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META TO THE CORE

You can probably you tell when someone has some trait or quality that goes all the way *to his or her core*. That's because a core trait cannot but express itself in nearly every aspect of life. That's why it is not difficult to detect when something is *at a person's core* which generates an energy that pervasively drives almost every expression and behavior of that person.

> Think about Jim Carey. What's at his core? Is it not the playfulness of creating fun and laughter for everybody? When he recently appeared on the Oprah Show, he did that with even the most trivial comments that came up and had everyone, including Oprah, in stitches.

> Consider the two billionnaires who initiated their new careers as TV personalities? What's at the core of Richard Branson? Is it not being adventuresome and creating feats of suspense and surprise? What's at the core of Donald Trump but displaying wealth, the best and most exquisite, and competitiveness? (Written in 2005)

From a modeling point of view, when we step back from these examples—some higher level quality, trait, attitude, feeling, perception, concept, understanding, etc. has been meta-stated *so much* and *so intensely* that it is now completely *pervasive* in that person's life. We can now say that this quality is not only that person's *highest* ideals, values, and concepts, *it is also at their core.* It is now within the very fabric of their being so that it is textured inside of every action.

From an application point of view, this raises numerous questions with regard to our everyday lives:
*   What's in your core?
*   What resourceful state or states have you meta-stated yourself with?
*   Are any of those states completely at your core?
*   How deep into your neurology have you embodied your meta-states?
*   Do they operate like an internal engine that automatically drive the way you move through the world?
*   What would you need to do to take a new resource state and meta-state it until you have it at your core?

To *know* the Meta-States Model as a model and process, yet to not be able to *use, activate,* and *live* from your chosen meta-states is to only use 5 percent of what's available in this model. The solution is to *meta to the core.* This means deepening your understanding of the Meta-States model and incorporating the *meta* at a deep level within your own neurology. When you do that, you truly make the meta-stated value *neuro*-semantic in your person.

And that leads to many incredible, even revolutionary things. When you are *meta-to-the-core,* you initiate an energy force at the center of who you are, an energy state full of passion, enthusiasm, and

commitment and which generates a drive for progress, even greatness. This energy core then activates your authenticity and passion for self-correction and development. This meta-core will drive your ability for self-actualization.

The Idea of Going Meta-to-the-Core
If you know the Meta-States Model, then you know about states-*about*-states. You know that you not only have mind-body states that respond to stimuli, you also can step back and reflect on your mind-body states and create states *about* states (meta-states). This describes the reflexivity of your mind-body system.

Now in building the Meta-States Model, I consistently used the *height* and *going up* metaphor and for years I consciously avoided mixing it with the *depth* or *going down* metaphor. This introduced the terms meta, stepping back, moving up the levels of the mind, meta-levels, psycho-logical levels, higher, above and beyond, in terms of, frames and frameworks, etc.[1] By way of contrast, the *depth* metaphor uses an entirely different set of terms and phrases: deep, core, going down, foundational, underlying, etc.

In these metaphors, it is not that one metaphor is good and the other bad. Nor is it even that one is more useful or practical. The metaphors are just different. In more recent years I have shifted to begin combining both of these metaphors to more fully map how they interface and how the synergy of the metaphors enable us to expand and enrich our understanding of things.

Actually, you *move up* creating and constructing (by generalizing and drawing conclusions) to invent our internal reality, the psycho-logics of your mind, or your matrix. That's the meta-stating process, transcending the current state, accessing a resource state, and applying that resource to the primary state so that you embed it inside of the meta-state. This sets a new frame. It creates a new mental context. It builds up a new matrix of meaning frames. And, you move up for the express purpose of empowering that higher in-formation to move back down inside of and become your core state.

Simultaneously, as the information in the resource meta-state *in-forms* you, it creates new *formations* within your nervous system so that you begin to *embody* that information. In other words, you take the create ideas, generalizations, principles, values, beliefs, etc. and mind-to-muscle them so they become your meta-core state. The state is both *meta* and *core* at the same time.

Meta-to-the-core describes meta-stating as completely dynamic, holistic, and multi-dimensional. It is dynamic because it is *not* just thinking, generalizing, "being in one's head," or intellectualizing. Anyone who meta-states in that way is only experiencing 10% of what the model offers. In that case, the person will not actually understand the model. By meta-stating, we infuse NLP processes with energizing kinesthetics in a new and powerful way. That's why we constantly emphasize in Meta-States training, *it is the feeling that counts*. Anchor a strong and intense feeling state and apply it to another state.

GETTING TO YOUR META-CORE

Given that to become *meta-to-your-core* you have to meta-state yourself with one of your highest understandings, beliefs, or values and then fully integrate it into your neurology, this is meta-stating at its best. While I wrote about this in 2005, I actually, had written about in earlier. In the celebration document for the 10th anniversary of discovering the Meta-States Model, I had written the following:[2]

> The more we go in and up and meta-state ourselves, the more we find that the meta-state enters into our core, our muscles, our body and neurology. The more we transcend to the highest levels, the more grounded we feel in our body. *We go up to go deep inside.* We rise up with non-judgmental awareness to embrace and integrate the shadow parts so as that we love our fallibility and embrace our mistakes, we move forward into a brighter future. That's meta-stating.
>
> Is Neuro-Semantics a top-down approach? *Yes.* Is Neuro-Semantics a bottom-up approach? *Yes.* Since we are dealing with a mind-body-emotion system, both approaches are legitimate and operational at the same time. As we move up the levels of transcendence, we experience greater degrees of depth.
>
> > Now, may you rise up deeply so that your best resources will in-form your core as you float down highly but only at a rate and speed that confusion takes you round and round that resource and allows a bright future to begin to beckon you into tomorrow.

Meta-to-the-core is meta-stating that has been through the entire process from generalizing *up* the levels and *coalescing* back *down* the levels so that the resource becomes fully *embodied*. This process in itself has no content or ecology built into this process. To this process you add content and run ecology checks. That's why we can run this process on unresourceful, limiting, and even morbidly sabotaging generalizations and beliefs as well as resourceful, empowering, and enriching one— which explains how some people get so messed up.

In this, *content* differs radically from *structural process*. *Meta-to-the-core* is a dynamic process that takes ideas and beliefs and *incorporate* them so fully in the body so that they become your felt-sense of reality, the meaning-that-you-perform. Because this describes all psycho-somatic illnesses, it describes all deeply ingrained semantic reactions, and it describes the highest and most celebrated states of expertise, we use this process for flushing out the frame matrix of these experiences.

What I'm describing is not just a "core" state [3] or a core question.[4] What's called "core" states in NLP are those highly desirable transcendent states that we all want and that all religions, philosophies, and psychologies ultimately point us toward: love, unity, compassion, contribution, oneness, etc. *Meta-to-the-core is the full embodiment of a meta-state.* If Jim Carey's is playfulness, what is yours? What would you like to make yours?

The Mechanisms and Power of Going Meta-to-the-Core

Meta-to-the-core occurs in the mind-body system from *meta-stating* resource state upon resource state until you create some of the highest and most valued intentional states or frames and then meta-detail them down into the body so that they coalesce into the depths of your neurology. In systems terms this means fully utilizing the feedback loop *up* the meaning–intentional matrices and equally then fully utilizing the feed forward loop installing and translating the best and highest into muscle memory. That's how you get it to-the-core.

In the feedback loop, you meta-state meaning and intentional frames until you get to those highest value state that you are willing to stake your life upon. These are the highest states which summarize your best meaning making, meaning that gets your juices going, that fit with your talents and aptitudes, and which brings out your best potentials. On the way up you continually run quality control checks to make sure that the highest frames are not only enhancing and empowering, but congruent, ecological with all of your other relationships and dimensions. This not only creates *meaning* to live by, but *meaningfulness*. That's because it's not enough to have meaning, you must have the kind and quality of meaning that is *meaningful*.

In the feed forward loop, you reverse the process and *feed forward* what you have created. Now we mind-to-muscle the greatest ideas by coaching your body how to feel the boldest and most audacious of frames. Now you do the meta-stating part of *appropriating* the meta-state into your body and the appropriate contexts. Now you *embody* and *incorporate* and somatize what you have semanticized. Now you are actually *performing* the meaning, which, of course, truly makes it neuro-semantic. Something is *meta-to-the-core* and fully neuro-semantic is when you perform-the-meaning.

The synthesis of both moving up and down the levels, of meta-stating meaning and activating performance, allows you to take the *meta* to-the-core so that it becomes your felt meaning at your center. This integrates the self-organizing nature of meta-states so that at the core it sets up a magnetic attractor. Now your meaning is no longer just "in your mind" or just intellectual. The meaning is now neurological and in the bones and muscles, it's in the fabric of your physiology.

HOW TO BUILD A
META-TO-THE CORE STATE

Now that you know about a meta-to-the-core state, *what's the value* of setting things up so you can induce yourself into this state? First and foremost is the full integration of your highest meanings into your mind–body system. Then, the intelligence of your higher frames of meaning can become so *core* within you, that it becomes your way of being in the world, your way of operating. Then your conscious meta-stating of your meanings drops out of consciousness to become your unconscious competence. Now you no longer have to think about those meanings. Now your body "knows" them, just as your fingers know a keyboard, or your body knows the feel of shifting a car with a manual transmission.

When you are *meta-to-the-core,* it's like having an internal engine of motivation, drive for progress, attractor of like energies, perceptual filters, and the heart and spirit that reflects your highest intentions. As an ultimate "propulsion system" it is no longer linear (toward valued experiences and away from dis-valued experiences), but systemically non-linear and fully integrated with all the levels and dimension of your mind and matrix.[5]

When you are fully *meta-to-the-core,* your ultimate "genius" state is in place so that you can easily step in and out of the engagements that you care the most about, and to do so naturally and elegantly. The meta-core state is a state of expertise—a well-formed and sequenced genius state. Do you have your "genius" state at your core? Are you able to experience the "flow" state when you want to?

Meta-to-the-Core Pattern
How do you access and activate a *meta-state pattern* so that it becomes a *core* within you? The following provides a way to use Meta-States to do this. Integrated in this pattern is the Axes of Change model. For best results, take this pattern to a Meta-Coach or Neuro-Semantic Trainer and ask him or her to coach you through the process.

1) Elicit a high level meaning. Awaken a great idea or quality meaning.
> What activities do you invest significant time, energy, and money to? Make a list of 4 to 7 activities.
> What is important to you about each of these activities.
>> When you achieve that value, what's important about obtaining it?
>> When you get that fully and completely in the way you want it, what does that give you that's even more importance?
>> [Continue these intentionality questions all the way up until you get to your highest values.]
>> What are the three to five repeated values that keep emerging in the activities?
> What would happen if you don't do this?
> What will it cost you if you miss out on this?

2) Probe and provoke the decision to go meta to your core.
>What frames or meanings have to change?
>Are there any current frames that get in the way or that sabotage this?
>What frames of mind holds your current place— where you are presently?
>Have you made the decision to meta-state this new meaning / value?
>When you will do that?
>What will be the price that you will pay for this change?

3) Co-Create the new Meta-to-the-Core structure.
>Take each of the 3 to 5 highest values and— What do you believe about each one?
>What do you understand about it? What is the principle that governs it?
>What does this mean to you? What else does it mean?
>>[Continue using meta-questions to elaborate on the highest meanings.]
>Do you feel it significant enough to act on?

4) Actualize and Reinforce your meta-stating downward and feed the meaning frame forward.
>What is the most empowering and succinct way to express this as a meaning?
>Do you believe this? How fully? How much more fully would you like to believe this?
>Have you made an executive decision to live by this meaning?
>Anything stopping you from making that decision now?
>How would you express the decision to live by this meaning so that it sends commands to your nervous systems to activate it?   How does that feel?
>Where do you feel that in your body? How much? How much more would you like to feel it?
>How will this influence your sense of yourself (your identity)?
>Who will you become in the coming years by living this meaning?
>What part of your body and physiology needs to be coached to feel it more fully?
>As this meaning gets into your body, eyes, face, posture, movement, etc., how will this influence the way you view things, see people and events, and even think in processing information?
>What transformations will this initiate within you and the way you relate to others?
>What tasks will you do this week to make this real?

5) Keep testing and refining the meta-to-the-core state so it becomes a feedback loop for continual improving.
>How is your meta-to-the-core state working for you? What's working well? What would make it even more robust?
>What feedback are you looking for and from whom so that you can keep refining it?
>What additional practices could you create to integrate this meta-core state?

Meta-to-the-Core Organizationally
All that I've written here applies equally well to organizations, associations, businesses, companies, and groups. In organizational development, one key for success is creating some "core" (or meta) values and purposes and then both integrating and aligning those highest value and principle as meanings into the way the organization actually works. An organization, team, association, or business that has some great principles, ideas, or visions *at the core* is an aligned one which creates a stable foundation. The company will then to become a visionary one.[6]

Bringing it Home

- Meta-to-the-Core means you have fully integrated a high level value, belief, or understanding (a meaning). It has become your core. It defines to a great extent your character. How *meta to the core* are you with regard to your highest values, beliefs, decisions, etc.? You now know how to take a resourceful value and run with it so that it is *meta to your core.* Will you? Are you ready to make some idea, vision, value, belief, understanding, principle, premise, etc. *embodied* and your *way of being* in the world?

- You can do so by using the power of your reflexive mind. Spiral up to the highest levels of your meaning-making, then spiral them down into the very fabric of your neurology.

- Within this *meta-to-the-core* process are Neuro-Semantic patterns: accessing personal genius, mind-to-muscle, intentionality, meta-yes, and gestalting. It describes what we mean by meta-stating and provides a way for to create *a synergy* of your highest meanings in our core.

References

1. See *Meta-States* (2000), *Secrets of Personal Mastery* (1999), or *NLP Modeling Going Meta* (2002).
2. Taken from the article "Ten Years of Meta-Stating," www.neurosemantics.com
3. Connaire Andreas developed the idea of "core" states in NLP in her book, *Core Transformation.*
4. Core questions are those highest governing meta-questions that operate as a self-organizing frame. You can flush out your core question by asking, "If you're life is the answer to a question, what is the question?"
5. In the book, *Propulsion Systems in NLP and Neuro-Sematnics*, we have eight patterns for creating various kinds of propulsion system. The *Axes of Change Model* incorporates a propulsion system in the first axes, see *Coaching Change,* (2005).
6. See *How to Build a Visionary Organization*, soon to be published on www.neurosemantics.com. based on the research work of Jim Collin's work in *Good to Great* and *Built to Last.*

This article, written in 2001, offers
lots of great insights for working
with coaching clients.

THE POWER THAT DRIVES "MODAL OPERATORS"
—> META-STATES

Bob G. Bodenhamer, D.Min

During my early NLP training, I realized the awesome power of the language pattern that we call *Modal Operators* and how they affect our perception and behavior. Indeed, in the development of our beliefs, these *Modal Operators* formulate the very maps we use to navigate the territory. They do that by determining the "boundaries" of our belief systems. They do that by creating the linguistic *structures* which prescribe *our mode of operation (i.e., our modus operandi)*.

In the Meta-Model, we classify such words under the category of *Modal Operators.* These refer to our *modus operandi* or *style* of moving through the world. In so conceptualizing the world, we also imply our ideas about the nature of the world that we live in.

In classic NLP, we have *the Modal Operators of necessity* which consist of those terms of necessity such as, "have to, must, should, ought, got to" etc. When we talk this way, we map out a world of force, pressure, law, obligation, etc. We then develop Modal Operators that involve a feeling of necessity. "I *have to* go to work." "I *must* clean this house." "I *ought to* write her a note."

Secondly we have the *Modal Operators of possibility or desire* which utilize an entirely different set of terms. "I *get to* do this task." "I *want to* clean the commode." "I *desire to* write the letter." When we talk this way, and language ourselves with these terms, we construct a reality that sorts for opportunities, possibilities, desires, etc. And so we have an entirely different Modal Operator in how we move through the world.

Possibility words include "can, will, may, would, could," etc. These reflect an optimistic model where we view various options and alternatives as possible. "Well another day, another dollar." "When I get to work today, I will work on..." *Desire words* include "want to, love to, get to," etc. These arise from a model of the world as including wants, desires, and passions. "I feel so lucky to get to go to work!" *Choice words* include "choose to, want to, I opt for," etc. These indicate a mental map that allows for human will, intention, and choice.   "I choose to go to work."

On the other side of the Modal Operator of Possibility coin we have the *Model Operators of impossibility*, which show up primarily in one term, *can't.* It sets a frame of the lack of possibility, the lack of options. "I *can't* do this job." "I *can't* stand criticism." "You *can't* say

those kinds of things to people, they'll think you're nuts!"

In the Meta-Model, the question that challenges modal operators invites a person to step outside his or her model of the world and explore the territory beyond *the modus operandi.* "What would happen if you did?" "What would it feel like (look like, sound like) if you did?" "What stops you?"

In the January 2001 issue of *Anchor Point,* I found Steve Andreas' article on Modal Operators (MO) quite interesting and informative. In describing Modal Operators and how they work, Steve wrote,

"Since a verb always describes an activity or process, a MO is a verb that *modifies* 'how' an activity is done. A MO functions in the same way that an adverb does, and perhaps should be called an adverb. An adverb sometimes precedes the verb that is *modified*, and sometimes follows it, while a MO always precedes it, and this is part of the power of a MO. A MO sets a general orientation or global direction 'before' we know what the activity is." (Italics mine)

Steve then provided example of just how the use of Modal Operators affect our perception and the subsequent kinesthetics associated by repeating the same thought of "looking out the window" but with different Modal Operators (in italics):
"I *want* to look out the window."
"I *have to* look out the window."
"I *can* look out the window."
"I *choose* to look out the window." (Italics mine)

As we reads and experience each of these statements, we can immediately sense the impact brought about by utilizing different Modal Operators.
And yet, just *how* do Modal Operators create such impactful internal states?
How is it that they in fact do *define the boundaries of our belief systems*?

Steve describes the *how* of Modal Operation in terms of these words functioning in a way similar to adverbs in that they *modify* the verb, but unlike the adverb, they always precede the verb and set within the listener/reader a *direction* for the brain to go prior to processing the action of the verb. Indeed, Modal Operators *modify* verbs.

In Neuro-Semantics, we take this further. We see Modal Operators as functioning as do all frame of references when we apply one frame to another frame of reference. Our brains do not stop at just one thought. Brains keep on thinking thoughts about thoughts and so create levels of thoughts, levels of frames. As a whole, they make up the ever-fluid meta-levels of our mind.

The Meta-Stating Process
When we have a "thought about a thought," the second thought changes the first thought. This is where the magic lies. In our thinking and behaving, this ability of our brain to experience thoughts about thoughts repeatedly plays a crucial role. What's the secret? When you have one thought (thoughts are composed of images and conceptual meanings) and then entertain another thought "about" the original thought, the original thought changes.

What does this mean in human experience? How does this play out?   It is actually very simple, which is part of why many miss it.   If you have an experience that scares you, and then from that experience, you become afraid of your fear, what will happen? In this case, the fear will intensify. Applying fear to fear typically leads to a person becoming paranoia. The fear generalizes as an overall attitude of mind. It then functions like a Meta-Program, that is, like a higher perceptual program for how to sort and pay attention to things.

Suppose that instead of becoming fearful of fear, the person welcomes the fear? Imagine that. The person applies the thought, "This fear has value to me and I will welcome it"? What will now happen to the fear? This higher thought will modulate the fear so that the person will be able to step outside from it, and learn from it. Once that happens, the person can then learn whatever he or she needs to learn from the fear and then bring other resources to the fear. The person may apply faith thoughts to the fear. What would that bring into existence? What happens to fear when faith is applied to it? Fear typically disappears in the face of strong faith.

Play with your brain. Get a thought of anger. Now, apply to your anger the thought of forgiveness. Take the same anger and apply the thought of love. What about taking your anger and applying the thought of calmness to it. What happens? Would you have ever guessed how easy you could change your states of mind by applying one thought to another thought?

