

Mindworks

An Introduction
to NLP

*The secrets
of your mind
revealed*

Anné Linden

Director, New York Training Institute for Neuro-Linguistic Programming
with Kathrin Perutz

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Introduction: Turning on the Magic

EVERYONE HAS DREAMS, big and little dreams, impossible dreams, and close-at-hand ones. Dreams of adventure, love, and success of every kind: daring to stand up to someone who's always had a hold on you, cooking an unforgettable meal, writing a book, winning the gold, wearing purple, learning French, making responsible choices, taking control of your life.

Make a picture in your mind of a dream you have, something you want to accomplish, a promise made to yourself, a goal you hope to reach. Make that picture small and dark and far away. Hold it in your mind's eye for a few seconds. Notice the feelings you have. Let it go.

Now make the picture big and bright and bring it closer to you. See it projected on your mental inner screen. Notice the feelings you have. Let it go.

Which way of representing your dream makes you feel more motivated to go after it? Which of the images makes you believe more strongly in the possibility of achieving it?

Your brain is a magic place. It may take a while before you can turn on the sights and sounds and feelings of experience with the ease of adjusting your TV, but it will come much more quickly than you now think possible.

All of us are making pictures inside our heads and playing tapes and talking to ourselves; it's the way our brains represent experience. When you think about something that has happened, something that might happen, or something you want to happen, you see and hear and feel it through your senses. This is the way we think, though most of the time we're unaware of how we do it.

In order to achieve our goals, resolve problems, or sort out our values, we have to be able to get in touch with the part of ourselves that controls most of what we do: walking, talking, breathing, moving, and all the hundreds of automatic behaviors that get us through the course of a day. I'm talking about the unconscious mind.

To make changes in our lives, we need to access this part of ourselves, to open up the connections between our conscious and unconscious thoughts.

Much has been written about communication, particularly about the difficulties in communicating across gaps of age, gender, expectations, ethnicity, or education. *Interpersonal communication*—communication between people, between yourself and someone else—is extremely important for our daily social interactions. You have to make sure that the message you’re trying to send is received and understood. You also have to ensure that you understand what someone else is trying to tell you. In many jobs, being able to communicate with others is crucial, and certainly few if any relationships can survive without it.

But at least as important as the ability to communicate clearly with others is the ability to communicate with yourself. *Intrapersonal communication* means doing within yourself what you do to establish understanding and *rappport* with others: listening, paying close attention, and creating an atmosphere of trust and safety.

Unless you trust yourself, you can’t communicate. And only by communicating with yourself can you discover the way you think. Then you can change your way of thinking to resolve problems and obstacles, and to break out of unprofitable or limiting habits and patterns.

You start this process of change by discovering what’s already there, the resources and abilities you possess, the things you do to motivate yourself or hold yourself back. You start by thinking out loud.

How do you represent your goals or dreams to yourself? Can you actually picture them? If you can’t see your dream out in front of you, how will you follow it? If you don’t know what you’re looking for, how will you know when you’ve found it?

Once you’ve imagined (literally, “made an image of”) what you hope to accomplish or where you’re going, you are already that much closer to fulfillment. In all probability that’s what you’re doing now. That’s what we all do, whether or not we’re aware of it. If you’re lucky, you’re already making a big bright colorful picture of whatever you want to achieve, even without knowing it. Or you’re talking to yourself, cheering yourself on with “You can do it!” and other words of encouragement, like the Little Engine That Could.

But maybe you’re doing the opposite—again, whether or not you’re aware of it. Maybe you’re telling yourself “I’ll never be able to

do this” or “I’m stupid” or “Everyone else is better than I am.” You may have been telling yourself this so often you’ve come to believe it.

Try this: Take the message you send yourself that keeps you from accomplishing the great or small things you hope to do, and play it over in your mind. Repeat the words you tell yourself: “I’ll never finish that” or “I’m not smart enough” or whatever you say.

Turn that message down until it’s very quiet, and make it come from very far away.

Now turn up the volume. Make the message loud and close.

Put circus music underneath it.

What happens?

The words remain the same, but the meaning will alter. *How* you do or think or feel something determines its impact. You can change how you feel by changing how you think. You can take conscious control over your unconscious behavior.

