordon, 1974, p294-297):

1. Ensuring you have been "hired" as a consultant (that the other person agrees to listen).
2. Preparing your case, especially any relevant information.
3. Sharing your expertise and opinions in simple I message form ("I believe...") and shifting gears to active listen the other's opinion.
4. Leaving the other to make up their own mind, rather than attempting to force a new value. People rarely change values in direct interaction with someone who shares the opposing value. It is more common for them to change at a later time, having been left in a positive state, to choose.

If you attempted to resolve Values collisions as if they were Conflicts of Needs, it could well lead to disillusionment with the conflict resolution process, and the belief that "some people just cannot be engaged in a win-win conflict resolution way". At times a person may also decide that rather than attempt to influence the other person's values, they will learn to live with the difference, or to alter the relationship so that the other person's values do not clash so frequently with theirs. Here's how the conversation between Frank and Joan might go if it was a Values Collision:

Joan: Frank, I have a problem I'd like to discuss. You handed in a report to the Director yesterday and suggested that new filing system I had recommended to you last week. I see reading the report that you've described it as a new idea of yours, and I guess I feel a bit resentful that I didn't get acknowledged.	Joan "owns" a problem: she is the one who is concerned about what has happened, so she uses an I message. Frank is feeling Okay, so initially he doesn't own a problem
Frank: [sighs] Lighten up Joan. What counts is that the idea gets through to him.	Frank responds indicating that he has a problem, so Joan "shifts gears" and active listens him.
Joan: You think I'm over-reacting, and the system will be working anyway.	
Frank: [nods] Sure. It's no big deal.	Frank's nod indicates he feels paced/understood, so Joan shifts gears again and restates her I message.
Joan: Well, when my ideas don't get acknowledged as mine, that work I've put into planning them comes across as yours, and I do also want to know that my contribution is valued.	
Frank: Look, I just wrote it out quickly, and I wasn't thinking about who owned what ideas. Actually, we all develop these ideas together, and as far as I'm concerned no-one "owns" them.	Frank identifies a difference in values about the issue
Joan: So you think of all the ideas as our collective property. I guess my approach sounds kind of selfish to you.	Joan reflective listens Frank's value.
Frank: [nods] Exactly.	
Joan: Well, I have a different way of thinking about that. I'd like to discuss it some more some time. Would you be willing to hear my thoughts about that.	Joan arranges to meet with Frank at a time that is easier for him to discuss their values difference. There, she will continue to use active listening and I messages to advocate her value, acting as what Thomas Gordon calls a "Values Consultant", and modelling her values.
Frank: [sighs] Maybe.... Yeah, I guess so. I don't want to get into a heavy discussion about it now though.	
Joan: Great. How about after the meeting on Friday: maybe we could put aside half an hour to clarify our approaches with each other.	
Frank: Okay.	

The Use Of Coercive Power

A fundamental principle of Effectiveness Training is that the use of coercive power in relationships is counterproductive. The destructive results of coercion by both rewards and punishments are discussed by us in another article. Effectiveness Training is a real world model. In the real world there are some situations where you will decide it's worth the damage to control another person's behaviour by using power. Thomas Gordon suggests (Gordon, 1974, p279-282) that these situations could include:

- Situations where you don't have the say over what the rule is. If you work. for a company you won't be able to negotiate solutions that give away their property. If you are a teacher you won't be able to arrange for someone to break a school rule. (You can, of course, work to change such rules.)
- Situations where your own need is overriding. You don't, for instance, have to put up with a person hitting you; forcibly preventing them may well be worth their response of frustration or resentment.
- Situations where it seems to you that another person is obviously in danger. It wouldn't make sense to calmly watch someone walk in front of a speeding car, while sending the clear I message "I'm really worried that that car will hit you!" Mostly their initial annoyance, at being grabbed and pulled off the road, will be worth coping with.
- Situations where there is no time to discuss the matter. If you have a conflict arise ten minutes before your plane is due to take off, you may decide it's worth temporarily refusing to sort it out.
- Situations where talking with the person is impossible. This will include many conflicts involving children less than two years old, and conflicts with people who are drunk or fully unconnected to reality.

Even in these cases, it's worth remembering the damage power over others causes. You can reduce the damage to your relationship by:

- Only using the minimum force needed to solve your problem.
- Explaining, afterwards, how you came to use power, and assuring the other person that this is not your usual intention.
- Using active listening to acknowledge their resentment, and spending time rebuilding your relationship.
- Planning how to avoid that situation in future.

These last three steps could be done quite simply, as in this example: "I'd like to talk about what happened before. I don't mean to push you around, and only acted the way I did because I couldn't find a way to safely sort it out at the time. I guess you felt pretty annoyed, and I'd like to try and sort out some agreement, so we don't get into that situation again."

This is an emergency strategy for times when the use of power was logically unavoidable (rather than times when it seemed like a simple solution). To restate the case, the use of co-ercion is relationships is associated consistently with destructive effects for both participants and for the relationship (see Bolstad and Hamblett, 1998).

Summary

We do not consider the Effectiveness Training model to be the "final word" in conflict resolution. In its original form, Effectiveness Training has some disadvantages.

- It uses negative language -describing conflict resolution as a "No-lose method" (Gordon, 1974, p217) for example.
- It has a problem focus rather than an outcome focus -the concept of "needs" which must be resolved in a conflict (Gordon, 1974, p272-273) might better be replaced by a concept of "outcomes" which could be met by the resolution, for example.
- It has a lack of understanding of NLP change technology, leading to a limited notion of helping as simply guiding a person through the problem solving steps (Gordon, 1974, p106-112).

Its key advantages seem to us to be:

- A clear sorting process to identify the situation from first and second position, and thus select useful skills ("problem ownership").
- A structure for elegantly shifting back and forth from helping skills such as pacing to assertive skills such as I messages ("shifting gears").
- Differentiation of conflicts by neurological level (into "conflicts of needs" and "values collisions").
- A commitment to win-win outcomes, and influence rather than coercion.
- Sensory specific descriptions of effective language patterns (passive listening, door openers, active listening, I messages, 6 step problem solving, consulting and modelling especially).
- A methodology which does not depend on the other person using it (or even being familiar with it).

We are very grateful to Thomas Gordon and to Effectiveness Training for their excellent contributions to conflict resolution. The processes described here are further explained in our text *Transforming Communication*. In the Transforming Communication seminar they are combined with other conflict resolution models and with the new skills of NLP.

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Couples

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One of the most enjoyable tasks for me as an NLP Practitioner is enabling people to create and enjoy one to one intimate relationship. The process of NLP based therapy with couples involves two levels of work. On one level, there are a series of educational activities which I do as a therapist. This forms some of the official "content" that we discuss in our sessions. There are six key areas, which I remember with the acronym **FAMILY**.

Frame the Outcome Each Session: Usually I begin by pointing out that a decision to seek couples counselling is in itself an expression of commitment to some sort of relationship, and I ask what prompted the two people to come. I listen to each person's description in turn (insisting on that happening if necessary), build rapport with each individually, and check what each person's outcome is. If one person has "no outcome" (ie claims to be happy with things as they are) I ask "What will you need to be doing differently so that you don't end up agreeing to come back?"

Mainly, in terms of setting an outcome, I want to know "Do both of you want to preserve this relationship, or just one of you, or neither of you." I realise that either person may be ambivalent, but I want an agreement from both people that the goal of the session is to preserve the relationship *or* I will treat the session as "not a couple counselling session". In the latter case I'm just working with two individuals helping them to resolve conflicts, to each of their satisfaction (maybe even by finding ways to separate). We all need to be clear which outcome is being agreed to. The rest of this model assumes that our goal is to enhance the relationship.

Anchoring: I explain the process of anchoring, and identify ways in which this may have been working in the relationship. Often, people in conflict have used most of their time together to try and resolve the conflicts, and the sight/sound/touch of their partner is now associated with conflict. They feel bad when they see or hear or touch each other. To reanchor positive states, I have each of them close their eyes and associate back into a time when they felt congruently good about the other person (eg soon after they first met). Then I have them open their eyes and notice that this is the same person! This is a process Virginia Satir used while "taking a family history". I also teach the couple how to use anchors effectively (eg, don't fight in the bedroom; spend time together without arguing).

Metaprograms and Values: (see *Transforming Communication* p 179-190). I formally elicit each of their values for a relationship, and for life; or give them this as a home task to do (separately, and perhaps asking them to guess what they think the other person's values are; so they get the idea that they have separate values). I discuss the differences, and identify the similarities. I usually give them a Myers Briggs style personality questionnaire and a questionnaire about their favoured sensory representational system. I never assume the results of these questionnaires are "true" to their actual behaviour of course. I make my own decisions about what is happening, and help the two of them to notice metaprogram and sensory preference differences in the session. This is usually a moving experience, as they discover that one person does not have to be framed as "wrong"; they may just be "different". I teach them how to utilise each other's style, and how to build rapport with that style.

Individual Therapy: This may involve a session with each person to clear negative anchors using NLP processes such as the Trauma Process (see *Transforming Communication*, p 110-112 & 118-120), and to similarly heal any older distress about relationships. It is also a useful way to clarify each person's outcomes. I arrange that each session is confidential, and ask permission before raising issues from an individual session in the couple session. Some therapists prefer to have another therapist see each individual. There are advantages to each method.

Love and Attraction Strategies: I elicit each of four "strategies" the person uses (how do you know you're loved?; how do you get to love someone?; how do you know someone is attracted to you?; how do you get attracted to someone?). I then teach each of them how to fulfil the other person's strategies congruently.

A) Their strategy for knowing they are loved. This is basically the one step strategy whose elicitation is described by Tony Robbins in *Unlimited Power*, Chapter 8 (see page 6 in the Transforming Communication In Families Manual).

B) Their strategy for feeling love. Use a similar process to get them to associate back into a time when they felt love, and find out how they did it. What did they use as a cue to allow themselves to "fall in love"? This strategy has often been disabled after a subsequent traumatic event (the person has stopped themself ever running it, because last time it led to a situation where they got hurt) If you find this time, you may choose to use the NLP Trauma

process on it (see *Transforming Communication*, p 110-112 & 118-120).

C) Their strategy for knowing that someone is attracted to them. It's likely that their partner was attracted to them at some time. They may not now be noticing it. Find out how they did notice it at a previous time, and check if they are aware if it's still happening. "Attracted" to them is different to "love". I usually use a New Zealand colloquialism: "How do you know if someone has the hots for you?" to make the difference clear.

D) Their strategy for getting attracted to (read "getting the hots for") someone else. Of course, most people are going to tell you that it's just magic. That's the problem! I ask them, if you were blind could you still do it? If you were deaf could you still do it? If you were unable to feel touch from the neck down could you still do it? If you had no smell could you still do it? I want them to reconnect with the sensory experience of sexual desire. The person you are working with is a mammal. They have an hormonal system which is designed to create craving. The opportunities are so frequent that the only way they could stop doing it is by keeping it out of awareness.

You may wonder; why find out about sexual desire when what the person wants is love? In my opinion, love is the sun that nurtures the growth of intimacy, but desire/attraction is the juice, the fertiliser. People often fantasise that their relationships grow on air. I find that when I associate them into relationships that they were willing to invest energy in, attraction is real significant! Just eliciting these strategies tends to reactivate them. Often I will play with the person as they report a patently unsuccessful strategy, ("You mean you can only know that someone is attracted to you if they tell you that in words. So if I was filling in for you, and I see this person who I get the hots for, and they're looking at me, breathing twice as fast as usual, smiling and making constant eye contact, and talking excitedly with me about things that turn them on, I have to tell myself that they're probably not interested?")

Yardsticks for Communication: I get their agreement to utilise some simple arrangements as they communicate. These include I messages to express their own intentions and responses, reflective listening (verbal feedback) to check the accuracy of their perceptions, and win-win conflict resolution based on chunking up to shared descriptions of the outcome and chunking down to mutually acceptable solutions (see *Transforming Communication*, p 219 for a definition of "Chunking"). While I do actually coach people in these processes, more significantly, we discover them as we perform the *"real"* task of couples therapy, which is...

Intervening in Closed Communication Loops As They Occur In The Session

The second and more important level of my session with a couple involves exploring the actual structure of their communication with each other in the session. The structure of this communication is more important than the theoretical content (which may be any of the above issues, or some issue that the couple have been disagreeing about previously).

This is where couples work becomes fundamentally different to individual work. The metamodel is an NLP tool for getting people to send sensory specific I messages, and to initiate sensory specific feedback in the communication process (see *Transforming Communication* p 122-123). About 80% of my interventions with couples are of this sort:

Person A: "You're incredibly insensitive; that's what's wrong here!"
Therapist: "So that's what really upsets you. Can I just check, how, specifically, is he/she insensitive?"
Person A: "Well, the way she/he wasn't listening when I said all that."
Therapist: "Oh; so you had the impression he/she wasn't listening. [to Person B] Were you?"
Person B: "Of course I was. I heard every word. You always insult me like that."
Therapist: "So as far as you were concerned you were listening. [to Person A] And as far as you were concerned, she/he wasn't. What would let you know she/he actually was listening?"
Person A: "Well, if he/she looked in my direction of course."
Therapist: [to Person B] "Did you know that was what she needed to see to feel listened to?"
Person B: "No. "
Therapist: "So this may have happened several times, and when she/he complained, you would have felt insulted; is that right?"
Person B: "Yes. And I suppose that once I feel that way, I actually do listen less."
Person A: "Exactly. So how am I supposed to know if your listening, if you don't even look at me?"
Therapist: "That's what we're after isn't it. A way you can know that he/she's really hearing you. And one solution is for him/her to look at you. Another thing I might add is...Do you feel listened to by me?"
Person A: "Sure."
Therapist: "Because I'm aware that one thing I'm doing is checking whether I've understood what

you say before I reply each time. Sort of restating it to find out if I got it right. And that gives us both feedback about whether I understand you."

In this sequence, the therapist uses the metamodel questions, combined with reflective listening. She/he also models and teaches this feedback process. It would have been so easy for the therapist to have assumed (with person A) that they both knew what "not listening" or even "being insensitive" meant to each of them. In couples therapy the secret is to internally question every definition and every presupposition! Just because one person refers to something and the other person nods doesn't mean they both know what they're talking about. Let me chunk down a bit and explain more step by step what goes wrong in couples conflicts like that above, and how an NLP therapist can intervene.(This entire model is clearly explained in *Changing With Families* by Satir, Grinder and Bandler, and also in our book *Transforming Communication*).

Here, I'll a) explain what a closed communication loop is, and b) introduce three key skills for resolving it (two to be used by the couple, and a third to be used by the therapist.)

Closed Communication Loops: An Example

Robyn and Belinda are flatting together. Robyn comes home from work and feels pleased to see Belinda. She decides to communicate this. If Robyn and Belinda were both telepathic, Belinda could have "read her mind." Being human, Robyn needs to choose some action or words to be a message about the feeling she has. She filters her internal experience (thoughts and feelings) into words. The message she says is "Hi! How was your day?" When Belinda receives this message she has to decide what it means. She filters the message into a internal representation of what Robyn though and felt. Hopefully, when Robyn says "Hi! How was your day?", Belinda decides that Robyn is pleased to see her. She might then feel pleased to see Robyn, and send her own message back: "Fine, how was yours?" This is how a communication loop works at its simplest.

But what if Belinda filters out something else. It may be that recently Robyn has been asking a lot of very personal questions of her, and seemed very critical of her lifestyle. Perhaps lately Belinda's been thinking that Robyn is trying to find out too much about her private life. This time she may filter in an internal representation of Robyn stepping up this campaign. When Belinda has <u>those</u> kind of internal representations, it will change her emotional state (she'll get "upset") and her return message will be rather different maybe "Don't be so nosy. Why don't you leave me alone!". Now, when Robyn filters that message, she may make an internal representation of Belinda being angry at her, or not wanting to live with her. Once this process has begun, it can escalate. Robyn's state is changed as a result of her internal representation of Belinda not wanting to live with her. (Robyn is also "upset"). If Robyn fires back "You always look so angry! Can't you just be friendly?" Belinda could now filter in "proof" that Robyn has been prying into her life and analysing her. This is a **closed communication loop**. Belinda gets upset about what she imagines Robyn means; Robyn gets upset by what she imagines Belinda means, and so on in a loop. The loop is closed because no-one actually checks that they got the right message.

In metamodel terms, Belinda has <u>deleted</u> the part of the message where Robyn said she wanted her to be friendly. She has <u>generalised</u> one comment about her being angry as meaning that Robyn is prying into her life in an ongoing way. She has <u>distorted</u> her own theory about this into a "proof", as if she could read Robyn's mind. The metamodel questions are one way to open up a closed communication loop. By asking the meta model questions, you assist people to send very clear messages about their internal experience.