Every time we take a thought and apply another thought to it, the original thought will modulate or change in some way. We call this Meta-Stating. This refers to how we can apply one thought to another thought, one emotion to another emotion, one attitude to another attitude, one metaphor to another metaphor, etc. And, herein lies the magic. *Herein lies our ability to re-format and re-program our thinking.* Those whom I have seen who have changed their thinking, inevitably meta-state their problem state with higher-level resource states. Instead of meta-stating themselves sick, they learned to meta-state themselves well. They left re-building a new set of higher-level mental frames that serves them.

Bateson described these processes. In his work on levels, he noted how higher levels organize, drive, and modulate lower levels.

Meta-Stating Our Styles of Operating
This description of utilizing Meta-States showed up, not surprisingly, in Steve Andreas' article about Modal Operators. He utilized this concept in his excellent description of how Modal Operators function. Steve explained,
> " Since a verb always describes an activity or process, a MO is a verb that *modifies* 'how' an activity is done."

In translating this sentence into in terms of Neuro-Semantics, I would only change one word,
> "Since a verb always describes an activity or process, a MO is a verb that *modulates* 'how' an activity is done."

Both to "modify" and to "modulate" mean "to change", which makes them synonymous. Modal Operators change, or to explicate further, Modal Operators "set the frame" for the meaning of the verb and they do this through a meta-stating process.

Instead of the traditional classifications of Modal Operators of Modal Operators of Necessity and Modal Operators of Possibility/Impossibility, Steve provides four classifications under the two categories of *motivation* and *options*:

    1. Motivation
        a.   *Necessity*: "should," "must," "have to," etc.
        b.   *Desire*: "wish," "want," "need," etc.
    2. Options
        a.   *Possibility*: "can," "able to," "capable," etc.
        b.   *Choice*: "choose," "select," "decide," etc.

This makes for a neat classification. In order for us to make a change, we must first be motivated to change, here *desire* and/or *necessity* orientations motivate us to initiate the change while the *possibility* of choice followed by the *choice* to change actually brings about change. Thus we create a *chain* for *change*:

> "I know I *must* change. Indeed I feel I *have to* change. I really *desire* to change. And, yes, I do believe it is *possible* for me to change and that I *can* change; therefore, I *choose* to change **now**."

Talk about self-hypnosis! Chaining Modal Operators in this way works for a really neat self-hypnotic trance. It provides some neat linguistics in creating *commands* to the nervous system to chain our behavior towards change. And, it does this because the Modal Operators "set the frame" for modifying the verb that follows the Modal Operator:

    1.   "I *must* change." - A frame of necessity
    2.   "I *have to* change." – A frame of necessity
    3.   "I *desire* to change." – A frame of desire
    4.   "It is *possible* to change." – A frame of possibility
    5.   "I *can* change." – A frame of possibility
    6.   "I *choose* to change." – A frame of choice

In each of the above examples the Modal Operators affect or modulate the action of the verb, and hence perception. It does so because we have put the Modal Operator in a meta-position to our primary state of changing. This means the Modal Operator term *meta-states* the verb and so determines the frame for the verb. In NLP we say that "all meaning is context dependent," and Modal Operators set the context, the frame, in determining the meaning of the verb.

My business partner, Michael Hall, says that in the meta-stating of another state, the higher state *textures* the lower state. We see this in these Modal Operator patterns. When I *must* go to work, the "must" textures the quality of my "going to work." What a different texture of mind-and-emotion when we *get to* go to work! Or, I *can* go to work. The higher state (or meta-state) shows up as the advert that defines the *quality* of the primary level activity.

This leads, of course, to the very conversational trance work that we do with Meta-States. Since every adverb and adjective, as modifiers, sets the frame for the *qualities* that we want to "bring to bear" upon an experience, they allow us to meta-state experiences very easily.

> "And as you *comfortably* relax in the *growing* confidence that you *can* and *will* understand these things about our modus operandi in the world, you can *really* wonder and do so *excitedly* about the possibilities for change and transformation, knowing that in NLP we focus on *positive* changes that enable people to be at the best, and you can feel that in a *delightful* way, can you not?"

Summary
The linguistic distinction of Modal Operators (in the Meta-Model) show up as the way we see, perceive, and pay attention to things as we move through life (as Meta-Programs) and they do so because we have brought one state to bear upon another (Meta-States). How about that? Three meta-domains governing one experience.

So when we hear something like, "I *must* get busy and produce that report." the *linguistic marker* of the Modal Operator tell us about the operating Meta-Program and the meta-state of necessity driving the person. "Yes, I know that you really must put out that report and don't you really *want to* see it completed, because you know you *can* do it?"

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THE CORE OF META-COACHING

Do you know the core of Meta-Coaching, that is, what is the central core when it comes to the process of coaching? The following is how I described the heart or core of Meta-Coaching in an interview that I did at the end of last year.

1) Meta-Coaching is a conversation **like none-other.** It is definitely *not* a normal conversation; not at all. It is about one subject— the client's experience and his or her hopes and dreams. It is not a two-way conversation which is what makes it very abnormal. In coaching, as the coach you focus exclusively on your client—the changes, and the unleashing that she wants.

2) Meta-Coaching is a conversation absolutely **based on rapport and compassion.** As a result, a very unusual thing happens—the coaching conversation becomes intensely relational very quickly. Clients often experience a depth of connection and support that they experience in no other relationship and start talking about things they have never told anyone. It is extremely intimate, yet it is not about friendship. Coaching is not your way to expand your social world! In coaching, you connect emotionally with compassion and benevolent good will. It will be a dialogue of exchanging meanings. It is not a monologue, and it is certain not advice-giving! As you take your state and use it to elicit your client's state– you create an experiential conversation for your client. So by its very nature, it is emotional.

3) Meta-Coaching is an intense conversation that **gets to the heart of things — meaning.** You and your client go to the person's construct of reality and into the meta-levels ... to flush out the frames. As you give feedback, coaching facilitates self-discovery and self-awareness. Clients learn a lot about themselves in the process. Sometimes they learn things that they don't want to know about themselves, that's when the conversation gets real. And they discover that *they* are never the problem, where there's a problem, the frame is always the problem.

4) Meta-Coaching is **a confrontative conversation** designed to call the person to authenticity— to get real. It is a call for the client to come out from behind himself. Consequently as the coach, you can't hide behind a persona. To make the conversation real, the coach has to be real and constantly challenge for authenticity. Coaching is a call to be genuine, to stop playing games, and to stop hiding.

5) Meta-Coaching is **a respectful conversation.** Coaching only works when there is a deep and profound respect for the client's life, ownership, and responsibility. As a coach, you respect your client's resources capacities, and hidden talents. You say, "It is your life. I am not responsible for your beliefs, values, decisions. You are." "I will respect your right to choose the option of not changing." "I will not coddle or protect your excuses or evasions." "While I will challenge you, the decision is always yours." Coaching is an antidote to cultural limitations, misbeliefs, and toxic beliefs.

6) Meta-Coaching is **a goal oriented conversation** about dreams and hopes. As a Coach, you initiate the conversation by asking, "What do you want to actualize in your life (#1)?" "What vision do you have about your life, what talents do you want to turn into skills, what potentials do you want to unleash and develop? Coaching is about enabling a client to develop a magnificent obsession and in that way, it challenges clients to not play small or sell oneself short. And as a goal-oriented conversation, coach focuses on enabling the solving of problems (hence question #14).

Given all of that, as a coach, and especially as a Meta-Coach you will often believe in your client much more than your client may believe in himself. You challenge your clients to be more, learn more, achieve more, have more, and give more. You're always pushing them to stretch out of their comfort zones. You therefore have to be more real as you challenge them to get real. In a word, you operate as a change agent par excellence.

7) Meta-Coach is **a structural approach** to coaching which means that it is not about hoping and guessing that what you're doing will work. With the structural approach, Meta-Coaches do not need to *guess about what they are do or what to do next.* They know. "Get rapport and go inside. Go deep inside. Interrogate your client's experience so that you can fully describe it— better than your client can describe it." Meta-Coaches are able to answer the systemic coaching question, "How do you know what to do, when to do it, with whom, how to do it, and why?"

As a Meta-Coach, if you are unclear, you immediately *ask primary and meta-questions.* These are your primary tools for exploring which brings about clarification. Meta-Coaches start from the position that they do not understand and then seek to understand a client *on his terms.* Pursing clarify is often the only intervention that you need.

Finally, as a Meta-Coach, you are an Awakener. Your job is to awaken clients to the wild and wonderful range of possibilities before them. Your job is to inspire people to live life more fully and passionately. Your job is to invite your clients to get real.

Now you know the heart and soul of Meta-Coaching. And if you want to become truly effective, efficient, and professional as a Meta-Coach, take these key items of coaching and fully integrate them into yourself and your way of coaching. Do that and you will become a great change agent and be an influence for good in the world!

THINKING ABOUT WHO WE ARE
AND WHAT WE ARE ABOUT

As we are about Neuro-Linguistic Programming, we are about *Communication*— effective, precise, elegant, and inspirational *communication*. We are about helping ourselves and others learn how to more effectively and accurately formulate their meanings and communicate in way that succeeds in reaching our outcomes. And since communication starts with self— self-communication lies at the heart of personal development in maturing as a person and becoming competent in living in the world.

- This makes NLP centrally about personal development, about skill and expertise development, human growth and self-actualizing.

We arose from the Human Potential Movement (1960s, 1970s) as the founders modeled key second generation leaders of the HPM (Perls, Satir, and Bateson). So we are about *Self-Actualization Psychology.* We are about the holistic approach of creating a synergy between meanings–values and best performances— combining knowing and doing.

- This makes Neuro-Semantics centrally about to how unleash our human potentials to become the best versions of ourselves. We then translate that to creating self-actualizing people, groups, families, companies, and countries.

One of the expressions for self-actualization is "*Fully Human / Fully Alive.*" That came from Sidney Jourard in the 1970s.

> *Fully human* refers to the personal development aspect of self-actualization— becoming authentic and real, becoming open to life and transparent to others, discovering one's talents and potentials, and transforming them into competencies at the level of expertise. Being human means being both fallible and mortal— the two facets of humanity that so many people fear and deny. Yet by embracing that we will make mistakes (and always will) and we will die (it is inevitable)— only then can we truly be human and be our best.
>
> *Fully alive* refers to the quality of one's life and experience in self-actualization— becoming awake and alert and zestfully alive to the wonder and mystery of life. This speaks about energy, excitement, and living fully. Being alive requires a lot of effort —effort to use your mind, exercise your body, participate fully with others in the social world, take on challenges, stretch out of one's comfort zone, etc.

So what we are about is *humanity* in its fullness and *aliveness* in its fullness. Contrast that to the opposite:

> *Inhumanity,* living on automatic, not caring about self, others, or meaningful values, living like a robot, stiff, unloving, inconsiderate, living solely a materialistic life, competitive, dog-eat-dog, self-centered, etc.

Dead to the wonder and mystery of life, un-curious, uncaring, bored, trying to stay busy, seeking to be entertained, unfit in terms of health and fitness, not wanting to learn or stretch, refusing to take on a challenge.

Fully Human / Fully Alive is a great summary phrase for what we're about, what we're attempting to do, what we want to experience for ourselves, our friends, our family, our colleagues, our world. Kermit the Frog sang about being a frog, about being green and noted that "it was not easy being green." Similarly with being human– *it is not easy being human.* In fact, without the guidance of Self-Actualization Psychology, a person would not even know what it means to be human.

Fake humans try to be "perfect," try to not make mistakes, play it safe, avoid challenges, seek comfort at all costs, and fear being exposed as a fallible human being. What a miserable way to live! What a waste of humanity! *Dead* humans live like zombies— they still walk and talk and move through the world, but they are not really "alive." They are not alive to love and care, to being hurt and disappointed, to laughing and crying, to hoping and believing. They try to "be" through things, material possessions. The only "therapy" they know is "retail therapy" which never satisfies and which demands more and more consuming. They live small lives full of fear and dread.

What is Neuro-Semantics? What are we about?
- We are about *waking people up to the possibilities of being fully human / fully alive.* To do that we shake the cage, rattle the comfort zone, and challenge people to step up to being fully human.
- We show by example and inform by training and coaching how to *unleash potentials,* unblock the blocks, and stop playing small in life.
- We collaborate together in local Institutes and worldwide so we can think bigger and bolder about what we're doing and why.

That's who we are, that's what we're about. So let's now *be* who we are and *do* what we're about!

Looking for a Video
During the past 3 maybe 4 years, I have demonstrated the Axes of Change at ACMC, both during the day with all the participants and in the evening with the Assist Team. Many of these have been filmed. In both instances, the purpose has been to demonstrate how to move from the motivation axes to the decision axes and how to benchmark the change skills. If you have a video of that, please let me know. Meta@acsol.net

THE ART OF USING META-QUESTIONS

You cannot truly *coach* without asking meta-questions— and you certainly cannot perform as a skilled *Meta-Coach* without the ability to use meta-questions effectively. A meta-question stands in contrast with a primary question. A primary question *grounds* a subject in reality — what, where, when, with whom, and how. It indexes time, space, and person of an experience. By contrast a meta-question takes a person from the outside to the inside. It requires a reflection of one's experience and on oneself as you create that first primary experience. Yet meta-questions are more than just questions about questions, they are s so much more. In Neuro-Semantics and Meta-Coaching, we have identified 10 basic meta-questions that will take you just about anywhere with anyone.

Believe and Value	Intend (intention) and Decide (decision)
Identity and Metaphor	Permit (permission/ prohibit) and Expect (expectation)
Remember and Imagine	

Given this, how then do you do it? How do you use meta-questions and learn the art?

1) Track from outside to inside.
Begin with primary questions to ground the subject. Once you have *the grounding facts,* you can use them to ask meta-questions. Do this by including the grounding facts so that you can then transcend them to the meta-frames. "As you think about procrastinating about doing your billing, what do you believe about putting the billing off?"

2) Find the frames.
That last question is designed to get to the hidden frames. Holding the grounding facts constant, your meta-questions will enable you to find the meaning or the frames that the person is using to interpret the facts. "What do you believe about time? How is it valuable to you to put things off? What experience do you remember about procrastinating? What do you imagine?" Remember, you are going *in* and then *up.*

3) Take the person inside with the meta-questions.
Is the person going in? The objective is to go inside. Meta-Coaching is not meta-coaching until or unless *you take your client inside* to his inner world of meaning. But asking the question and enabling/facilitating your client to actually *go in* are two different things. Sometimes you have to do a lot of inviting in, sometimes you have to seduce, and there's times when you have to challenge. That's because many people are not skilled in going in and many others resist doing so. They may have learned to focus on the outside to the exclusion of the inside.

4) Make it safe to go inside.
Going inside requires safety. For many people, it is not safe to go inside. They have constructed all

sorts of problems, demons, aliens, hateful things, etc. inside. Keep assuring the person that it is safe to go inside, a place of humanity. There are no demons there. Keep saying, "If there's a problem, the frame is the problem." To make it safe— use the person's values to secure your client. When you do, the person will feel safe because he is moving toward his values.

5) Include and transcend all the way up.
Don't get distracted— stay focused on *the thread of thought* that you are following through. Hold that constant by repeating the primary referent. Now you can *open up* the hidden frames and explore the matrix. You are now in the land of the unconscious. Most of what a client presents will not be in conscious awareness.

6) Keep re-grounding.
You have to keep doing this. Why? Because your client can and will lose frame. They get distracted. Ideas, emotions, associations, etc. bring them *out*. That happens and it is actually a common experience. Use this as your mantra: "Green earth/ Blue Sky." The foundation is *green earth*— sensory-based VAK descriptions. When you have that grounding, now you can soar upward into the heavens for the *blue skies.*

7) Expect to repeat the meta-question.
Meta-questions often have a complexity and for those who are not that skilled in *going in,* it may be difficult. Do so patiently and compassionately. This is the ultimate step back and an invitation to see the whole. "As you step back and just observe your belief (decision, understanding, etc.) is this empowering for you as a person and enhancing for your relationships?"

With meta-questions you can do magic. And while they are not hard to learn and use, meta-questions are unusual. That's why you need lots of practice under supervision to develop the art of asking meta-questions and become truly competent with them. They are a key to your client's kingdom— so learn the art with precision and compassion.

8) Use the Ecology meta-question to escape the matrix.
The ultimate meta-questions take a person outside of her matrix where she can then pain perspective on her constructions and experience a choice point for updating things.

Creating Transformational Questions:
How do you learn to create great questions? First, tune your ears to begin to hear wonderful and awesome questions. Model great coaches. Use this exercise to develop great meta-questions.

The Process:
1) Identify a problem you think you have.   "I don't have time to exercise."
   Write on a paper.
2) Turn the statement into a question.   "How can I create more time for exercising?"
3) Ask questions about the questions.   "What decision would I need to make about
   What are the assumptions of the questions?   creating more time so that I can have time for exercising?
4) Use meta-questions to question your questions.   "Do I have permission to make that decision
5) Explore your questions via the Matrix.   for making more time for exercising?"

THE ART OF INDUCING STATE

To coach is to induce state. If as a coach, and especially a Meta-Coach, you cannot *induce a state, you cannot coach.* You are just having a chat. You are only a talking-head and unable to facilitate either a deep compassion or a significant challenge. But, what does it mean to *induce* a state and how do you do that skillfully?

The What
A state is an *experiential state of being* comprised of what a person thinks, feels, and embodies. Most of the time we are in mixed states, two or three things are on our minds as well as we are generating several emotions. As a result, our "normal" state is diffused, scattered, and non-discreet. Ask a person like that, "How are you feeling?" and his immediate response will be, "I don't know." That's because he is not feeling anything very strongly and he may be experiencing conflicting emotions so that he really does not know what's going on inside.

In spite of that, *all of us are always (at all times) in a state.* You cannot *not* be in a state of mind-emotion and body *if you are alive.* Now true enough, some people are in such weak, feeble, non-focused, non-directional, and wimpy states that you could hardly call it a state. But if they are breathing, and if they are not in a coma, then they are in a state. The first question is, What state? And the second question is, Is the state productive, useful, empowering, or effective?

Now state induction is also a hypnotic process. That's because you are taking a person (your client) *inside* so that she can *experience* the meanings of the conversation. State induction is your skill and activity of facilitating your client to *transition to the inside* so that she can access the resources that will transform her life.

The How
Here are the steps for effectively *inducing state* as a skilled Meta-Coach. Consult your ACMC manual for more about this and for the benchmarks of this skill.

1) Talk about the state. Ask your client about his state, his feelings, where he is, what he is experiencing, what's on his mind, how much he is feeling X, etc. In other words, you as the Meta-Coach *bring up the subject.* Your client is in a state and in order for there to be change, renewal, and transformation, your client must *experience* the meanings he is processing. Find out what state your client is in. What would be the best state?

2) Pace, pace, pace and then lead. Begin by calibrating where your client is and as you discover that, pace it. Say words that match it. Sound like and use words to match where she is at. Do this until she trusts that what you say is true of her experience, then and only then can you lead. Get yourself into a state of being present to your client. Open all of your sense receptors to input sights, sounds, sensations, etc.

3) Congruently and effectively use your voice. The key is *congruence.* Be sure that you sound like what you're talking about. Adjust your voice so that it paces (matches) your client's experience (not your client's voice necessarily). This will require voice variation and use of tone, tempo and pitch. It may require using some special accents. The worse thing is to be monotone and talk with the same tone and tempo as you normally do. Do that and you will put your client to sleep. Talk to fast or too low (common problems for coaches) and you will not induce the states you need, but states that you do not need— confusion, misunderstanding, etc.

4) Congruently use your gestures and movements. Pace and the use the semantic space of your client and/or help to building up some better semantic use of space and gesture. Your client externalizes his internal world outside in space— learn to see it and then use it.

5) Use specific words. Start with your clients favored representation system and use specific visual, auditory, or kinesthetic words. The more vague you are with your language— the less effective you will be with your client. Use small, precise references to elicit a discreet state. Listen for VAK predicates and follow. Information content counts for about 20% of the communication. Use the traditional formats.
> *Think about a time when you were thinking or feeling ...*
> *What would it be like if you were fully experiencing ...?*
> *Do you know anyone who does experience ...?*

6) Make your words vivid. Be vividly specific. Use the sub-modalities or the cinematic features of what you're talking about so that you give your client sensory-rich representations to respond to.

