The Fundamental Principles of NLP

These are some of the central principles, or working hypotheses, or presuppositions, which underlie NLP and which form an essential part of the `NLP attitude'.

- Meet people in their own unique model of the world - and respect their world view

- The meaning of your communication is the response you get

- The map is not the territory - people interact with their internal maps of the world rather than with pure, sensory-based, input.

- Positive self worth is always held constant. People are not their behaviors - behind every behavior there is/was a positive intention. In any situation a person makes the best choice with the resources currently available to them

- In any interaction the person with the greatest behavioral flexibility has most influence on the outcome

- All human behavior has a structure and results from how a person uses their representational systems

- NLP is a generative rather than a repair model - it emphasizes solutions rather than analysis of causes

- People have all the resources they need even if they do not currently have access to these resources

- NLP is a model rather then a theory

- Mind and body are part of the one system: external behavior is the result of internal behavior

- Conscious mind capacity is very limited - supposedly to about 5-9 chunks of information

- Always add choices - never take them away

- There is a solution to every problem

- Redefine mistakes as feedback - so if what you are doing is not working do something else.

- If one human can do something then, potentially, anyone can.

These are the principles on which, ideally, your application of NLP rests.

However they are not idealistic nor are they unrealistic. The principles, also called presuppositions, have been around since the early days of NLP and are a guide on how best to use NLP. In particular, some of the principles are excellent guidelines on how best to use NLP with other people.

NLP is a very powerful technology and, if you do not apply these guidelines, can quite easily be used to the detriment of others. This is why, in our NLP Practitioner Certification Programme we explore what each principle means in terms of behavior and attitude. And why they form a key element in our assessment for certification.

We believe that a true Certified Practitioner of NLP will have absorbed the key principles from the

above list and this will be evidenced in their behavior at an 'unconscious competence' level so that their behavior respects the self esteem, values and beliefs of other people.

The Presuppositions of NLP™

1. The ability to change the process by which we experience reality is more often valuable than changing the content of our experience of reality.

2. The meaning of the communication is the response you get.

3. All distinctions human beings are able to make concerning our environment and our behavior can be usefully represented through the visual, auditory, kinesthetic, olfactory, and gustatory senses.

4. The resources an individual needs in order to effect a change are already within them.

5. The map is not the territory.

6. The positive worth of the individual is held constant, while the value and appropriateness of internal and/or external behavior is questioned.

7. There is a positive intention motivating every behavior, and a context in which every behavior has value.

8. Feedback vs. Failure - All results and behaviors are achievements, whether they are desired outcomes for a given task/context, or not.

The 19 Golden "Keys" To Understanding NLP

1. "The map is not the territory" or "The menu is not the meal"

What we see, hear, and feel is not reality, but our brain's interpretation of it. Right now there are thousands of radio waves flowing through the air around you. When you turn on your radio, you hear only one wavelength- that one station. Your radio doesn't play all the stations simultaneously it would be too confusing. Also, your radio isn't set up to receive microwaves or any of the millions of other wavelengths available.

Humans are very similar. We have five basic instruments to pick up wavelengths. These instruments (the five senses- human antennae) take in information which is then interpreted by our nervous system (similar to radio circuitry), which then assembles the information in a way we can comprehend it. Everything you think you see hear or feel is created by your brain in response to real external stimuli. Reality out there does exist. We just never get to experience it first hand.

So our brain creates a virtual reality for us- a map. Just like a map of your town. The map is not the town. But, if you want to get to the corner store and the map tells you how to get there- it's useful.

2. People respond according to their "maps"

The human mind has a very special capability. It can give meaning to things. As we grow up in the world we experience things and give meaning to them. Michael Jordan gave a different meaning to getting kicked off his high school basketball team

than other people in a similar situation did. So, not only does our mind body system make it's own interpretation of what's really out there, but then we interpret it again by creating our own individual meanings for things. From these interpreted meanings we create our own maps. We move through the world and respond using these maps we create based on the meanings we have given to various experiences. Michael Jordan's map didn't label getting kicked off the basketball team as "failure" he mapped a different meaning to it. Look where he is today.