Clear I Messages Resolve Closed Communication Loops

Such clear messages are often called "I messages", because they describe the internal experience "I" have. "I messages" are one of two skills which the couple themselves could use to resolve closed communication loops. In our example above, where Belinda says "Don't be so nosy. Why don't you leave me alone!", she has said something about Robyn - a "you" message. By using an I message she could have not only solved her own problem quicker but also helped heal the rift between the two of them. She might have said "When you ask me that, I feel uncertain about what I'm being asked about." or "When I go to answer that I get gripped up. I guess I'm uncomfortable with some of the questions you've been asking me lately". Sure: Robyn might have been surprised, but at least she'd know what Belinda meant. At the next step Robyn says another "you" message back ("You always sound so angry. Can't you just be friendly?") Using an I message she could have said "I was just meaning to be friendly," or "I don't know what I did wrong. I'm shocked. I just meant to ask you how your day was." It may have worked best to wait for another time to bring the issue up, but at least with an I message Belinda would more likely know she

wasn't being blamed. A clear “I message” describes how I feel (state) and what sensory specific experience I’m responding to.

Reflective Listening Resolves Closed Communication Loops

A second skill could also be used by the couple to resolve the closed communication loop problem. This is reflective listening, or feedback. Reflective listening involves restating what the person has said back to them, as if they had said an I message. The reflective statement checks what the clear meaning behind their statement was. For example, when Belinda said "Don’t be so nosy. Why don't you leave me alone!" Robyn could have responded "When I ask you how your day was, like that, you feel hassled". In the same way, after Robyn said "You always sound so angry. Can't you just be friendly?" Belinda could have responded, "When I said that, I sounded angry to you; You're disappointed we don't get on better."

When you use reflective listening, you're really checking if the message you received after going through two filter systems is actually a clear enough description of the other person's internal experience. In a way, it's a question that says "Let me check if I got your message correct. Do you mean....?" When this is done with a genuine, congruent interest in understanding what the other person meant, it has powerful effects. The other person will feel understood. They will probably nod their head or verbally agree, to let you know your reflecting was mainly correct. They will even be more willing to listen when you send them your own message. If you've very successful, they will start reflecting your messages to check their own understanding (they'll have learned the skill).

Whether your reflective message was exactly right or not, it will tend to encourage the other person to speak in clearer messages themself. This is because your reflective message subtly changes the way the other person thinks about what they meant. Reflective messages gently alter the person's comment in line with the meta model.

a) Reflective messages include the word "you" (a performative, in metamodel terms). They remind the person who specifically feels that, and who thinks those things are true. e.g., "So for YOU..."

b) Reflective messages include sensory/perceptual words such as "You feel..." "The way you see it ..." "It seems to you..." "Your opinion is ..." "You think..." This challenges metamodel patterns like mind reading. It remind the person "This is your perception of it"

c) Reflective messages can avoid cause and effect, complex equivalence and modal operators just by using the structure "When .... (this sensory specific event happens) ... you feel/think ... (internal response)". This stops the person filtering their experience as if something or someone "makes them have to" feel or think a certain way. In your reflective message you can put the person back "at cause" in their life. "When *this* happens, you feel *that*" opens up the possibility that you could find a way to respond by feeling differently.

d) Reflective messages can realistically limit events, challenging any universal quantifiers. Robyn's first statement was "You always sound so angry", Always is a universal quantifier. Belinda doesn’t have to argue whether it was true or not. She could just reflect "When I said that, I sounded angry to you". Her reflective message talks about one specific time, instead of "always."

Used By The Therapist, The Metamodel Resolves Closed Communication Loops

Used with reflective listening and softening frames, the metamodel questions can assist the clarification of a closed communication loop. When Belinda said “Don’t be so nosy. Why don’t you leave me alone?” a therapist might have responded “So you’d like her to give you more space. I’m not clear though; how specifically was she being nosy?” When Robyn said “You always sound so angry. Can’t you just be friendly?” a therapist might have responded “ She sounded angry when she said that. Do you mean she *always* sounds that way to you?” or “You’d like her to be more friendly. What specifically would she do that would be “being friendly”?”. More examples of this process are given in *Changing with Families*.

The metamodel, again, encourages the other person to send clear “I messages”. Notice, however, that I do not recommend initially that you teach the metamodel to the couple. The metamodel is a mismatching skill; it chunks down and disagrees with the other person, and requires a high level of rapport to be used successfully.

Process and Content

So there are two levels on which I work with a couple: a) the “content” of their particular disagreements, and of the particular issues raised as we explore their metaprograms etc., and b) the process of how they communicate in the session. As in all communication, the content is seductive; by which I mean that it’s tempting to get involved in the issues, in finding a solution, in who said what

when, in who really has what values, metaprograms or negative anchors. The key to successful couples work is to pay attention most of the time to the process. Sorting out a particular conflict is a great experience, but without understanding the structure of effective communication, the couple are likely to return again and again to get help with future conflicts. Knowing this means I'm willing for us not to complete a particular content in the session, if we can use the time to fully explore and resolve a closed communication loop.

And there's one final thing I do in a session with a couple. In concluding the session, I tell them what I've appreciated about being with them, and what I identify as successful in their interaction together. I messages and feedback aren't just a way of identifying what's gone wrong. I also aim to have the couple use them to celebrate what's gone right.

Summary

There's a structure to building and sustaining a successful intimate relationship. As with anything else that happens in our neurology, NLP offers us ways to model that process and pass it on to others.

The process of assisting a couple to maintain and enhance their relationship includes:

- framing the outcome clearly with both of them.
- teaching them about anchoring and reversing negative anchors.
- eliciting and teaching them about their metaprograms and values.
- clearing issues and clarifying outcomes in individual therapy.
- identifying their strategies for love and attraction (how do you know you're loved?; how do you get to love someone?; how do you know someone is attracted to you?; how do you get attracted to someone?).
- coaching them to use I messages and reflective listening.
- interrupting and redirecting closed communication loops as they occur, using the metamodel.
- validating the couple.

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Teaching To The Right Sense

An Introduction To NLP In Teaching

© Dr Richard Bolstad

Teachers need more than knowledge of their subject!

From the 1950s to the 1980s, psychologist Virginia Satir was one of the most influential developers in the new field of Human Relationships. Often called the grandmother of Family Therapy, Satir assisted thousands of married couples and families to resolve old conflicts and create a more enjoyable life together. In her field, she was an expert, but Satir had one problem - she couldn't teach what she did to others. Hundreds of people trained with her, but when they left her seminars, they were usually unable to copy what she had done.

One day Satir was demonstrating in front of a group of student psychotherapists. She stopped talking to the couple she was working with, and asked if any of her students could carry on, using her methods. On by one, students tried to help the couple, but none of them seemed to know how Virginia chose what to say. At the back of the room, a young man was tape recording the training session. He was Richard Bandler, a computer programmer and a graduate student of linguistics at the University of California, and he had no training in psychology. Finally, after Satir's students had failed, Bandler came to the front of the room and offered to talk to the couple. Amazingly, he seemed to know exactly how Virginia was constructing her questions and suggestions to the couple. Listening to him was like listening to her. The psychotherapists were puzzled. Who was this young man, and how had he learned Satir's method so precisely?

In 1976 Richard Bandler and Professor of Linguistics John Grinder wrote the first of several books explaining their discoveries about communication, human change, and teaching. Their first book, called "The Structure of Magic" (Bandler and Grinder, 1975) explained that by understanding the inner "languages" of the brain (neuro-linguistics) anyone could learn to achieve the excellent results of the most expert communicators, teachers and therapists. Before publication, Bandler and Grinder showed the transcripts of their books to the experts whose skills they had "modelled", people like medical doctor/hypnotherapist Milton Erickson, anthropologist Gregory Bateson, and of course Virginia Satir. Satir's comments, which I will quote from later, convey the excitement which teachers around the world have been reporting ever since, as they learn the "structure of the magic" of Neuro Linguistic Programming.

What NLP Offers Teachers

For teachers, NLP offers three important benefits. Firstly, it provides a new model of how people learn. NLP's precise understanding of the way the brain works can be compared to a computer "User's Manual".

Without the manual, you know that the computer has a vast memory and can do amazing things. If you play around with it eventually you'll manage to stumble on some of those things. But with the manual, you can choose exactly what you want to do, and have the computer do it perfectly every time. In NLP, we know the programs (or "strategies" to use the NLP term) which naturally excellent learners have accidentally stumbled on: the strategy perfect spellers use to memorise words; the strategy enthusiastic readers use to speed read their books in a fraction of the time, and so on.

Secondly, though, human beings are more than computers. Learning and creativity work best when the student's mind is free from distraction, when it has an almost meditative calmness and alertness. Research shows that having students relax at the start of each teaching session will increase their learning by 25%. (Jenson, 1994, p. 178). NLP delivers us some remarkable new ways to get students quickly into that state.

If NLP only provided these powerful new ways for students to learn, it would already deserve it's place at the centre of the learning revolution. But NLP also provides a whole new model of what teaching is, of how the most effective teachers are able to create a sense of "rapport" with their students, motivate them, and inspire them to achieve their best. In a world where the teacher competes for students' attention with television, video games and popular culture, that is no small achievement. NLP shows you how to utilise your every move, and your every word so that they support you in getting your students to believe in and be hungry for learning.

NLP is not one technique; it is a field generating hundreds of techniques, and the framework that makes sense of them. This chapter gives just a sample of the ideas you can take advantage of in teaching. With these basic concepts, the rest of the book, on NLP Training, will be accessible. We

strongly recommend getting reputable NLP training experience to support you in actually using these techniques successfully.

Making Sense of Learning

Here is a simple experiment which explains the NLP model of how your neurology (or to use less formal language, your "brain") works ...

> *Think of a fresh lemon. Imagine one in front of you now, and feel what it feels like as you pick it up. Take a knife and cut a slice off the lemon, and hear the slight sound as the juice squirts out. Smell the lemon as you lift the slice to your mouth and take a bite of the slice. Taste the sharp taste of the fruit.*

If you actually imagined doing that, you mouth is now salivating. Why? Because your brain followed your instructions and thought about, saw, heard, felt, smelled and tasted the lemon. Your brain treated the imaginary lemon as if it was real, and prepared saliva to digest it. Seeing, hearing, feeling, smelling and tasting are the natural "languages" of your neurology. When you use these languages, your neurology treats what you're thinking about as "real".

In the past, some teachers thought that learning was just a matter of "thinking" about the subject, of using words. But when students learn, they are using the five basic senses, as well as the sixth language of the brain - words. In NLP the six languages of the brain are called:

Visual	(seeing pictures or images)
Auditory	(hearing sounds eg music)
Kinesthetic	(feeling body sensations)
Olfactory	(smelling fragrances)
Gustatory	(tasting flavours)
Auditory digital	(thinking in words or concepts)

Some students do a lot of thinking in words (auditory digital). They want to know the "information" you're telling them. But for other students, being able to "picture" what you're showing them (visual) is more important. Others will want to "tune in to the main themes" behind your words (auditory) or "come to grips with" the lesson and "work through" some examples" (kinesthetic). If you listen to the words students use, they will actually tell you which is their favourite sensory system for representing their learning in (called in NLP their preferred Representational System). Effective teachers learn to "speak in each of the representational systems". (Bolstad and Hamblett, 1998, p 124-125).

NLP gives you a number of ways to reach the learners you have in your classroom. If there are some of your students who just don't seem to learn, you may not be teaching to the sense they think in most. For example, to reach visual learners, you may want to write words up on the board, and draw more diagrams. To reach auditory learners, you may choose more discussions and use music. Kinesthetic learners like to move around (you've probably noticed them in the class already), and they will appreciate your use of activities like role plays. You can adjust your language to match each of the main senses (if you don't see the point of this, you may not have been picking up a key way to get on the same wavelength as your more challenging students). When you use all these main three senses in your classroom teaching, your students brains will be far more fully activated. They will thirst for your teaching just as your mouth watered for that lemon.

The Right Sense For The Job

How do polyglots (people who speak a number of different languages fluently) remember which of a dozen languages each word comes from? Is it magic? In the past many people have assumed that there might be something different in the polyglot's neurology; something that made them naturally more able to keep each language separate. Actually, NLP studies (Dilts and Epstein, 1995, p. 222) show that polyglots are paying special attention to their auditory and kinesthetic sensory systems. They use a different tone of voice and different set of body postures for each language. Someone who only uses their visual system (and tries to picture each word they say, as if it is written down) will not find it as easy to become fluent in multiple languages.

Just as the Windows software program can be installed in any compatible computer, so the "strategy" that polyglots use can actually be installed in any other person. If it's possible in one person's neurology, it's possible in anyone's. All we need to know is exactly which sensory distinctions the first person uses, and in which sequence. To "install" a new strategy, NLP uses a series of groundbreaking discoveries about what happens when a person uses each sensory system. For example, we use the fact that a person's eyes move differently depending on which sense they are getting information from.

Just how easily a new learning strategy can be installed is shown by a piece of research done at the University of Moncton in Canada. (Dilts and Epstein, 1995, p. 409). Here four groups of

pretested average spellers were given the same spelling test (using made up nonsense words they had not seen before). Each group had different instructions.

- Group A was simply told to learn the words.
- Group B was told to visualise the words as method of learning them.The two other groups were told to look in a certain direction while they visualised.
- Group C was told to look up to the left (an eye position which NLP claims will help visual memory).
- Group D were told to look down to the right (an eye position which NLP claims will help feeling kinesthetically, but may hinder visualising).

Group A scored the same as their pretest. Group B scored 10% better. Group C scored 20-25% better. Group D scored 15% worse! This study supports two NLP claims: a) the eye position a learner uses decides which sensory system they can effectively process information in; and b) Visual recall is the best sensory system for learning spelling in English. Even more exciting, it demonstrates that students can be successfully taught (in 5 minutes) to use the most effective sensory strategy. For a kinesthetic learner who had been a poor speller, this would result in an instant improvement of 35-40%. Interestingly, in a final test some time later (testing retention), the scores of Group C remained constant, while the scores of the control group, Group A, plummeted a further 15%, a drop which was consistent with standard learning studies. The final difference in memory of the words for these two groups was 61% .

In the same way, any learning strategy can be "modelled" from expert learners and taught to others in a minimum of time.

The State Where Learning Naturally Occurs

Research bears out the belief of accelerated learning experts that students' ability to memorise new information is increased by over 25% simply by having them enter a relaxed state (e.g. Jensen, 1994, p. 178). Learning new information is not so much a result of studious concentration by the conscious mind, as it is a result of relaxed almost unconscious attention. Children learn nursery rhymes and television commercial songs, not by studying them consciously, but by just relaxing while they are sung. You ride a bike, not by thinking about your balance at each moment, but by trusting your unconscious responses.

What NLP offers the teacher is the skill to quickly and unobtrusively invite students into this relaxed state. The NLP skills which achieve this were modelled from Hypnotherapist Milton Erickson. They are similar to the techniques developed in Suggestopaedia from Hypnotherapist Georgi Lozanov. An NLP practitioner learns to talk in such a way that students relax, *without* having to use formal relaxation techniques ("You are getting more and more relaxed; your toes are relaxed, your feet are relaxed ..." etc). The result is like switching your students' memories into top gear within minutes of them walking into the room (see Bolstad and Hamblett, 1998, p 27-28 for an example of this relaxation process).

One of the key ways NLP uses to get your students into a learning state of mind is anchoring. Here's an example of what I mean by anchoring. Sometimes when you're listening to the radio, you hear a song you haven't heard for many years, a song that was a favourite of yours back then. When you hear it, all the feeling of what it was like back then may come back to you; even the sound of old voices and the image of those favourite places may re-emerge. The song has "anchored" you back into that "state". In the same way, if you revisit your old school, it will anchor you back to the feeling of being at that school (not always as positive as the song!).

Once you understand this process, you can design powerful anchors which instantly get your students feeling confident, curious and eager to learn. Even playing the same tune at the start of each of your classes will help to get your students quickly into the mind-set for your subject (Bolstad and Hamblett, 1998, p 24-25).

Communicating Your Enthusiasm For Learning

Earlier this century, successful salespeople were considered to have a sort of inexplicable charisma, a personal magnetism that made others buy from them. We now know that this charisma can be taught. When new executives learn the body language, and speech patterns of expert salespeople, their own sales begin to rise.

In the past, these kind of skills have not been available to teachers. My belief as an NLP Trainer is that teachers have even more right to be skilled at motivating people than sales staff. Just as no modern company would leave its sales staff untrained in this area, no school can afford not to teach its teachers how to motivate students. In a sense, we are salespeople for the future. The life we and our children will enjoy, depends on our

ability to inspire and enthuse them with a love of learning.

NLP is continuously developing and expanding new teaching techniques such as metaphor, positional and music-based anchoring, and mind maps. But NLP is much more than "The most important communications toolbox of the decade". (Jensen, 1994). It is a whole new way of thinking about teaching in particular, and communication in general. In this new way, teaching is a process of "building rapport and then leading" (Bolstad and Hamblett, 1998, p68-72).

Rapport is the feeling of shared understanding that good friends and business colleagues sometimes build. It results in a genuine eagerness to co-operate and follow each others lead. If you remember a time when you really admired a teacher and had fun in her/his class, you know the feeling of rapport. You probably became interested in the things your teacher was interested in, and were highly motivated to follow their suggestions.