7) Make your words dramatic. Do not commit the coaching sin of boredom! Use active, moving, dynamic words— verbs. Banish nominalizations until later. You are a guide into the inner world and so let your words grab your client's attention and bathe her in an energy filled world.

8) Make your words rich. Expand your vocabulary so that you offer enriched descriptions. Robbins calls this transformational grammar— language that transforms and unleashes potentials.

9) Provoke. Part of how to be dramatic is to excite with your words, inspire, stimulate, tease, surprise, even shock. Do something unpredictable, something provocative. Why? To jar your client out of his comfort zone. Be evocative: sound like what you are trying to elicit.

10) Calibrate the state. Start with intensity; keep gauging how much your client has gone into state so that you will know if you should lighten the intensity or deepen it. A stray thought can pop into your client's mind and suddenly she is in a very different state— so stay on top of things. Be ready to interrupt or to lessen a state. *Calibrate processing time.* How fast or slow does your client process information or emotions? When one needs more time, use quietness.

11) Be ready to flexibly adjust. Do you need to do more or less of what you're doing? Do you need to interrupt? If your client goes into the wrong state, immediately interrupt it. It's your responsibility to facilitate productive states and help them avoid unproductive states.

12) Ask meta-questions. Meta-questions inherently take a person deep inside, invites reflection and moves a person into the higher unconscious levels in the back of the mind.

13) Use purposeful silence. As you calibrate, notice when your client needs time to process things and then hold the silence — hold the space for him.

14) Use the state productively. Once your client is in state, engage that state to activate whatever coaching objective that you're working on. You may at this point use embedded commands or questions, you may set up a post-state (post-hypnotic) suggestion. You can "coach the body" to get your client to integrate ideas into neurology.

15) Use a menu list. If your client gets stuck, doesn't know, etc.—pull out a menu list of possibilities. This will enable you to "prime the pump" and help your client think of a referent to use in accessing a state.

Supplementary: If you have your own coaching room, set it up so that the environment of that room induces a learning state of curiosity and fascination. Otherwise manage the coaching environment as best as possible. How does that environment feel? How do your clients feel in it? Here you can put pictures, art work, diagrams on the walls, put on some light music, burn incense, etc.

At the end of the session— *ask for feedback.* Often the very best feedback will come directly from your client.
　　　__ Was the conversation experiential? If so, what did you experience?
　　　__ How strong or impactful were the emotions that you felt?
　　　__ How much more state management do you now have?
　　　__ What is now more fully incorporated into your neurology and physiology?
　　　__ What could have made the session more experiential?

From: L. Michael Hall
February 22, 2021

HONORING YOUR PROFESSIONAL LICENSE

When you signed the License agreement on Day 8 of ACMC after completing many more days of training (normally NLP Practitioner and Master Practitioner or if you took the "fast track" of Modules I and II just 6 to 8 days), you had in hand a *Professional License under the auspices of an International Society.*

Now being licensed *as a professional in any field,* whether a doctor or dentist, a tax expert, a therapist, an electrician, etc., means that you have attained both the required knowledge and the required skills to perform adequately. In the field of Coaching, you understand the foundations of what it is and how it operates. You have had plenty of practice actually coaching under supervision and you are ready to begin as a practitioner.

Yet no practitioner starts out as an expert. Far from it! It will be yet another decade before you might reach the level of being an expert. So in the meantime, your professional standing, your ongoing practice, supervision, continual education, etc. all helps to move you more and more to the place of expertise.

Once I attained status as a professional psychotherapist in the state of Colorado and had a license to practice, I paid to keep my license renewed each year (that cost $250 USD), I continued my education to attending short courses on new things in the field of therapy. When I finally closed my practice and started traveling to promote Neuro-Semantics, I continued to renew my license even though I was no longer practicing. I did that for the next 25 years.

Why? Because it was a Professional License and I wanted to maintain my standing in that profession. I wanted to honor the license that I had earned and to be a part of that professional community.

Now the field of Coaching is still developing and becoming a full Profession and as more and more governments are beginning to regulate the field in various countries ---the good thing about maintaining your Professional Standing in Neuro-Semantics and in the Meta-Coaching Foundation is that when your government begins to regulate the field, you will be "grandfathered" in. That's another reason to keep your Professional License current.

To do that, contact the Institute of Neuro-Semantics in your country (see below). Your fee goes directly to the Institute that is there to promote and support Neuro-Semantics and Meta-Coaching.

Here are the 13 Institutes of Neuro-Semantics in 13 countries along with the contact person---
1. Australia / New Zealand   —   Shawn Dwyes
2. Brazil   —   Huáras Duarte

3. China / Hong Kong — Mandy Chai
4. Egypt — Mohamed Tarek
5. Europe (France, Netherlands) — Germaine Rediger
6. Indonesia — Mariani Ng
7. Malaysia — Marzuki Mohamed
8. Mexico (Latin America) — David Murphy / Omar Salom
9. Scandianian (Norway, Sweden) — Henrik Schalén
10. Philippines — Aldem Salvana; Shelia Tan
11. Singapore — Michael CW Chang
12. South Africa — Kgobati Magome
13. United States — Jason Schneider

From: L. Michael Hall
2021 Morpheus #9
February 24, 2021

IN COACHING
IT'S ABOUT THE THINKING

How is your client thinking? That's the key question for you to explore and answer as a Meta-Coach. Coaches other than Meta-Coaches focus on *what* their clients are thinking. They ask, "What are you thinking?" and then they often get caught up in the content. And because they do, they are frequently tempted to give advice. That's the problem with getting caught up in content and failing to step back and think in terms of structure and form.

By way of contrast, NLP and Meta-Coaches know that *the secret of transformation and the power of coaching lies in the structure.* So after we ask the *what* question ("What are you thinking?") we ask the *how* question, "How are you thinking?" This question enables us to explore the client's inner maps more deeply to understand how they work. With the *how question,* we then explore several things:
- What do you *see, hear, and feel*? (VAK)
- How have you *encoded* your pictures, sounds, and sensations? (Sub-Modalities/ cinematic features)
- What *language* are you using to think? (Meta-Model)
- What *perceptual filters* are you using? (Meta-Programs)
- What *frames of references* are you using? (Meta-States)
- What *strategy* or *strategies* are you using to create your experience? (Strategy)

Now with the next to last one, *frames of references*, we are searching for the client's *internal context* (we call these meta-levels)*. As meta-states, they can take a hundred different forms— but mostly beliefs, values, decisions, identity, permissions, memories, imaginations, expectations, metaphors, etc. (the meta-levels that we use as Meta-Questions).

All of that is about *thinking.* Do emotions not count? Yes they do! Emotions are *the results* of thinking. Emotions are *symptoms* of thinking, learning, and meaning. That's why when your client gives you feeling states (emotions), you can use that emotion to backtrack to the thinking and meanings which create that emotion.

> "So you're feeling really anxious and nervous and you are thinking what that causes that?"
> "So you're feeling angry with Jim and your angry thoughts about are what?"
> "You say you're uncomfortable when you speak up to Jill, so what are you thinking about speaking up to Jill?"

In coaching, however, if you want to get to *the heart of things,* you don't go after the emotion or the behavior, you go after *the thinking.* "How is my client thinking?" Plant that question in your mind; write it and post it above your coaching chair.

Suppose your client says, "I want to feel safe and not so nervous or anxious about what people think." What do you next ask? If you are going after emotion (not recommended), you zoom in on the nervousness and anxiety. But that will not give you much. Those are *just symptoms* of something else. The internal question, "How is my client thinking?" would lead me to be very interested in what my client is thinking about "what people are thinking." If the answer is "they will be critical of me, disapproving," I still want to know, "what and how are you thinking about criticism or disapproval?"

"I feel put down, like I'm less of a person."

"So that's what criticism and disapproval means to you? It means you are being put down and that you are less of a person."

"Yes, I can't stand criticism, it creates conflict and bad feelings."

"So your belief is that 'criticism creates conflict and bad feelings.' ... [pause] and you believe that?"

"Yes, that's what makes me so anxious, I'm anticipating rejection."

"What would be a recent example of criticism or disapproval?"

"My immediate manager recently said that he thought I was not giving it my all."

"So saying the words, 'you are not giving it your all,' is a criticism? [pause] It is a statement of disapproval?"

"Yeah."

"Do you hear your manager saying that in your mind?"

"Yes."

"In his voice ... in the same volume that he said it?"

"Well, yes, but a bit louder and ... probably more harshly."

"Probably?"

"Yes, it is more harsh."

"And when you hear it, do you feel anxious and nervous?"

"Yeah and it seems even worse now."

"Great . . . so we now know *how* you create those limiting emotions."

"But that's what he said. Do you want me to deny that?"

"Yes, that's what he said and *you gave it the meaning of criticism and disapproval*."

"What else could it mean?"

"Great question. What else could it mean? Does everybody take your manager's comments the same way?" ["Well, no."] "How else do others take him?"

"Well Jim dismisses it, 'That's his view, not mine.'"

"Okay, so there's another way to interpret it. 'It's not criticism, it's just another view.' What other choices can you imagine?"

As a Meta-Coach, if you go for *the thinking that creates the experience,* you get to the heart of things— *how* your client has created and continues to create his experience. And when you know that, you are very, very close to the solution. What solution? Changing the thinking.

Want more? Be sure to check out the *Thinking* series of books from *Executive Thinking, Executive Decisions, Thinking as a Modeler,* etc.

HOW TO ELICIT VALUES
AND CO-CREATE A VALUE HIERARCHY

"I have another question," she announced.
> "How do you elicit values when you do the Intentionality Pattern or when you ask Question 3 of the WFO questions?"

"Oh yes, a follow-up question to that question," she further said.
> "What are the distinctions a Meta-Coach needs to know in order to elicit a client's values and use them effectively?"

"And another follow-up question," she said as yet another meta-comment about her comments.
> "How do you distinguish values from emotions and benefits?"

When I asked her to give me something to work with, she said that in a coaching conversation, a client had said he wanted to feel satisfaction. "Is that a value?" I said it did *not* immediately sound like a value to me. To "feel" anything is a statement of a goal, such as, "to feel an emotion." "But how would I know?" I recommended that she either ask some clarification questions or make a guess and then check it out.

> 1) *Clarification.* What kind of *satisfaction* is this *satisfaction?* Is it an emotional satisfaction, a mental satisfaction, an interpersonal satisfaction, a goal satisfaction? When you take the nominalization, *satisfaction,* and ask about the verb, "satisfying" then you need an object.
> 2) *Guess & Check.* "So 'satisfaction' is a value to you? It's important? If yes, is this a high level value, medium, or low level? If it is important, what's important about it?"

Let's say it is a value, that the client actually holds "satisfying a goal" is a value in the context of engaging in some business activity, say stepping up to a leadership challenge. *Values* are generally one word or two word nominalizations. And because all values are not equally valuable, they are hierarchical. We all pretty much value the same lower-level values: feeling good, sleeping soundly, eating what we like, having a job, gaining sufficient money to live on, etc. But why? Why is any one of these things important to you? That takes you up one level and begins to help a client *prioritize her values.*

And that's important. If you do not know your values, you can't make intelligent or effective decisions. Decisions are based on what's important to you. Without knowing what's *most important to you,* you can't even set effective goals, plan your career, decide on where to live, who to befriend, and on and on. Sadly, a great many people (perhaps most) do not have a clear sense of their *highest values.*

The distinctions you need to make are between *values* and benefits, emotions, and behaviors. So

you have to be very careful and very precise in your questioning as you move up the hierarchy of values scale with your "why is that important question." If you're new to this, my recommendation is that you *only* use that question. "And why is that *value* important to you?" Don't mix it up with other questions. Especially do not ask any of the following:
- What do you *get* when you get that value?
- What is the *benefit* that X-value will give you?
- What will you *feel* when you achieve that value? How will you feel?

Why not? Because these questions invites the person to go *out* and not *up*. It takes a client into his emotional state which is irrelevant to eliciting a hierarchy of values. It takes a client out into the future to consider benefits and what she will *get*. Again, irrelevant to eliciting a hierarchy of values. Don't ask those questions! It will distract both you and your client.

Without eliciting your client's hierarchy of values and testing it as you go, you will *lack the leverage that your client will need for change.* It leaves out your client's innate motivation system, a system activated and informed by his intentions and values. Ask one question over and over, "Why is X-value important to you?" Ask it *holding* the primary state and the values that are elicited as you move up the levels.

When you are done, you should have a list of 5 to 9 words (nominalizations). When you look at the list, the words should indicate the person's lowest values, medium values, and highest values. When you have your client look at the list or hear you read it— it should activate his neurology and emotions and crank up his motivation. That's because values describe what a person is living for— what's ultimately meaningful.

If you have a global client, and the client's first response is at the top of the hierarchy, "oneness with the universe," "fulfilling God's purpose for me," "leaving a transformative legacy," etc., then, of course, you now have to "chunk the person down."
> "Between completing this report (your goal) and 'love,' is there any value in-between?"

TEACHING META-COACHING

"The best way to learn something is to go teach it." I say that all the time. Regardless of what I'm presenting in a training, I always encourage people to *go teach it.* But that does **not** *mean* that now you have a license to teach Meta-Coaching. It does not! If that's what you want, that requires an entirely different course of study— becoming a trainer via NSTT and going through an internship and being licensed by me personally.

When you go through the *Coaching Mastery* training and complete the first degree of Meta-Coaching, the ACMC license, you are *licensed to coach. You are not licensed to teach.* You have a license that allows you to use the materials in the Meta-Coaching System and in Neuro-Semantics to coach individuals and groups. That is **not** the same as teaching or training a group.

But if you want to teach, there are things that can you. There are actually *a lot of things that you can do.* So, what are them? Here we go. First and best of all— set up a Meta-Coach Chapter so that you and others can practice *teaching each other.* Many Chapters have been organized to do that. This week John will teach Axes of Change to his colleagues. Next week, Alice will teach the Matrix Model. Then George will teach the Meaning–Performance quadrants, and so on.

Week by week, you can take turns teaching the materials to your colleagues and getting some high quality feedback. This will force the one teaching to study and restudy the materials to see if she can present it well. It's one thing to know it in your head— to present it in a logical format that makes sense to others— that's an entirely different thing which you will quickly discover. And your colleagues, if they are truly in a learning mode, will ask questions— many of which you will not be able to answer. What a great way to learn the materials in-depth!

Now you can do this with a large MCF chapter of 12 to 20 people. Or, you can do it with just three of you. That means that if there's not a Chapter set up for this— *set it up yourself.* Find two more Meta-Coaches and set up a time and place for you to take turns doing this.

Another option. Find a person who wants to be a coach and has not yet taken the Meta-Coach Training and teach that person one-on-one. Be a mentor to that person. In every community there are centers where there are "counselors" who are there to help the homeless, those suffering from domestic violence, those dealing with addictions, etc. Many of those "counselors" have very little training. What a gift to them! Go in, make yourself friends with the people who run the center, hold conversations with them that demonstrates the skills you have learned. More than likely, you will be asked, "would you teach me some of that?"

You can even "share," that is, give a report back to your company or organization if the company sent you to Meta-Coaching. But giving *a report of what you learned* is **not** "teaching." Giving a

report is about you and what you learned. It is not saying, "We did this exercise and now I want you to do it." That's stepping into trainers role without the qualifications to do so. That's not only *unprofessional,* it violates the Coaching License. A Meta-Coach has **not** been licensed to do that; you received no training to do that.

Or, if you have a good relationship with family members, ask one of them if they would want to know what you've been studying. If they say yes, then begin to explain to them what coaching is, how it differs from therapy, how it is a part of self-actualizing, how change works, how unleashing works, etc. That's a great way to present Meta-Coaching.

Then there is your own Consulting Sessions. Essentially what you do in those sessions is teach your client about coaching. This is the session that you are qualifying a person to see if he is ready for coaching. You explain what coaching is and is not, and some of how it works. Depending on what your potential client is looking for, you might provide instructions about how change works, how goal setting works, how problem-solving works, etc. When you get really good at this— and you have a person who is ready for coaching— your sales percentages will get really high— like 80 and 90% of the people will buy.

In a word, you have many opportunities to do some teaching without becoming a Trainer and officially teach. Now if you do want to teach Meta-Coaching, plan to get to NSTT — this year it will be in Egypt in October. If you can't afford it, then get really, really good at coaching, prove your worth — namely, that you can add massive value by facilitating the coaching conversation. Do that and you will soon have enough money for NSTT.
> [By the way there are NLP Trainers Training programs, similar to NSTT, all over the world— *all over the world.* I don't think they are as near good as NSTT, but they are there.]

If you don't, then you probably would not be a good teacher anyway! What do they say, "If you cannot do, then teach." That's a criticism against many who go into teaching— failing to be able to *do what they teach,* they just talk about it. And people who "just talk about it" are not good examples, cannot demonstrate things, and actually are not good teachers. They mostly just like to hear themselves talk! Don't be that guy. Aim to become as much as an expert as you can in the area that you love.

HOW ABOUT YEARLY ASSESSMENTS?

While studying and researching in the field of teaching and learning for another book, I came across the idea of regular assessments *as a method of learning.* If that sounds like a new idea, it is not. The idea has been around for a long, long time. Yet if you are like the majority of people (and I hope you are not!), you probably have *a semantic reaction* to the word "assessment." Is that true? If it is, this article is just for you— just what you need.

If it is not true, then *gauge how excited you would be to have your coaching skills assessed yearly* or even monthly. Would you like that? If you truly know, and have integrated the coaching skills, then you're confidence level would be sufficiently high to say a resounding *yes.* If you "know" the skills *intellectually* but you have not integrated them into your behavior, then it could be a bit scary. Which is it for you?

What ruins assessments for the majority of people is the way Schools use assessments. They give tests in such a manner that they are able to induce thousands of people into an experience called "performance anxiety." They now get nervous, anxious, fearful, etc. when they think about tests or assessments. But why? What's so scary?

What's so scary are their *semantics!* They have linked their worth as a person to how they do on a test. They have linked their self-integrity to a test's results. They have based their self-image, reputation, self-care, etc. on the assessment. The assessment is not an assessment of their knowledge and skills in a given subject— it is a *measurement of their soul.* No wonder they don't like assessments and don't want to be assessed.

That's the dark side of assessment— a view that arises from fallacious thinking, cognitive distortions, and some sick beliefs. The good news is you can do away with all of that! The bright side of assessment is that you can use it as part of your repertoire for learning and skill development. Actually, a person who knows that *learning* is the heartbeat of humanity, learning is what enables you to be fully alive/ fully human, hungers for feedback that will tell her how she is doing.

Over the years I've had many individuals who have sent me their coaching video to be benchmarked. But I have only had a few who did so week by week by week. I would assess what they did well and what they need to work on, and they would immediately *work on what I recommended,* and send another, and another, and another. They would do that until they were able to fully demonstrate competency in all of the skills. They were hungry for the feedback and they eagerly anticipated it. They wanted to know— what next can I work on? What next can I refine?

That's the bright side of assessment and demonstrates the power of a passionate learner. That's the person who will become an expert in the field. That's *deliberate practice* in real life. Having your coaching comprehension and skills assessed is not about *you,* it is about what you know and what you can do. It is about behaviors— mental and conversational.

Do you still have a **P** (provisional) by your name? Great! Now get to work. Coach at least one person every day! Get a Meta-Coach buddy and coach each other— *every day.* Video-record it and watch it. Do your own assessments. Use the benchmarking sheet and see what you are doing well and what you need to work on. Assessing yourself in that way or engaging in collective learning and doing it with someone else *is a fabulous and powerful way to accelerate your learning.* In fact, I know no better way to jet propel your skill level.