3. Meaning operates context dependently

If I call my girlfriend "sweetheart" and then call a waitress I don't know "sweetheart" I am saying the same thing. Yet, I may get a completely different reaction from each person.

No word or behavior is an island. Everything we do or say occurs within some context. The meaning we give to what people say and do is altered by the context.

4. Mind/Body inevitably affect each other

If I cut you with a knife your mind knows about it. If I say certain things to you, I can make you feel bad. Well where exactly do you "FEEL bad"? In your body of course. MINDBODY acts a whole.

Korzybski talks in depth about how language maps our reality and that separating things that really shouldn't be separated by using two different words has a major impact on how we respond and function in the world. It's really MINDBODY. Just like Einstein's SPACETIME.

5. Individual skills function by developing and sequencing rep systems

We have five senses or antennae by which our brain receives "human radio waves". Once our brain converts those waves into something it can work with, we start sorting the information in our mind to give it structure.

Everything we do has a sequence to it. Before you decide to buy something you may picture yourself using the widget, then you may say to yourself "this widget would be really cool when I go widgeting", then you may feel a good feeling about the widget and you buy it. This would be called a buying strategy and it consists of the 3 major representational systems- SEEING, HEARING AND FEELING or VISUAL (V), AUDITORY (A), AND KINESTHETIC (K). Most of the time we use these 3 antennae more often than the two others. The way we sequence these in our mind enables us to exhibit certain skills. Certain sequences work better than others. If your phone number is (876) 716-5512 and I dial (678) 551-2617, I'm not going to get you on the phone. It's the same numbers, but the sequencing gives dramatically different results.

Richard Bandler uses a very funny example of this (paraphrased): "There's all these books out there and they all have the same 26 letters. $15 or $20 and all I get are the same 26 letters over and over. I'm getting ripped off!" Sequencing the letters the right way creates the right words and sequencing the right words creates a masterpiece. We do the same at a very unconscious level with the VAK (Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic.) The way we string together the representations of each sense in our

mind will create very specific results. The spelling strategy of NLP was created from this presupposition.

6. Respect each person's model of the world

Now that you know that we operate in a virtual reality of our own creation, you can respect that every other person on the planet is doing the same. The difference is you now know you are working through a map. Most people think everything they think and feel is REAL and it is for them. Respect that.

Rapport is created when you can step into that person's model of the world (even if you don't want to stay there). Leading is when you gently expand their map of the world.

NLP is all about more choices. So respect someone else's model of the world and if you want to change it always make sure you are installing a map that allows greater flexibility. Much of NLP is based on systems theory, which basically says that the system with the most flexibility and options wins.

7. Person and Behavior describe different phenomena

When you were 3 years old maybe you sucked your thumb. Does that make you a thumb sucker today? You are more than the behaviors you produce and have the ability to change them at any time. What you DO and what you ARE are two different things.

8. Every behavior has utility and usefulness in some context

All behavior functions from positive intentions. This presupposition separates behaviors from the person. A person may start shaking with fear and sweating when they need to make a presentation. That fear may be appropriate just not in that situation. Maybe if a person held him up at gunpoint it would be natural to have fear. Fear is good in a certain context.

9. We cannot NOT communicate.

Even if we don't say a word, our internal thought processes effect our body in such a way that our message gets out. (See presupposition #4)

10. The way we communicate affects perception and reception

How many ways can you say "You're the best"? Try it. Use different tonalities, voice tempos, tones, etc. Change the way you stand, the focus of your eyes, and your posture. Experiment with a few friends and try to come up with 20 ways to say it over the next week. The words are the same, but the way you communicate them can make a radical difference.

11. The meaning of your communication lies in the response you get

This is one of the driving presuppositions in NLP. It forces you to take full responsibility for RESULTS in your communication. If you get a response you don't like- then you need to change something in your communication.

Again, everyone is functioning through HIS OR HER model of the world. If you communicate to everyone using your model only, you will not get the response you want. NLP is all about results- if one thing doesn't work, TRY SOMETHING ELSE. You aren't just communicating to hear yourself, are you? You communicate because you are looking for a response from another person. Keep shifting and changing the way you communicate until you get the response you want. This is the basis of all sales and dealing with sales objections.