Rapport is created by matching your students' behaviour. That means doing activities together with them, using examples that are already interesting to them, using their preferred sensory system when you teach them, using similar gestures and body positions to them, adjusting your voice to a similar speed and tone, even breathing in time with them. If these things seem a little strange at first, notice that you do them naturally with your own close friends. Wherever people build rapport, they match each others' behaviour.

Leading is the process of inviting students to follow your suggestions. If you have rapport, students will do this easily. Once, teachers would have said that students who don't follow their suggestions were "resistant" or "disobedient". It makes more sense to realise that when students don't follow your leading, it just means they aren't enough in rapport with you yet. That's something you can change, when *you learn NLP rapport skills*.

Successful teachers are also good at using their language to elegantly invite students to learn and change. When we study skilled teachers, we find them using their language with care to create the kind of internal representations (pictures/sounds/feelings etc) they want their students to have. In order to understand what you say, your students make internal representations of your words.

Here's an example. If I say to you "Don't think of a juicy lemon!", in order to understand my sentence, you first make an internal representation of a juicy lemon. If I add "... and don't taste the tang of that lemon now!" your mouth may begin to water -even though I told you not to. When teachers say "Don't forget to do your homework!", students have to imagine forgetting it. Their brain is thus *more* likely to forget. If you want to suggest that your students do their homework, the thing to say is not "Don't forget ...", it's "Remember your homework."

Skilled teachers structure their every word so that it produces the representation they want their students to have. This art, called "Suggestion" in hypnosis, is very powerful. I wouldn't want to suggest that *you want to learn about suggestion now* though, because you can do that when you read the rest of this book.

Reframing (changing the meaning of an experience by describing it differently) and metaphor (telling stories to offer students new choices) are other examples of how skilled teachers use their language to have students create useful internal representations (O'Connor and Seymour, 1994, p.; 182). For example, many students believe that the more mistakes they make, the worse their learning is. As a metaphor, I often tell them about Thomas Edison, who tried 10,000 different materials before finding the one that would make an electric light work. He said that this was the real key to his brilliant invention; that he was willing to find 9,999 things that didn't make a light go. Mistakes are the secret of genius! (That last sentence is a "reframe". It changes the meaning of "mistakes").

Metaprograms

In building rapport, as we mentioned, you match the behaviours and thinking styles of your students. Different "styles" of processing information are called metaprograms in NLP, because they are the programs that run other programs in the brain. One example we've discussed already is the metaprogram of sensory preference (whether a student prefers to think in visual, auditory or kinesthetic). This "metaprogram" decides which more specific learning programs (strategies) the person is likely to use.

Another metaprogram which is essential to understand in terms of teaching is the preference for details and specific facts versus the preference for overviews and generalisations. Some students find it easier to think in more general terms (to "chunk up" in NLP jargon). Some find it easier to deal with specific facts and examples (to "chunk down"). If you start teaching details to a student who chunks up, they'll be frustrated because they don't know "where this fits in the big picture". If you only teach

in general concepts, the person who chunks down will have difficulty understanding what specifically they are supposed to do with all these general ideas. Successful teachers, of course, have the flexibility to shift from overview to detail, from concept to example, and back again. They can match each metaprogram, as needed.

Multiple Perspectives

One of the fundamental ideas of NLP is that it can be useful to consider any event from different perspectives. Different perspectives change the meaning of an event (reframe it). For example, when a student says "I can't learn the writing methods they teach us at school." NLP trainer Robert Dilts points out that you could respond to this at a number of different "neurological levels" depending on which word or phrase in the sentence you attend to.

1) The final phrase "…they teach us at school." refers to the **Environment** where the problem happens. One way to create change is to change the environment (eg by finding a different teacher or a different school). Often this is the first level of change that students want to try.
2) The phrase "…the writing methods…" refers to the specific **Behaviours** which the student is unable to do. Change can be created at this level (eg by showing the student how to do those specific writing methods). Often this is the first level of change that teachers want to try.
3) The word "…learn…" refers to the **Capabilities** which the student would need in order to solve the problem. More profound change can be achieved at this level (eg by showing the student new learning strategies).
4) The word "…can't…" refers to the level of **Beliefs and Values**. It would be the same if the student said "I don't want to learn the writing methods they teach us at school." "…don't want to…" is a Beliefs and Values level issue. Fundamental changes can occur for students when they resolve issues at this level (eg by changing their beliefs about what is possible).
5) The deepest level in the statement is the level of the word "I…", the level of **Identity**. At this level, change can occur by giving the student a new experience of who they are as a person (eg the experience of themselves as a good learner). Many of our attempts to get students to change do not work because change needs to occur at this much more profound level.

Another NLP model for thinking about different perspectives is the model of Perceptual Positions. NLP co-developer John Grinder points out that in an interaction between myself as the teacher, and a student, I can consider the interaction in three ways.

1) I can stay "in my own body", listening through my own ears and looking through my own eyes. This is called **First Perceptual Position**. It gives me useful information about my own opinions and choices. As a teacher, if I just "go with my students' ideas" then I become unassertive, and I am unable to convey the understandings that I have. I need to be able to use First Position because often I have important information that my students do not.
2) I can, in my imagination, step into the other person's body, and listen through their ears, and look through their eyes. This **Second Perceptual Position** gives me more information about the effects of my actions on the student. It also gives me a sense of where they are coming from. If I only used First Position, I would not notice whether they understood me; I'd be preoccupied with my own fascination with the subject. As a teacher, Second Position helps me to know how to effectively explain things so that they make sense to this particular student, with their current level of knowledge.
3) I can, in my imagination, step out of my body to a neutral spot, separate from both the student and myself. This **Third Perceptual Position** gives me valuable information about the system of interaction between the student and myself. I don't get caught up in conflicts or misunderstandings so easily here. As a teacher, I can monitor our relationship, the class "climate" and the consequences of my actions more objectively from here.

NLP: A New Field and A Tool For Our Profession

As you read the above descriptions, you may have thought "Well, I already do some of that". That's part of why NLP is so powerful. NLP will help you to identify what you already do well, so you can repeat it even with the most difficult students, and the most challenging subject matter.

And that's why Virginia Satir, one of the first teachers studied by NLP, said in her foreword to "The Structure of Magic" (Bandler and Grinder, 1975): "It would be hard for me to write this Foreword without my own feeling of excitement, amazement and thrill coming through. I have been a teacher of family therapy for a long time .... I have

a theory about *how* I make change occur. The knowledge of the process is now considerably advanced by Richard Bandler and John Grinder, who can talk in a way that can be concretised and measured about the ingredients of the *what* that goes into making the *how* possible." (Satir, in Bandler and Grinder, 1975, p. Viii).

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Tapping Into The Power of NLP

An Introduction To NLP In Business

In this article, I discuss three ways the new science of Neuro Linguistic Programming can be utilized in business. These are by providing specific structured skills to:

1) create rapport and effective business communication with anyone, fast;
2) become a powerful influencer, creating solutions that work for you and others;
3) identify your personal mission and your ability as a visionary leader.

The foundation of Success

Communication is a fundamental platform of progress. You can legislate until you are blue in the face but unless the worker and boss communicate effectively the nothing else matters."
- Murray Rae, president, Auckland Employers Association, quoted in NZ Business, October 1994

A familiar enough point, and one that also applies to relationships with colleagues, clients, and working relationships between corporations. In the same magazine as the above quote, business writer Margie Sullivan shows how successfully resolved disputes can save millions of dollars in inter-company legal battles.

The real question is how, specifically, you can improve your business communication. Very few of us actually set out for the office in the morning saying, "Today I will lose the goodwill and motivation of my staff, have an argument with my boss and irritate several clients into taking their business elsewhere." We can have great intentions - to create an effective work team, to negotiate successfully, to explain our ideas in ways that motivate others to adopt them, to help clients and employees meet their needs and our corporate goals. Any business seminar can remind you of these intentions. What's needed is the specific tools you can use to reach them.

NLP: The Science of Successful Communication

Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) is the leading edge in communication skills training. The Nightingale-Conant Corporation, the world's foremost producer of personal development and motivational audio programs calls NLP "the most powerful mind technology for self-change developed in the last twenty years." Science Digest says, "NLP could be the most important synthesis of knowledge about communication to emerge since the sixties."

That's one reason companies like IBM, ITT, AT&T, American Express, Coca Cola, and the Chase Manhattan Bank use it. NLP Trainer Anthony Robbins' book Unlimited Power is a virtual text of the NLP field. Ken Blanchard (Co-author of One Minute Manager) calls Robbins' book "The cutting edge - A must for anyone committed to personal excellence."

As a certified NLP Trainer, I'm getting the same kind of response here in New Zealand. Jo Taylor, Auckland Company Director, calls NLP "a new and valuable way of thinking...empowering one with the ability to change the future and your relationships." Christchurch Life Insurance broker Les Te Paa says, "NLP is a state-of-the-art achievement technology for anyone in business. It's only a matter of time before it becomes part of standard management practices. If you want to be able to enhance your motivation, rapport, sales, productivity and enjoyment in business (and life) then train in NLP."

NLP was first developed by Dr Richard Bandler, computer and physics expert, and Dr John Grinder, Professor of Linguistics, in the United States in the 1970's.They and their colleagues researched the specific behaviours of excellent communicators and change agents and developed models enabling them to teach these skills to others in a very short time. Excellence, they believed, can be learned. Today, NLP forms the basis of most of what is called accelerated learning. It's being used in sports motivation and performance, in medicine, in psychotherapy, and in business.

If Tony Robbins is right in saying that "The quality of your communication is the quality of your life," then NLP is the science of living life at your peak.

The Power of Rapport

What makes NLP unique is it's power to get down to the actual facts. For example, everyone knew that "rapport" was the basis for successful communication. But it was NLP that demonstrated the specific verbal and non-verbal techniques that consistantly create rapport.

It turns out that when people have the experience of getting along with each other well, the experience of rapport, they automatically and unconsciously

use similar body positions, similar voice tonality and similar wordings. A person trained in NLP can utilize these elements to communicate rapport even when disagreeing with another. After hearing about voice tonality, a manager of one large U.S. corporation told NLP trainer Genie Laborde, "So that's why our department reports so many disgruntled responses in the deep south. We thought Southerners were just difficult to deal with. The personnel in my department phone our customers all over the States to remind them to send in their payments. Our telephone personnel are from New York City. Southerners speak at vastly different rates from New Yorkers. Our policy is to be courteous, but we need to do more than that."

The "more" involves specific training in rapport skills. NLP Trainer Tad James gives a great example of his use of rapport in negotiation. His clients were an Alaskan Indian company who needed a 7 million US dollar loan from the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Tad spent two hours teaching the CEO and his two executives rapport skills; getting to specific things like breathing in time with someone. They had been told that the loan would take 6 months to a year if they got it. In fact, though, after two meetings they were given the money up front. A BIA official speaking to James afterwards said, You know, in 20 years of government, I've never seen my boss so excited about any project that has ever been brought to him. And your project isn't anything special. I don't understand. What did you guys have that no-one else has?"

The Crucial Differences: Sensory System Use

Really getting in rapport with someone takes more than just some body language though. It means sounding out how they think and talking to them in their language. It means fitting your proposals into their mental framework, so they can get a grasp of them. It means using their perspective, and helping them see what your ideas will look like.

For example, it turns out that some people think mainly in pictures, some mainly in words and sounds, and some mainly in feelings. Read the last paragraph again, and you'll find that I restated the same concept three times, using three different languages:
1) auditory; sounds and words
2) kinesthetic; feelings and physical actions
3) visual: pictures and images

NLP developer Richard Bandler describes working with a young engineering trainee. No matter how long he looked at electrical schematic diagrams, he couldn't see how the machines worked. His bosses assumed he was just too slow. Actually, his only problem was that he thought kinesthetically (in feelings/actions) and the boss was trying to explain in pictures (visually). Bandler had the trainee imagine what it would feel like to be an electron inside the circuit he was studying. He imagined flowing round the various lines, responding as he came in contact with each component of the circuit. Immediately, he "had a handle" on the situation and could understand the whole system.

NLP teaches the ability to speak in each of the sensory languages visual, auditory, kinesthetic) and even shows you how to detect which type of thinking a person is doing before they say anything. From a client'seye movements you can predict whether she will be interested in "seeing" your product, "hearing" about it or getting a hands-on "feel" for it. Thedifference may decide whether you're in rapport or not. It may also decide whether you make the sale.

More Crucial Differences: Metaprograms

NLP is famous for this model of eye movements and sensory systems. But actually, that's just one of approximately 30 vital differences between people. Understanding these "metaprograms" will maximise your ability to build rapport, motivate people, sell to people, and negotiate agreements.

Four of the metaprogram distinctions are already taught in many business trainings as the Myers-Briggs Personality typing system. There are others that can be equally important. For example, consider the difference between "towards" and "away from" motivation. Some people motivate themselves by moving towards what they want, while others motivate themselves by avoiding, or moving away from what they don't want. As with any such metaprogram, some people do a bit of each. A fully "towards" person gets up in the morning by thinking of all the things they want to achieve. The "away from" person gets up by thinking of all the problems they'll have if they don't get up soon. A towards motivated entrepeneur wants to earn money because of all the thing they can do with it. An away from motivated entrepeneur is more interested in avoiding bankruptcy and poverty.

Anthony Robbins tells of a business disagreement he and his partners had with a man who'd done some work for them. Robbins began their meeting by telling the man that he wanted to create an outcome that would work well for both of them. The man said that didn't interest him - he just wanted Robbins attorney to stop calling and hassling him. Puzzled, Robbins suggested that at

least in a basic way thay were all committed to helping both themselves and others experience better quality of life. The man disagreed.

At this point, Robbins says, a light bulb finally lit up inside his head and he changed gears. He told the man that if they didn't sort out the issue within the next sixty seconds, Robbins was not going to carry on negotiating. He suggested that the man check inside to see "if you're willing to pay the price that you're going to have to pay...Because I'm going to continually tell people about how you behaved here and what you did...You can decide now that you want to work this thing out or otherwise you're going to lose everything... Check me out. See if I'm congruent" .It took him twenty seconds to jump up and say to Robbins "Look guys, I always wanted to work with you. I know we can work this out." Robbins points out that the man didn't do it grudgingly. "He got up enthusiastically, as though we were true pals. He said "I just wanted to know we could talk."

Robbins had recognised the man's "away from" motivation. Finding a co-operative solution just didn't mean anything to him. Avoiding conflict and embarrassment did. If Robbins had used such threatening language with a "towards" person they'd have left the room. But for this man, reminding him what he could lose actually motivated him to co-operate fully. Robbins NLP training enabled him to create rapport with someone others might have considered a lost cause. In doing so it saved him a costly court case and won him a useful ally.

First, Second and Third Positions

The power that advanced NLP Rapport skills give you is partially explained by the way they increase your ability to "stand in another person's shoes" and "see the world through their eyes". The NLP developers discovered that all highly successful communicators are able to view any interaction from three distinct positions:

- First Position: seeing through their own eyes; their own responses
- Second Position: seeing through the other person's eyes; understanding how it feels to be the other.
- Third Position: seeing the interaction from an observer position, like a "fly on the wall".

Cythia Barnum, IBM consultant, recommends that business people doing business with Japan make a particular point of understanding the cultural differences this way. She has her clients read representative books from each position eg:

- First Position; Edward T. Hall's book, "Hidden Differences, Doing Business With Japan"
- Second Position; Shintaro Ishihara's book "The Japan That Can Say No"
- Third Position; Norwegian author Karel von Wolferen's book on Japanese/English speaking world interaction "The Enigma of Japanese Power"

The model of first second and third position is a very simple one. But the NLP developers didn't make it up; they discovered it already being used by the world's most successful managers, negotiators and change agents.

In studying these people, NLP has discovered far more than communication skills. Good communication is an essential for good business. But if you **personally** don't have that certain charisma that marks out success, then you may not end up communicating with the people who can really make a difference anyway. Is there a way to learn the skills of excellent influencers and leaders? The developers of NLP found there is. And that's what our next section is about.

Turning Problems Into Solutions

If all Neuro Linguistic Programming contributed was its many ways of understanding rapport, that in itself would make it worth serious business attention. But that's just a fraction of the total model.

NLP developer John Grinder, a professor of Linguistics, was able to analyse the language patterns used by highly successful communicators and influencers. He and co-developer Richard Bandler were able to model and teach to others the way top IBM salespeople always achieved their sales at the time of IBM's expansion; the way world recognised mediators turned disagreements into agreements.

The key is a way of thinking called Reframing. Reframing enables you to identify what more useful meaning a problem situation could have, or where a "problem" could actually be an asset. Many major business breakthroughs are successful reframes. Oil was once considered something that ruined the value of land for agriculture! This has been fairly successfully reframed now. Only a couple of decades ago, sawdust was an annoying waste product of the timber yards. Then an American found a way to glue the sawdust into "Presto logs". In two years, he turned this free "resource" into a multi-million dollar business. That's a reframe!

When the second biggest car rental firm promotes itself with the slogan "We're number two; we try harder!", that's a reframe! And when Pepsi-cola takes on the century old Coca-cola empire with the slogan "Pepsi, the choice of a *new* generation", that too is a reframe. Such moves seem chance acts of creativity, until you understand their linguistic structure. NLP teaches specific ways to develop your skill as a reframer. And after all, ALL business is reframing (or is that another reframe?).

