

Life's Paradox

uncommon reflections of life matters

The Magic of NLP

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On a day when I am with people I like, whilst doing what I like and being remunerated by just the amount I like, it's a great day. Wouldn't it be magic if that was the norm rather than the exception?

Wouldn't it be nice if we had routine reproducible techniques to deal with people on a daily basis like we have procedures for every system at work?

Wouldn't it be fabulous if these tools were readily at our finger tips, especially on those days when everybody seems to be on a mission to annoy us?

Funny how it's always *other* people who annoy us, isn't it? How they make us upset, let us down, ruin our day.

Let me propose that perhaps it is what we do inside our heads that cause us to get annoyed, upset, let down. It is our perception and how we make meaning of that behaviour for ourselves. Not what the other person does to us. S/he cannot *make* us do anything.

For example, when somebody raises their voice and utters a series of emotionally charged words at me, it is my perception of the meaning of that behaviour that causes me to respond. Perhaps I could get offended, angry or intimidated.... utter a few intense

phrases back myself. Or I can choose to respond differently – remain uncharged, be genuinely interested, maybe ask how I can help alter the situation. Imagine how differently the two scenarios pan out.

So, why do we do what we do when we know what we know?

Let me suggest that we are programmed or conditioned to do behaviours, regardless of conscious thought. Wishing, or willing, is not powerful enough to over-ride the ingrained patterns and habits that resulted from conditioning. In fair weather, we may battle to steer from these patterns through our logical thinking. When the weather gets rough and tough, we default to these programs unconsciously. And we keep repeating habits we promised ourselves to kick. Typical is the smoker wanting to quit, or the dieter wishing to lose weight, or the manager desiring to communicate better with staff, superiors, customers....people we deal with on a daily basis. All in a stressful day of keeping to schedule, handling deadlines, working in a fast-paced demanding world, running a business/family.

The good news is that we do have technology to transform these old patterns into more useful programs that support us.

Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) is one such way of “upgrading our software” so we can operate in a different manner. We are so aware of attending technical programs to keep up with our vocational or career skills. Yet we so easily neglect our self development in the relationships skills area. NLP alters our abilities to do things, and it changes the quality of our relationships. NLP is about learning to wake up our senses; to have a heightened awareness of our programming. To bring what is not conscious to us into consciousness.

Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP)

NLP was originally founded in the 1970s by John Grinder and Richard Bandler. Since then, many brilliant people have studied, utilized and adapted the original patterns to bring them up to date with what is needed in this rapidly changing world. The NLP foundational concepts and methodology can be extremely practical, easily understandable and directly applicable to professional and personal life.

NLP is a behavioural science focussing on the study of human behaviour. The content of NLP is not new. It is based on modelling people who are outstanding at what they do, recognising the patterns and establishing a methodology to replicate their behaviour in another person. NLP is the process of modelling and developing human excellence in any field.

Neuro – relates to our nervous system through which our experience is processed via the five main senses (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, olfactory and gustatory) and how we make meaning of this information in our neurology.

Linguistic - relates to the language and nonverbal communication systems through which we communicate and transfer meaning, including words, gestures, “body language”, facial expressions, unconscious movements and sounds.

Programming – refers to the patterns and unconscious templates we have running in our neurology. Our programming is the “software” that commands and controls our neurology, and hence our behaviour. The quality of our programming, or patterning determines the quality of our behaviours and our life. The programming occurs at a neurological level and not a logical level, so in order to effect change neurological intervention is needed. This is the study of NLP ... creating change at a neurological level of patterning. Change of physical behaviours, emotional reactions, intellectual ability – quality of thinking, unconscious reactions, “bad” habits.

Allow me to pose a seemingly strange question: *Does a fish know if it is in water?* I would conjecture that it does not. When a fish is in water, it is functioning in its usual pattern and hence is unaware. When the fish is out of water, it has to respond differently from its usual programmed responses: The fish knows when it is *out* of the water! Similarly, when we go about comfortably doing what we routinely accomplish, we are quite unaware. If we wish to achieve different results from what we are getting now, we need to do something different, get uncomfortable with some new patterns to learn to re-program our behaviours to get what we want. You want better relationships with your staff, why not try some new behaviours with some new soft skills tool?

So we may need to hop out of the usual way of doing things so we can get out of habits that do not support us and re-create new patterns that are more useful. E.g. Have you ever come out of a series of bad relationships and find that the new one isn't any better? We seem to have a pattern of seeking out the same partner – only they have a different name! Ever wondered that in all the relationships there is a common denominator? You.

Think of some situations at work you would like to change. Perhaps you could have less difficult clients whose mere appearance on your diary makes you wish you were not on this planet with them. You would gladly have less high maintenance staff who seem to make your existence a misery. You would also love to have a great way of winning all arguments in the boardroom! NLP have some simple and effective practical techniques to help transform your life in these ways and more.



In the next few articles, we will attempt to touch on a further series of applications that will open your options to more choices of how you can run, manage or lead your life to where you want to go.

Play with it. Try something new. What's the worst thing that can happen? You learn something!

What's the best thing? It can bring some practical magic into your daily life.

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About the Author: **Dr Yvonne Sum** is a pioneer in Parent Leadership coaching. She is on a quest to co-create joyful learning partnerships between parents and children to simultaneously bring out each other's authentic best. She inspires parents to learn from our children mirroring to us what we most need to learn about ourselves and vice-versa. Through her series of **Transformational Leadership Challenge™ (TLC)** programs, Dr Sum is committed to transform leaders of tomorrow today by highlighting family values and celebrating parents as role models and heroes in life who proactively unleash our children's potential through self actualization, intentional living and powerful leadership centred on love and high purpose. She expresses this passion to bring out our authentic best through her roles as an international speaker, writer, transformational corporate facilitator, executive and parent Meta-Coach, Neuro Linguistic Programming trainer, business woman, wife and mother. Please visit www.dryvonesum.com for more information.