12. The one who sets the frame for the communication controls the communicating

We can consciously take in 7 +/- 2 bits of information at a time. Frames are the magnifying glasses that magnify the specific 7 +/- 2 bits of information our other than conscious mind will choose to have our conscious mind concentrate on. When you use a camera, you don't take a picture of everything around you. The lens "frames" the specific scene you want to focus on. Whoever sets this frame in any communication will control that particular communication.

"The sun has a beautiful red color to it as it's setting tonight. (frame) Let's take a walk on the beach"

"It's going to be too dark when we get there (new frame- Dark is not good)"

Seductive voice "Well that will be nice. That way no one can see what I'm going to do to you once we get there" (reframe- Dark is good)

13. There is no failure, only feedback

There can only be failure if you put a time limit on something. Until you die, you can continually alter your behavior until you get the results you want

14. The person with the most flexibility exercises the most influence in the system

The Law of Requisite Variety: In any system, the one with the most flexibility will exercise more choices and therefore more influence in the system.

Make sure your model is big enough to allow a wide variety of behaviors. Again, simply, keep trying new things until you get the results you want. The wrestler with the most holds wins!

15. Resistance indicates lack of rapport

With the proper amount of rapport you can convince someone to do almost anything. You can literally change the way they map their entire world. If you are getting resistance on any level (verbal or non verbal- i.e. keep your eyes open) you need to step back into their map of the world for a minute and regain rapport. Remember presupposition #11!

16. People have all the internal resources they need to succeed.

We all pretty much have the same set of antennae and the same nervous system to interpret signals. We have everything we need to deal effectively in the world. Sometimes we just need other people to bring it out of us.

17. Humans have the ability to experience one trial learning

This presupposition takes the Pavlovian thing to new heights. Humans can associate anything with anything and do it instantly if the state of mind at the time is intense enough. That's how phobias are formed.

I was watching on a talk show about a boy who had an intense fear of clowns. The boy was about 17 years old and he looked and talked like a pretty tough kid. When the host mentioned bringing a clown in, the 17 year old rolled up on the floor in a fetus position and started crying hysterically. A psychologist came on and asked the boy how this happened. The boy said that when he was 4 years old he was watching a movie about a killer clown on Halloween. His aunt just happened to have dressed up as a clown that looked very similar and during one of the intense parts of the movie the aunt, in her clown costume came up behind the boy. When he turned around, there was the clown in the movie-in real life.

Now, intellectually, now that he's 17 he realizes that his aunt wasn't the clown in the movie. But, humans are one-time learners and his nervous system learned in that one intense moment to associate massive fear to clowns.

18. People make the best choices open to them when they act

If I have a map of Florida (my home state) published in 1917 and I use it to get around, it's probably not going to be very helpful. If my computer is an Apple II plus from 1982, I'm not going to be able to do as much as I can if I had a Pentium III 500 MHz. In either case though, that may be the best I have at the time.

Everyone makes the best choices they can from their current map or model of the world.

19. All communication should increase choice

Always increase the amount of choices someone has with your communication. See presupposition #14.

These 19 presuppositions are the framework or Greenhouse, as I like to call it, from which NLP blooms. If you don't understand the 19 presuppositions, you really don't understand NLP. They are the basis for the Attitude, which generates the methodology, which in turn leaves the trail of techniques. With just these presuppositions and the right attitude you can do better than the thousands of people out there that think they know what NLP is.

NLP is a major therapeutic tool and instrument for personal effectiveness and excellence. NLP therapy is witnessing immense popularity with applications galore

Richard Bandler and John Grinder created neuro linguistic programming (NLP). They studied and modeled people like Milton Erickson (hypnotist), Fritz Perls (gestalt therapist) and Virginia Satir (family therapist), took the most effective patterns from each and created a practical, replicable system to get consistent results. They also borrowed heavily from Alfred Korzybski, the author of *Science and Sanity*. In fact, Korzybski spoke about "neuro linguistic" effects almost 40 years before Bandler and Grinder came on the scene.