Have you not had an assessment of your coaching skills in the last year, or several years? Then it is definitely time to get to an MCF chapter or contract with a buddy Meta-Coach to assess where you are. There are several really big reasons for doing that.
- One really scary reason is that *all skills deteriorate if not nourished regularly.* Generally speaking, every Meta-Coach who has come to be on "the team" knows that. Some have been shocked by it— "What happened to my skills? I was at the 2.5 level but not I am not getting a 1.5!" The sad fact is that skills deteriorate. If you are not regularly exercising them, you will lose the sharpness you developed. It similar to not only to the gym for a week or more.
- Here's another scary reason, *without feedback from others you are highly likely to fall into some bad habits and not even know that you've lost your edge.* A common human bias is to think we are better than we are.
- You owe this to your clients. To be an effective change agent who can unleash potentials in people, you need regular assessments to stay sharp.
- You success as a Professional Coach requires this. You owe it to yourself. After all, the higher the quality of your coaching skills, the more expertise you demonstrate and the more your business will prosper.

As a community, here is a service we can provide each other— use the feedback sheet of the coaching skills and give specific sensory-based feedback. If you are weak in this skill, do it by video. With a video you can back up to see and hear what occurred and you can see it several times. *Competence* and *expertise* do not just fall out of trees— you have to work for them.

YOUR SKILLS ARE NOT PERMANENT

Your coaching ability to listen and support, to question, induce state, frame, challenge, etc. are in flux and flo. They rise and fall according to how you feel, the client you're with, your ongoing learning and practice, the level of your training, and many other factors. One day you may be *on* and nailing the structural processes like the well-formed outcome, the axes of change, the meaning—performance axes and the next day you are *off.* Your tongue seems to be tied down, your mind strains as if in slow gear, and you are just not fully present in the session. That's the way it is with skills — they are not permanent or static.

So if you reached 2.5 at a certain point, you can count on the fact that you are often *below that level.*   As a process, your coaching skills rise and fall just as your fitness skills in whatever exercises you do, or sport that you participate in, also rises and falls. If you one got 2.5 and you want to maintain a 2.5 average — you have to get up to the 3.0 level. That's what every Bell curve scale indicates.

Reaching a 2.5 is *the beginning, not the end.* It is at that very place that *you are beginning to become a Professional Coach.* In other words, with 2.5 you have *not* made it. You are only beginning to make it. Next challenge— reach that number regularly. Reach it once every two times, then three times out of four and eventually, 9 out of 10.   Another goal after 2.5 is seek to reach *2.5 on all of the basic skills simultaneously.*

While at 2.5, you are *beginning to become competent,* you are not there. Competency is not a permanent thing. In fact, don't think of it as a thing or an entity.   It is *an experience* that ebbs and flows. It is a complex mental-emotional-and-linguistic skill that we call "coaching" that you can offer a client. It is what *you do with a client* that creates value for your client. Now given all of this, what shall we do?

1) *Get accurate measurements.* Use the feedback form to assess your skills on a regular basis— at least once a month. Then arrange to set for an assessment with other Meta-Coaches. And as often as you can, raise your hand to be on the ACMC team so that you can get more indepth training. Reread last two posts, Morpheus #11 and #12.

2) *Become a passionate learner.* Set yourself to keep learning the content information of the Meta-Coaching system. There are 16 books in the series on Meta-Coaching and there are ten years of back issues of Morpheus. And there is your ACMC manual. Remember, you are just beginning to become a Professional Coach.

3) *Use deliberate practice intentionally.* For this you will need a partner who can give clear and precise feedback and keep running you through the practice until you habituate the skill. Set up a MCF chapter specifically designed to do this.

Now none of this will matter if you are not planning to become a Professional Coach. If you took ACMC just to expand your communication skills and you are keeping your day job, then pushing and stretching yourself so that you stay sharp and maintain the edge of your skills will not really matter. But if you want to make your living as a Professional Meta-Coach, then deeply knowing inside yourself that your skills are not permanent, they need constant nourishing, refining, and updating will enable you to put in the effort. And when you do that, you help us raise the level of quality of Meta-Coaching. It makes what all of us are doing— more professional and more credible.

THE TRUTH ABOUT "P"

You received a "P" when you graduated— that simply meant that there was one or more **P**rovisions that you yet needed to reach to complete the full certification. For most people, the provision to fulfill was demonstrating competent skill on each of *the five core skills.* We do not even require that you reach all five *in a single session.* We do expect and anticipate that *you* will set that goal for yourself and keep getting assessed until you can demonstrate the five core skills in a session. While we usually do not say this explicitly —this is our expectation. After all, think about all of the time, effort, and money you have invested in yourself in learning to become a Professional Coach.

Our expectations for you do not end there. We actually expect more. We expect that you will *naturally want* to reach all five in *every* coaching session you do. Why would we expect anything less? The question is, are *you* expecting that of yourself? If not, are you selling yourself short of your potentials and possibilities?

To reach competency on *all seven core skills,* the best is to get yourself on the team at ACMC. Then you will receive (at no cost to you!) two full days of training on how to receive and give feedback. The feedback will be about the coaching skills. Then as a member of the team, you will have another six days of hands-on training of actually practicing receiving and giving feedback. And usually you will have the opportunity to be mentored by someone more experienced.

Now if you plan to be a Professional Coach, consider all of this as the minimum— the basic foundation. Doing this will raise your skill level, your competence and therefore make you worth more money in the marketplace. Would you like that?

The truth about the **P** is also that once you have achieved it once, *that does not, in itself, guarantee that you will stay at that level of competence.* Skills deteriorate. You are only *fooling yourself* if you think that because you reached it once, got the **P** removed, that you are locked in as being "competent" for the rest of your life. ***You are not.*** That's not how competence works. You have to work at it. Constantly. You have to keep re-learning the basics and keep reassessing to stay sharp.

This is true for every profession and every professional. Professional baseball players begin again, every year in the spring, in *spring practice* — practicing throwing the ball, catching, battering, running bases, etc. It is Back to Basics for them. So with every musician— they have to keep practicing and pushing themselves— stretching beyond their current level— to stay sharp. So it is with for you as a Meta-Coach.

While we do not (or at least we have not in the past) given Meta-Coaches a new **P** when they lose their edge, that is actually the truth. If your skills have dropped and you can no longer demonstrate 2.5 competency, you actually have earned back the **P!** No one may know that you have lost your edge and earned back you **P**— well, not until they see you coaching. Then they will know!

The truth of the **P**— it is not statically permanent. It is not forever. *The **P** is conditional upon your skills and your skills are conditioned upon continual study, practice, and development.* Have you earned the **P** back and didn't even realize it? If so, get to a Meta-Coach Chapter to "sharpen your sword." Get with some other Meta-Coaches and set up weekly practices so you can keep each other sharp. Plan to revisit ACMC as a participant. Plan to revisit by being on the Assist Team. Plan to get to PCMC training and assessment. Plan to take GCMC (Group & Team Meta-Coaching).

There are not many coaches in the world who can demonstrate at least a 2.5 competence level on the seven basic coaching skills. That benchmark is *the highest measurement of competence in the entire field of Coaching.* I interviewed more than a dozen ICF coaches who were supposedly "Master Coaches" and not one of them could demonstrate a 2.5 level competence— not one!

This is what can totally distinguish you as a Professional Coach and enable you to do in a coaching conversation what other coaches only dream about doing. Why slack up now? Now is the time to refresh your Meta-Coaching skills and use the deliberate practice to stay truly sharp with a cutting edge as a Meta-Coach. Are you up for the challenge?

META-COACHES AND NSTT

Several questions have arise from Meta-Coaches about NSTT. I'm writing this post to answer those questions. If you have more questions, please send them to me (meta@acsol.net).

A little history first. Some years ago we began inviting Meta-Coaches who only have done the *fast track* to ACMC (Coaching Essentials and Coaching Genius) to come to Neuro-Semantics Trainers' Training (NSTT). What was the reason for this? Because many of them wanted to have the right to train Meta-Coaching. And that's what the Training License provides —the right and privilege to train Modules I and II of the Meta-Coaching System. As a result, we named that License the *Modular Trainer License.*

Now *training* and *coaching*, while they share certain similarities, are very different modalities. Having come through the Meta-Coaching system, you have been trained to facilitate *a coaching conversation* with one or more persons in order that they experience your *compassion* and *challenge.* The purpose? So that they personally grow, step out of their comfort zone, unleash some new potentials and learn some new skills.

Training is different. It is not an intimate conversation that centers primarily on one person and intimately relates to that person. Training, as an adult version of teaching, differs from coaching in that you are providing certain conceptual and procedural information designed to enable people to develop certain skills in that area. Training, as a platform skill, occurs in front of a group and is designed to induce a group experience as you gain rapport, hold rapt attention, and then facilitate a learning experience. In the current NSTT manual, there are 41 skills that we cover for training — and then a whole set of additional skills, business skills for running a training business.

That's why in order to gain the *Neuro-Semantic Trainers' License* requires more than what's required for the Meta-Coach License. You also need NLP Practitioner Certification and NLP Master Practitioner Certification. Once upon a time, that was the only License available. Then a number of Meta-Coaches wanted to training the two modules that contained the introduction to NLP information and the Meta-States Training of Accessing Personal Genius.

Ideally, every Meta-Coach who really wants to be fully equipped for coaching should also plan to completely Prac. and Master Prac. But because many wanted to receiving coach training without committing themselves to the 10 days of Prac. and the 15 days of Master Prac,— we set up the fast track.

The coach training, certification, and license is precisely that— *it trains a person to be skillful in coaching.* That training **does not** train one to teach and train. For that, we have the NSTT program— a program that I think is the very best NLP training in the world for trainers. For this

you will learn the foundation skills of training — group rapport, group engagement, use of voice, use of space on stage, the 4-matting structure of your presentation, framing, etc. In addition there are another 9 enrichment skills, 5 experiential skills so that your training is experiential, 8 installation skills whereby you present in such a way that it installs whatever program you are training. Then there are another 7 supplementary skills, and 5 management skills. A lot!

Additionally, because Neuro-Semantics is experiential and personal, you have 15 days of training in which you are up on your feet presenting every day using many different formats. And after your personal presentations— there is immediate feedback and a "take two" as well as feedback when you are co-presenting with someone.

It's one thing to have "the gift of gab," to be able to get up and chat away at a group of people, it is entirely another thing to skillfully, intentionally, and consciously to present in such a way that it becomes a personally moving learning experience. That takes a lot of skill and competency. And that's the focus of NSTT.

Should coaches have the ability to train? Yes. Should trainers have the ability to coach? Yes. These are great complementary skills. And with each, you have to do some *unlearning* of one methodology when you are doing the other methodology. That requires an extra degree of flexibility to know when, where, and how to make the shift from one to the other. Trying to coach using training methodology really messes it up! So also, trying to train using coaching methodology also messes it up.

If you are interested in NSTT, check out www.neurosemantics.com / Trainings / Becoming a Neuro-Semantic Trainer. There are lots of articles about it. And if you think you are ready to do this, let the trainers who trained you know; they can provide a lot of valuable information.

COACHING PROGRAMS
JUST FOR YOU!

As a Meta-Coach, you have been trained for *coaching.* So what specifically can you coach? One answer lies in the wide range of Coaching Conversations that we have identified. Another answer lies, to a great extent, on your background, the skills you bring from other experiences, your interests, your passions, and/or what you believe is the best choice for your future. If you have had previous careers, that's a good place to start when considering if you want to establish a niche. Recently Omar Salom reminded me that many, if not most, Neuro-Semanticists don't even know about all of the available resources that we have. This is a beginning remedy.

If you have experience in sales, for example, you could probably very easily move into making your niche *as a Selling Meta-Coach.* If you have experience in finance, real estate, the stock market, you could possible focus on becoming an *Inside-Out Wealth Coach.* In these cases, you might even consider doing a bit of both — consulting with your expert knowledge and then coaching that knowledge into a person's life. Nor is that the end of it, there's more. We have lots of resources in Neuro-Semantics so that *you do not* have to re-invent things from scratch.

Coaching Meta-Coaching Specialities
1) *Communication Coaching.* Book: *Coaching Conversations, Communication Magic.* Manual: Coaching Essentials.
2) *Personal Mastery or Genius Coaching.* Books: *Secrets of Personal Mastery, Meta-States, Meta-State Magic.* Manuals: Accessing Personal Genius, Coaching Genius.
3) *Change / Transformational Coaching.* Get the books *Coaching Change*, *The Crucible,* and *Dragon Slaying.* Manuals: Transformational Coaching and Unleashed.
4) *Executive Coaching.* For that we have both a book and a manual by the same title.
5) *Group & Team Coaching.* For this we have the training (6 days) and the GTMC Certification. Book: *Group and Team Coaching.* Manual: Group and Team Coaching.
6) *Managerial Coaching.* Manual: the MCC– Manager Coach Certification.

Coaching Basic Business Specialities
7) *Sales Coaching.* Get the manual *Selling Genius* and use it as the content of your coaching program. For a book: buy *Selling with Integrity* (Morgan).
8) *Inside-Out Wealth Coaching.* Get the manual and the book with the same title. Now you have a coaching program manual and you have a book that delves into the subject in depth.
9) *Business Coaching.* Book: *Games Business Experts Play.* Manual: Games Business Experts Play.
10) *Leadership Coaching.* Books: *Unleashing Leadership* and *Collaborative Leader.* Manuals: Unleashing Leadership.
11) *Collaboration Coaching.* Book: *The Collaborative Leader.* Manual: Unleashing

Collaboration.
12) *Decision Coaching.* Book: *Executive Decisions.* Manual: Same title.
13) *Creativity Coaching* or *Problem-Solving Coaching.* Get the book *Creative Solutions* and the manual, Unleashing Creativity and Innovation.\
14) *Productivity Coaching.* Manual: *Unleashing Productivity.* Books: *Achieving Peak Performance.* I'm also planning for *Inside-Out Productivity* in late 2021- 2022.
15) *Writing Coaching.* Manual: Writing Genius.

Coaching to Relationship Issues
16) *Couple / Love / or Relationship Coaching.* Book: *Games Great Lovers Play.* Manual: Games Great Lovers Play, 1992.
17) *Political Coaching.* Book: *Political Coaching.* Manual: A one-day manual on the subject.
18) *Parenting Coaching.* Manual: Parenting #101.

Coaching to Emotional Intelligence
19) *Emotional Mastery Coaching.* Books: *Crucible, Unleashed, Sourcebook of Magic I.* Manual: Emotional Mastery; Defusing Hotheads; Games for Mastering Fear.
20) *Fear Mastery Coaching.* Get the books *Winning the Inner Game* and *Games For Mastering Fear.* Manual: same title.
21) *De-stress Coaching* or *Relaxation Coaching.* Get *Instant Relaxation.* Manual: same title.
22) *Resilience Coaching.* Book: *Resilience: Being the Phoenix.* Manual: Unleashing Resilience. There are also more information on resilience in *Meta-States* and *Thinking Like a Modeler.*
23) *Mastering Stuttering Coaching.* Book: *In Their Own Voice* (Bodenhamer). Manual: Games for Mastering Stuttering.

Coaching to Self-Development Specialities
24) *Self-Actualization Coaching.* For this there are several books: Unleashed, Self-Actualization Psychology, Achieving Peak Performance and several manuals: Unleashing Vitality, Unleashed.
25) *Authenticity Coaching.* The book is titled, *Get Real* and the manual is Unleashing Authenticity.
26) *Personality Coaching.* Book: *Figuring Out People.* Manual: Perceptual Genius.

Coaching to Communication Issues
27) *Persuasion Coaching.* The book is *Inside-Out Persuasion.* The manual is Unleashing Persuasion.
28) *Thinking Coaching.* Book: *Executive Thinking.* Manual: Brain Camp.
29) *Reframing Coaching.* Book: *Mind-Lines.* Manual: Reframing Genius.
30) *Presentation Coaching.* Manual: NSTT manual.
31) *Metaphor Coaching.* Book: *Metaphorical Thinking.*
32) *Hypnotic Induction Coaching.* Books: *Hypnotic Thinking; Hypnotic Conversations.* Manual: Meta-Trance (part of Master Prac.).

Coaching to Education Issues
33) *Learning Coaching.* Get the manual, *Learning Genius* and wait for the book *Learning*

Dimensions (working title) which will be out in June or July, also the book *Executive Thinking*.

Other Coaching Specialities
34) *Health and Fitness Coaching.* Get the books *Winning the Inner Game* and *Games Fit and Slim People Play.* Manuals: Games Fit and Slim People Play; the Neuro-Semantics of Health; Unleashing Vitality.
35) *Weight Loss Coaching.* Book: *Games Fit and Slim People Play.* Manual: Same title.
36) *Christian Coaching.* Book: *Patterns for Renewing the Mind.*
37) *Modeling Coaching.* Books: *Meta-States, the Matrix Model, NLP Going Meta, Neuro-Semantic Modeling, Cultural Modeling, Thinking as a Modeler.* Manual: The Modeling Module of Master Practitioner.

In *The Meta-Coaching System,* all of this is already available. Numerous Meta-Coaches have been using many of these formats with clients. Now given that most of the training manuals are for 3-day trainings, you have essentially 24-hours of formatted material for each one. That's enough for a 12-session coaching program with lots of things in the manuals you can prescribe for tasking.

This means that as a Meta-Coach, if you want to specialize, develop an unique niche— you can and the materials are already available. If you want to be more flexible and offer many different kinds of coaching—you can do that also. This is also just one of the many reasons for keeping your License renewed and a part of the Neuro-Semantic community.

THE ETHICS OF COACHING

When we talk about the ethics of coaching we almost always focus in on *how to treat your client ethically.* In your ACMC manual and on Day 8 of *Coaching Mastery*, we talk about the ethical rules that governments typical expect of professional people. Most of these "rules" are obvious and would be natural for anyone who operates from the basic premise of "be respectful and caring." Namely, do not physically assault your clients, do not engage in sexual relationships with them, be transparent in your prices, and in your practice of invoicing and collecting fees, etc. It is certainly not rocket science.

Ethics also go to the subject of accurately representing your profession. In Coaching that means distinguishing what you do from what those in other professions do — a therapy, a teacher, a consultant, a trainer, etc. That's because the ethics of the profession govern *what you are promising that you can deliver* and being truthful about what coaching does not provide. For that purpose we have provided you a page in the manual for that you can properly disclose that information— it is called a *Disclosure Statement.* I'd highly recommend you customize with your name and details and have every client sign a copy.

Obviously, to misrepresent yourself as a Meta-Coach is to perpetuate a lie, hence an unethical behavior. To be an ethical coach, put in the disclosure statement what you have been licensed to do and what your repertoire of skills enable you to do with a client. Since we focus on the population who are within the "normal" range and not those needing psychotherapy, those on psycho-active drugs, those under a doctor's care, we do not do "therapy" with clients. Instead, we compassionately challenge people to step up to be their best selves as they unleash their potentials.

If you have questions about what the Professional Coaching License entitles you to, please send those questions to me or to any Meta-Coach Trainer. Shawn Dwyer, who is the current President of the MCF, along with my partner, Geraldine Hall, is working on a Meta-Coach Handbook which is being designed to answer all of the practical how-to questions.

One thing the Professional Coaching License does **not** give you license to do is to *teach Meta-Coaching.* I wrote about that in Morpheus #10 (March 10) this year. There is a full process by which you, as a Meta-Coach, can become a Modular Trainer of Modules I and II and also another full process that involves an internship with a Meta-Coach Trainer for becoming a Meta-Coach Trainer. To teach without the NSTT license is an unethical practice because you have not been trained to do that (see the last Morpheus #15).

Here's something else that's not ethical— *talking and acting in such a way that you think you "own" your clients.* That idea comes from the scarcity frame-of-reference and leads to what's essentially a slavery mentality. "If I contacted you and you become my client, I *own* you as a

client for the rest of your life!" What is ethical is the attitude that you and I are *in service* of our clients and that we want to serve them as best as possible. And that means that if they connect with and resonate better with another Meta-Coach —then that's what they need. In that case, we put our ego-needs aside and support our client even if it means we lose them as a client.

People often will "click" with someone else better than with ourselves. It's just one of the facts about differences. It is not a strike against you if someone you influenced finds that they prefer the style of another coach over yours. In fact, it is a cognitive distortion to "personalize" that.

We have to be bigger as individuals and as a community. Actually, when you know your client needs some specific coaching, training, or consulting which is beyond your skill set or that another coach is more capable of providing, then talk to your client about you referring them. Ultimately, it is the well-being of our clients that matters most. And when they know that, they will refer more people to us — as a community.