Within your brain right now are thousands of choices you might not have a clue about. You didn’t notice all the alternatives that have been available to you. Maybe you’ve taken a backseat, until now, and let yourself be driven along the road or tracks of your life.

It’s time to take control. By learning how to direct your mind, you can do just about anything: change direction, go backward or forward, accomplish what you dream of, resolve difficulties, alter your habits, get on a new track. You can be in charge, in the driver’s seat, the captain of your ship.

This doesn’t mean you can always get what you want when you want it. But it does mean you have choices about how you think and feel. It means you can make your brain actively work for you instead of leaving it on automatic pilot.

If you can pinpoint what, specifically, you need to change and have the tools at hand to change it, the results can be magical. In an instant you can go from a feeling of limits to a feeling of strength and freedom, as the new associations flow together like quicksilver.

Each of us is unique. We experience the world in our own way. We each have our own content, the result of our personal histories of sensations, people, events, behavior, and emotions. Yet we’re able to communicate to and with another person. How do we do that? How can I be sure that if I say something is beautiful you will know what I mean? Or what about love? Each person conjures up different images and

CHAPTER 1

Saying What You Mean

"You should say what you mean," the March Hare went on.

"I do," Alice hastily replied; "at least—at least I mean what I say."

—Lewis Carroll
Alice in Wonderland

DO YOU KNOW what you're saying?

Of course you do. Otherwise you wouldn't be saying it, right?

Maybe.

What you're saying and what the other person understands may be two different things. The way to know if what you say gets across is by paying attention to the response. Your communication is made up of both the message you intend to send out and the message you receive.

Communication between people, like magnetism, requires two poles: you and me. The message passes between us, and what you say is what I understand you to say, just as much as it is what you think you are saying.

THE MEANING OF YOUR COMMUNICATION IS THE RESPONSE YOU GET TO WHAT YOU SAY OR DO.

Interpersonal communication: an exchange between people. Sounds straightforward, doesn't it? Yet the number one problem that sends people to therapists is lack of communication, people who can't hear what the other person is saying. Husband and wife, parent and child, boss and employee, doctor and patient, partner and client—the problem is the same. They can't get their message across.

With all the emphasis that's usually placed on being a good speaker, one half of the equation has been forgotten. You can't have magnetism with only one pole, and you can't have communication

4 THE MEANING OF YOUR COMMUNICATION IS THE RESPONSE YOU GET

without someone to receive what's being conveyed: a listener for the speaker, audience for the actor, observer for the doer. Without a listener, there's no dialogue. And that means no effective communication.

If you can't listen well, you'll never know if your point gets across. A good listener *watches* as closely as he or she listens. I learned that as a young actress: To be convincing onstage, you have to respond to cues; not only to the lines of another actor or a prompter but to everything that goes on around you.

As in the theater, so in life: All the world's a stage, and how effective you are, how believable, depends on how easily you convey your meaning. If I'm doing a great dramatic role, a Lady Macbeth, and the audience is laughing, I can be absolutely sure I'm not coming across. The response tells me that the meaning of my communication—the meaning I intend—is not being delivered.

I have to stop and examine my behavior. Is it the tonality I'm using? Is it in my movements? Am I overdoing my gestures, talking so quickly that I sound like an organ grinder? The words remain the same, no matter who is saying them—"Out, damned spot"—but the message is contained as much in *how* it's said as in *what* is said. What Shakespeare intends in Lady Macbeth's speech is to illuminate her state of mind as she tries to wash away the guilt of the murder she's just committed. If the words are spoken as if the owner of a Dalmatian is ordering her dog out of the kitchen, the meaning is lost.

Knowing *how* is as important as knowing *what*. That's why there are great actors and mediocre ones. And that's why some people are able to communicate easily or brilliantly, while others can't ever seem to get their meaning across.

Those who can't, generally confuse intention and result. They believe that when they've said what they've meant to say the communication is finished.

If Bill tells Susan "I love you," meaning that he really *loves* her, and Susan goes "Yeah, sure, I love you too," in a tone of voice that would be equally appropriate for "Pass the mustard," it's pretty obvious Susan isn't getting the message that Bill is trying to send her.

Now what usually happens is, the person who feels he's not being understood starts blaming the other. "What's the matter with you? Why don't you ever listen when I talk to you?"—things like that.