NLP was a major shift in therapy. Earlier, psychologists were interested in the question 'why' something happens and spent a lot of time revealing the cause. NLP directly went into 'how' this problem could change just now. NLP practitioners claimed that they could change a phobia in half-an-hour and they did it! NLP then grew as a major therapeutic

tool and as an instrument for personal effectiveness.

Initially, most therapists used NLP (since that's where the model originally came from), but now its applications have extended into almost every area of life (sales, business, negotiations, modeling). So over the years NLP grew as an industry and in the recent past there have been many offshoots. The issue of who owns NLP came up recently since many people had contributed to the development of the science. Richard Bandler now asks his participants to sign a contract that says he is the author of the trademark NLP. Now there are all kinds of training programs and trainers in the name of NLP and some of them can make you an NLP trainer pretty fast. Ideally a practitioner level training is of seven to 10 days duration and master level around 15 to 20 days. To be a trainer one selects a topic within NLP and pursues that deeply.

So what is NLP?

First, NLP is based entirely on certain presuppositions. Presuppositions could be considered base beliefs. It's like an operating system on a computer. Every program you run goes through that operating system (for instance, Windows). So, the more flexible the operating system the more options you will have when running a program.

Presuppositions are the internal, mental environmental structure we build that directs our conscious attention span. These presuppositions form the environment from which all NLP techniques take form. Bandler defines NLP as "an attitude, backed by a methodology, which leaves a trail of techniques". Most people who are familiar with NLP just know of the techniques. The point is that the basis of NLP is the presuppositions and the attitude you have when you use these presuppositions. Here are some of them:

1. 'The map is not the territory' or 'The menu is not the meal'. What we see, hear, and feel is not reality, but our brain's interpretation of it. Everything you think, see, hear or feel is created by your brain in response to real external stimuli. We say that the sun rises in the East and sets in the West. In reality we know that the sun is stationary. But through our five senses we feel that it rises in the East. Reality exists. We just never get to experience it firsthand. So our brain creates a virtual reality for us—a map. Just like a map of your town. The map is not the town, but it is similar and if you want to get to the corner store the map tells you how to get there—it's useful.

2. People respond according to their 'maps'. The human mind has a special capability. It can give meaning to things. What all meanings we have given to sunsets and sunrise! As we grow up in the world, we experience things and give meaning to them according to the map that we have.

3. Mind/body inevitably affect each other. If I cut you with a knife, your mind knows about it. If I say certain things to you, I can make you feel bad. Where exactly do you 'feel bad'? In your body. Mind-body acts as a whole.

4. Individual skills function by developing and sequencing representational systems. We have five senses or antennae by which our brain receives information. Once our brain converts that information

into something it can work with, we start sorting the information to give it a structure. There are five representational systems: visual, auditory, kinesthetic, olfactory and gustatory. Everything we do has a sequence to it. Before you decide to buy a car, you may picture yourself driving that car, then you may say to yourself, "this car seems to be ideal for me", then you may get a good feeling about the car and you buy it. This would be called a buying strategy and it consists of the three major representational systems—seeing, hearing and feeling or visual (V), auditory (A) and kinesthetic (K).

5. Respect each person's model of the world. Now that you know that we operate in a virtual reality of our own creation, you can respect that every other person on the planet is doing the same. The difference is you now know you are working through a map. Most people think everything they think and feel is REAL. Respect that. Rapport is created when you can step into that person's model of the world (even if you don't want to stay there). Leading is when you gently expand their map of the world.

6. Person and Behavior describe different phenomena. When you were three years old, maybe you sucked your thumb. Does that make you a thumb-sucker today? You are more than the behavior you produce and have the ability to change them at any time. What you DO and what you ARE are two different things.

7. Every behavior has utility and usefulness—in some context. All behavior functions from positive intentions. This presupposition separates behavior from the person. A problem like stammering would have had some positive intentions when it was first developed. Maybe it saved that person from something.

8. We cannot NOT communicate. Even if we don't say a word, our internal thought processes affect our body in such a way that our message gets out.

9. The way we communicate affects perception and reception. How many ways can you say "You're the best"? Try it. Use different tonalities, voice tempos, tones. Change the way you stand, the focus of your eyes, and your posture. Experiment with a few friends and try to come up with 100 ways to say it over the next week. The words are the same, but the way you communicate them can make a radical difference.