Anchoring Yourself To Success

Of course, reframing doesn't just enable you to turn other people's objections into enthusiastic agreement. It also enables you to turn your own inner uncertainties into the source of your own confidence! Every salesperson knows that the one person you must sell your product to is ... yourself. Aside from its contribution to communication, NLP is, in the words of Time Magazine, "an all purpose self-improvement program and technology." Norman Vincent Peale (author of "The Power of Positive Thinking") calls it "A truly new and unique approach.... the power to reprogram your own thoughts and behaviours," and describes NLP Trainer Anthony Robbins' overview of NLP as "required reading for anyone wishing to tap their full potential."

"Anchoring" is one of the many NLP techniques which enables you to literally program success into your life. Everyone has had the experience of hearing a song on the radio that you haven't heard for many years, and having it remind you of the fun you had those years ago. That's what NLP calls anchoring. Ever had the smell of candyfloss and popcorn remind you of the fairground? Or the sight of John Cleese cause you to smile before he even said anything? That's anchoring. A certain sound, sight, smell, taste or touch creates in you the whole "state", the whole mind set, that was associated with it earlier.

Imagine that you could decide **which** state things anchor you into. Some people find that public speaking anchors them into anxiety. But it could anchor you into confidence and enthusiasm. The NLP technique called collapsing anchors does just that.

Tom came to see me a few days before an important presentation. He had to convince a room full of Education Service Managers to fund his new programme. Every time he thought of it, he felt nauseous. While he felt this anxiety, I pressed on one of his knuckles. The anxiety was now associated with that "anchor". Then I had him recall a time when he felt incredibly confident. As he did that, I pressed on a second knuckle, forming a second anchor. Finally, I pressed on both knuckles at once. Tom had a moment of confusion. When he tried to think of the presentation again, he realised that he now automatically felt some of that incredible confidence there. The presentation, of course, was a complete success. It sounds almost too simple. And, truthfully, it does take skill to guide someone through. But it only takes ten minutes to reprogramme yourself in this way <u>once you know how.</u>

Anchoring Others

Advertising is mainly anchoring. Reminding people of parties and then showing a close up of the Coca-cola symbol is simple anchoring.

NLP Trainers John Grinder and Anthony Robbins negotiated with the United States Military to run a series of NLP Training programmes. The military were excited by the idea of being able to have their best performing soldiers "modelled" so that new recruits could be taught the strategies that work perfectly; however they had previously expressed concern at the price the NLP Trainers considered fair. They met in a big conference room. At the head of the table was the chair reserved for the General in charge. Even though the General wasn't present, Grinder and Robbins noticed that people unconsciously glanced over to his chair every so often. The two of them moved over to the chair and stood with their hands on it, as they presented the price they wanted. This time, no-one questioned their rate. It had been anchored to the General's chair.

Influencing With Integrity

NLP gives us incredible powers of influence. In fact it's so powerful it raises some obvious ethical issues, about when and where it's appropriate for you to use such skills. There are three levels on which these issues can be answered.

<u>Level One:</u> Practical results set a limit on the use of such techniques anyway. Sure, using rapport skills and anchoring, you can convince anyone of anything. But how they feel about it tomorrow is a different story. "Buyers remorse" isn't good for your business. At the point of sale, it may be best to step out of rapport a little, take the anchors off, and find out if the person has **really** bought your proposal.

<u>Level Two:</u> Another frame for understanding this is to realise that people (you included) are always using these skills anyway. When you like someone, you automatically get in rapport. All we're doing in

NLP is learning how to **choose** what messages you send. You may have met someone who unintentionally irritates others (I know it's rare, but if you think back far enough). That person is doing things which anchor others into a state of annoyance. After a while, all they have to do is walk into a room and people get tense. Teaching that person anchoring wouldn't mean teaching them a **new** "trick". It would actually mean teaching them to notice something they've already been doing accidentally, and giving them the choice to do it in the way they really intend to. People have a right to that choice.

Level Three: NLP Trainer Genie Laborde answers at this third level in her book "Influencing with Integrity". She says the difference between integrity and manipulation boils down to one question: Are you aiming to meet the other person's outcomes/needs/intentions in life as well as your own? If you are, then your influencing has integrity. If not, it was just manipulation. NLP is designed to use with integrity Laborde concludes "When we choose to dovetail our outcomes with others', we are choosing personal integrity. Your outcome and the other person's may not be a perfect match, but seeking ways to dovetail avoids manipulation and protects you from resentments, recriminations, buyers remorse, and revenge....Now we have superior tools for influencing. The use of these tools and the integrity of that use is in your hands.

Meeting Your Outcomes AND Others Outcomes

Integrity is another nice theory, like rapport. So, again, NLP has a series of practical skills which you can use to support your intention to meet your outcomes AND others'. These skills are skills of negotiation, of conflict resolution. Handling an objection in a sale, negotiating a joint venture, setting management targets... infact virtually all business situations are opportunities for you to put these skills into practise.

There are a few surprises in this area. It turns out that business people who adopt a win-win, "you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours" attitude actually acheive more. Dr Terry Mollner, fellow of the World Business Academy and business author, notes "As all wise business people have known for thousands of years, the marketplace is not primarily a centre of competitive activity, but of co-operative activity." Robert Helmreich and Janet Spence from the University of Texas researched the relationship between achievement and personal qualities in business people. Consistently, high achievement was related to three personal qualities: 1) A strong orientation towards work 2) A Preference for challenge and 3) **Low** competitiveness. They point out that their results "dramatically refute the contention that competitiveness is vital to a successful business career."

One person who wouldn't be surprised is W. Edwards Demming, the economic advisor responsible for the postwar Japanese economic miracle. Asked whether it was competition that made America great, he replies "No; it was co-operation. Competition is our ruination. We've been on the decline for decades; we're on the decline. The decline will continue till we learn."

Sur/Petition

Business consultant and developer of lateral thinking, Edward de Bono, calls competition "a dangerous and seductive trap that limits and restricts business thinking." He gives specific examples. "When Kodak ventured into the instant camera business a few years ago, analysts marked down Polaroid stock. But in fact, Polaroid's sales increased because Kodak now had to advertise instant cameras.... The more antique shops, the more the area will be visited by antique buyers." De Bono recommends replacing competition with Sur/Petition. "the difference between competition and Sur/Petition is... instead of running in the same race, you create your own race." Any good athlete knows that the trick is not to keep looking over your shoulder at the other runners (the competitive way), but to run your own race with full commitment.

Actually, companies that have a win-win approach to selling acheive higher. The US Ethics Resource Centre in Washington checked how many major US companies had worked out a written code saying that serving the public was their central goal, over the thirty year period from 1960-1990. There were 21. They then compared the results of investing $30 000 with those 21 companies over that time, with the results of investing $30 000 in a Dow Jones composite over that time. The Dow Jones average would have left you with $134 000. Not bad; but the companies committed to serving the public would have left you with $1 021 861 -nearly ten times as much!

The same is true for businesses which adopt a win-win approach to employer/employee relationships. Workplace New Zealand (WPNZ) is a New Zealand promoter of this principle. Its manager Owen Harvey emphasises "The first thing that management needs to understand is that they are not going to be economically successful until they involve people....Involving employees is something which requires managers to devolve authority."

The Need For Skills

The truth is, that implimenting this win-win approach in business requires skills. The **risks** of empowering employees **without** these skills are high. Dudley Lynch and Paul Kordis, in their book "Strategy of the Dolphin" divide business approaches into three "schools". "A carp (that is a person using the carp strategy) typically [responds to business challenges using] ... flight or freeze. Obviously, carps get eaten a lot....Usually the strategy of the shark is viewed as a strategy intended to produce a personal win whatever the cost.... The strategy of the dolphin is a diamond-bit-ended search for what works.... Dolphins like to win. But they don't need for you to lose unless you insist on it." Shifting to a win-win approach to business means steering clear of the instant gratification of the shark school **and** the naive lack of business skills of the carps.

NLP Trainer Anthony Robbins describes some of the specific verbal skills which enable win-win management, sales or business. The simplest example of all is what's called in NLP the "Agreement Frame". Actually, it's the one word **AND**. As in "I appreciate your position, **AND**...", "I respect... **AND**... ", "I agree... **AND**...". Replacing the word "But" with the word "And" creates a powerfully different negotiation process. It enables the other person to consider your position without having to give up their own. Robbins notes "The best salesmen, the best communicators, know it's very hard to persuade someone to do something he doesn't want to do. By creating an agreement frame, by leading him naturally, rather than through conflict, you do the latter, not the former.... This is one way to turn resistance into assistance."

There are of course many others. That's what NLP is about. In our next section we'll look at skills to create the most powerful personal qualities of all. The key differences between the world's most successful managers and the rest.

The Fundamental Character Traits of Success

Is having specific personal and communication skills enough to achieve your highest potential? Probably not. I mentioned earlier that Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) was developed by studying people who succeeed and modelling their excellence. Some of the results were specific verbal and non-verbal skills like those we've discussed already: rapport skills, reframing, anchoring and negotiating skills. But there's something more that consistent high achievers have. Scott Degarmo, editor-in-chief of Success Magazine says of NLP "I have never seen a more powerful technology. "

Finally in this article, lets consider the **central** ingredient in the **Power of NLP.**

Paul Kordis and Dudley Lynch use the metaphor of sharks, carps and dolphins to describe three different business strategies. Sharks are out to win at any cost. Carps will step back if challenged. Dolphins will do whatever it takes to win their own objectives, but have no need to have others lose. They know that win-win solutions can deliver each "side" more prosperity than win-lose solutions. But dolphins, say Kordis and Lynch, are different in an even more central way:

"A fundamental difference between dolphins and their fellow sojourners in "the pool" is that dolphins understand the importance of knowing what their purpose in life is and whether at any given time they are on purpose, and carps and sharks often do not." In 1989 the Columbia University School of Business researched 15 000 CEOs, whose collective business involved 10% of the Gross World Product. These CEOs identified one key element in their success: "... the vital importance of visionary leadership."

The Structure of Visionary Leadership

The NLP approach allows us to get really specific about what exactly enables you to become a visionary leader; someone who knows your purpose in life. For a start, visionary leaders store time in a different way. British sociologist Elliot Jaques researched the relationship between a person's ability to visualise their future "time line", and their status. The average factory worker visualises time clearly up to three months ahead. A general manager tends to have a clear future time line up to 5 years ahead. The average CEO has a clear future time line 50 years in length.

NLP has studied the structure of how a time line is stored in the brain, at the unconscious level; how to change the neurological coding of your brain so that it has the type of time line that will work for you.Now, what would happen if **you** could visualise your time line clearly 100 years into the future, and programme in your ultimate success. That's what high achievers do. A reporter once asked Conrad Hilton if he intended to help others be successful, now that he was a success himself. Hilton immediately detected and disagreed with a presupposition in the reporters question. "Nonsense!" he explained " I was a success when I worked as a clerk in a rooming house. I knew then that I would build a chain of hotels."

That's the power of a clear future time line. The NLP process of Time Line Therapy™ (developed

by NLP Trainer Tad James) gives you this same power: to programme goals into your future so that they happen. The excellence of the highly successful is not "magic". It can be learned.

Values: Motivation Engines of the Brain

Other aspects of visionary leadership can also be learned. One important skill is the ability to identify and align your personal values. Values are those things that are important enough to you to invest time and energy in. When a goal meets one of your highest values, achieving it will seem effortless. Values are the secret of powerful motivation. Identifying the way each step of your business life supports your highest values is what makes that step seem worthwhile. Without this, your chosen career may seem lifeless and boring. Values are what gets you up in the morning; they are the body's natural alarm clock. You know the feeling of being on a holiday that you're really excited about; how when you wake up in the morning you can't wait to get out of bed and into the day. That's what it feels like to be meeting things you highly value every day.

Are you stuck with the values you've accidently developed over your lifetime? Not at all. NLP has studied how the brain codes high values, and can offer you the choice of actually changing what motivates you. You can use NLP processes to identify your values, and then align them to ensure they each support your overall purpose. Sometimes, for example, people come to see me because they are not making the money they'd like to. I get them to list their values for a career, asking "What's important to you about a career?" Guess what: Nine times out of ten, money won't even be on the list! For someone to earn more money, money has to be a priority; it has to be a **value**. So at that point, the person needs to decide: will you stay the way you've been, or will you use NLP techniques to **install** money as a value?

Missions: Personal and Corporate

Above even values, the structure of visionary leadership involves having a clear sense of your life's mission. You probably have a mission statement for your business. But how about your life?

Why would John Scully abandon his successful position as President of Pepsi cola to be CEO of a small computer firm called Apple? The answer is simple. Scully says "I loved tinkering with electrical things as a child.... My single minded concentration on success at Pepsi somehow caused me to discard my earlier interest in inventions and technology." You can understand, given that, that Sculley at Apple will have many times the personal passion that he had at Pepsi. And that passion, that sense of contributing **every** day to his life purpose, will outperform mere administrative skill every time.

Apple is a company founded on an almost evangelical sense of mission. In fact, its liason people with the software firms were called Evangelists. One of them, Guy Kawasaki, explains "The software evangelists did more than convince developers to write Macintosh software. They sold the Macintosh dream.... Luckily for Apple, Macintosh generated an emotional response unlike that of any other personal computer. This response carried Macintosh through a shortage of software, poor initial sales, and brutal competition with IBM."

The power of a mission comes from a sense that your actions are part of something much greater than just "earning a buck" or "enjoying the good life". More and more business corporations are asking the question "What is our higher purpose?" The Chase Manhatten Bank, Du Pont, AT&T and Apple are examples of companies who, in the last few years have identified their mission in terms of their place in the world as a whole. It's the difference between "a guy who paints ceilings" and Michelangelo painting the Sistine Chapel as a monument which will awe and inspire others for thousands of years (and yes, he was in business: most of the Chapel ceiling was painted by his apprentices; what Michelangelo was paid for was his vision).

The Ecology Example

And in the 1990s, any real sense of **business** mission tends to align itself with the ecology of the planet. Edward de Bono, developer of lateral thinking, notes "The furrier industry is going out of business. McDonalds has dropped the polystyrene containers that used to keep hamburgers warm. Recycled paper proudly proclaims itself....Smoking is banned on many flights and in many workplaces." Even DuPont's Agricultural Products Team (previously defined as a herbicide producer) now describes its mission as forging "A New Partnership With Nature."

It's easy to be cynical about businesses like the Body Shop; to say that they haven't really saved the rainforests **or** brought about a collectively managed utopia for their staff (and in fact the two aims sometimes conflict: when the Body Shop issued a statement opposing the Gulf War, its patriotic American staff protested that they weren't

consulted). Some watching businesses wonder if it's all worth the cost. The Body Shop, for example, pays about NZ$200 000 a year to screen suppliers to enforce its ban on animal testing. But then, Body Shop sales for 1993 topped NZ$1 000 000 000 , and its policies do actually make a difference in the lives of thousands of people.

The same could well be said for Trade Aid's 27 shops New Zealand wide. As far back as 1990, research by Colmar Brunton showed that two thirds of New Zealanders make an effort to buy environmentally friendly goods, and 62% say they're willing to pay more for the choice. A third are even willing to accept some loss of product effectiveness to get something kinder to the earth.

Ecology is only one example of the way a business can align its mission with wider meaning; but it's a good example because **every** business can respond to it. The reason for business getting involved in a sense of wider mission like the ending of illiteracy, poverty, or war isn't because business "owes" the world. It's because business ought to be a game worth playing... one worth waking up to in the morning.

What It's About

NLP Trainer Anthony Robbins, whose annual corporate income is more than US$50 million concludes "That's ultimately what this... is about. Sure, it's about maximising your personal power, learning how to be effective and successful in what you try to do. But there's no value to being a sovereign of a dying planet. Everything we've talked about -the importance of agreement frames, the nature of rapport, the modelling of excellence, the syntax of success, and all the rest- works best when it's used in a positive way that breeds success for other people as well as for ourselves. Ultimate power is synergistic. It comes from people working together, not apart.... using these skills on a broad level to empower ourselves and others in ways that are truly positive, in ways that generate massive, joyous communal success."

NLP has demystified the notion of missions. It teaches specific skills to help you identify your personal and corporate mission. In doing so, it moves far beyond the communication techniques we started this article by looking at. And yet ultimately, we need to take action in this wider way if we want communication to work. Guy Kawasaki adds "My message is that to make products, companies and ideas successful, you must sell the whole hog -not just the sizzle- by getting people to believe in your product, company or idea and to share your dream."

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Living Co-operatively With Children

Dr Richard Bolstad & Margot Hamblett

What's Wrong With Our Kids?