CHAPTER 10

Pacing and Leading

WHEN YOU SEE two little girls skipping along together down the street, their skips matching and mirroring each other, you know the girls are very much in tune—best friends, probably—if only for today.

Or watch a pair of lovers strolling toward a golden dawn somewhere, their steps synchronized, moving like a single engine with four legs.

A mother and her baby son are having a picnic together in a city park. The child is only a few months old, but he's trying to speak, his little mouth opening and closing, his eyes serious, focused on the object of his all-encompassing love, and she, his mother, is following his movements, opening and closing her own mouth in synchrony with him.

In each case, the two are matching each other, joining forces as if they alone were their own tiny world.

This is *pacing*.

Pacing refers to meeting the other person where he or she is, or happens to be, at that moment. It means aligning yourself with the other, joining that person in his or her particular way of understanding the world (not agreeing with it, necessarily, but respecting it). You're following, getting into the same rhythms, speaking the same language, talking about the same topics, joining the mood.

This creates and maintains a strong sense of rapport. The skills you use to pace are other-orientation, calibration, matching tone, tempo, posture, language, and backtracking.

The little girls come to the end of the street, to the large road they're not yet allowed to cross by themselves. They turn back and resume their skipping; then one of them starts changing the pattern of the skipping, interspersing little jogs between the skips. Her friend follows suit, and soon the jogs have taken over. The girls are no longer skipping but running.

The mother moves her lips in approximation of the baby's movement. Then she says, "Ma-ma," bringing her lips tightly together, exploding them open on the vowel. The baby watches, trying to emulate her. "Mmm," he says. "Mmm."

What's happening here is what we call *leading*. Leading is moving the person to another topic, perspective, language, rhythm, mood, tempo, or posture.

Once you've paced the person you're ready to serve as guide toward something or somewhere else, to another thought or behavior. Moving someone into a different language or posture or tempo can change his or her perspective. And the new perspective can bring new choices, possibilities, and creativity.

Specifically, what you're doing is altering the pattern that the other person is using. You can pace (match) the other's experience through language, posture, tone, and tempo. Then you can lead the person into a different awareness by shifting your language, posture, or voice, thereby transforming the experience.

If you want something from someone else—to have your boss give you a raise, to get your husband or friend to plan a vacation with you—you first must join the other person in whatever he or she is involved with at the moment. You won't get anywhere by blundering in on someone, trying to impose what *you* want no matter what he or she may be doing, thinking, or feeling.

You do it leisurely. At first you enter into the other person's concerns, his enthusiasm or frustration, her worry or pleasure. You listen, you talk about whatever it is (all this is pacing), and only then do you begin gradually to lead the person to the behavior you have in mind. You shift language, tempo, perspective, or any of the other behavioral markers we've talked about, and you do this respectfully, showing that you have respect for the other's concerns.

Let's say you're trying to talk your workaholic husband into taking a vacation. You've been picturing it on your way home from work, the two of you lying on a beach, the sun shining... You walk in the door. He's on the phone, smiling, and as soon as he hangs up he starts telling you about the exciting new project he's working on. He's talks so fast his words run together: "I'm getting a tremendous charge out of this work for a change; this project is hot."

CHAPTER 25

Evidence of the Outcome's Success

THE NEXT RULE involves evidence of success, so you will know when you're achieving your outcome. Sherri was able to formulate her outcome by being sensory-specific. She defined what she meant by satisfaction—"having more control," "creating the picture," "seeing things through my own eyes"—and in doing this she was able to specifically describe her outcome.

I then asked her for evidence: "How would you know if you *were* more satisfied in your work? What would you be doing? What would you be seeing? What would you be hearing?"

Evidence is a word we use in NLP to test the validity of an outcome, to make sure it's achievable. But testing the evidence is something most of us do all the time naturally, as a matter of course. We test-drive cars before buying; we try on clothes, sample the wine; we test ourselves all the time in all kinds of ways, and whenever we're in danger of falling in love, we ask, "Could this be it?" or "How do I love thee? Let me count the ways."

How do you know you're in love—or having fun yet, or satisfied?