Finally, being ethical and operating ethically is another distinction of Neuro-Semantics and Meta-Coaching. This is one of the ways that we have set out for the past twenty-five years to raise the standards of NLP and to offer *quality services*.

COACHING ACCOUNTABILITY

To understand what some words mean, all you have to do is look at the word itself. Inside the word is the story of its meaning. That's the way it is with the words *responsibility* and *accountability*. All you have to do is pull the word apart and *lo and behold—* there's the meaning laid out before you.

- **Responsibility:** respond-ability, the ability to respond to a trigger or event, therefore the ability to respond mentally, emotionally, linguistically, and behaviorally. The ability to take action in response to a stimulus.

Responsibility is a *power word.* It speaks about the power or ability to make a response and not lie there like a rock. As a sentient being, whatever happens— *you are a responsive being* in how you think and therefore feel, in what words you use to describe it or say to it, and in whatever actions you take to deal with it. The word announces that *you are not a victim.* If you think that you are a victim or feel like you are a victim— paradoxically, that is a choice and response you are making and actually demonstrates your power.\

- **Accountability:** account-able for your responses, your *ability* (power) to *account for* what you have thought, felt, said, and done. Accountability answers the question, "Who can give account of what's has happened?"

Responsibility / Accountability are two sides of the same coin. Turn the coin over to heads and you have responsibility. Flip it over to tails, and there is accountability. Two sides of the same phenomenon.

Responsibility identifies the *abilities* in terms of the actions that a person can generate. If someone is responsible for getting the kids ready for school, for preparing dinner, or for walking the dog, that person is *able* to generate the needed actions and behaviors to succeed in achieving any of those activities. When the actions do not occur, or are inadequate, or inconsistent, we *hold that person accountable by asking questions of that person.*

> What happened? You said you would do X, but you did not. What prevent you from doing X?

Asking the questions is asking the person to *give account for his behaviors or lack of them.* It is the person responsible *for* getting something done or accomplished that alone is *ab le to give account* for the problem. Or, if he succeeds— the give account of what he did that brought about success.

Accountability is the word we use for *the conversation* that explores the reasons and explanations for *responding* to a request, duty, obligation, goal, etc. When we ask what happened? What did you do or not do? Was the goal achieved or not? The explanations that are given are either true or false, legitimate or illegitimate, valid reasons or mere excuses. If it is an excuse, then the

person is *excusing* himself from his responsibilities. If it is a legitimate reason— then we now have the factors and variables that we need to work on and deal with in order to succeed in responsibly achieving the goal.

Now given this linguistic and psychological background, as a Meta-Coach, it is essential that with every single coaching conversation— you and your client co-create her responsibilities and that you hold her accountable for the required actions. When you do this, you are engaging in *the accountability conversation.* You are not blaming or accusing, you are trying to discover the legitimate factors that make or break succeed in reaching an outcome.

But here's the thing— a lot of people on Planet Earth (maybe most people) do not fully accept responsibility for their own lives. And that's why they do *not* want to be held accountable for what they do or don't do. Even coaching clients often have this problem. When "the rubber hits the road" and results occur— many clients pull out their degree in Excuse-Making and give you an incredibly creative display at the highest level.

While at one level, they don't want to be held accountable, at another level, they know that growth and self-actualization comes through the responsibility/accountability dynamic. This is where you, as a coach, earn your fees. It's your job to *hold your client accountable to what he is responsible for.*

One weakness in the responsibility/accountability process occurs when you design an outcome with your client. Using the WFO questions, you ask question #7 (and #11), "What do you have to do to achieve your outcome?" Eventually, when you get a list of the actions as behaviors— you and your client has *the list of responsible actions* that have to be taken. But what if they are not? What then? Be sure to ask that question and ask it repeatedly until there is a clear sense. That will give both of you *the accountability structure.*

> *"If* I do not do these actions, then X will happen.
> If X happens, I will need to do X^1 and X^2 (and other consequences).
> To prevent all of these consequences, I will set a limit on myself so that I get myself to take the needed actions.

As you now know how to begin the accountability conversation, you know the place where you *challenge* your client *compassionately.* To your best coaching!

COACHING BLIND SPOTS

"In life, the person with the fewest blind spots win."
Farnam Street, *The Great Mental Model*

"To know that we know what we know
and that we do not know what we do not know,
that is true knowledge" Confusius

As a Meta-Coach, here is something you can reasonably expect every single time your coaching client comes in and sits in your coaching chair— *your client has numerous blind spots.* That's because all of us human beings have blind spots. True enough, the more personal development that you have achieved, the more intra-personal intelligence you have developed, the more feedback from others you have received and explored— the fewer blind spots. But always— there are blind spots. To be human is to be blind to ourselves.

What is your client blind to? A whole lot of things! He is especially blind to his *frames.* For most coaching clients, whatever is stopping them from reaching their desired outcomes or even establishing a desired outcome, is due to some frame. That's really why we need each other. I can see you frames much easier and quicker than I can see my own frames. After frames, there is the blindness to *thinking patterns.* Your client will usually be fully aware of *what* she is thinking, but not *how*. That she will need to learn. That's why meta-programs are so important in coaching — most people are blind to their own meta-programs.

What else? There are premises and assumptions, and there are all sort of *habits* that we're blind to, especially our defense mechanism habits. Then there a person's belief opposites. That's because when you have a belief, you have a self-fulfilling phenomenon so that you see what you believe you will see. And you will not be able to see what you don't believe in. Clients are also blind to what is *not* happening, to the *absence* of something. Ask, "What did not happen?" and you can help to open up sight to that area of negation. And there's more. *Systems—* every system you are a part of— you are also equally blind to.

For babies, what is out of sight is out of mind. That's true for the young infant because they do not have "constancy of representation." It is also true for you and me. What is *out of our mental sight* is also out of mind. It is there, perhaps even in plain sight, but if you do not have a mind that can see it, embrace it, explore it— you will be unconscious of it. And it can (and will) operate anyway— just outside of your purview.

How do you coach to your client's blind spot? First, be sure to set frames with all of your clients that your job as a Meta-Coach is to *challenge* them and that will sometimes means exposing

blind spots. In that way you can prepare your clients to anticipate you presenting what may be outside of her conscious awareness. Next, be sure to offer an inspirational reason for this blind-spot challenge. For examples, you can't change what you're not aware of, so first awareness. Blind-spots are often the cause of problems blocking expertise or success in reaching a goal, by eliminating the blind-spot you are more free to actualize your highest values.

We challenge blind-spots so that we can live *mindfully*. Then what is outside of consciousness will be less likely to trip you up. Given that we have a tendency to ignore disconfirming information and to confirm what we already know (the confirmation bias), it is a true gift for a coach to bring into the light what a client has been blind to.

When you bring up something that seems present in a client's thinking, emoting, speaking, and behaving that is outside of the client's awareness— you can expect that the person will at first deny it. After all, he does not see it. Let it go. If it is a pattern, it will come up again. When it does, present it ... You may have to do that several times. For a coaching client, when you have done this two or more times, they will begin to suspect that there's something here and become curious and open. A therapy client will get more and more defensive— that's a signal that it is time to refer.

Coaching blind spots is one of the great reasons for coaching. That's because you cannot self-coach your blind spots. While self-coaching goes a long way— the one thing you cannot coach are your own blind spots. When it comes to a blind spot, get a coach!

DO YOU KNOW YOUR BLIND SPOT?

The question in the title is actually unanswerable and, generally speaking, stupid. That's because if you ask it of any person who is mentally alert, she will probably say:

> "Of course, I don't know my blind spots! They wouldn't be a *blind spot* if I knew them! And for that reason, that question is a stupid question!"

Of course a person could also answer: "No, I don't think I do come to think of it; I wonder what my blind spots are?" Or, "Yes, I know my blind spots and I'm working on them!" As a Meta-Coach one of your tasks with clients is to help them discover, identify, expose, mirror, and enable them to confront their blind spots. That's a key purpose of the Confrontation Conversation. Clients will almost never come right out and say:

> "See, I have these blind spots and I need you to help me expose them so I can deal with them and not get side-blinded and sabotage my own best intentions."

In fact, as a coach when you do happen upon what, for the client, is a blind spot and mention it, they will most often deny it. And why not? They are *blind* to it. They don't know it's there. They may not even have a clue as to what you're talking about.
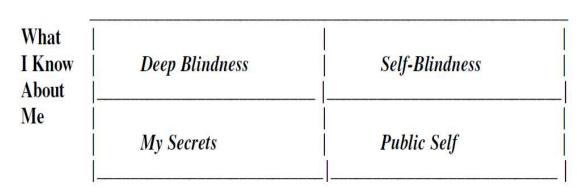
Yet we all have blind spots. Every one of us is *blind* to certain facets of ourselves. No one is so totally self-aware that they have no facets of their own way of being in the world that's unknown to them. In fact, as you discovered when you learned about Self-Actualization Psychology in *Coaching Mastery* and the Meaning–Performance Axes, one of the greatest places where your blind spots are hidden is in your strengths, and especially in your meta-program best strengths that gives you your advantages and core competencies. That's because every meta-program not only tells you want to notice, to see, to focus on, to detect, but also what to delete, what to not-see— what to be blind to.

Why is all of this important in coaching? Because wherever there is non-achievement over time, wherever you find yourself stuck again and again, wherever you have a pattern of not being able to complete a goal or aspiration, wherever for all of your efforts, you just do not mind-to-muscle some great principle or idea and transfer it into muscle memory and practical skill—*you are probably struggling against something within yourself that's a blind spot to you.*

Various Kinds of Blind Spots
What are you *blind* to? Probably some of your highest frames that are governing your most outside-of-conscious assumptions. At the lowest levels of blind spots, those that your clients will typically have is when a person is blind to how he comes across, how others experience him, what others are saying and responding. I know Executive Coaches who get paid big bucks just to

observe and give feedback at this level. Here the magic of *feedback* saves the day and gives the person a mirror so that the person can *see* oneself. Of course, to *see* oneself, you they have to be open to feedback, willing to consider it, and have the frame that what you cannot see in yourself is often very much in the open and seen by others.

What You Know About Me

What I Know About Me	*Deep Blindness*	*Self-Blindness*
	My Secrets	*Public Self*

At the next level would be *the belief frames* that a person may have, that you and I may have, and that we simply not be aware of. This is why you and I, and anyone who coaches, should have a coach. Do you? Have you gotten a buddy-coach from your *Coaching Mastery classmates*? If you have, do it! Do it today.

There's something about being asked questions about beliefs, "And what do you believe about that? And if that's true, what would that mean to you?" Asking it of yourself, while if you develop that discipline, can become a powerful self-coaching tool, is still not the same as to be put on the hot-seat with a great meta-question by another human being. Asked in the right way, at the right time, when you are in an open and curious state can suddenly strip away all of the common masks and posturings that we use and we can find ourselves naked in our frames.

But what about those *blind spot frames that are really outside-consciousness* and at the level of your life premises? What about those conflicting frames that only nudge at the edge of your consciousness even more most salient moments? How do you get to those? You do what you already know— mirror, ask meta-questions, and create a crucible environment so you can take the person into the deepest/ highest truths of their lives.   Further, you could use either the Crucible pattern and the Explore a Matrix pattern.

There is also another pattern, a more complex one, Blind Spot Detection Pattern that we have in Neuro-Semantics. It is especially for facilitating a confrontation with a person's blind spots when they keep cycling around the same issues or patterns for years, even decades.

HOW "THINKING"
BECAME MY CURRENT FOCUS

When I entered NLP, I had already been thinking a lot about thinking. That came from my studies in Cognitive Therapy and especially RET where I learned about the cognitive distortions. Then I read Joseph Yeager's book, *Thinking about Thinking with NLP*. So from the beginning, it was obvious to me that NLP, as a Communication Model, was about thinking. Realizing this, in 1986-7 I put "the languages of the mind"— *how we think* visually, auditorially, kinesthetically, etc. into the book *Speak Up, Speak Clear, Speak Kind* (1987).

As I learned the Meta-Model, I realized that the linguistic distinctions which indicated ill-formed structures corresponded to the cognitive distortions of cognitive therapy. I even traveled to New York City and met with Albert Ellis (founder of RET). I wanted feedback on the theme that I was working on that the thinking patterns of RET correlated to NLP's linguistic distinctions. Later I presented that paper to the international inter-disciplinary Conference of General Semantics. That paper is now one of the chapters in *Developing Sanity in Human Affairs* (1998, Hofstra University).

The next awareness about the importance of thinking came in studying the Meta-Programs Model. Here were a dozen thinking patterns that had been identified as playing a significant role in perceiving, communicating, and learning. In 1996, together with Bob Bodenhamer, I extended the list from 15 to 52 (and later to 60) meta-programs as we wrote the book, *Figuring Out People* (1997). Then as the years past, several models were generated using only the meta-program thinking patterns: Axes of Change (2003), Self-Actualization Quadrants (2005), and the Axes of Leadership (2009).

As all of that was developing, I kept experiencing a nagging sense that *thinking itself is the foundational element* in everything human. Ultimately, everything goes to thinking— how we think governs how and what we perceive, value, and understand. It determines if we create healthy and productive mental maps for navigating reality or if we create dysfunctional and toxic maps that create psychopathology and misery.

This eureka insight of an old idea— an idea that had been around for thousands of years— began to take on new freshness. "As a person thinks, so is he or she." *How you think is the leverage point* for change, for insight, for creativity, for personal self-actualization, for creating wealth, for effectively communicating and persuading, for building great companies, for leadership — for everything human.

It's one thing to know, and even to appreciate, an insight like that, it is an entirely different thing to put it to good use. That's what I was trying to figure out. How to put this insight to good use?

A superficial use of it is the self-help idea of "positive thinking." Certainly thinking positive, looking on the bright side of things, believing, hoping, and trusting are thinking patterns that will — overall— empower you. Yet that's not the whole story, not by a long-shot. Negative thinking can produce very positive results in certain contexts. So can skeptical thinking that questions a superficial solution.

"What is the next step in using and developing *the thinking leverage point?* While I did not know the answer, I began reading in the field of Critical Thinking. Suddenly, I realized that that's the answer— developing the ability to think critically and creatively. That ultimately culminated in the idea of tapping into the highest forms of thinking— using the executive functions of the prefrontal cortex. That led to *Executive Thinking* (2018) and from that came *Brain Camp* as a training process for developing better thinkers and a more expansive understanding of thinking.

Thinking about thinking on a continuum led to distinguishing six kinds of non-thinking patterns and ten kinds of genuine *thinking* patterns. It raised the central issue of *how* to effectively think, how to transform thinking, how to unlearn, how to use the higher executive functions in a healthy and productive way.

Finishing *Executive Thinking* and developing the training in high quality thinking (Brain Camp), I thought I was done. I wasn't. Out of executive thinking came specific application— *Thinking as a Modeler* (2019). And then I realized I needed to expand executive thinking, so I wrote *Hypnotic Thinking* (2019), *Humorous Thinking* (2020), and then *Metaphorical Thinking* (2021). That's when I realized that I had missed a major executive function— decision-making. So next came *Executive Decisions* (2021).

With all of that in place, with high quality thinking and deciding situated, what was next? The answer was obvious— *learning.* Learning, as a meta-level skill, transcends primarily state learning. We effectively think and decide in order to *learn* how to live, how to develop skills, how to be our best selves, how to unleash our potentials, how to get things done, how to solve problems, etc.

But there was something that blinded me from immediately seeing learning as an executive function. What blinded me? The fact that all creatures learn. Learning is inputting information, processing it, and using it to respond to adjust to the environment — and all animals do that. It took me awhile to realize that *the determining difference* between animal learning and human learning is that *human learning is distinguished by the executive functions—* self-awareness, choice, reflexivity, planning, self-monitoring, self-regulation, long-term memory for anticipating the future, etc.

We humans not only learn, we *learn* about *how to learn* and can keep learning how to do it best. Learning is within our control and management. Animals learn by association. Things get connected. And while we also learn by association, we can do so much more. We can unlearn associations which are no longer true or useful. We can learn by using symbolic systems

(language, mathematics, diagrams, etc.) to invent higher level concepts. All of this led me to write, *Executive Learning* (scheduled for 2021).

But wait, there's more. When you are the master of your thinking and have full flexibility with all of the ways to think, and you are the executive decider, the CEO of your own choices, and you know how to meta-learn for fun, profit, enjoyment, contribution, creativity, etc., what then? What emerges as an emergent property from within the human system?

The answer is *wisdom*. Wisdom takes us beyond intelligence to the use of discernment of good judgment which enables you to recognize, choose, and create the good life. Wisdom is the executive function that integrates all of the many different kinds of intelligence that we have so that we can make discerning choices and decisions in the face of problems that do not have clear-cut answers, in the face of dilemmas and paradoxes. That describes the next stop, *Executive Wisdom* (scheduled for 2022).

Here then are the books and training manuals that enables you as a Neuro-Semantic NLP Trainer to use *the foundational leverage point* for change, transformation, inspiration, self-actualization and some projections about coming books and trainings.

Books	Training
Executive Thinking (2018)	— Brain Camp (2019)
Hypnotic Thinking (2019)	— Meta-Trance
Hypnotic Conversations (2020)	— APG
Humorous Thinking (2020)	— For the Fun of it!
Metaphorical Thinking (2021)	— Metaphorically Speaking
Thinking as a Modeler (2019)	— Modeling manuals (Master Prac)
Executive Decisions (2021)	— Effective Decision Making
Executive Learning (2021)	— Learning Genius
Executive Wisdom (2022)	—
Executive Productivity	
Inside-Out Productivity (2022-3)	— Inside-Out Productivity

COACHING PRODUCTIVITY

While we have, in Neuro-Semantics, an entire training on *Unleashing Productivity,* and while that was based on the book, *Achieving Peak Performance,* there is a lot more to say about being productive. So my plan is that in a year or two, I will produce another book on the subject, *Inside-Out Productivity.* Until then I have my eye peeled for the many aspects of productivity. Recently I came across the realization that productivity is not merely about setting goals, it is about a particular kind of highly intelligent goal-setting.

For Meta-Coaches that explains why we always start a coaching session by facilitating a goal setting conversation: "What do you want? Why is that important?" We do that because as we humans have known for a long time, "without vision, the people perish." And since the 1960s Gary Latham (University of Toronto) and Edwin Locke (University of Maryland), "the godfathers of goal-setting theory" discovered what we now consider obvious truth: Establishing goals boosts performance, increases motivation, and results in greater productivity.

From NLP, we also know something else— when it comes to goals, goals can be well-formed or ill-formed. You can set goals in a non-intelligent way or you can do it intellectually. The idea of SMART goals arose in GE with CEO Jack Welch and that eventuated into the NLP *Well-Formed Outcome* pattern. When I entered into NLP in 1986, that pattern only had 5 or 6 distinctions. It eventually grew to 10. Then with the development of Meta-Coaching, I pushed it to 18. Vague, fluffy, over-generalized goals that are not contextualized or detailed for clarity make goal-setting impossible. You can also mess up goal-setting by making the goals too big with the result that you get overwhelmed.

The secret for truly intelligent goal-setting that works for achieving a desired outcome and being productive lies in the dual goal-setting that's inherent in the WFO questions.

- By asking questions #1 ("What do you want?") and #3 ("Why is that important to you?") you call forth *meaningful* and *inspirational* goals. This activates your meta-cognitive thinking and learning. It enables you to get the big picture which provides the energy and motivation to invest in the outcome.
- By asking questions #7 ("What do you have to do to get what you want?") and #11 ("How many things do you have to do to get what you want?") you call forth smaller and clearer goals, step-wise goals that are actionable. This activates you're here-and-now cognition, your in-this-moment cognition as you detail the specifics and sequence them into a procedure.