"Something is wrong with the way we bring up our kids." Most people think of incidents such as the Columbine High School shooting when they hear this kind of statement. Murder is one of the top five causes of death in childhood in America. Since 1925 murder of children aged 0-4 years old has increased sixfold and murder of children aged 5-14 has doubled. But most of these kids are killed by adults. A third of them are killed by their own parents (Pogrebin, 1983, p 50). While an increasing number of countries ban all violence against children (by parents or others), countries such as the United States and New Zealand continue to allow legal assault. The United States Supreme Court has upheld the right of school teachers to inflict severe injuries requiring extensive hospital treatment. It has stated that children are specifically excluded from protection under the Eighth Amendment, which forbade the use of cruel and unusual punishments (case of Ingraham vs Wright; see Gordon, 1989, pxx).

Letty Cottin Pogrebin, former editor of MS magazine, describes this as a result of "pedophobia" (fear of children). She says (1983, p 42) "America is a nation fundamentally ambivalent about its children, often afraid of its children, and frequently punitive towards its children." She quotes Indiana Moral Majority leader Greg Dixon, who gives the standard justification of this behaviour, saying "The Bible instructs parents to whip their children with a rod…. welts and bruises are a sign that a parent is doing a good job of discipline." The same is true in New Zealand. The year of your life in which you are most likely to be killed by homicide is the first year. In New Zealand this accounts for 6.9 deaths per 100,000. In the USA it accounts for 9.8% (the second highest figure in the world). By comparison, countries in southern Europe average 0.2-0.4 per 100,000. In New Zealand in the last 20 years, the number of children murdered by their caregivers has increased by 58%. This is a world-wide trend.(Coddington, 2000, p 43)

But in fact almost all parents, in the United States as elsewhere, begin by hoping that they will have a very different kind of relationship with their children. They hope for a relationship of love and mutual respect. In our experience as teachers of parents, it is only after they have discovered the difficulty of achieving this that they accept justifications like Greg Dixon's.

Of course, more modern parents have other explanations for their difficulty creating co-operative relationships with children. Currently doctors diagnose up to 20% of American children with "ADD" or "Attention Deficit Disorder" (Armstrong, 1997, p14). Between 1990 and 1994, the production of Ritalin to control these children increased 400%. And yet at the end of that period, the parent advocacy group CHADD complained that America was suffering from a "nationwide Ritalin shortage" (Armstrong, 1997, p 38). In his classic study of the ADD disorder, Russell Barkley (1990, p 26-27) argues that the key problem with these kids is not that they are unable to learn, but that they have specific deficits in "rule governed behaviour" (ie they won't do what they are told!). For this problem, the new solution is Ritalin. This is, let's agree, nicer than beating them. But an ever increasing number of our children are being identified as severely disturbed. Research into "Major Depressive Disorders" reveals that 9% of American children aged 12-14 are labelled clinically depressed (Seligman, 1995, p 40). Between 1993 and 1997, the number of preschool children on antidepressant drugs increased tenfold in America! 1.5% of American children aged two to four years old are on antidepressants, ritalin or antipsychotic drugs. It's not just America though. In France, 12% of children beginning school are receiving psychotherapeutic medication and two thirds of these are on dangerous major tranquilisers!. (Coyle, 2000)

Are Children Human?

The treatment of children can be put in context by a look back at social attitudes towards women a century ago. As late as 1915, British courts still ruled that (Wilson, 1983, p 84) "the husband of a nagging wife… could beat her at home provided the stick he used was no thicker than a man's thumb." (a law so approximate that it led to the English phrase "as a rule of thumb…"). Doctors and therapists agreed. Dr Fritz Perls, modelled by the developers of NLP, proudly described his holding down a woman client in therapy and telling her he knew "…thousands of women like her in the States. Provoking and tantalising, irritating their husbands and never getting their spanking. You don't have to be a Parisian Prostitute to need that so as to respect your man." (Perls, 1969, pages un-numbered). Such attitudes to women may appal us now, but they are freely applied to children. What would we think of a doctor who diagnosed 20% of women as suffering from ADD because they had deficits in rule

governed behaviour when responding to their husbands?

There is no need for a special set of skills to use when relating to women. Treating them as human turns out to work quite well, though doctors like Fritz Perls would once have found that hard to believe. Our experience is that the same is true for children. The problems that parents have relating to their children do not stem from their failure to understand the "special needs" of younger people. They stem from their failure to treat children with the same skills they would want to use in any other relationship. When women are denied the respect of listening to their views and negotiating solutions that suit their needs as well as their men friends' needs, they often "nag, provoke, tantalise and irritate" (using the terms of the English magistrates and of Dr Perls). These are the same behaviours we now see in children and consider "part of *their* nature". They are in fact the response of human nature generally to win-lose coercive relationships.

People in general do not respond well to the use of coercion to control their behaviour. They each have their own outcomes, and they like to be able to reach those. Coercive parenting is based on the assumption that often one or other of the people in a relationship will have to give up their outcome (lose) in order for the other to get their outcome (win). Naturally, a parent who believes this then usually sets about trying to win; trying to coerce their child by rewards and punishments. The results are unpleasant for both parent and child. One study of children showed that those whose parents gave them high levels of restrictiveness and punishment show strong tendencies towards self-punishment, suicide and accident proneness. In another study, children with lower self esteem were shown predictably to have parents who used more punishment and less reasoning (Gordon, 1989, p90). E. Maccoby and J. Martin found that children of more authoritarian parents show less evidence of "conscience", poor self control and more withdrawn responses (Gordon, 1989, p91).

Coercion by the use of rewards is only minimally more successful than that using punishment. Actually, research reveals that parents who use more punishments use more rewards, and vice versa (Kohn, 1993, p51). Parents who resort to threats ("Tidy your room or you'll get a spanking") to get co-operation also try bribes ("Tidy your room and you'll get the chocolate bar."), but neither really inspires love and respect. Rewards and punishments are just two sides of the coin of coercive power. A study of children's interest in maths games shows the typical result of reward-based child control. (Kohn, 1993, p39) Experimenters rewarded children for playing with a randomly chosen set of maths games, and ignored their playing with the other maths games. Of course, the children opted for the rewards. At the end of 12 days, the rewards were stopped and the children became less interested in the games they had been rewarded for than they had been before the experiment. Numerous studies (Kohn, 1993, p42-43) show that children who are rewarded for correct answers will become less able to find the answers, and will enjoy the task less (their focus shifts from the task to the rewards). In short, children who are coerced often "nag, provoke, tantalise and irritate" their parents and other adults.

Is There An Alternative?

Virginia Satir, was one of the original models for NLP. She concludes her book on raising children (*Peoplemaking*) by emphasising "I think we may be seeing the beginning of the end of people relating to each other through force, dictatorship, obedience and stereotypes.... It is a question of whether the old attitudes will die and new ones be born or that civilisation dies out. I am working on the side of keeping civilisation going with new values about human beings. I hope that now you are, too." (Satir, 1972, p303-304). Satir's intention in *Peoplemaking* was to inspire parents with the possibility of coercion-free relationships with their children and partners. Thirty years on, most parents would agree that this is still a challenge to them. In teaching co-operative relationship skills to thousands of parents across the world, we have found it very rare for parents to enjoy beating, threatening and bribing their children into obedience. Mostly, they are desperately searching for skills that create naturally co-operative, win-win, loving relationships.

Such relationships actually work! We say that after raising four children to adulthood using these principles. Robert Cedar of Boston University reviewed 26 separate research studies on win-win conflict resolution in parenting showing that it is significantly more successful than all other models of parenting studied, especially for increasing children's self esteem and co-operativeness. (Cedar, 1985). Six months after training in win-win conflict resolution, parents continued to show greater understanding, positive feelings and respect for their children, and their children had higher self esteem and considered their parents to be more accepting of them. Other studies show that children whose parents use win-win methods have increased IQ results, while the results for children whose parents give in to them remain static, and the results

for children whose parents are autocratic actually drop (Baldwin, Kalhoun and Breese, 1945).

In this article we want to share the specific skills which these parents are using to create the kind of family every parent hopes for. Furthermore, the skills we describe are all skills which are appropriate for use in *any* relationship. As a result, these skills do more than gain co-operation in the immediate situation. At the same time, as we use them, we are teaching our children how to create healthy co-operative relationships throughout their lives. We'll use examples from our relationship with our children, but these are people-skills, not "parenting" tricks.

The Key To Co-operative Parenting

Co-operative parenting rests on one very simple understanding: Successful solutions are those that are initiated by the people who desire them, to meet their own basic outcomes. Read that sentence again. This understanding means that when we are in a relationship it becomes of paramount importance to clarify who has which outcomes. In conflict resolution theory, this is called identifying problem ownership (a problem is a gap between where you are and your outcome).

Let's take an example. A parent wants their child to go to bed and sleep, at 8pm each night. They believe that this will give their child adequate rest (an outcome), which in turn makes being with the child more enjoyable (an outcome). They also know that it creates the opportunity to have some time alone at the end of their own day (an outcome), which in turn makes them more enjoyable to be with as a parent and partner (an outcome). Whose outcomes are all these? They are the parent's. The child may or may not have an interest in reaching any of them.

The first step in working out how to meet these outcomes is to identify just who exactly wants them. Totally different solutions can be used if a) the child shares some of these outcomes or b) the child doesn't want any of these outcomes. As a parent, of course you have the right to have such outcomes, and a right to get your outcomes met. In co-operative parenting, we would emphasise that so does your child have those rights. Coercive win-lose parenting begins when the parent in such a situation denies that right. They then think about what outcome their child "should" have, rather than what actually is true. In their book on family therapy, John Grinder, Richard Bandler and Virginia Satir emphasise the absolute importance of the freedom to see, hear, feel and talk about "what is NOW instead of what should be, could be, was or will be." (1976, p5)

Let's take another common example. A small child is playing with her set of wooden blocks. Several times she tries to build a tower of them, but each time the tower falls over, and the child is becoming increasingly frustrated. The child's parent is cooking a meal nearby. Finally, in despair at another collapse of the tower, the child begins to cry. Win-lose parenting begins when the parent gets confused about who has what outcome. Some parents may believe that, as a parent, they "should" make sure their children are happy and successful all the time. Some parents may believe that their child "should" respect the parent's need to concentrate on cooking a meal that the child will be able to eat. These "shoulds" may have very little to do with what each person actually wants.

Getting the blocks to stay up *may* be the child's outcome. Getting the meal cooked may be the parent's outcome. Both outcomes are important. In co-operative parenting, we are interested in finding out, first of all, who has which basic outcomes. Our first interest is in "what is NOW instead of what should be, could be, was or will be." Once we know what peoples actual present outcomes are, we are interested in working out how to help all those people involved to reach their outcomes. We came across an important example of this one day. A four year old girl was attempting to thread cotton through a sewing needle, but the hole in the needle seemed too small for her to manage. As she looked increasingly more desperate, her mother reached over and took the needle, threading it for her. Bursting into tears, the girl complained "I didn't want the needle threaded: I wanted to thread the needle!"

Guilt-free Parenting: How To Really Help Kids

Helping children is different to rescuing them from pain. Living co-operatively with children involves respecting their own ability to solve problems or meet outcomes, and helping them discover ways to expand that ability. When Richard's son Francis was three years old, he was running across the other side of a large room one day, when he tripped and fell flat on his face. Indignantly, he looked over to Richard and said, "Why didn't you catch me!" This misunderstanding of the situation is amusing in a four year old. It is dangerous in a fourteen year old. We were reminded of this metaphor repeatedly through our children's first twenty years. Kids who hadn't done their schoolwork wanted us to phone up school and "get them out of trouble". Kids who had spent large sums of their pocket-money on the

latest toy wanted us to take it back and get a refund because they were bored with it the next day. Our role as parents is not always to "catch" our children. We needed to work out more successful ways to truly help them.

Psychologist Martin Seligman discusses this in his book "The Optimistic Child". He emphasises that the proliferation of books on "good parenting" has left many parents feeling guilty. Parents, believing that their children's happiness is their responsibility, try to protect their children from all pain. The result is a communication to the child that uncomfortable or challenging events are unbearable, and dangerous. This fear, says Seligman, creates a sense of powerlessness which is the source of depression. He explains (1995, p 44-45) "In the struggle to cure syphilis in the first decade of the century, Paul Ehrlich concocted a drug, 606, that worked by poisoning *Treponema pallidum*, the spirochete that causes syphilis. It was called 606 because before it Ehrlich concocted 605 other drugs, none of which worked…. Children need to fail. They need to feel sad, anxious, and angry. When we impulsively protect our children from failure, we deprive them of learning the 606 skills…. And if we deprive them of mastery, we weaken self esteem just as certainly as if we had belittled, humiliated, and physically thwarted them at every turn."

Truly effective help does not deny pain. It reframes the situation so that pain, while recognised, has far less significance. In a very real sense, Paul Ehrlich never failed at all; he continued to utilise feedback until he reached his outcome. Dr Milton Erickson, one of the expert therapists studied by the developers of NLP, gives a very clear example of this (Rossi ed 1989, p176-179) . One day his 3 year old son Robert fell down the back stairs, split his lip and impacted a tooth into his jaw. The boy screamed in pain and terror, staring horrified at the blood all over the pavement. Milton Erickson's first comment to was "That hurts awful, Robert! That hurts terrible." Robert nodded, crying in terror. "And it will keep right on hurting. And you really wish it would stop hurting." Robert nodded again, feeling his suffering was completely understood. "And we don't know if it will stop in one minute, or in two minutes." Robert agreed. This also was very true. Erickson continued, pointing to the blood which had so terrified Robert "That's an awful lot of blood on the pavement."

So far, all Erickson had done was verbal pacing, speaking Robert's deepest fears and thoughts. He had Robert's full attention. Milton continued "Is it good strong red blood?" A harmless enough question. Robert wasn't sure. Milton explained that if it was good strong red blood, it would turn the water pink when they washed his face clean. They went into the bathroom, and washed up Robert's face, and sure enough, the water turned pink. Robert was very impressed. Milton began to carry on talking about the stitches Robert would get, just as his older brother Allan and older sister Betty Alice had had. Milton speculated as to whether Robert would be able to get as many stitches as they had had. Robert was very curious about that. He was now totally engaged in creating the outcome of healing.

Learned Optimism: Reframes of Power

Seligman's research showed that children who are sustainably happy interpret life's positive results and challenges in a particular way. They assume that positive results are permanent (this good result will continue), pervasive (this good result will affect many other events) and personal (this good result is evidence that I am good). They assume that negative results are temporary (this challenge will pass), specific (this challenge only affects a small area of my life) and situational (this challenge is a result of something in the particular situation). He called these assumptions an optimistic explanatory style. Children who get depressed in crises make the opposite assumptions –for example, that bad things are always happening to them because there's some fatal flaw in their nature, and those bad events will ruin everything. (Seligman, 1995, p 163).

Parents, Seligman notes, can install an optimistic explanatory style in their children by restating problems as temporary, specific and situational. In the example of Erickson and his son Robert, above, Erickson paced Robert's pessimistic perception of his own crisis (which Robert feared was permanent and had damaged him profoundly) and then communicated that:
-Robert's pain was temporary (one or two minutes in fact)
-Robert's pain was specific and situational (because Robert had good strong red blood, itself a permanent pervasive positive resource).
Erickson emphasised (Rossi ed., 1989, p179) "At no time was he given a false statement, nor was he forcibly reassured in a manner contradictory to his understandings."

The same reframing can be used when parents themselves have a problem with their children's behaviour (for example when they want their child to go to bed earlier, or not to interrupt them while they are cooking). To say, "Johnny you're always staying up late, and you get so grumpy in the morning. What's wrong with you!" obviously

teaches a very different explanatory style from, "Johnny, I realise you want to carry on playing. I found it difficult when you stayed up late last week and you said you were too tired to get up in the morning. I like it more when you're more able to enjoy getting ready for school in the morning." To say "Can't you ever consider how hard it is for me to cook these meals. I wish you weren't so selfish" conveys a far less optimistic explanatory style than, "I know you want to get some help with the blocks. It's really frustrating. I have a problem myself right now because the meal is cooking. I can help afterwards. What other good ideas do you have for right now." This process of empowering through reframing is also discussed in Connirae Andreas audio cassette series *Successful Parenting* (1992).

Different Skills For Different Situations

Our experience, and the research of family relationships educators such as Thomas Gordon (1970, 1989) shows that different verbal responses are successful in situations where my own basic outcomes are not being met, than are useful in situations where another person (such as my child) has outcomes that are not met. This emphasises the importance of finding out first who has what outcomes.

Children who are upset, worried, resentful, frustrated, angry, fearful, or otherwise unhappy have a (temporary, specific, situational) problem meeting their outcome. The appropriate skills for a parent to use in this situation include skills which maintain rapport (matching the child's behaviour, acknowledging their concerns, and listening). They also include verbal skills which help the child clarify their outcome and safely create their own solutions. Advice giving, criticism, lecturing, interrogating, reassurance and other "parenting skills", which may be quite safe in the situation where everyone is happy with their outcomes, are not appropriate first responses when the other person gives signals that they "own a problem". The two most effective verbal skills for this situation are reflective listening (eg "That really hurts!", "So the problem you're experiencing is…", "You want to…") and open, solution-focused questions (eg "What would it take for you to have solved this?", "Can I just check, what needs to be different here?").