Specificity and evidence are two sides of the same process, both referring to the same kind of information. When we're going for the *specifics* ("How/what/who, *specifically*?"), we're trying to get a clear picture of what the outcome is. When we go for *evidence* ("How will I know"—*specifically* is implied—"when I've achieved it?"), we're testing that outcome to see how we can ascertain or convince ourselves that we're successful.

Basically, we're asking, "What do I want and how will I know when I'm getting it?" We measure the answer in terms of the second question: "What will I be seeing, hearing, feeling?"

I asked Sherri that question.

Sherri: *I don't know about hearing or saying, but I know I'll be feeling as though this were mine. This life, I mean. I'll be seeing the pictures, pictures with me in them, or just the landscape, the animals. I'll be feeling free, like starting out new. See what I'm saying? I'll be feeling really, really good.*

Anné: *Where would you be doing that? Can you picture it?*

Sherri: *I would be walking on the... [She pauses, as if lost in thought.] The landscape I'm thinking of is in the desert, where we just did a shoot and I was sort of placed into it. I had on this satiny thing, "deep sunset," they called it, a really dark coral, a fiery color, like a flare going up from the sands.*

What I'm feeling now is, I'm sort of positioning myself. Me, I'm putting myself where I'm supposed to go. I'm the one doing it. Paying attention to what my own body is telling me instead of whatever they're shouting about, about where to put my legs, arms, whatever.

Anné: *And what could you be doing? Just imagine—if you were in the midst of this work, out in the desert, having a full, satisfying experience—what could you be doing?*

Sherri: *This is interesting. You know what? I see the sand, and there's a bright blue sky, and I'd like to be the one who's looking at it and framing it in the way I want. I would love to be out there taking pictures of this incredible landscape. That's what—that's what I really love about this job. I love seeing these incredible places.*

Anné: *You want to stay in the same industry. But what I'm hearing you say is, in order to have more satisfaction, instead of being the object of the picture you want to be in control of the picture. You want to be—*

Sherri: *Exactly.*

Anné: *—taking the picture, setting up the scene, instead of being set.*

Sherri: *This is incredible.*

Anné: *So instead of somebody else telling you how to move, you would be creating the movement in the scene.*

Sherri: *It would be through my eyes.*

“Mindworks will bring out the magic in the mind of every reader who wants to learn about NLP for superb communication, accessing resourceful states, getting results, turning failure into feedback, and having more choice and flexibility in everyday situations. It is a first-rate beginner’s guide to NLP.”

Judith E. Pearson, PhD, NLP Trainer and Practitioner

Using the amazingly effective tools of Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) **Mindworks** shows you how to unlock the resources, abilities and creativity that you already have in order to take control of your life and accomplish whatever you want.

NLP is a series of psychological change techniques developed in the early 1970s. It has been a huge influence on today’s motivational writers. As its name suggests, NLP is based on the idea that the human mind is a sort of computer; our verbal and body languages are the programming that allows us to change our thoughts and to influence other people.

Mindworks shows you how to change your mind, reprogram your thoughts, gain control of your fears and fulfil your desires and potential.

“This is a beautiful book. Not only is it full of delightful insights. It is written in the most elegant absorbing way. Only someone who has mastered a topic can write with such fluency and style. Anné Linden is undoubtedly one such master. Mindworks is a delight to read if only for the absorbing style with which it is written. For me this is what NLP is all about... being an example of excellence and this book is most certainly that.”

Sue Knight, author of NLP at Work, International Consultant, Trainer and Coach

“A great book for people, new to NLP, who are curious about NLP as a pathway to self-development and who enjoy colourful and lively real-life examples of how it works - and who also like to be warmly encouraged to try it out for themselves!”

Judith Lowe, PPD Learning

“Anné Linden is a master teacher, a model of excellence, and her writing is wonderfully simple and crystal clear, offering readers empowering principles of transformation. She makes NLP very accessible, and I am most happy and eager to highly recommend her book to all my students, colleagues, and friends. We certainly will carry her book in our Learning Alliance bookstore!”

Rev. Joyce Liechenstein, PhD, Associate Director, One Spirit Learning Alliance and One Spirit Interfaith Seminary, New York City

As the founder and director of the N.Y. Training Institute for NLP, **Anné Linden** is ideally suited to bring the techniques of this powerful and revolutionary discipline to the broad audience it deserves. She has been recognized as one of the foremost trainers of NLP since its inception.

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