From a learning point-of-view, when you ask these questions in sequence you are guiding your client to *meta-detail* his goals— an aspect of genius. You are enabling her to activate her prefrontal lobes for an inspirational objective *and simultaneously* getting her activate her motor cortex to detail what she has to do. This gives your client *clarity about the how-to* of the goal-

setting. Questions #8, 9, and 10 expands and qualifies your question #7 step-wise goals. Questions #12-16 then meta-states the goal with the ideas of plans, blocks, resources, and ecology. I constantly amazed at the depth and richness of the 18 Well-Formed Outcome Questions— there's a lot in them!

When it comes to setting goals, you need *both* big goals and small goals. You need the big, bright, outrageous goals for inspiration, energy, and motivation: I want to be a surgeon, write a masterpiece novel, create a world-class business, cure cancer, etc. But these big goals *do not tell you what to do today.* They are not actionable. You need specific and crystal clear smaller goals for the here-and-now: I will write from 7 am to 8 am., I will go to the gym for 40 minute workout on weights, I will spend 7:30 to 8:30 with my children playing an educational game.

With a clear goal, you know *what to do* and *what to do next.* The clarity makes these actions intelligent. While that may seem insignificant, it is actually part and parcel of the genius state. How? That's because with clarity of the small goal— your focus specifically on a single thing, your concentrate tightens and now you are able to enter the flow zone where you synergize challenge and competence, meaning and performance. The bite-size tasks is not only manageable, it enables you to access the optimal state of flow which plays a huge part in reaching your goals because you are now able to persist.

There you have it— your task this week in your coaching. Coach your clients for the dual goals (of big and small, inspirational and actionable). That will induce them into a magnificent and inspirational *and* crystal clear state that has a specific actionable activity attached to it.

COACHING FOR RESULTS

You want results; your clients want results. We all want results. So, we set out with a focus on the results that we want. That's good. So we start with the Well-Formed Outcome questions to specify precisely what a client wants— what outcomes and results.

Yet here's a warning —there's several hidden dangers in this. Significant dangers. The first danger is that *you can become so results-oriented that you overlook and discount the very processes you need to get the results.* That happens all the time in businesses and corporations. They are so focused on "the numbers" which measure the results— 5% increase this quarter, 25 contacts every week, 7% increase in productivity, etc.— that they ignore the required processes that they need to achieve those results.

People trying to lose weight sometimes fall for this. They want to lose 30 pounds. They weigh themselves every morning, they are aiming at 1 or 2 pounds per week. The problem is that *what's on their mind are the numbers, not the process.* They are not focusing on eating less calories or increasing their activity and exercise routine. They are not focusing on making their eating and exercising a lifestyle. Focusing on the results, weight loss, prevents them from learning how to enjoy fitness, well-being, energy, and vitality.

Another danger about being overly results-oriented is that you may fall for the unethical conclusion that *the ends justify the means.* Once a person gets to this kind of distorted thinking, then everything is on the table. Corporate leaders who fall for this one will often "cook the numbers," embezzle the company, use people as pawns to get what they want, burn out first-line workers all in service of "getting the numbers." All sorts of unethical and immoral things have been justified by "the ends justify the means." Results-only thinking is ethical quicksand.

If you put results over process, here's another hidden danger, this one is about you. You will have a tendency to over-control. You will micro-manage those around you. You will have a lot of trouble letting go and turning loose responsibilities that you have delegated to others. You will tend to experience anxiety about things you can't control. All of this is stressful— unnecessary stress.

In addition to those dangers, *there is a deception lurking within this.* Once you are focused exclusively on results, it is then easy to conclude that **if** you so happen to get the results you wanted, you must have a good process. Sadly, that is not true. You could have been lucky. The results may have been the result of other unknown factors. It could have been a coincidence of time and opportunity. Results do *not* mean that you are doing something right! You might have intimidated everyone to comply, they got the numbers, but now you have a mutiny ready to occur on your hands.

If you are a results-oriented person, that's good. You are practical and pragmatic. You live in the real world and you are probably a mover-and-shaker. But here is the big paradox for results-oriented people: *the results will take care of themselves if you focus on process.*

- If you have a great process for thinking critically and learning— you will learn, be creative, and think with clarity and precision.
- If you have a great process for eating and exercising, you will have plenty of energy and vitality, well-being and fitness. Your weight will take care of itself.
- If you have a great process for coaching with compassion and challenge— you will have successful clients. Your effectiveness as a coach will take care of itself.
- If you have a good process for creating wealth, the money will take care of itself.
- If you have a great process for winning the hearts and minds of people, you will be recognized as a self-actualizing leader.

What is the secret of success? It is to *develop a great process.* That's what executive think and learn and then from their learning create an effective strategy. After that, it is just a matter of working the strategy.

What is the secret of success? *Put process front and center.* Ensure that you have a good process— keep refining it, updating it, and getting timely feedback so that the process is solid. In fact, as you do that, you can trust — the results that you want will take care of themselves. Here's to some great Meta-Coaching!

COACHING DISCIPLINE

Sometimes, just sometimes, when people come for coaching and they are serious about achieving certain outcomes, they are then shocked— stunned— surprised — and even frustrated to discover that they have to learn to become disciplined in order to get what they want. "Disciplined? Why do I have to become disciplined? I'm a free spirit, I like doing my own thing!" Perhaps they assume that all they need to do is to dream, to really and truly dream, and their highest intentions will make it so. Perhaps they have bought into the myth of positive affirmation and assume that's all they need to do. Perhaps they assume that they just don't know the right strategy, and once they get it, everything will work out.

What they didn't expect is that *they* would have to change. Or that they would have to learn a discipline and become disciplined. As noted in the training on *Productivity,* discipline and disciple come from the same root word. Both denote learning and following a certain process or strategy. If you truly want to accomplish things and to become productive, you have to say goodbye to the options meta-program, stop with looking for alternative ways of doing things, and sign yourself up for a disciplined process as a way of life. If expertise has a structure and you want to be an expert— then you have to learn structure and learn to value structure.

Now the word *discipline*, like so many other words, has a really bad rap. The word has been dirtied by associations with certain experiences and/or ideas (e.g., punishment, pain, etc.). "Your father is going to discipline you when he gets home." No wonder some people scream when they hear the word discipline. The word has been cheapened and inflated by over-use. The word has been depleted of its inherently rich meanings. So one of the first things we have to do is to recover the true meanings and values within the word.

The most positive use of discipline is when we use it to refer to *a field of study*— psychology, medicine, anthropology, etc. When we mention the discipline of engineering, it is a synonym of *science* and refers to a well-thought out and well-structured *area of study.* Somewhat positively also, we can refer to a *disciple*— someone might be a disciple of Freud, or a disciple of Christ, a disciple of Howard Gardner's approach to intelligence, etc. When you learn a discipline and commit yourself to it, you become a disciple to that discipline.

When you coach someone to be disciplined, first clarify the area of the subject. "You want to be disciplined to what?" "You want to be a disciple of who or what?" "What does the discipline entail?" "What practices will you sign up for?" In this, you could study the discipline of success, wealth creating, resilience, communication, leadership, coaching.

Discipline shouts that there is a strategy to what you want to learn and the expertise that you want to develop. There is a specific winning strategy (a discipline) and when you follow it, you enter into the flow zone of that optimal performance.

My disciplines have saved me from having to reinvent things. Once I have an effective and efficient way of doing something (a system or discipline), the discipline habituates it. That saved a lot of mental effort and strain as I don't have to think about things, just do them. This is true of my writing discipline, my reading discipline, my exercise discipline, etc. There is no longer mental debates in my head, "Should I or not?" "Do I feel like it today?"   As a disciple of a discipline, I am now disciplined to follow it.

This description, obviously, will trigger most of the common obstacles and blocks to discipline. As a Meta-Coach, the question for any given client will be, "What blocks you?" "And what else?" And you ask that question (question #14 of the WFO questions) because that usually identifies exactly where that client needs *resource coaching,* where that client needs to be challenged, and where you need to take that client. To your excellence in coaching!

A NEW NEURO-SEMANTIC MODEL
A Model of Learning

When you train, teach, coach, consult, mentor, or parent, you are enabling someone to learn. You are *guiding and facilitating the learning process.* You cannot "learn" them, you can only provide a context and information wherein they might choose to learn. And hopefully, they will learn what's best for them to learn in an effective way. Therefore you provide an inter-personal context where they will want to learn, trust you to facilitate it, guide it in a strategic step by step fashion so they succeed and have lots of fun in the process.

When you do this, you are working with *the learning process.* Therefore to be effective you need to know all you can about the learning process itself. You need to be able to answer a number of questions about learning: "How do people learn?" "How do people learn best?" "What blocks learning?" "What enhances learning?"

To answer these questions, and any more, early this year I reviewed everything I could find in NLP about learning. I reread all of the application books in NLP on learning and teaching. As I did, I began making a list of all of the variables, factors, components, and elements that various authors asserted were essential to learning. I also reviewed every specific learning strategy that I could find in that literature— the spelling strategy, the reading strategy, analyzing language strategy, the speed reading strategy, the memory strategy, etc.

In the end I had a fairly extensive list of *learning variables.* Yet it was immediately obvious to me that some variables played a more important role for various learning outcomes than others. That raised the next question— How could I organize all of the learning variables into a model that would outframe all of the learning strategies, learning states, learning beliefs., etc.?

To answer that I tried the Matrix Model as a template. But I found that while it was highly effective for any specific learning— like learning resilience or learning leadership, it was not all that useful for incorporating all of the learning variables into an overall model. Learning was too unyielding for that. Yet in thinking in terms of the Matrix Model and its eight dimensions, that gave me an idea. Dimensions. Learning dimensions. "What are the dimensions of learning?"

That was the question that then led to the *Learning Dimensions Model* which offers an integrated way of thinking about learning. It highlights that there are numerous dimensions of learning and that all of the dimensions operate simultaneously. Yes, we can separate the dimensions and talk about them individually, yet they are intricately related and each dimension influences every other dimension. The simultaneity of the learning dimensions reveals just how systemic learning is. It reveals that learning is not just one thing, but many things *at the same time.*

As an overview, people learn best when they are in the right state, use all of their representative capabilities, recognize the presence of their background information, effectively organize their data into conceptual categories that allow them to understand, monitor their learning in real time to keep it focused and ecological, integrate their learning so they apply to self, and take pragmatic actions to translate it into actions and skills. Sorting that out, we have the seven dimensions:

The Learning Dimensions Model

1. The Learning State Dimension	Launch learning and its possibilities
2. Representational Learning Dimension	Code learning and hold in mind
3. Background Learning Dimension	Transfer learning for long-term memory
4. Conceptual Learning Dimension	Learn for understanding, create categories
5. Meta-Learning Learning Dimension	Self-reflexive learning: learning about learning
6. Integrative Learning Dimension	Applying learning to self, embody ideas
7. Pragmatic Learning Dimension	Learning as skills, competence, innovation

Learning is a lot of things— it is *stretching out* of your comfort zone, asking lots of *questions* in a search for answers, *discovering* out of curiosity, *experiencing, making meaning* as you invent understandings, *experimenting* with predictions, hypotheses, and tests, *focusing attention, remembering* what you have encoded, and having *fun.* Learning is what makes you uniquely human and is a powerful resource for creativity, innovation, and problem solving. By learning you become *fully human/ fully alive.* Learning is what you facilitate if you are a trainer, teacher, coach, consultant, mentor, and parent!

As a learning model, *the learning dimensions* goes beyond the basic NLP strategy model. Strategy is certainly included within it— in the Conceptual Dimension, yet learning is so much more. That's why you can model and present a specific learning strategy about anything— management, writing, weight loss, parenting, budgeting, creating passive income, etc.— and yet only having that strategy will not be sufficient for all of your clients or participants to learn it and incorporate it into their lives.

"Why don't many people benefit from training, coaching, instruction, consulting, etc.?"
"Why don't many really learn what they are trying to learn, spending time and money to learn?"

The short answer is: They did not tap into and use all of the learning dimensions. This also applies to you. "Why haven't you got the full benefits from something that you invested your time, money, and effort into learning?" You may know a lot about a subject and yet you have not learned it thoroughly enough so it is now your unconscious competence. Why not? One or more of the dimensions is lagging.   The solution is to *utilize all of the learning dimensions—* to make your learning truly holistic.

SCAFFOLDING COACHING

We call it *deliberate practice* and use this very special kind of practice when it comes to training Meta-Coaching as well as many, many other skills. The word being used in the field of education which is very similar is *scaffolding*. This word— as a metaphor— refers to a structure that is used in construction. When a building is being built, constructors typically use various kinds of scaffolds and then when they are finished, they take them down. You have undoubtedly seen them, especially in downtown areas of large cities, when a building is being remodeled.

In fact, before the remodeling takes place, the constructor puts up a scaffold on the side of the building. From there the scaffolds give the workers access to the outside of the building— to the face of the building, to the windows, to the parts of the building they want to work on. From there new materials can be brought in and old materials can be taken out. The scaffolds provide workers a safer work environment.

This metaphor is now being used to talk about how to *scaffold* someone's learning, whether a child or an adult. *Scaffolding* means providing a context of inter-personal support to the person. You are essentially offering your mind (intelligence, experience, insights, distinctions) to collaboration with your client so that your client can more effectively learn and develop.

In education, teachers learn to scaffold children by first creating a "meeting of the minds." They do that by stepping into the child's experience to understand how the child is currently understanding something and then providing the kind of questions and suggestions that enable the child to achieve the next level of understanding. Such scaffolding enables the child to *think* for himself, to *think independently* and to discover insights and processes on her own.

This comes from Lev Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory of learning. By emphasizing the social nature of mind and the cultural influences that affect one's learning, Vygotsky demonstrated the importance of having the presence of a more advanced or "expert" mind available when learning. If, in the process of learning, you are in the presence of someone who can guide your attention, focus, and perceptions so that you discover what something is and how it works— you move from your current level of functioning to your zone proximal development (ZPD).

To a great extent that is what you do, as a Meta-Coach, when you are coaching a client for learning, skill development, and/or personal growth. As your minds meet, you develop a collaboration that facilitates the client's experience. Ideally, the more "expert" mind that you offer is that of expertise in structure and process, not content.

Guidelines in the field of scaffolding focus on *enabling* the learner to do the work— to *actively* work on figuring something out. One does that by asking questions, by prompting with cues, by pointing out where to focus and what to attend to. One does not *tell* the other what and how to

do it. One does not directly *command* the performance. One also backs off and allows the responsibility to belong to the learner as soon as possible. One also keeps adjusting the learning or skill development by ensuring that it is optimally challenging without being overwhelming. One only intervenes when a person becomes truly stuck.

Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory of learning highlights the *social nature of mind*. It speaks to how our "minds" arise from and through interactions with others. As we hear parents and other describe what is and how it works, as they guide us through language to meet our needs and get along, we slowly integrate that *mind* and make it ours. From the conversations with parents, peers, and teachers, we learn our mother language which structures and governs what and how we perceive and how we learn to be self-governing. All of this speaks volumes to both parents and teachers because ultimately *the quality of learning goes to the quality of the conversations.*

And in our case, as Meta-Coaches, this describes to a great extent how coaching works. Your client wants to build a new structure in his life. You put up scaffolds of safe and care (empathy, compassion, firmness, challenge, etc.) so that your client can freely explore what and how to build. Your scaffolding focuses on the processes that she will need to success – her attention, state, meanings, intentions, etc.

COACHING YOUR CLIENTS' BEST THINKING

Regarding the quality of your coaching and its effectiveness in the lives of your clients, the bottom line is this: *A coaching client's success and achievement is dependent on the quality of his or her thinking.* The worse the quality of your client's thinking, the worse will be the results of the coaching. For higher quality results, your client will need to learn how to think better. And for that, you— as the Meta-Coach—will need to coach your client for better thinking.

Now to facilitate that in you, we present in Meta-Coaching, the cognitive distortions. We go through those on Day 3 of ACMC. We mention each one, give examples of each, and identify when and how they will show up in coaching clients. Later, we send you the list of cognitive distortions and recommend that you provide that to your clients as reading material. Yet the cognitive distortions are not the only way in which *thinking can go wrong.* There is also the phenomenon of the cognitive biases and the cognitive fallacies.

Do you know the differences and distinctions between these three sets of factors that can mess a person up cognitively?

- *The Cognitive Distortions* are the ways that children think. They are over-simplified and distorted thinking patterns that describe, at least to some extent, the thinking processes that children go through developmentally as they mature mentally and emotionally. Children over-generalize, personalize, awfulize, blame, etc. When you hear them in a child, it is "normal." When you hear them in an adult— *it is a sure-fire formula* for creating emotional misery and falsehood. No wonder they need coaching!

- *The Cognitive Biases* are short-cut ways of thinking. They arise from generalizing that "usually" or "generally" work. Here is a heuristic pattern that *most of the time* will get you by. Some, like the status quo bias, are created by repetition. Others are built into the way the mind processes information— such as the Availability Bias and the Confirmation Bias. These become problematic when a person over-uses them, when a person assumes they are always useful or effective, and when a person uses them *without thinking.* Then they become the source of problems, blind-spots, and false-to-fact conclusions. These also bring people to coaching.

- *The Cognitive Fallacies* are simply false ways of reasoning. Some of these arise from the false ways that children reason about things. Others arise as manipulative ways to try to force someone to accept your point of view or position. Known for a long, long time, a great many of these have Latin names— given to them from great thinkers in the field of

Logic to identify illogical and non-logical ways of arguing for a proposition. These can ruin relationships, create toxic competition, and undermine ethical persuasion.

There you have it— three sets of distinctions about how *thinking can go wrong.* It can be childish and immature, it can be lazy and impatient, and it can be erroneous and false.

Childish thinking (the cognitive distortions) typically arise when we are in stress and feeling insecure. We regress to thinking as a child. They are at the heart of many of the problems that clients bring to coaching, and of course, are great ways to increase personal misery.

Lazy thinking (the cognitive biases) arise when you are in a hurry, when you are impatient, or when you don't know how to think through something in a thorough way and do "due diligence" about your information gathering. Now you use a cognitive short-cut, a short-cut that sometimes will work and sometimes will really screw things up.

False thinking (the cognitive fallacies) arise generally because you really do not know better, have not been taught better, or you are more committed to manipulating and winning an argument that finding the truth.

A month ago Geraldine overheard me on an interview where I recommend that a person memorize these lists, or at least become extremely familiar with them. Later she asked me to get her a copy of each of those lists so that she could do precisely that— get so familiar with the lists that she would be able to pick up on them in real time in a coaching conversation. I'd recommend that every Meta-Coach who regularly coaches professionally do the same. Memorize them. Study them until you know them very well and can catch them in real time. To that end, I will present them and write about them over the next few weeks in this series.

COACHING YOUR CLIENTS' COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS

As a Meta-Coach, you know what cognitive distortions are and why they are important to you as a coach. At least I hope you do. We cover them in NLP trainings and in ACMC and describe how they show up linguistically in the language of your clients. We also send you the list of the cognitive distortions so that you can make that part of the reading task of your clients.

Now, in one sense, they are simple and obvious. They reflect *childish thinking* and that's precisely what makes them unfit for adult life. In another sense, they reveal a complexity in the thinking patterns— a complexity that *distort* good map-making and effective representing and encoding of information. And as *distortions—* some of them are also Meta-Model violations of well-formed maps. You can also count on something else that's really critical— they undermine and sabotage learning. The more a person, including you, have any of these cognitive distortions, to that extent, one's learning is reduced in quality.

Distorted Thinking	**Healthy Thinking Patterns**
1. Over-generalizing Jumping to conclusions	Contextual thinking
2. All-or-nothing thinking	Both-and thinking; consider the excluded middle
3. Labeling (name calling)	Reality-testing, distinguish map from territory
4. Blaming (non-responsible T.)	Responsibility thinking
5. Mind-reading	Current sensory data: how know?
6. Prophesying	Tentative predicting, probabilistic thinking
7. Emotionalizing	Witness thinking
8. Personalizing	Objective thinking
9. Awfulizing	Reality-testing, challenging pseudo-words
10. Should-ing	Choice thinking, other modal operators (will, want)
11. Filtering	Multi-perspective thinking
12. Impossibility thinking: Can't-ing	Possibility thinking (can)
13. Discounting	Appreciative thinking, valuing
14. Identifying	Dis-identifying, distinguishing map and territory

When I was recently working on *Executive Learning,* Geraldine and I engaged in a long talk about the cognitive distortions and their absolute essential role for a coach. I off-handedly said, "That's why I encourage coaches to memorize these fourteen cognitive distortions." She then noted that while she knew the fourteen, the ability to catch them *in real time in a live coaching session* was her next step of development.