On the other hand, when we as parents are upset, worried, resentful, frustrated, angry, fearful, or otherwise not meeting our basic outcomes, we could also be said, in these terms, to "own a problem". This doesn't mean it's our "fault" – simply that we are the ones who need to get something changed. When my problem is with some issue unrelated to other family members, I use my own solution generating skills to solve it. But when my problem is related to some behaviour of a child's, I will of course choose to communicate to them in some way. Advice giving, blameful criticism, lecturing, interrogating and similar skills are again not very effective. The most useful verbal skill for the situation where I "own a problem" is to describe my problem clearly. In doing this, I will give the child information about the sensory specific behaviour that has generated the problem, rather than my theory about their internal intentions or my judgement of that behaviour. Instead of saying "You were careless about our agreements", I'd say something more specific such as "This morning, you got up half an hour after the time we arranged." I can also tell them about any concrete effects the behaviour has on me, and about the nature of the undesired state I'm in. My communication will thus be an "I" message, using a format such as: "I have a problem I'd like some help with. When… The effect on me is/was… and I feel/felt…" (For example; "I have a problem I'd like some help with. When you got up half an hour later this morning, I had to do a lot of extra rushing around to make sure you were ready to leave for school. I don't like that feeling of rushing.").

This way of thinking about events puts an end to the idea that children "misbehave". Calling a child's actions "misbehaviour" is simply a way of saying that they don't fit with a parent's outcomes. It is an evaluation that tells us something about the parent's outcomes, but nothing at all about the child's outcomes. Once parents start thinking in terms of what people's basic needs, problems or outcomes are, they become less interested in evaluating a child's actions as "good" or "bad" and more interested in finding solutions that suit both parent and child.

The Two Step

In real life, problem ownership is constantly changing. In the middle of assisting a child to solve her problem building with blocks, I may discover that she has values and attitudes to my cooking which I deeply resent. I need to monitor the situation, to identify when it becomes appropriate to shift from reflective listening to I message.

Certainly, if I send an I message, the child receiving it may well feel uncomfortable about that; they may even feel "angry", "humiliated" or "insulted". Therefore, before re-sending or re-explaining my I message, I now need to respond to this child's new problem (eg their embarrassment at my I message) with reflective listening. I do this until the child indicates that they feel understood (usually by

nodding). We are then back in rapport enough for me to send a revised I message. The result is a kind of "dance" which we term "the two step". Here is an example:

Parent: "There's something I want to talk about Johnny. I notice you went to bed an hour later last night, and you got up half an hour later this morning. It meant that I ended up rushing around this morning to make sure you were ready to leave for school. I don't like that feeling of rushing." [Parent describes her problem in an I message]
Child: "I didn't think I was too late this morning. I still had my breakfast." [Child indicates he now owns a problem, having heard the I message]
Parent: "You thought you got everything done. You didn't know it was a problem?" [reflective listening]
Child: nods [feels understood and so is back in rapport]
Parent: "Well it did make a difference to me. I had a lot of things like making your bed and getting your breakfast ready, and I had a shorter time to do them in. It was hard work." [re-sending a modified I message]
Child: "Oh…. I just forgot about the time last night. I was tired this morning. I'll remember more carefully." [problem solved. Both sets of outcomes met]

In this case, the result of the Two Step is that the child agrees to change. Many parents' problems with children can be solved this simply. However, as parents know, there are other possible scenarios. One is that the child may have some prior problem of their own which leads them to produce the behaviour the parent wanted changed. This produces a conflict of needs or outcomes, which requires a search for mutually satisfactory solutions; for example:

Parent: "There's something I want to talk about Johnny. I notice you went to bed an hour later last night, and you got up half an hour later this morning. It meant that I ended up rushing around this morning to make sure you were ready to leave for school. I don't like that feeling of rushing." [Parent describes her problem in an I message]
Child: "I didn't think I was too late this morning. I still had my breakfast." [Child indicates he now owns a problem, having heard the I message]
Parent: "You thought you got everything done. You didn't know it was a problem?" [reflective listening]
Child: nods [feels understood and so is back in rapport]
Parent: "Well it did make a difference to me. I had a lot of things like making your bed and getting your breakfast ready, and I had a shorter time to do them in. It was hard work." [re-sending a modified I message]
Child: "Oh…. I just forgot about the time last night. There was that really cool movie on. I just *have* to see those kind of movies."
Parent: "Well, the rush in the mornings is a problem. I wonder if we can find a way to make that easier for me, and make sure you can get to watch those really good movies." [re-sending a modified I message]
Child: Why don't we…" [moving into the search for a win-win solution]

The third possible result of the Two Step is that the child does not believe that their behaviour concretely affects the parent. In this case, the child will perceive the parent as attempting to coerce them into line with the parent's values or personality traits. This is a conflict of values; for example:

Parent: "There's something I want to talk about Johnny. I notice you went to bed an hour later last night, and you got up half an hour later this morning. It meant that I ended up rushing around this morning to make sure you were ready to leave for school. I don't like that feeling of rushing." [Parent describes her problem in an I message]
Child: "I didn't think I was too late this morning. I still had my breakfast." [Child indicates he now owns a problem, having heard the I message]
Parent: "You thought you got everything done. You didn't know it was a problem?" [reflective listening]
Child: nods [feels understood and so is back in rapport]
Parent: "Well it did make a difference to me. I had a lot of things like making your bed and getting your breakfast ready, and I had a shorter time to do them in. It was hard work." [re-sending a modified I message]
Child: "Why does my bed have to be made anyway? And why do I have to have breakfast. I'm not hungry! Dad doesn't always have breakfast."
Parent: "Well I have a different opinion about what's likely to happen if you don't get breakfast. Is it okay for us to talk about this now?" [re-sending a modified I message and asking permission to influence the child's value]

Child: "I guess so. I mean I'm never hungry until lunchtime anyway. And breakfast is boring! …." [parent and child are in a values influencing process]

The Win-Win Process

Where a parent and child have conflicting basic outcomes, the use of I messages and reflective listening helps to set these out non-blamefully. The parent can then guide problem-solving to find a solution which meets both sets of outcomes. This can be thought of as a seven step process:

1. Preframe the situation as a problem to be co-operatively solved.
2. Define each person's basic need or basic outcome (what prompted their actions).
3. Brainstorm solutions which meet both sets of basic outcomes.
4. Evaluate these solutions to check how well they meet both sets of outcomes.
5. Agree on the best solutions.
6. Plan and act on the agreed solutions.
7. Check how the solutions are working.

Defining the problem in terms of basic needs or outcomes is crucial to enable this to work. As parents our temptation is to make guesses as to our children's outcomes. Under pressure ourselves, we may even assume that their basic outcome is to annoy us, or to force us to do what they want. However, in NLP terms, we know that all behaviour results from a person's attempt to create a more positive state for themselves. Once we understand how they are trying to reach that positive state, it becomes easy to think up ways that they can reach this outcome while we reach our own. By using reflective listening, we can assist children (and others) to clarify their more basic outcome, instead of simply demanding the first solution they happened to think up as a way of reaching it.

Using The Method With Very Young Children

Alfie Kohn (1996, p8) cites a collation of research studies by the U.S. National Institute of Mental Health showing that "even children as young as 2 years old have (a) the capacity to interpret the physical and psychological states of others, (b) the emotional capacity to affectively experience the other's state, and (c) the behavioural repertoire that permits the possibility of trying to alleviate discomfort in others. These are the capabilities that, we believe, underlie children's caring behaviour in the presence of another's distress." This was certainly our experience with our own children.

Nonetheless, a child younger than 3 years will, in our experience, need to be at least guided through the win-win process. A child too young to talk cannot adequately be consulted about their needs verbally. However, skillful parents use the win-win method there anyway, by checking for non-verbal clues as to their child's basic outcomes and thinking up ways to meet these while still meeting the parent's outcomes (Solter, 1990, p160-196). A parent who finds a child drawing on the wall with crayons may, for example, get some large sheets of paper to place on a specific wall. A parent whose child cries and reaches for miscellaneous items while supermarket shopping may, for example, give the child the task of picking up the items the parent selects, or choosing which of two similar items to put in the shopping basket.

Values Influencing

A conflict of values exists in any *disagreement* when a child does not believe their behaviour concretely affects the parent (eg if the parent asked the child to use "more respectful language"), or where a parent does not believe their behaviour concretely affects the child (eg if a child doesn't want their parent to hug them in front of the child's friends, and the parent thinks it doesn't matter). Such conflicts operate on what NLP would call a "deeper neurological level". As a parent, in such situations I may want to influence not just the child's behaviour, but also their more basic values or beliefs.

The use of coercive power is no more effective here than in conflicts of basic outcomes. And yet there are some situations where we would decide that our value is so important that we will not negotiate. For example, a child attacking another child with a stick may not be concretely affecting me, but I'd surely want to stop them. A child insulting people of another ethnic group may not be causing me to do any extra work or costing me money, but I don't want to just ignore the behaviour and hope it changes. A child refusing to go to the dentist for a checkup may be convinced that it's none of my business, but I'd probably want to find some way to get them there anyway.

The important thing to realise is that when we insist on the child changing these behaviours, we have not actually influenced the child's values. They may stop hitting the other child and find some way to attack again when I'm not around. They may resent the people from that ethnic group even more once they're forbidden to insult them in my presence. They may continue to be convinced that dentists are just a plot to terrify children. So in a conflict of values our interest is to actually *influence* the other

person's value, rather than merely control their behaviour. Think of someone who has succeeded in influencing your own values and behaviour (perhaps someone whose book you read, or whose course you attended). The chances are they succeeded by a combination of the following three skills: Shared Values, Modelling and Consulting.

1. Identifying values which the child shares with us, and building on these. The child who is hitting another child may want to get that child to play more "fairly", for example, and may appreciate an offer of help to do that even more successfully by having me guide them through the win-win process. The child who insults others may value a sense of their own group identity, and appreciate working to celebrate that in a way that gradually leads to respecting other ethnic groups. Say you want to convince a 14-year-old not to smoke cigarettes. Will it work to discuss the risk of her getting a heart attack in her thirties? Probably not. You'd be better talking about how the smell of cigarettes can turn off potential friends. You need to find a shared value.

In their book Reframing, Richard Bandler and John Grinder give an interesting example of their use of shared values to resolve a conflict over non-shared values. A father has just told his daughter 'If you don't listen to me and don't come home by 10 o'clock, I'll ground you for a week ...'. After checking that this message (a 'You message' and 'a threat to use power') doesn't get a very good response from the daughter, Bandler and Grinder ask the father what the value is behind his command.

He replies 'Well, I care. I don't want her hanging out with hoods. I don't want her out in the street. There's dope out there. I want her to be in the house, safe and sound. She's my girl, and I want to make sure that she has the kind of experiences that she needs to grow up like I want her to grow up.' The daughter explains her values: 'But it's my life!' Bandler and Grinder then point out a value that both of these people share. 'OK, Sam. Is part of that image that you have of your daughter growing up for her to be independent? Do you want her to be a woman who knows her own mind, who can stand on her own two feet and make decisions for herself based on the realities of the world? Or do you want her to be pushed around by other people's opinions?'

Once these two people realise that they share the value of 'independence', they will probably find more useful ways to behave. In a sense, they want the same thing, only their methods differ. The father may now be willing to alter his way of discussing the matter, the daughter may be willing to alter her evening pattern. They may, in fact, be prepared to resolve the problem using the win-win method

2. Demonstrating the effectiveness of our own skills ("modelling" them, to use this term the way it is used in Psychology). If we consistently use respectful communication, our children tend to copy this. Francis' responses in the situation above demonstrate that very fully. Again and again we have watched our children develop interests and values which paralleled our own (becoming vegetarian, getting involved in personal and social change movements, avoiding the use of recreational drugs, using eastern methods of meditation etc) without us ever even discussing the matter with them. Often they have adopted these values in marked contrast to their peer group, and with considerable extra effort. Modelling requires a certain amount of trust that our values are working, and that the positive benefits of them are able to be seen by our children. The more you *like* someone, the more of their values and behaviour patterns you tend to copy. Couples who are "in love" often go through major values "conversions" as a result (at times, much to the shock of their other friends).

3. Consulting. This is the core skill for influencing another's values. It involves carefully sharing one's own opinions, identifying them as such. It then involves reflectively listening to the other person's opinions, and respectfully leaving them to decide to change or not. This seems so simplistic that its power is easily underestimated. But in fact, many of the values which you hold today will have been established as a result of someone's effective consulting. Consulting does not need to result in an immediate "conversion" experience where the other person changes their opinion in front of you. It more often results in them going away, feeling good about how you respected their right to decide, and reviewing in a calmer mood the pros and cons of your advice.

When we were first teaching these skills to groups of parents, we would sometimes invite our teenage children along to the training group, so people could get a sense of what "the finished product" was like. One time, Richard's son Francis attended a session where consulting was being discussed. Richard explained that consulting is a form of influence, not coercion, and so the other person still makes up their own mind and may decide not to change. As an example, Richard described how he had consulted with Francis when Francis was about 14 years old.

Francis wanted to go out to a video-game entertainment centre one Saturday night. There was a special deal on where for a set fee they could use as many machines as they wanted until closing at 11pm. Richard was concerned because one teenager had been stabbed outside this particular centre a few weeks before. He thought Francis and his friends might not be safe coming home from the centre by bus at that hour. But Richard was going somewhere else that Saturday, and didn't want to supervise them. He decided to attempt to convince Francis not to go. He asked permission to discuss the matter, saying he had a serious concern about the planned trip. Francis agreed to listen, and Richard said, "I realise that whether you go to the centre doesn't exactly affect me directly. It's not my decision, and I'm willing to let you make it. I do have a real worry about you going though, because you may remember that someone was stabbed outside the centre a few weeks ago. I don't think its safe for you to be leaving there at 11 o'clock. I'm really scared about it, and I'd feel much safer if you left earlier, at say 8 o'clock."

Francis frowned. "Well" he said "I think you're over-reacting. We're not going to be hanging around outside the centre. We'll be inside. And they have security guards. I'll probably be safer there than at home."
Richard reflected this. "So you think I'm worrying about something that you're not going to do anyway." Francis nodded. "Well, I am really concerned. To leave at 11 o'clock you need to walk through all that, and it's a real danger. It's dark, and I don't think it makes sense to risk it. I don't believe the security guard can supervise that many people."
Francis nodded, and then gritted his teeth. "Well, my friends are going; and I'm going." He concluded.

In telling this story at the training, Richard explained that Francis did indeed go, and he returned safely. It was an example of unsuccessful consulting, and an example of the scary, neither-black-nor-white decisions parenting is full of. Richard decided that the damage to their relationship if he used coercion was a more serious risk than the danger on that particular occasion. Then Francis, who was at the training listening, added, "Well, actually there's a sequel to that story. I never told you, but I went away and thought about it. I thought, 'Richard is being silly about this. I'm pretty sure we're safe…. But there are some times when Richard knows something I don't know about, and maybe it's worth being sure.' So I rang up my friend and arranged for his 21 year old brother to drop us off at the centre, and pick us up at 11. I just didn't bother to tell Richard."

In a co-operative relationship, where coercion is avoided, people have enormous influence over each other, because they become trusted consultants instead of controllers.

Celebrating Co-operation

We've discussed skills for helping children when they have a problem getting their outcome. We've discussed skills to help parents when they have a problem about their child's behaviour. And we've talked about conflicts where both people have a concern about the events. Successful family relationships also depend on what we do when there is no problem at all. If parents and children only interact when there is a conflict, the risk is that they generate "negative anchors" in NLP terms. When they see or hear each other, they tense up ready for a conflict resolution session. Any successful relationship builds in times to celebrate the good times they share together.

In our 17 years together as a family, we've experimented with a number of ways of doing this. For example, while all four of our children were living together with us, we had a system of weekly meetings to discuss any issues that came up. We arranged to complete these meetings with a half hour group activity, and rotated the person who chose the activity. Activities included conventional style sports games, new games (see LeFevre, 1988), "encounter group" style activities (eg see Bolstad and Hamblett, 1998, p 10-11), and celebrations (see Lieberman, 1991). We also put some thought into creating a community of families around us; people who had learned the skills we describe here and who shared our dream.

And in the end, this article is part of that process of expanding our dream to include you. If you are a parent, or work with parents, you know that parents do not wake up in the morning planning to argue with, insult, humiliate, threaten, bribe, punish, trick and physically injure their children. They plan to wake up and celebrate the vision of loving relationships they had always wanted, even in their own childhood. Generally, they want to create long term, mutually respectful and caring friendships with their kids, and they want their kids to grow up confident of their ability to reach their own outcomes, based on positive, life affirming values. Reaching that goal takes clarity, and personal skill. But the rewards for civilisation, when more and more parents achieve it, will be phenomenal. Because our children are learning more about the structure of relationships in their first 15 years than at any other time in their century of life. And how

we relate to them has a profound affect on how they relate to future life partners, colleagues, friends and fellow citizens. There couldn't be a better place to start changing the world than in our own homes.