10. The meaning of your communication lies in the response you get. This is one of the driving presuppositions in NLP. It forces you to take full responsibility for RESULTS in your communication. If you get a response you don't like, then you need to change something in your communication. Again, everyone is functioning through HIS or HER model of the world. If you communicate to everyone using your model only, you will not get the response you want. NLP is all about results—if one thing doesn't work, TRY SOMETHING ELSE. You aren't just communicating to hear yourself, are you? You communicate because you are looking for a response from another person. Keep shifting and changing the way you communicate until you get the response you want.

11. The one who sets the frame for the communication controls the communicating. When you use a camera, you don't take a picture of everything around you. The lens 'frames' the specific scene

you want to focus on. Whoever sets this frame in any communication will control that particular communication. Just see the following scenario:
You: It is so cool and nice in the park. Let's take a walk there. (Frame-park is a cool and nice place).
Your fiancée: It's going to be too dark when we get there. (New frame—dark is not good).
You in a seductive voice: Well, that will be nice. That way no one can see us. (Reframe—dark is good).

12. There is no failure, only feedback. There can be failure only if you do not learn anything from what has happened. Until you die, you can continually alter your behavior till you get the results you want.

13. The person with the most flexibility exercises the most influence in the system. The Law of Requisite Variety—in any system, the one with the most flexibility will exercise more choices and therefore more influence in the system. Make sure your model is big enough to allow a wide variety of behavior. Again, simply, keep trying new things until you get the results you want.

14. Resistance indicates lack of rapport. With the proper amount of rapport you can convince someone to do almost anything. You can literally change the way they map their entire world. If you are getting resistance on any level (verbal or nonverbal, keep your eyes open), you need to step back into their map of the world for a minute and regain rapport. Remember presupposition 11!

15. People have all the internal resources they need to succeed. We all have the same set of antennae, the same nervous system to interpret signals. Sometimes we just need other people to bring it out of us.

16. Humans have the ability to learn from just one experience. This presupposition takes the Pavlovian thing to new heights. Humans can associate anything to anything and do it instantly if the state of mind at the time is intense. That's how phobias are formed. When one has a terrible experience on a flight during a bumpy ride, one may develop a phobia of flying.

17. People make the best choices open to them when they act. Everyone makes the best choices from their current map or model of the world. So if you want to change yourself or someone else, you need to show more choices.

These presuppositions cover almost all aspects of NLP, but then it's a growing science. Every day there is something new added to it. So stay tuned!

The basic premise of NLP is that the words we use reflect an inner, subconscious perception of our problems. If these words and perceptions are inaccurate, as long as we continue to use them and to think of them, the underlying problem will persist. In other words, our attitudes are, in a sense, a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Introduction

The word Neuro linguistic programming can be broken down to three distinct words:

> Neuro   Linguistic   Programming

Neuro refers to the brain and neural network that feeds into the brain. Neurons or nerve cells are the working units used by the nervous system to send, receive, and store signals that add up to information.

Linguistics refer to the content, both verbal and non-verbal, that moves across and through these pathways.

Programming is the way the content or signal is manipulated to convert it into useful information. The brain may direct the signal, sequence it, change it based on our prior experience, or connect it to some other experience we have stored in our brain to convert it into thinking patterns and behaviors that are the essence of our experience of life.

Our experiences and feelings affect the way we react to external stimuli. Let me illustrate. I am afraid of snakes. The impulse I get if I see a snake or even hear a sound close to resembling that of a snake is a feeling of total fright. This is because, I was born in an area infested with several deadly snakes. One day a boy from my neighborhood came to our house. He knocked on the door. I opened the door. He had a snake in his hand. He wanted to show me the prize catch he had. He was holding it like we hold a pet cat. For him it was a pet. So, it gave him lot of joy to hold one. To me, it gave a migraine headache!

Both myself and my neighbor boy saw the same thing. The same signal was passed to our brain. It was the picture of a snake. However, our brains interpreted the implications of the snake entirely differently. In processing the information, our brains used our experiences (good and bad), our biases, our opinions, our value systems, etc. to convert it into useful information that we can use.