How about you? Have you *memorized* the fourteen basic cognitive distortions? If not, consider taking that on as a challenge. Memorize them, perhaps write them on a card —and then keep that card with you when you're coaching so that you can have quick access to it. In that way, every coaching session you then do becomes a *live practice* for developing your competence in seeing and hearing cognitive distortions in real time.

As forms of *childish thinking,* these tend to be "natural" ways of thinking as our brains grow and develop. That explains why these thinking forms are *primitive* and why you can find them abundantly in people who have not learned better. That highlights the fact that you and I *have to learn better* than to think in these more "intuitive" ways. They are *intuitive for a child* or an undeveloped person.

When you hear them in your coaching clients, hear them as *warning signals* blaring out that your client either has not learned better or has regressed to them due to the level of stress in life. These thinking patterns also are big clues as to the *frames that are doing damage* in that person's life. Given how these patterns set ineffective and misery-causing frames, when you call attention to them and/or challenge them in your client—your clients will have an opportunity to break out of the prison of misery they have created.

Anticipate that a client who is in a lot of pain and misery, who is stuck in some dysfunctional behavior probably has *multiple cognitive distortions occurring.* Not only is he over-generalizing, but he is negatively labeling and perhaps awfulizing.   Or she is personalizing, identifying, and self-blaming. When you have two or more cognitive distortions operating around a subject, you know that the person has dug himself into a deep pit of misery.

Do you know what to ask when you catch a cognitive distortion? That will be the subject of the next post.
> Want more? Check out the chapter on Cognitive Distortions in *Executive Thinking* (2018).

QUESTIONING YOUR CLIENTS' COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS

It's one thing to know and recognize cognitive distortions in your clients (and also in your own thinking and talking!), it is an entirely different thing to know *how to respond to them.* So let's focus on that. Once you recognize a cognitive distortion, then what?

A simple and easy response would be to ask, "Did I just hear a cognitive distortion?" It's an inquiry question that poses a search. Was there a cognitive distortion? Maybe there was, maybe there was not. No judgment, no accusation, just a curiosity. When you do this, often the person will be at a loss. He doesn't know. He may even be unaware of what he just said. "What did I say?" At this point, repeat what your client said (an acknowledgment). That will enable her to *hear* herself. Then, you might repeat the specific cognitive distortion and call it out.

> "I think that's personalizing." "Was that awfulizing?" "Sounded like an over-generalization, what do you think?" "Oh, a label!"

Once you've done that, then the key to *compassionately challenging* your client's cognitive distortion is to know the kind of questions to ask upon identifying the distortion. Here is a list of questions for challenging each of the cognitive distortions.

Cognitive Distortion	Coaching Questions
1. Over-generalizing	Always? Never? Did it occur in X?
2. All-or-nothing thinking	What makes X all or nothing? What's in-between A and B? To what degree does X happen?
3. Labeling (name calling)	What do you mean by X-label? What are the conditions of X?
4. Blaming (non-responsible T.)	What part of X is your responsibility? How did you contribute to the situation?
5. Mind-reading	How do you know that X thinks, feels, intends that?
6. Prophesying	What is the probability that X will happen? What else might happen instead?
7. Emotionalizing	What thoughts correspond to those emotions? What beliefs, meanings and understandings increase that emotion?
8. Personalizing	How is this about you? What else is it about?
9. Awfulizing	I know it's undesirable, but how is it "awful?" Awful in what way? What specifically does awful refer to?
10. Should-ing	Who says you should? What's the rule? Who made it? What if you changed should to will, want to, or get to?

11. Filtering	Is this a negative filter? A self-serving filter? An over-optimistic filter? What kind of a filter is it? What are you leaving out?
12. Impossibility thinking: Can't-ing	If you could, what would happen? What is possible? What can you do?
13. Discounting	What do you count and appreciate? What do you value?
14. Identifying	How are you more than X (a thought, emotion, experience)? Is X all that you are? Are you over-identifying yourself with X?

How do you learn these? Well, you could memorize one question for each distortion. You could keep familiarizing yourself with them. You could keep them in front of you when you are in a coaching session and from time to time call for a Meta Moment ... and peruse them ... with that session's subject and dialogue in mind.

If you write a journal or keep a diary— if you are bold and brave enough— read through it with the list of cognitive distortions before you. Catch them in yourself! Then use the questions with yourself and generate some new responses as you stretch yourself out of the old patterns.

Overall, *your ability to catch a cognitive distortion in real time as your client is speaking is the power to be truly present to your client.* And as you keep developing and refining this skill, you will be more capable of pinpointing dis-empowering language and thinking patterns. This is also how to be more *challenging* as a coach. Prior to doing this, however, be sure to preframe why you are committed to catching them. These are the thinking patterns *causing the problem and the misery.*

COACHING YOUR CLIENTS'
COGNITIVE BIASES

In contrast to the cognitive distortions which are always inadequate and which inevitably *distort* things, the *cognitive biases* are frequently quite useful. When useful, they essentially offer a short-cut in thinking. As a heuristic that is accurate and/or useful *most of the time*, these biases will move you forward. These patterns become problematic when you use them in a non-thinking way, when you simply assumes they are always useful or effective. That's when they become the source of problems, blind-spots, and false-to-fact conclusions.

In the book *Executive Thinking,* after considering over 100 cognitive biases, I put them into seven categories in order to simplify them and make them more memorable. Here are the seven big cognitive biases:
      1) Understanding Bias
      2) Availability Bias
      3) Confirmation Bias
      4) Consistency Bias
      5) Experiential Bias
      6) Social Bias
      7) Context Bias

1) Understanding. We all are naturally biased to think that we understand! Actually, this is quite astonishing! We all live our lives *as if* we understand what's going on. I put this first because it seems the most dominant of all the biases. What's amazing about this bias is that while there are lots and lots of things we do not understand, we act and even think that we do. What a comfortable illusion this one is! Clients will tell you they understand, then when you ask them to explain— they often discover that they actually do not understand! It can be eye-opening and transformational. Clients often think they understand their history and will tell you "the story of their life." But that's a construct that they invented.

2) Availability. We are all biased by the information that we have available. We think, process information, and calculate according to *what is available*—this includes information that you can remember, current events, whatever is in the media's focus, conversations with friends, books you've been reading, etc. You and I reason from what's present, salient, and recent. And we neglect what is not. This disadvantages information which requires study and research. So we engage in easy, lazy, and superficial thinking. This bias moves us to not even concern ourselves with what's not available— oftentimes a big mistake.

3) Confirmation. We are all also biased to confirm what we know and believe. Actually, the more you know something, the more familiar it is to you, the stronger your bias to believe it. Then the more you believe in X, the more you will find even more confirming evidence for it. Over time it will seem more and more believable. In terms of learning, this is a Catch-22. Once you "know" or learn something— it becomes increasingly more absolute to you. No wonder it is so difficult to talk, and worse yet, argue, someone out of a belief! The confirmation bias sets up the self-organizing nature of a belief. You now uncritically accept ideas simply because they fit with what you already believe. Conversely, to think in terms of dis-confirming is rare. It's a learned thinking pattern. It is the scientific way of thinking about a hypothesis. The confirmation bias sets up the expectation bias, the ownership bias, etc.

4) Consistency. We are all biased to want to be consistent. We want to reduce inconsistency and to align our thinking, feeling, and doing. Generally this is good. It's valuable because it enables us to be congruent and a good model of what we teach. Problems arise when we *need* to be consistent and cannot tolerate inconsistency in self or others. Then we are unable to welcome and embrace inconsistency and explore it especially when there's a lot of change. This bias leads to the narrative bias— the need to put things into a simple but coherent story. It leads to the causation bias, especially linear causation, and the status quo bias.

5) Experiential. We are all biased to see, think, reason, etc. from first perceptual position—from out of our own eyes and ears. In the self-reference bias, we operate from out of our experience, and tend to over-use our emotions and subjective experiences in reasoning about things. Doing this makes "reasoning" inherently contaminated by our life experiences. What you have *experienced* tends to determine what you expect, how you think, the emotions you are used to, etc. This makes sense. After all, what is most "real" to you are your experiences. Yet problems arise from this bias when we are deceived by an experience— a visual illusion, an auditory illusion, a misunderstanding, etc.

6) Social. As social beings who become *persons* with and through other persons, it's no surprise then that we are socially biased. We care about what others think and say, about being accepted by them and not rejected or judged. Our tendency is to distort our reality perceptions to fit in and be accepted. This bias is strongest when we are dependent on others. And that leads to another bias —bias for an in-group/ out-group orientation. In the back of our mind, we are continually processing, "Who's in? Who's out?" Accordingly, we give extra attention and significance to our group over other groups which explains the natural tendency to be ethno-centric. From this come other biases— authority, group-think, not-invented here, etc.

7) Contexts. We are all biased by the context in which we operate. Because meaning is always context dependent, we are highly influenced by contexts and environments. Where and when something happens inevitably governs its meaning. This is true for social contexts—who was there, how many people were present, for what purposes, and so on. Contexts play a significant role in how we experience ourselves (our identity) and what we believe we should do (our actions). Your way of thinking and responding will differ depending on where you are— at home, school, church, court, theater, work, etc. In other words, *contexts create bias.*

The Cognitive Biases
Summary of the seven big cognitive biases with other biases subsumed under them.

Understanding Bias
> Pattern Bias
> Hindsight Bias

Availability Bias
> Short-term thinking bias
> Anchoring Bias
> Attribution Bias
> Attention Blindness Bias
> Survivorship Bias
> Spectacular Bias

Confirmation Bias
> Expectation Bias
> Ownership Bias
> Selection Bias

Consistency Bias (Coherence)
> Narrative Bias
> Causation Bias
> Status Quo Bias
> Past-Based Prediction Bias
> Substitution Bias
> Over-Simplifying Bias

Experiential Bias
> Self-Justification Bias
> Ego-Centric Bias
> Ease Bias
> Options Bias
> Results Bias
> Experiential Bias via Association

Social Bias
> Authority Bias
> Groupthink Bias
> Not-Invented Here Bias
> Liking Bias

Context Bias
> Ownership Bias
> Sunk-Cost Bias
> Contrast Effect Bias
> Scarcity Effect Bias
> Money Counting Bias

COACHING BIASED CLIENTS

You and I coach *biased* clients. The primary reason I can write that is because there are no other kind of clients. All clients are biased just as all human beings are biased. It comes with the territory of being human. *And,* frequently, clients are clients *because* they are biased and their biases are now undermining their effectiveness at work, their connectedness at home, and their joy of life.

But, as a coach, it will not help to go after the biases directly. "Tell me about your cognitive biases," what biases are bothering you these days?" Ask that and you will get nowhere. Consider your own biases. Take a moment to name them. Ah, caught you, didn't I? The problem with biases is that they mostly work at unconscious levels. While we all have biases, we are mostly unaware of our biases and we are especially unaware of them *as we are thinking and reasoning about things.* Given that, expect the same in your clients.

So, *how do you detect the biases and how do you help your clients to become aware of them?* In Morpheus #28 and #29, we covered the cognitive distortions. They are easier— actually much easier— to detect than the biases. That's probably because you can readily recognize that they are forms of childish and immature thinking. That's why I recommend you memorize them, learn them inside-out, give them as reading material to your clients, and then openly and explicitly talk about them.

Unfortunately, you won't be able to do that with the cognitive biases. These are much more subtle. "Why is that?" you ask. In part it is because the human brain and nervous system is designed in such a way as to think this way. Take the *Understanding Bias* for example. Within this category we have the Pattern Bias and the Hindsight Bias. I put this as the first bias in *Executive Thinking* because it is the most common. All people everywhere has a bias that *they know.* "I understand things, I understand what's going on."

How can this be? How can we all feel like and have a strong sense that we understand things? The bias of our brain to create patterns is one explanation. It's what the brain does. And the brain is *so good* at creating patterns, it can (and does) create patterns where there are no patterns. That's why people see and detect all kinds of patterns. Some show up as the cognitive distortion of mind-reading, some show up as cause-effect patterns that we conjure up. The hindsight bias furthers this sense of knowing. Due to the fluidity of memory and how unreliable it is, we often feel that "I knew it all along." What's actually happening is that our brain is adjusting our memory of things fooling us into thinking that knew more than we did.

Go through the Biases that were listed in Morpheus #30 and/or the book, *Executive Thinking,* and develop your intuition about them. Most of them come from the neurological structures in our

brain and nervous system and thereby *set us up for an unreliable way of thinking and reasoning about things.* If anything will give you an appreciation for the depth of our fallibility, this will.

The cognitive biases explain how we can go wrong in our thinking and reasoning, and therefore in our learning and deciding. It explains the bias in our system for various errors. And those errors can sometime create tremendous disadvantages and undermine our well-being.

Coaching to the Biases
Each kind of cognitive bias requires a unique response.

Understanding Bias (Pattern Bias; Hindsight Bias*).*
> For this bias, use the Meta-Model and ask questions until your client gets to the edge of his knowledge. It usually does not take very long. Then he will be ready to actually *learn.*

Availability Bias (Short-term thinking; Anchoring; Attribution; Attention Blindness Bias).
> For this bias, keep asking about what the person *does not* know, for information the person does *not* have available.

Confirmation Bias (Expectation Bias; Ownership Bias; Selection Bias).
> Explore how the person came to a confirmation about X. Explore the presence of self-fulfilling and self-organizing facets of the person's beliefs and understandings.

Consistency Bias (Narrative; Causation; Status Quo; Past-Based Prediction; Substitution; Over-Simplifying Bias).
> Ask about the things that are not consistent with the person's beliefs, her incongruencies.

Experiential Bias (Self-Justification; Ego-Centric; Ease; Options; Results; Experiential).
> Ask about experiences from which the person drew inadequate, false, and even disastrous conclusions. Raise his appreciation for evidence-based facts apart from subjective experience.

Social Bias (Authority; Groupthink; Not-Invented Here; Liking).
> Explore the role of other people, family, social groups, etc. with the person. Check on the balance between self and others and the self-reference / other-reference meta-program.

*Context Bias (*Ownership; Sunk-Cost; Contrast Effect; Scarcity; Money Counting).
> With Meta-Model questions, combine this with specific expert information of any given context (e.g., economics, health, education, etc.).

BLASTING THROUGH A BIAS

The biggest problem with the cognitive biases is how *they are so seductive.* By contrast, no mature adult would be seduced by the cognitive distortions. They are obviously childish, infantile, and are easily seen as silly distortions. They are the way children think; not adults. But this is not the case with the cognitive biases. These are the ways that most adults think. They are common place. You hear them in the news, in the movies, on talk shows, etc. And most of them fit the way our brains work. They are everywhere as common examples and so who would guess that they are so problematic for living? But they are.

Why are the cognitive biases so seductive? They are seductive, in part, because they are often helpful and useful. Often they are right on. The conclusions that you came to proved to be right ... even though you got to it through a cognitive bias, the bias, while not fully legitimate, was a short-cut that saved you time and trouble. They are seductive because we are in a hurry and don't have time to think everything through. We need a quick, down and dirty, process. That's what the bias offers.

Sometimes, just sometimes, my understanding of the situation is good enough to operate from, translation: My Understanding Bias is sufficient. Sometimes the information I have available to me is sufficient, translation: Sometimes my Availability Bias works. Sometimes boldly standing up for what I believe and looking for more things that confirm it actually strengths a good healthy belief. My Confirmation Bias works. Sometimes.

That is the seduction and that is also the problem. Sometimes my understanding is not sufficient, the information I have available is not adequate, and confirming what I already believe is the epitome of stupidity. Sometimes. But when? Is this one of those times? Ah, that's the question and the dilemma.

The problem here is that *unless you check, you won't know.* Yet if you are under time pressure or pressure from work, who has time to check? It is easier just to run with the bias. Of course, this is how we make mistakes— sometimes disastrous mistakes. Here then is a piece of wisdom for you as a Meta-Coach— *check!* Find out about the stress and pressure that your client is under. The more stress in your client's life, the more likely that she will default to her favorite cognitive biases. Anticipate it and make that an area of exploration in your coaching conversations.

That is step one for blasting through a cognitive bias. Because they are thinking short-cuts and because we are more likely to use a short-cut when we're under time and activity pressures— the pressure points in a client's life are telling points for where your client might be defaulting to a bias. So go there. Co-create with your client an *awareness* of what's going on and what bias might be present.

Once you have that, then you are ready to *coach to the bias* as detailed in the last Morpheus (#31). That will allow you to confront it and together with your client blast through it. The cognitive biases are not absolute. They are thinking patterns and because of that, when you and your client move to a meta-position and engage in some meta-thinking about it— you are at the place of change and transformation. Now you can run an ecology check. Now you can run a realistic thinking check. And both of those processes enable you to *blast through a cognitive bias.* Now you can cut short the short-cut and, with your client, take the longer route to constructing a solution that will be more satisfying and longer lasting.

Are you thinking about learning the seven categories of Cognitive Biases? I highly recommend that you learn them thoroughly so that when they pop up in coaching conversations, you immediately recognize them and know how to handle them. To do that, get *Executive Thinking* and spend a week or so on each of the seven categories. Review coaching sessions looking for the particular category that you're acquainting yourself with. It will raise your competence as a coach and train you in critical thinking.

COACHING YOUR CLIENTS' COGNITIVE FALLACIES

The *cognitive fallacies* differ from the cognitive distortions and the cognitive biases. At their core, they are simply wrong through and through. They are errors pure and simple. As humans, we are fallible beings—we are "liable to error," and these fallacies really highlight just how we can get things wrong. This is true for every aspect of our experiencing and functioning. We are fallible and liable to error mentally, emotionally, verbally, behaviorally, relationally, and, in fact, in every area of life. It comes with being human. It is our glory because we are free and can learn, and yet it can become our downfall if we are not vigilant.

These fallacies primarily deal with how we reason, how we argue for a position, and how we try to validate and/or establish credibility for a belief. Because of that, they are all aspects of the Confirmation Bias. Whenever you start with an idea that you already believe and then you want to convince yourself or others of its correctness or rightness, these fallacious ways of thinking then arise.

Now while you can use them to convince yourself about a cause, a decision, a belief, etc., they are mostly social maneuvers. We use them mostly as part of our social dialogue with others trying to get them on board with us. Accordingly, that's why we see them in newspapers and books and why we hear them in speeches, on the radio, on television, etc. We hear them in debates, when people argue, in committee meetings, board rooms, and in propaganda. In mentioning propaganda— that is the basic nature of these *fallacies.* They are highly manipulative. We use them, intentionally or unintentionally, to manipulate others to agree with us or worse, we use them to manipulate the truth.

Here's the list that I put in the book, *Executive Thinking.*

The Cognitive Fallacies
   1) The Appeal to Character: *Ad Hominem*
   2) The Appeal to Ill Logic: *Non Sequitur*
   3) The Appeal to Emotions: *Arumentum ad passiones*
   4) The Appeal to Fear or Force: *Ad baculum*
   5) The Appeal to Ignorance
   6) The Appeal to Ease
   7) The Appeal to Popularity
   8) The Appeal to Authority
   9) The Appeal to the Past, Precedence, or Tradition: *A priori*
   10) The Appeal via Distracting: Red Herring
   11) The Appeal via Over-Simplification – Straw Man Argument

12) The Composition / Division Fallacies
13) The Addition Fallacy
14) The Undistributed Middle Fallacy
15) The "After This, Therefore Because of This" – *Post Hoc* Fallacy
16) The Base Rate Fallacy
17) The Appeal to Memory
Etc

Many of these *cognitive fallacies* show up in the cognitive distortions, in the way children think. You can see that in the first eight that are listed. Children will argue against someone by calling them names (#1), by appealing for pity (#3), by arguing "it's too hard" (#6), that "everyone's doing it" (#7), etc. Thinking patterns which are leftovers from childhood have many fallacies built into them. So what was appropriate at the beginning of our mental development becomes wrong in later development.