Summarising

Children, like all human beings, have their own needs and want to reach their own basic outcomes. Research shows that parenting which is based on this understanding is highly effective at creating the kind of family most parents are searching for. It begins with parents identifying who "owns which problem" (which basic outcomes are not being met by which people). Parents can assist children to reach their own outcomes by using reflective listening, which first paces the child's distress and then reframes the problem as temporary, specific, situational and solvable. When their children's behaviour is experienced as a problem, parents can move towards meeting their own outcomes by framing their concern as an I message, and reflective listening their child's response. This will either solve the problem, or clarify which type of conflict is occurring. In a conflict of needs, clarifying each person's basic need or outcome enables the two people to brainstorm possible solutions to meet both sets of outcomes in a win-win agreement. In a conflict of values, parents have the choice of becoming powerful influencers, building on shared values, modelling the success of their own values, and acting as a respectful values consultant. Arranging times to celebrate life together ensures that the basic anchoring of feelings in a family remains positive, and conflicts are seen in the context of wider co-operation.

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Transforming Conflict In Teaching

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As a teacher, I know that teaching brings me many of the most moving, inspiring experiences I will ever have. Experiences where I feel that I have touched the hearts of course participants and changed their lives. To get those experiences, I invest enormous energy, and I take risks with my own heart. At times I reveal some of my most precious experiences, I unfurl the newly formed wings of my most sacred dreams, I teach all that I know and allow people to see the edges of what I am. And in that state of vulnerability, conflict and criticism can seem unbelievably brutal; can leave me wondering if I want to face another class ever again….

As a student, I know that teaching has the potential to open the world for me. Some of the greatest changes in my life have been born in the marvellous nest that teaching provides. Teaching can be like accelerated living; a year of planning, dreaming, discovering, and connecting, packed into a single week. To get those experiences, I commit myself to time and energy, and I take risks with my heart. I reveal my hopes, my uncertainties, my growing edges. Criticism, coercion and teaching that doesn't meet my anticipation can seem to have discarded or even crushed that trust….

Robert Dilts summarises this more succinctly, saying "The basic problem space of presenting relates to managing the interaction between the presenter and the audience in order to achieve the desired goals of the presentation." (Dilts, 1994, p 17) This article shares our experience as teachers in finding a path which creates co-operation in the classroom. To us, there is nothing more important for a teacher to learn. Everything else is footnotes, and this is the main text of any teaching manual. Interestingly, though, almost everything in this article we learned by "not doing" at some time –by making "mistakes". Very little of what now seems to us crucial "common sense", was written in any book on training. So in this article we'll share with you not only some of our "best performances", but also some of the "mis-takes" we learned most from. And before we begin, we will comment on why so little is written about co-operative classrooms and training settings. This is an intriguing question. Why, when teaching is such a powerful interpersonal experience, is there so little written about how to deal with this aspect of the job?

Turning The Problem Inside Out

In traditional teacher training, the skills we discuss here would be referenced, if at all, under "discipline problems" or "classroom management". Alfie Kohn, himself a trainer of school teachers, describes his attempt to model extra-ordinary school teachers. In each city he visited, he tracked down teachers rumoured to have remarkable success. "I was particularly keen to see how they dealt with discipline problems.… As it turned out, I rarely got the chance to see these teachers work their magic with misbehaving children because it seemed as though the children in their classes almost never misbehaved…. After a while, however, it dawned on me that this pattern couldn't be explained just by my timing. These classrooms were characterised by a chronic absence of problems." Kohn discovered that these teachers simply weren't interested in "discipline", or in "classroom management", or in "behaviour modification". They had more important things they wanted to do in their time together with their students. Their question was not "How do I manage these students?" or "How do I discipline these students?". It was "How can we meet these students needs?" " (Kohn, 1996, p xi, xv).

Kohn's studies showed him that great teachers didn't even *need* to pay attention to "discipline" or "conflict" management anymore. They took their success for granted, and regarded it as natural and expected. They did not identify it under any recognised teacher training labels. In many ways, they behaved in the classroom just as co-operative human beings behave anywhere, and so there was nothing special to say about it. But for those used to other ways of teaching, their success is revolutionary, and applies at least as fully to adult education as to children's classrooms. Accelerated learning author and corporate trainer Eric Jensen says "Discipline problems are not only NOT the real problem, but they are a gift to you…. What you call problems are the results of gaps in your teaching and give you important information that you can use to be a better teacher." (Jensen, 1988, p 176). In describing how these and other successful teachers create co-operative learning environments, there are six major themes we would like to emphasise:

1. **Advertising the Contract**
2. **Negotiating the Contract**
3. **Warm-up and Preframing for the Content**
4. **Eliciting Useful States**
5. **Dealing with the Power Differential Respectfully**
6. **Resolving Conflicts with a Win-Win Approach**

While some of these themes have been discussed in our previous articles on training we believe collecting them here in this framework will add to a teacher's ability to use them in a co-ordinated way.

1. Advertising The Contract

Co-operation in the classroom begins with your first contact with potential students or course participants (usually your advertising or course information). A few words said or written carefully at this time equate to hours of conflict resolution time spent untangling mismatched expectations later. If you run public trainings, your advertising can be fairly flamboyant in presenting the benefits you believe people will get from your training. However it needs to be considerably more specific and economical in describing your course requirements and the materials to be provided.

For example, if people need to attend 100% of the time to be certified, this is best advised from the start. We have had people complain half way through a training that they can't possibly come to *every* session; they have a life to live. We've had people who work an 8 hour job after the seminar, in the evenings, complain that the course is too tiring. We've learned to state uncompromisingly that full attendance is required (but not in itself sufficient) for certification. We know now to warn people that our trainings will be a total commitment of their time. We have learned to be clear that the first day starts at the usual time, and the last day ends at the usual time. Some people have a belief that these days don't matter so much. If we plan an additional evening session, we've learned the details need to be given with the course timetable. If we plan to video-tape the course, we've learned to tell people *before* they enrol.

In terms of materials, we have provided manuals that are 98 pages and advertised them as "100 page manual provided". People complained most indignantly. The secret with all these things is to make a contract that allows you as a trainer to be generous later. If we advertise a 100 page manual, and provide 102 pages, people feel like they got a bargain. This is not a trick. People *actually* buy into the 100 page deal. We *actually* exceed our arrangements with them. People do not measure our generosity based on what seems to us to be "fair". They measure it based on the deal *they* entered into.

Our advertising proposes a contract with our participants. The people who come to our trainings do not always have any other realistic knowledge of what to expect from us. *They* are not teachers. People sometimes phone and ask us to send details of all the trainings we are running in their city over the next month, so they can choose the timings that suit them best. In reality, since we cannot be everywhere at once, we may not have a training in that city for the next year! The point is that other people don't know that. They also don't know whether to expect creche facilities, four course meals, a billeting service, free private tuition to enable them to prepare for the course, or any of the other things we've had people ask for. Their asking need not cause us to get indignant or resentful. It's simply an opportunity to clarify our policies and update our information and advertising.

Partially, our own decisions about the facilities and training structures we offer is also motivated by the search for co-operation. In our experience, organising billeting has proved a source of conflict rather than a solution, so we ourselves don't do it. Providing meals has proved useful (so long as we carefully preframe people's expectations so they don't anticipate a five star restaurant). Providing floor cushions for people to recline on during the training has worked for us. In each case, we are deciding which things to add and which to remove, based not on whether we "can" do so, but on whether is supports co-operation to do so.

2. NegotiatingThe Contract

When seminar participants enter the training room and when students come into the classroom, they still do not know what the experience will be like. They have a number of (possibly unconscious) questions about who will be there, how we as trainers will behave, and what behaviour will be expected of them as students. These questions are finally answered when they have some sense of rapport with their teachers and group members, and a clearer sense of contract and commitment to the structure of the teaching.

If we do not provide explicit methods for answering these questions early on in the seminar or class, students will take time and energy away from the learning task to find their own answers to the questions. They will also sometimes assume they can use answers which applied in their last school or training environment, or in their idealised fantasy class. We take time to enable people to introduce themselves to each other. We also create a written set of guidelines for how the group will run.

First, we explain the concept of guidelines about *how* a group or class is, rather than about what is learned. We point out that every group operates with such norms or guidelines, but that if they are not discussed then people have to guess them, test them out etc. We suggest that the guidelines we are

about to show are ones we've found to work successfully in this sort of seminar. We then present and briefly explain the guidelines that are important to us in our training, for example:
1. Start and finish at arranged times
2. Do the exercises as described and to the best of your ability
3. Keep personal information confidential
4. It's okay to check when you're not certain
5. Respect others' models of the world
6. Allow for fun

Next, we ask people to get into triads and check that they understand what we meant by these guidelines, and to check if anyone in their triad has any similar guidelines they'd like to add. We give them a few minutes, or until the conversation dies down (whichever is first). This invitation to generate new ideas gives us important information about the expectations of group members. Some trainers wonder if the process isn't creating problems. We consider it to be testing that we have the agreement to proceed.

Next, we check briefly with each triad that they are okay with the guidelines. If a triad has something to add, we put it on a separate list. We check that such new ideas are okay for us as trainers to go with, and then ask all the triads to turn quickly to each other again and check that they have agreement about the new proposals too. If disagreement about a proposed guideline isn't reached within the time we have allotted for this exercise, we have that guideline left off the list for now, to be reviewed later.

We now ask people to check whose "job" it will be to ensure that these guidelines are kept to. For most items on the list it becomes clear that these are a collective responsibility. In a written form handed out to all participants, we ask that people who have a concern about these or other matters (at any stage of the training) let a trainer or assistant know as soon as possible, so we can help them resolve it. We undertake to do the same if we have any concerns about a person in relation to these agreements or in relation to their achieving course outcomes. We explain that independent mediation would be available if they were not satisfied.

We have learned to emphasise that we do not undertake to act "on behalf of" participants to "fix" their concerns about another participant, assistant or trainer in secrecy from that other person! In the past participants sometimes came us to us demanding that we stop someone behaving in ways that upset them (but keep the origin of their complaint "confidential"). This simply isn't possible. It would involve us trying to meet the complainant's outcomes, without being able to get feedback about how well what we are doing works, and without being able to explain our reasons to the person they are concerned about. We are much more interested in supporting the complainant to take charge of their own concern and discuss it with the person whose behaviour they want to change.

Finally, we either write the list of agreed-on-guidelines on a wall chart that stays up in the room, or have it typed and handed out to all participants. If conflicts arise later in the seminar, these can now be easily raised in the group by framing them with "I just want to check how we're going with our agreed on guidelines." We have "preframed" our seminar as a win-win process. We have stated our "needs" or outcomes, and invited the participants to do likewise. We have modelled the process of brainstorming solutions and checking for agreement. We have redefined our roles so that we as trainers are not "responsible" for keeping participants happy. The responsibility is shared.

Working With Younger Students

Transforming Communication Instructor Julie McCracken has used the same process with High School Students. She describes using a modified version of the process with Junior High School students, as follows (McCracken, 2000, p50-51):

"When working with Junior students I use a version of the Japanese "Hexagon Kaizen Think Kit" (described in the book by G Dryden J Vos "The Learning Revolution"). This involves the following steps:

1. ***Preframing the whole process using sports teams** and how they need rules and regulations and that everyone needs to agree to them and know what they are. They also have common goals and the whole team is aiming toward the same thing.*
2. ***A Goal Setting process** to get individuals to focus on what they want from the class. I also explain my personal goals for the class.*
3. ***Focus on creating a supportive environment** so that we can all reach our goals. This is achieved through a general discussion about the sort of class we want and things that would help to create this.*
4. ***Generating Agreements**: Each individual writes down some of the agreements they would like, then they get together with 2-3 mates and create a list. They then write each agreement on a separate coloured hexagon and stick it on the board. I do several as well as I am part of the group)*

5. ***Selecting the Agreements****: Similar hexagons are grouped together and explanations gathered where required. A unanimous vote is required for each agreement to be accepted. If someone does not agree then there is discussion and the issue is* ***adjusted*** *until everyone agrees. This is very important as everyone is expected to stick to these agreements, therefore everyone,* ***including*** *the teacher, must agree to each one. The accepted agreements are then put onto a poster and each student writes them into their book.*
6. ***Methods of enforcing the Agreements*** *are discussed and agreed upon.*
7. ***A Review of progress*** *and possible adjustments is done after a week.*

I have found that students are excellent at determining what is important in creating a safe, enjoyable environment and the voting process works quickly and easily. A student will occasionally put a suggestion on the board that is obviously impossible to achieve. When this happens it is noticeable that during the voting process, no-one votes for these suggestions (including the authors).

Regardless of the age of students, they always take the process seriously and the following week is really the time when my sincerity to stick to the agreements is 'tested'. Occasionally I will need to remind students of the agreements and what they mean, but generally students will enforce the agreements themselves and I am free to concentrate on the teaching/learning process."

3. Preframing The Content

A preframe is a statement by you which creates the presuppositions that are needed to understand what you are about to teach. For example, the first paragraphs in this article suggest that teaching is an emotionally significant experience which could be positive or negative. This is a preframe. It is necessary to presuppose this idea in order to understand the rest of the article. If we started the article at the section headed "Advertising the Contract", it would still contain all the instructions to use this model. And if you already shared our presupposition about teaching and about "class management", then starting there would be fine. If you didn't share our presupposition though, we'd have to add further justifications of that frame later (reframes). It's a lot easier to preframe and set up useful beliefs from the beginning, than to reframe and change unhelpful beliefs after they have "taken hold".

When you are teaching, it can be useful to go through each of the key concepts or skills you want to teach and ask yourself, "What presuppositions are needed to support someone using that information or those skills?". You can then design a statement that simply presents this preframe, or a statement which itself presupposes the desired preframe. This is particularly important to do with concepts which have created disagreement in your previous trainings. As Eric Jensen says above "What you call problems are the results of gaps in your teaching and give you important information that you can use to be a better teacher." (Jensen, 1988, p 176).

For example, we could have begun this article by saying "Since teaching is a powerful and potentially positive emotional experience…" or "How many times have you come out of a teaching situation valuing the material but disturbed by a conflict which happened there?" Both those statements presuppose the preframe that "teaching is an emotionally significant experience which could be positive or negative". Another way to preframe is to present an experience which gets the person to access a set of internal representations that create the preframe. Having you imagine "unfurling the wings of your most sacred dreams" is an example of creating the representations which install the preframe desired by this article. Metaphors are, of course, a commonly used way of preframing in trainings.

A good preframe can be usefully followed by a question which raises an issue for discussion. If this issue presupposes the preframe, any response to that question will reinforce the preframe. Consider the question we raised in the first section*: "Why, when teaching is such a powerful interpersonal experience, is there so little written about how to deal with this aspect of the job?"* This question presupposes that teaching is a powerful interpersonal experience. We don't mind if readers agreed with our theories about why the teaching books don't discuss conflict resolution. We don't even mind if people disagree with our claim that there is nothing much written about the subject. Our priority is to provide any readers who enjoy mismatching (disagreeing) with an issue to consider. Whether you agree or disagree with us on this issue, the fact that the interpersonal experience which we call "teaching" is so powerful has been assumed. In fact, the more someone disagrees with us there, the more they argue for our basic assumption.

Preframing the content in this way allows your course participants to enjoy either agreeing or disagreeing. Some people like to agree, and others

like to clarify their own separate opinions. That's fine. Note that this is not a "trick". Each of our statements is congruently true for us. We have simply arranged them in a certain order to protect the validity of our core ideas. These core ideas are necessary if the reader or listener is to get any benefit from our following statements. Getting them those benefits is our contract with them. Preframes meet our needs while respecting the varying learning needs of course participants.

4. Eliciting Useful States

Course participants come to your trainings to learn, and learning requires that they be in a certain state of mind. States such as hostility or resentment are often less effective learning states, as you may remember from your own early school experiences. NLP provides us with many valuable ways to assist people to enter useful learning states, and to let go of conflict invoking states which may originate in situations completely irrelevant to the training they are now attending. Amongst these are metaphor, anchoring, pacing and leading and reframing (Bolstad & Hamblett, 1998, E).

The following example demonstrates a combination of these choices. On one NLP certification training we ran, we had a man (let's call him Sam) who began the course extremely angry. In small groups he was assigned to, he argued with the other participants, forcibly advocating views which always seemed to differ from whatever was said first. In the main group, he took up considerable time questioning the validity of each main concept taught by the trainers. We identified that Sam's learning state was not useful for him or others.

On the third day, we told a particular story in the training. As Sam listened to the story, he went into a "catatonic", trance-like state, his normal questioning completely absent. After this, his anger seemed to reduce dramatically. Interestingly, while Sam showed no conscious awareness of what had happened, another course participant came up to us after the story to thank us. "You did something when you told that story this morning." He fed back. "I felt a whole pile of anger just leave me. I thought, 'I don't need that anymore!', and it just went. Thanks!" Here is the story:

Shivaji

Hundreds of years ago the Mongol hordes swept across Asia, setting up kingdoms in their wake. In India, the Mongols were known as Moguls, and for some centuries their empires held most of north India in sway. At this time there were, as now, many holy teachers or sages in India, to whom local people came for blessing. One day a young man came to a teacher out in the desert. Angry after his long walk, the young man marched into the centre of the holy man's ashram, and demanded a blessing on his daily work. "Prove to me that there's something in all this nonsense!" the young man insisted.