Neuro linguistic programming (NLP for short) was developed in the early 1970s by an information scientist and a linguist at the University of California at Santa Cruz. They had observed that people with similar education, training, background, and years of experience were achieving widely varying results ranging from wonderful to mediocre. They wanted to know the secrets of effective people. What makes them perform and accomplish things. They were especially interested in the possibility of being able to duplicate the behavior, and therefore the competence, of these highly effective individuals. It was the golden era of modeling and simulation. They decided to model human excellence. They looked at factors such as education, business and therapy. They have then zeroed in on the communication aspect. They started studying how the successful people communicated (verbal language,

body language, eye movements, and others). By modeling their behavior, John Grinder and Richard Bandler were able to make out patterns of thinking that assisted in the subject's success. The two theorized that the brain can learn the healthy patterns and behaviors and that this would bring about positive physical and emotional effects. What emerged from their work came to be known as Neuro-Linguistic Programming.

The basic premise of NLP is that the words we use reflect an inner, subconscious perception of our problems. If these words and perceptions are inaccurate, they will create an underlying problem as long as we continue to use and to think them. Our attitudes are, in a sense, a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The neuro linguistic therapist will analyze every word and phrase you use in describing your symptoms or concerns about your health. He or she will examine your facial expressions and body movements. After determining problems in your perception, the therapist will help you understand the root cause. The therapist will help you remodel your thoughts and mental associations in order to fix your preconceived notions. These preconceived notions may be keeping you from achieving the success you deserve.

NLP will help you get out of these unhealthy traits and replace them with positive thoughts, and patterns that promote wellness.

How Does Neuro Linguistic Programming Work?

NLP uses self image and attitude towards illness to effect change and to promote healing. Hope is our greatest asset. It is one of the main reason why placebos (sugar pills used in clinical studies) work. We also know how effective prayer can be when it is combined with faith and hope. When a person loses hope and feels helpless in the face of a chronic disease such as AIDS or cancer, it is very easy to lose the hope; the body may just "quit trying." If the patient is made aware of his or her unique abilities and possibilities, he or she may see things differently. Now, the body's natural healing power can be harnessed to do the job.

NLP is based on several useful presuppositions. NLP places great emphasis on concepts that work as opposed to concepts that *should* work. NLP therapists will tell you that if what you're doing isn't working, you should try something else that will work for you. Every person is different. Flexibility is the key element in a given system. The person who is most likely to do well responds to changing (or unchanging) circumstances appropriately. This is one reason why NLP has made so much progress. NLP is much more interested in getting results.

Other tools that are available to NLP therapists are meta model, sensory acuity, Milton model, system representation and submodalities.

Presuppostions

NLP makes a number of presuppositions. Presuppositions or assumptions are the beliefs a person will find useful in effecting changes to themselves and/or to the world.

Examples of presuppositions:

1. Communication is more than what you are saying.

2. No one is wrong or broken. People work perfectly to accomplish what they are currently accomplishing.

3. People already have all the resources they need.

4. Behind every behavior is a positive intention.

5. Every behavior is useful in some context.

6. The meaning of a communication is the response you get.

7. If you aren't getting the response you want, try something different.

8. There is no such thing as failure. There is only feedback.

9. Having choice is better than having no choice at all.

10. In any system, the element with the most flexibility exerts the most influence.

11. The map is not the territory.

12. If someone can do something, anyone can learn it.

13. You cannot fail to communicate.

Representational Systems

Representational system in NLP consist of our five senses:

> Visual (images)
>
> Auditory (sounds)
>
> Kinesthetic (touch and internal feelings)
>
> Gustatory (tastes)
>
> Olfactory (smells)

Every one of us uses one or a combination of these senses to perceive the world. The brain gets the "picture" of what we are talking about from one or from a combination of these senses and from these senses alone. For example, we see a dead dog on the road. The eyes senses the visual image and send it to the brain. The nose will sense the smell and send it to the brain. For example, if the smell is rotten, the brain may infer from what it had received so far (a picture of a dog lying still that is giving out foul smell) that the dog had been dead for some time. If the dog is crying, the ears will send this information to the brain. In addition, we might touch the dog. We probably won't taste the dog. So, these are the "inputs" to the brain.