"Who are you, and what do you work at?" asked the teacher calmly.

"I don't see what business it is of yours," the man growled, "but my name is Shivaji, and I am a thief. I rob travellers of their possessions.". The teacher's disciples were shocked, but the holy man blessed Shivaji and wished him well.

The next week, Shivaji came back to the teacher, well pleased. "This has been my best week ever!", he announced. "Who would have thought that such a foolish old man could be of use to me." But the teacher was unimpressed. "I would like to bless you more." he replied. "I suggest that you find another one or two thieves and link up with them. Then, your fortunes will be even greater." The next week, Shivaji returned to confirm that he was the most successful highway robber in the area. But the holy man was still unimpressed. "What could you do if you had twenty such men!" he challenged. And so Shivaji expanded his operation further.

When he came back to thank the teacher for this next blessing, the teacher merely said, "Well, it seems to me that you have not done much yet. If you had a couple of hundred men, now, you could easily throw the local Mogul out of his city and you would be king." And so it was. The whole area was thus freed of the Mogul oppression. And when the disciples asked the teacher why he had helped such an evil man, he explained ... "I have never helped a thief. I only helped a king. But you see, I saw that he was a king the very first time we met."

5. Dealing with the Power Differential Respectfully

With such powerful NLP techniques at our disposal, it is all the more important to bear in mind some ethical issues about the situation of teaching. Teaching is potentially a one-up one-down contract. In any relationship, each person has some ability to reward or punish the other person (to help them meet their needs and objectives or to prevent that). We could call this ability "Power" (realising that this word has other potential meanings. See Bolstad & Hamblett, 1998, B). Even a baby has the ability to reward its caregivers with smiles and co-operation, or to signal its displeasure by crying and struggling. But clearly, in many relationships one

person has more ability to reward or punish than the other; more power. A parent has many more choices in meeting or not meeting the baby's needs than the baby has in meeting the parent's needs. A spouse who is in paid employment may have more power than one who is not.

The *existence* of power in relationships is not in itself a problem. Caring for a baby, or being in a marriage can still be a mutually beneficial process. The problems begin when one person uses their power to get the other person to do things they don't want to do. Even in a potentially equal relationship, this is a high risk activity (imagine a husband witholding "housekeeping money" from a woman who is at home caring for children, until she "co-operates", for example). In a relationship such as teaching, such actions are potential dynamite.

Teachers have more power than their students. This fact is recognised in legal and professional codes in many countries. As a result, for example, sexual relationships between teachers and students are often considered unacceptable. The risk of the teacher using their power (either to initiate or to control the relationship) is considered too high.

Course participants are aware of their lesser power in the training situation or classroom. They will, for example, make decisions about what feedback they give during a training based on their assessment of the greater risk to them. They may attempt to hide their lack of knowledge for fear of losing certification or other benefits. Such actions actually limit the success of your training. You need genuine feedback. You need to know how your students are doing with their learning. For this reason, it makes sense to work to reduce the power differential between you and your students. Here are some possible ways to do this in the adult training context:

a. Get *anonymous* written feedback half way through a training, or by use of a suggestion box. Keep this feedback anonymous.
b. Have explicit money-back guarantees for the eventuality that any student was seriously dissatisfied. This doesn't totally solve participants' feelings of resentment, but it does limit any grievance.
c. Have a clear "feedback not failure" policy on certification, explaining how students will be supported to reach course objectives if they don't succeed at initial attempts.
d. Ask students' permission before revealing personal information about their experiences, or making personal comments about them in a group setting.
e. Do not resolve conflicts with students using the "forcefulness" that you would usually apply to equal relationships. Your comments have far more impact than usual.

This last point deserves elaboration. The open expression of anger by a teacher towards a group may at times seem perfectly justified by the "normal rules of healthy social exchange". In reality, we have never seen this done without creating some degree of fear and resentment. These feelings in the participants are then extremely difficult to bring out and resolve. The benefits of such expressions of anger (in terms of honesty etc) are generally far outweighed by the problems resulting. This caution is the training equivalent of the principle that "the customer is always right". Therefore, while you need to make sure that your needs as a trainer are met, resolving conflicts with minimal expression of anger is a crucial skill for successful training.

6. Resolving Conflicts with a Win-Win Approach

Your every response to students during teaching can establish and deepen the climate of co-operation. Our model of conflict resolution, explained more fully in our book Transforming Communication (Bolstad and Hamblett, 1988,F), rests on four core concepts; Problem Ownership, The Two Step, The Win-Win Process, and Values Influencing. While these concepts have their primary origins in the work of Thomas Gordon (1974), our application of them bears in mind the insights of NLP and other solution-focused approaches (Bolstad and Hamblett, 1999 A).

Problem Ownership

Our aim as teachers is to have ourselves in a state where teaching is possible, and our students in a state where learning is possible. When both of us are in these desired states, a wide range of communication skills can be utilised. Advice and information can be given by the trainer, and students can be directly challenged to consider new perspectives and adopt new behaviours. However, when either of us is in an undesired state (called "owning a problem" in Thomas Gordon's conflict resolution model) the purpose of our being together is obstructed.

Students who are upset, worried, resentful, frustrated, angry, fearful, or otherwise unhappy with either the training situation or some personal issue are said in these terms to "own a problem". The appropriate skills for the teacher to use in this situation include skills which maintain rapport

(matching the student's behaviour, acknowledging their concerns, and listening). They also include verbal skills which help the student clarify their outcome and safely create their own solutions. Advice giving, criticism, lecturing, interrogating and other teaching skills, which may be quite safe in the no-problem situation, are not appropriate first responses when the student gives signals that they "own a problem". The two most effective verbal skills for this situation are reflective listening (eg "So the problem you're experiencing is…", "You want to…") and open, solution-focused questions (eg "What would it take for you to have solved this?", "Can I just check, what needs to be different here?").

On the other hand, when we as teachers are upset, worried, resentful, frustrated, angry, fearful, or otherwise unhappy with either the teaching situation or some personal issue, we could also be said, in these terms, to "own a problem". This doesn't mean it's our "fault" –simply that we are the ones who need to get something changed. When my problem is with some issue unrelated to the teaching situation, I use my own solution generating skills to solve it. But when my problem is related to some behaviour of a student's, I will of course choose to communicate to them in some way. Advice giving, blameful criticism, lecturing, interrogating and similar skills are again not very effective. The most useful verbal skill for the situation where I "own a problem" is to describe my problem clearly. In doing this, I will give the student information about the sensory specific behaviour that has generated the problem, rather than my theory about their internal intentions or my judgement of that behaviour. Instead of saying "You were careless about our agreements", I'd say something more specific such as "You arrived ten minutes after the arranged start time.". I can also tell them about any concrete effects the behaviour has on me, and about the nature of the undesired state I'm in. My communication will thus be an "I" message, using a format such as: "I have a problem I'd like some help with. When… The effect on me is… and I feel…" (For example; "I have a problem I'd like some help with. When participants arrive late to the session, I find I need to re-explain things, and we lose time. It gets quite frustrating.").

The Two Step

In real life, problem ownership is constantly changing. In the middle of assisting a student to solve her problem studying, I may discover that she has values and attitudes which I deeply resent. I need to monitor the situation, to identify when it becomes appropriate to shift from reflective listening to I message. Certainly, if I send an I message, my student may well feel uncomfortable about that; they may even feel "angry", "humiliated" or "insulted". Therefore, before re-sending or re-explaining my I message, I now need to respond to this new student problem with reflective listening. I do this until the student indicates that they feel understood (usually by nodding). We are then back in rapport enough for me to send a revised I message. The result is a kind of "dance" which we term "the two step". Here is an example:

Teacher: "There's something I wanted to mention before we start. There were several cups left on the floor here over lunch time. When coffee spills on this carpet, it actually takes quite a lot of work for us to clear it up. I know we mentioned it earlier, and it's a bit frustrating to have it still happening." [Teacher describes her problem in an I message]
Student: "I didn't actually hear anything said about that earlier. I think some of us were out of the room." [Student indicates he now owns a problem, having heard the I message]
Teacher: "You didn't know about it" [reflective listening]
Student: nods [feels understood and so is back in rapport]
Teacher: "Well I'd really appreciate your help with this from now on." [re-sending a modified I message]
Student: "Sure. Sorry." [problem solved]

In this case, the result of the Two Step is that the student agrees to change. Usually, trainers' problems with students can be solved this simply. However there are two other possible outcomes. One is that the student may have some prior problem of their own which leads them to produce the behaviour the teacher wanted changed. This produces a Conflict of needs, which requires a search for mutually satisfactory solutions; for example:

Teacher: "There's something I wanted to mention before we start. There were several cups left on the floor here over lunch time. When coffee spills on this carpet, it actually takes quite a lot of work for us to clear it up. I know we mentioned it earlier, and it's a bit frustrating to have it still happening." [Teacher describes her problem in an I message]
Student: "Well, you know it's pretty hot in here. We need to be able to drink something." [Student indicates he *also* had a problem, which led to his behaviour. This is a conflict of needs.]
Teacher: "You want some arrangement so that you can get a drink during the training" [reflective listening]

Student: nods [feels understood and so is back in rapport]
Teacher: "Well, I do have a concern about coffee and tea staining the carpet. I'd like to find a way that we can solve that problem and also ensure we all are able to get the drinks we need." [re-sending a modified I message]
Student: "Sure. Maybe we can…." [moving into the search for a win-win solution]

The third possible result of the Two Step is that the student does not believe that their behaviour concretely affects the teacher. In this case, the student will perceive the teacher as attempting to coerce them into line with the teacher's values or personality traits. This is a conflict of values; for example:

Teacher: "There's something I wanted to mention before we start. There were several cups left on the floor here over lunch time. When coffee spills on this carpet, it actually takes quite a lot of work for us to clear it up. I know we mentioned it earlier, and it's a bit frustrating to have it still happening." [Teacher describes her problem in an I message]
Student: "I don't actually think we need to worry about this. We're all adults. Surely we can take care of our own spills." [Student indicates he doesn't believe that his behaviour needs to affect the trainer. This is a conflict of values.]
Teacher: "You'd rather it was left up to each individual to deal with." [reflective listening]
Student: nods [feels understood and so is back in rapport]
Teacher: "Well I have a different opinion about what's likely to happen here. Is it okay for us to discuss this?" [re-sending a modified I message and asking permission to influence the student's value]
Student: "I guess so. I mean, I've had coffee each session, and I just make sure it doesn't spill…." [student and trainer are in a values influencing process]

The Win-Win Process

Where a teacher and students have conflicting needs, the use of I messages and reflective listening helps to set these out non-blamefully. The teacher can then guide problem-solving to find a solution which meets both sets of needs. This can be thought of as a seven step process:

1. Preframe the situation as a problem to be co-operatively solved.
2. Define each person's basic need or basic outcome (what prompted their actions).
3. Brainstorm solutions which meet both sets of basic outcomes.
4. Evaluate these solutions to check how well they meet both sets of needs.
5. Agree on the best solutions.
6. Plan and act on the agreed solutions.
7. Check how the solutions are working.

For example; in a recent training held during the summer holidays, our venue was a school set in beautiful New Zealand native bush, and overlooking a bay. There was a swimming pool available for participants' use, and there were many far-flung and quiet places for students to do small group activities. Unfortunately, it became increasingly difficult to get students back into the training room at the time set for the next activity. Those who arrived early were frustrated, and as trainers we were anxious about our timing.

After one lunch break, once everyone was back, we explained that we had a problem we needed help with (Step 1). We pointed out, in I message form, the two concerns we had. Participants explained that they liked to find shaded outside places to work. Others explained that when they finished an exercise early, they liked to take a quick dip in the pool. Unfortunately, the pool was too far away to hear the bell which called people back, and they didn't have their watches on. We reflectively listened to these difficulties, and restated our own problem (Step 2).

We then invited suggestions as to how we could solve all these concerns. Many suggestions were made. Some were definitely not likely to work for us as trainers (for example sending an assistant over to the pool to advise people five minutes before return time seemed to us to be putting in more than our share of work. However, we accepted these ideas in the brainstorming (Step 3), and then shared our views as we evaluated each idea (Step 4). Our final decision involved setting defined areas of shaded lawn to work in, and people arranging their own time monitoring at the pool (Step 5). The swimmers planned the details of their own monitoring (Step 6). Together, these solutions worked (Step 7). The 15 minutes we took to discuss it was well worth investing, to avoid the extra ten minutes per exercise, and the extra stress, that we had been coping with. But, more important, the process itself evoked a more co-operative atmosphere. It increased people's respect for our needs as trainers, and their sense of us working together.

Values Influencing

A conflict of values exists in any *disagreement* when a student does not believe their behaviour concretely affects the teacher (eg if the teacher asked the student to use "more respectful language"), or where a teacher does not believe their behaviour concretely affects the student (eg if a student wanted the teacher not to display their products for sale in the training room). Such conflicts operate on what NLP would call a "deeper neurological level". As a trainer, in such situations I may want to influence not just the student's behaviour, but also their more basic values or beliefs.

The use of coercive power is no more effective here than in conflicts of needs. And yet there are some situations where we would decide that our value is so important that we will not negotiate. For example, we have NLP trainees who believe that they should be certified without attending a training, because they've read all our books. As far as they are concerned, it's "no skin off our noses" to give them a certificate. For us, though, our value of integrity in assessment and certification takes priority. We have had students who think that rapport skills are nonsense, and don't see why they should have to use them in the exercises. We do.

The important thing to realise is that when we insist on these behaviours, we have not actually influenced the participants' values. They may attend the training, but still feel aggrieved that we didn't certify them without attending. They may use rapport skills in the training, but never again. So in a conflict of values our interest is to actually *influence* the other person's value, rather than merely control their behaviour. There are three skills which maximise our chances of doing this. They are:

1. Identifying values which the participant shares with us, and building on these. The student who disagrees with rapport skills may value flexibility, for example, and may be able to accept a reframe of their use of rapport skills ("some of the time") as an indication of flexibility.
2. Demonstrating the effectiveness of our own skills ("modelling" them, to use this term the way it is used in Psychology). If we consistently use rapport skills, the student who disagrees with them has an opportunity to see their successfulness. They will, at least, get a sense of our congruent valuing of the skill.
3. Consulting. This is the core skill for influencing another's values. It involves carefully sharing one's own opinions, identifying them as such. It then involves reflectively listening to the other person's opinions, and respectfully leaving them to decide to change. This seems so simplistic that its power is easily underestimated. But in fact, many of the values which you hold today will have been established as a result of someone's effective consulting. Consulting does not need to result in an immediate "conversion" experience where the other person changes their opinion in front of you. It more often results in them going away, feeling good about how you respected their right to decide, and reviewing in a calmer mood the pros and cons of your advice.

The Power of Co-operation

Research on teachers who are less controlling and more supportive of students' autonomy, finds that their students are more self confident, and more interested in learning (Kohn, 1996, p 85). The more that students experience their class as a co-operative community, then the more they see learning as intrinsically valuable, the more skilled they are at resolving conflict, and the more supportive of others they become (Kohn, 1996, p 103). Using these processes for creating co-operative win-win educational experiences pays off in terms of the most basic goals of learning. But it also pays off in terms of teacher satisfaction. We have experience training hundreds of teachers, at all levels of the education system. In every training, we find that "authoritarian" teachers do not want to create coercive or conflict-ridden classrooms or groups. They simply do not know the skills to do otherwise.

Those skills include initiating clear contracts from our first contact with students, negotiating basic agreements that set a co-operative tone, preframing so that students who enjoy disagreeing can do so successfully, eliciting co-operative states in students, and reducing the power differential between students and teacher. All these processes create a climate in which win-win conflict resolution is expected and effective. Conflict resolution itself involves identifying who "owns each problem", using reflective listening and I messages in alternating sequence to identify the type of conflict, and then either working towards solutions which meet all basic outcomes, or influencing values respectfully.

When these skills are applied fully, they become almost "invisible" to both students and observers (Kohn, 1996, p xv). The focus of your training or teaching returns to its rightful place. But the feeling of co-operation you create remains with your students long after their training (Kohn, 1996, p 85). One of our students said to us in her feedback, "I can't work out whether you were using love to

teach us about NLP, or using NLP to teach us about love." To us, that's success… and we don't know which is true either.

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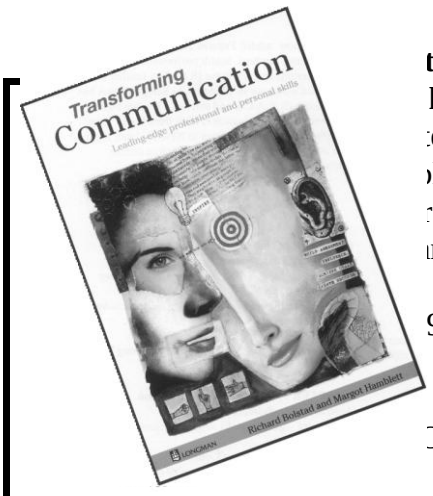

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