Submodalities

The qualities and attributes of the representations you make using your five senses are called modalities. Let me illustrate. Think about a dog. This evokes different reactions in people depending on what we perceive. One person may visualize a cute, poodle. Another person may think of a vicious bull dog chasing after him. What is the color of the dog? Our imagery and the reaction to it can change depending on whether we see it "in vibrant colors" or "black and white". Make the colors more vibrant.

What is the reaction you get as a result? Now move the picture further out and see how it "changes."

One of the great advantages of using a spreadsheet such as Excel is that once we make a model in it, we can change it by asking "what-if" questions. We examine various scenarios till we are satisfied that the model is satisfactory for our purpose. A similar thing is happening in our mind or brain with the information that is "input" by the sensory system. The information can be represented in different ways based on our feelings, prejudices and value systems. These values are unique to each of us. It is part of our "internal" system. These are our submodalities.

The great power of this concept is that once we recognize how our submodalities may mask our perception, we can make changes to our subsystem to effect the change or to "correct" the situation..

Meta-Model

Meta model in NLP is a set of questions designed to find the explicit meaning in a person's communication. It is important that the therapist makes no assumptions regarding the communication. The therapist may ask probing questions to find out what is in the mind of the person being treated.

Example:

Subject: I am so tired.

Analyst: What makes you tired?

Subject: He is always taunting me and making fun of me.

Analyst: Who is making fun of you?

Subject: Bob.

Analyst: Bob who?

Subject: Bob Sullivan, my neighbor.

Analyst: Why is Bob making fun of you?

Subject: He is such a tease!

An untrained person would have made the assumption that the person was physically tired. By asking probing questions, the analyst learned what the subject is *really saying*. The therapist will use the sound, the way the subject is talking, the pitch of the voice etc. to understand the communication.

Sensory Acuity

We can take one look at a person and can infer a great deal about what they are thinking or what their thought process is at that time. For example, we will know when a person is happy or unhappy. We will know when a person is depressed. We know when to avoid our bosses - it may be his or her "bad day." Of course, some people are good at hiding their true feelings. We call it a "poker face."

In general, a person's thought process is very closely tied to his/her physiology. A dog can sense when you are afraid. How did he know? We pick up clues from the body language of the person we are communicating to: slumped shoulders, downcast eyes, drooping head, lack of animation etc. Sensory acuity takes these observations beyond the more obviously recognizable clues and uses the physical feedback in addition to someone's words to gain as much from the communication as possible.

Milton Model

Milton model refers to a set of linguistic patterns derived by Milton Erickson, the father of modem hypnotherapy. These language patterns are used to help guide someone without interfering with their experience. For example, "Think of the time you saw the dog." The suggestions are made purposely vague so that the subject will have ample opportunities to shape it in his or her mind. For example, the therapist did not suggest what kind of dog it was, what was its color etc. It is up to you to fill in those blanks. This way, you can personalize it the way it makes most sense to you. Thus, this suggestion is very general and can be used for everyone. The Milton-model helps the therapist to maintain rapport with the patient. It is often used in hypnotic or trance state sessions.

By using these models, (many of them modeled from the behavior and actions of successful people) NLP enables us to recognize how we and others create our own unique maps of reality. It enables us to understand our own and others' processes of decision making, communication, motivation and learning.

Making Changes To Our Life Style Using NLP:

Once we understand our own map of reality, we can make changes to it in order to obtain the life experiences we want. NLP provides us "maps" used by other people. We learn how others have responded to a particular situation we are facing. We see the differences in the approaches and in the outcomes. Based on it, we may voluntarily make changes to our own behavior. We step out of our own map and step into the other's. When this happens, the rewards are many. We experience a deep connection to the successful person. And our life will never be the same again.

NLP increases the depth and effectiveness of our relationships, beginning with our self and extending through personal and intimate relationships to our professional and work lives, and finally, to the therapeutic arena or working with others to bring about healing, change and growth. NLP provides the tools that enable this rich connection with self and others to happen.

Many of NLP's tools and applications are widely used in business, management, education, training and therapy. Many of us may have encountered and applied these principles in our life, without even realizing that it came from NLP.