Many of the fallacies are rooted in the cognitive biases. The Availability bias shows up in appealing to emotions (#3), to what's popular (#7), and to precedence (#9). and so on. The Consistency bias shows up in appeal to tradition (#9), the Understanding bias in whatever ill-logic a person uses (#2), over-simplification (#11), compositions (#12), addition (#13) etc. It is because the thinking biases are built into the human condition, that is, the way the brain works, these naturally set us up for erroneous thinking.

How do these fit into your coaching? They show up in how your clients argue for their positions, how they try to persuade others, and how they seek to convince themselves. So listen for them in the conversations that they quote. They make up the false thinking that then ties your clients into knots. So, if you're going to coach your client on how to untie these knots, you'll need to know the fallacies and how to address them— the subject next week.

COACHING TO UNTIE THE KNOTS OF YOUR CLIENTS' COGNITIVE FALLACIES

Some cognitions that you have and that your coaching client have are 100 percent pure fallacy. We call these the cognitive fallacies. They are wrong-headed ways of thinking and yet they are so common. They are common because we run to them and develop them to convince ourselves and others, to persuade ourselves and others, to win an argument, to sell our products, and to manipulate to get our way. In the very way that we grow up in our culture, we learn these crooked ways of trying to get our own sweet way. And sometimes they work ... with some people ... for some period of time. Then they backfire.

What role do the cognitive fallacies play in coaching? How do they fit into your coaching practice? Most often, they comprise the false thinking that ties your clients into knots— knots that lock them into limiting beliefs and decisions, knots that work as barriers to learning and creativity, knots that create internal conflicts, and knots that create convoluted relational problems. So, as a Meta-Coach, you need to be able to identify the knots created by the cognitive fallacies and then know how to address the specific fallacies.

It is because they are fallacious, when we use them, we engage in wrong thinking, come to wrong conclusions, and enter into wrong states. Take the first one, Appeal to Character, or what in Latin is called *Ad Hominem.* Here you fight for or against an idea based on *the person* and/or his character, who is communicating it. If you like the person, like something about the person, like the person's religious views, political views, etc., then you appeal to her character. "Because she's a caring person, this has to be correct." "Since he graduated from Harvard, his solution has to work." "She's an upstanding charter member, so she would know." Now all that may be true, but it is equally irrelevant. Even liars, cheats, thieves, and murderers frequently hold a true position about things. If you don't like the person, then you argue against an idea, belief, or position because of who he is. "You can't trust him, he's a vegetarian."

This wrong-headed, muddled way of thinking causes people to believe stupid things, make irrational decisions, and engage in ineffective behavior. You will detect this in coaching when you ask people about how something came about, why they did something, or what they were thinking when X happened. As they *explain*, this is where the cognitive fallacies emerge. You will therefore find them in a client's excuses for not doing what he wants or doing what she doesn't want to do. *Explanations, excuses, reasons, arguments for a case — herein lie cognitive fallacies that undermine a person's effectiveness.*

To address them, *you have to know them.* Then the first thing is to call attention to what the person is doing. Ask if they understand that they are using X cognitive fallacy? They probably do not. Use an acknowledge statement so that your client *hears* what he just said. Then pause. Now ask, "Do you know that you just indulged in the cognitive fallacy known as Y?" Or give feedback, "That sounded like the cognitive fallacy of the Slipper Slope, are you aware of that?"

The reason you will need to know and understand each fallacy is that with each one, there will be unique and different ways of addressing it. About *Ad Hominem* you ask, "What does the person or his character have to do with the quality of the idea?" With *Non Sequitur,* you ask the cause-effect Meta-Model questions. "How exactly does X cause Y?" With some, you will need to be setting some frames about how accurate thinking works.

For example, in "appeal to ignorance" what is fallacious in that just because there is the absence of evidence does not argue *for* or *against* that thing. Having no evidence for a position does not constitute evidence one way or the other. "There's no evidence *against* extra-terrestrial life on earth, therefore it could be and probably is." The person is arguing *for* something based on the fact that there's no evidence *against* it. But "no evidence against X" is a double negative.
  "There's no evidence against the fact that fairies and unicorns do exist."
  "There's no evidence that I'm not lying about X."
  "There's no evidence against the fact that am the best candidate for the job."

The bottle line is that we human beings seem to have an incredible ability to tie ourselves up in knots using cognitive fallacies. It really is a most amazing ability! And sometimes, we get so tied up in mental and emotional knots that we can't untie them. Similar to when you have a knot in your shoe string, if you keep pulling on it, the more you pull, the tighter the knot. So it is mentally with these fallacies, the more you try, the tighter and harder the internal knotting. Now you need a coach— a well trained Meta-Coach who can recognize, discern, and skillfully tutor you to untie the knot.

YOUR CLIENT IS
NOT YOUR BENCHMARK

When we benchmark, we benchmark your *skills.* There's an important reason for that— *that is the only way to truly discover your competence, your ability to add value, the way you make a difference, and the value that you add.* This also speaks to a significant mis-understanding, myth, and erroneous concept among many coaches. They falsely think that their client's success is an indication that they have done a good job. False! They erroneously assume that if their client reaches his outcome or if she gets a breakthrough— they are a good coach. Myth!

Now we all want to be effective. We all want to make a difference and contribute value to the lives of our clients. It's also a great privilege and delight to see change and transformation in our clients. It's a great emotional delight. But it is *not* the way to determine if you are, or are not, effective as a coach.

The Wrong Way to Determine Competence and Effectiveness
The wrong way is to look at your client's results. Yes, you want your client to achieve her objectives. Of course! And yes, you work hard to do your best so that your client experiences success in the coaching process. Of course! But whether that happens or not has very little to do with your competence and effectiveness.

What it mostly has to do with is your client's willingness to engage in the coaching relationship, her responsibility to take effective action, the context of the goal, the quality of the collaboration between coach and client, etc. When you clearly and accurately cut *the responsibility for / to line*, as the coach, you only play a partial role in helping your client reach his outcome. The client plays the biggest role. After all, it is the client who must do the work. Your job as the coach is to facilitate the process. The coach has to go inside, discover her frames, stretch out of his comfort zone, engage with the coach in the conversation, co-create tasks for daily practice, make time to do the coaching tasks, etc.

When it comes to a client failing to reach her goals, *any client can defeat any coach.* Whatever the client sets as his objective, you cannot *make* the client get that objective. That's the client's job. You can't follow the client around in his daily life, at home, at work, at play, etc. and force the client to do what you talk about in the coaching conversation. And you are *not* so charming or persuasive as to over-ride your client's thinking, learning, deciding, and acting. Any client could, at any time, *defeat your best efforts.*

The Right Way to Benchmark Your Competence and Effectiveness
If your client's experiences and outcomes *do not measure your skills,* what should you focus on so that you can truly, accurately, and effectively measure your competence? The answer is so simple— *your skills.* Ah, now you know the reason why we *benchmark the seven core skills* at

ACMC. It is the reason we benchmark another dozen skills at the PCMC. To know *how* you are actually doing, we have to look at *what* you are doing. It lies in the sub-skills and the micro-behaviors of the skills that will inform you about your level of competence.

Consider the basic competencies of coaching— *relationship, inquiry, and feedback*— that we have identified and benchmarked in the Meta-Coaching system. View these as comprising a double-sidedness. When you do, you see the skills of supporting and listening as making up the double sides of *relationship.*   Questioning and meta-questioning as making up the two sides of *inquiry.* Giving and receiving of feedback as the composition of *feedback.* These, along with state induction, have one or two dozen sub-skills.

Do these things along with inducing state and setting frames and *you raise the probability that it will have an effective and productive effect on your client.*   There's no guarantee. We cannot say that your competent skills will always be effective and productive with your client. Your client can resist you or ignore you or just forget to follow-through. Yet the higher your skill level (which is what you discover when you are benchmarked by a competent benchmarker) will raise the probability.

While any given client may not reach his or her goals, over the long-run, the higher number of your benchmark of your skills, the more likely you will be successful. This is the perspective to adopt. Think in terms of the long-term and about the entire population of your clients. The bottom line: Any individual client at any time is *not* the benchmark of your competence or effectiveness.

META-MODEL COACHING

"Bad terminology is the enemy of good thinking."
Warren Buffet (quoted in *Seeking Wisdom*, Peter Bevelin, 2003)

In the field of investment, of buying companies, negotiating for good deals, Warren Buffet came to the understanding that *bad terminology* prevented good thinking. Now isn't that amazing! Of course, we have known that in NLP for over four decades. And linguists have known it back to the beginning of the 20th century. And Korzybski developed General Semantics in the 1940s to address the problem of *bad terminology.*

Is it any wonder then that you as a Meta-Coach focus a lot of your coaching on words, definitions, statements, the propositions that clients present, their goals, beliefs, etc.? *How they code their understanding tremendously determines their success in life.* For this reason, as a coach, you listen very, very carefully not only to what a person says, but *how* the person says something. What words does he use? What phrases does she rely on to try to communicate her meanings? How functional or dysfunctional are the language forms?

The foundation of the NLP Meta-Model of Language is Korzybski's metaphor, "The map is not the territory." As a Meta-Coach it is not enough to know that, you have to deeply incorporate that into your neurology. You have to know that words are not real, they do not adequately describe reality, and they can *entirely* be a person's problem.

Actually knowing a word, know the words that a person uses does not tell you anything. Geraldine and I was talking about this the other day. When we drove into the garage, I pointed to the furnace, and I said, "That's the furnace." After a pause, "How does that tell you?" You can use that term, you can tell others, 'That's a furnace,' but how much do you understand about how that furnace works? If it stopped working and you had to check 'the furnace,' what would you do? What parts of it would you examine?

All that word gives you is *a name.* It does not give you an understanding. Now, how many words do you use that you know *the name,* but you really do not understand the referents? Chemistry, calculus, quantum mechanics, speed of light, depression, leadership, motivation, etc. To know a name does not mean that you *know* or *understand* the *meanings* that are implied by the word.

Your client talked about needing "more motivation," because he is "not motivated," about work, and he's feeling disillusioned. Lots of words! And *you* know what you would mean if you used those words in that way. But what does your client mean? Here is the deceptive nature of language. By knowing the names of things, we all (myself included!) *think* that we understand.

This is the Understanding Bias, the first of the seven major biases that I put in *Executive Thinking*. Deceptively, we think we know. But we do not.

As a Meta-Coach, this is a great starting point. Start at the realization that though you know the words and names of things that your client is using— *you do not know or understand*. If you start there, you now have a place to go— as you seek first to understand. Now you will repeatedly ask the clarification questions. That is, you will seek to understand *the referent experiences* which your client is referring to by not letting a name or a word trick you into thinking you understand when you don't.

There's the hidden factor in this as well. Namely, *most of the time your client also does not understand what she is talking about*. Really! Typically they *think* they do, but once you start asking Meta-Model questions, they quickly discover that they actually do not. They also are tricked and deceived by the nature of language. With coaching questions, you get them to the place where they quickly discover that they are inarticulate and cannot put in words what they are experiencing. Then, through the discomfort of searching for words and playing around with various ways of thinking about things— they become articulate. They find enhancing and even transformative ways of saying things, thinking things.

Now both you and your client come to understand their meanings and, as you do, begin to construct more empowering meanings for their lives. As you do this, your client learns a new language — *the language of thinking*. You give them the Cognitive Distortions and you start to introduce the Cognitive Biases and Fallacies— and now they have a far richer internal vocabulary, a vocabulary by which they can govern their own thinking and learning processes.

Since I have already focused on the three big areas of *bad thinking* (Cognitive distortions, biases, and fallacies), in this series I will focus on how you can use the Meta-Model of Language as your primary tool for coaching. Very few NLP trained persons have been trained very well in the Meta-Model. It is the most neglected, yet most powerful, of all of the resources in NLP.

WHAT IS META-MODEL COACHING?

If you're going to use the Meta-Model in coaching, you have to know what it is.   So, what is the Meta-Model? Short and simple it is a set of linguistic distinctions and questions. The distinctions identify particular kinds of *semantic structures* and the questions gives you a way to recapture *the inner essence of meaning* regarding what the person is trying to say. The distinction reveals a pattern in how the speaker is speaking. As you learn to recognize and identify that pattern, you now know what to ask to facilitate the meaning-making process. So to know, learn, and effectively use this model, simply think— *distinction & question.*

Now the Meta-Model was developed from the much more formal *Transformational Grammar* (TG) model that Norm Chomsky invented in 1956. This was the dominant model in Linguistics for many years. Then it was replaced. In fact, the very year that NLP made its public appearance, 1975, was the very year that Chomsky himself said that the TG model was inadequate to explain linguistics. He then gave it up ... others, like George Lakoff, carried it on for awhile and also eventually rejected it. It was a nice *stepping stone* from the old Behaviorist view of Linguistics to the newer ways that have developed, the Cognitive Linguistics Models.

Anyway, that's where it came from and that's the origin of a lot of the weird names and terminology in the Meta-Model. I blame John Grinder for that! He was the one who has a speciality in TG and bring over into NLP such terminology as derivational search to referential index, lost performatives, nominalizations, etc. The good news is that you do not have to use that terminology and lose all your friends!

The structure of the Meta-Model involves three categories: deletions, generalizations, and distortions. Using Korzybski's metaphor of a map and the fact that the map is not the territory, think of these three categories as *mapping processes.* When you make a map— you leave things out, you cannot put everything on the map (deletions). You also make broad strokes to represent the smaller details, you generalize things into categories (generalize). You also twist things around as the map you create is more of a caricature than a realistic representation (distortion). Here then is a summary of the distinctions.

Deletions
    1. Simple Deletions (characteristics left out)
    2. Comparative and Superlative Deletions (unspecified relations)
    3. Unspecified Referential Indices: *Unspecified Nouns and Verbs*
    4. Unspecified Processes — Adverbs Modifying Verbs.
    5. Unspecified Processes — Adjectives Modifying Nouns.
Generalizations
    6. Universal Quantifiers (UQ)

7. Modal Operators (MO)
8. Lost Performatives (LP)

Distortions
9. Nominalization (Nom.)
10. Mind-Reading (MR)
11. Cause-Effect (C-E)
12. Complex Equivalences (CEq.)
13. Presuppositions (Ps.)

For many, these distinctions sound like grammar. *They are not!* This is *not* even the field of Linguistics. This is *neuro-linguistics.* "What is the difference? What is neuro-linguistics?"
> *Neuro-linguistics is how language affects your neurology; it is how your neurology processes your language.*

That means that as *you use language,* you are deleting things, you are leaving all kinds of things out of your statement. You are generalizing things, creating mental categories in which you are ignoring details. And you are distorting what you are representing, sometimes usefully and sometimes harmfully. We all do. Your clients do. And because we do— when you meta-model your client, you help him express his meanings more fully and more precisely.

As you know and recognize the linguistic distinctions, you recognize semantic patterns and you can then ask questions that facilitate a fuller expression of the person's meanings. When you do this in coaching, both you and your client develop a fuller and more precise understanding of the meanings being expressed. Clients often discover what they really mean. They come to know themselves better; they become better communicators. You enable them to manage the different levels of communication more effectively.

The power of the Meta-Model is that when you become *skilled in using it*, you make language your servant rather than being a servant (and victim) of language. Now language can do your bidding. By way of contrast, *most human beings are victims of their language.* And worse, they don't even know it!

Meta-Coaching News
Welcome all of the new Meta-Coaches from Egypt!
We have 23 new colleagues on this egroup — from 4 countries.
They were trained by Tarek and Hossam and 10 Team Leaders.
Welcome to the Meta-Coach Community!

META-MODEL REASONING

While Geraldine and I were on a hike the other day, she was talking about the Meta-Model as a coaching tool, as the essence of NLP, and as the key to communication. She was also telling me about the deliberate practice group that she runs on Friday evenings. So I decided to test her — like we do on Day 8 of ACMC.

> "Okay, what are the reasoning patterns that are both required when you use the Meta-Model and what are the reasoning patterns that are developed as you use the Meta-Model?"

With a bit of prodding, she actually did very well as she identified three of the patterns. After that she would not leave me alone, but strenuously urged me, dare I say blackmailed me, to write an article on this subject. I thought it might be a good way to end this series on *Meta-Model Coaching,* but the woman's voice prevailed. Plus, I wanted to avoid creating any domestic turbulence, so I got busy putting this article together(!). [Say I wonder if she used any of the Meta-Model patterns on me?]

Now in terms of "reasoning"— *reasoning is thinking. Reasoning* is *thinking about something in a particular way.* When you reason, you calculate something, evaluate, and then come to a conclusion. You use reasoning to make sense of something, explain something, or justify something. In this way, the reasons you come up with give an account of something or argue for something. Given this, there are many ways to reason— many are legitimate, helpful, and productive. Many also are illegitimate, destructive, and dysfunctional. All of the cognitive fallacies that we covered fall into the latter category. Yes people "reason" in those ways, but they are manipulative, unfair, and biased ways of using your powers of thinking.

When you use your *capacity to reason* in those ways, you map out false and untrue conclusions. You construct false meanings. Those conclusions become limiting beliefs, decisions, understandings, etc. Now the most common ways to reason is to use inductive and deductive reasoning. You can begin with sensory-based facts and from them induce upward to draw a conclusion. This is how scientists, engineers, detectives, and lab technicians think. Conversely, you could start with a basic idea or principle and *deduce downward* to practical applications. That's how philosophers, artists, and imaginative people think. Both are legitimate ways of reasoning. A third way, steps aside from "chunking up or down" (NLP talk) to analogous reasoning— using metaphors, stories, poems, etc. as a way to think "on the side" or laterally. [My books *Hypnotic Thinking* and *Metaphorical Thinking* covers analogous reasoning.]

What results from reasoning? Constructs of meaning. These are structured in a certain way and show up as the distinctions in the Meta-Model. So when you ask Meta-Model *questions* in

response to the Meta-Model *distinctions,* you inherently use (and perhaps learn) five different reasoning patterns.

1) Categorizing. You do this as you use the three categories of deletions, generalizations, and distortions. Here you recognize the basic modeling or mapping categories that people use when they think and talk. By categorizing, "that's a generalization" or "that's a deletion," you identify the kind of reasoning a person has done, or is doing, to generate the linguistic maps and meaning constructs that you are hearing.

2) Detailing. With the deletions, you recognize that the person has deleted key information, so you ask the most basic Meta-Model question, "What specifically does X refer to?" Here you are recovering the elements left out. Here you are inviting the person to return to the sensory territory to get a fuller description of the experience. In Meta-Coaching we call this the *clarity check* which needs to be asked repeatedly as you follow and track down the person's references.

3) Identifying structure. Another reasoning pattern is that of being able to recognize the most common linguistic patterns in human thinking, reasoning, and communicating. Here you notice more specifically which Meta-Model *distinction* occurs in the person's speech. These are meaning constructs that make up the Meta-Model.
   C-E: Cause-effect — X leads to —> Y.
   CEq: Complex Equivalence X equals = Y.
   Id.: Identity: X equals = Y.
   Personification: X equals = Y.
   LP: Lost Performative. Map maker is missing.
   UQ: Universal Quantifiers. X made universal for all time, places, persons.
   Nom.: Nominalization: An active verb is transformed into static noun.
   MO: Modal Operator: Rule describes a kind of world.
   M: Multi-Ordinal: X_1 is embedded inside X_2
   Met: Metaphors: X_1 is the source domain for the target domain of Y_1.
   DVS: Delusional Verbal Splits. Elements ripped apart from their system.
   O/U: Over/Under Defined Terms: Over-defined by dictionary, under-defined by extension.
   E-O: Either-or Phrases: Statements framed in a dichotomized and polarized way.
   SW: Static Words: Words that picture the world as frozen, not moving or changing.
   PW: Pseudo-words: Sounds and sights that look and sound like words but have no reference.

4) Inferring. By recognize Ps. (Presuppositions), you know that things are being implied in a person's speech that are not stated. So, *you infer what's implied.* Some inferences are logical and the implication is built into the terms; others are logical possibilities that you have to guess at and then check for validation.

5) Process thinking. In all of this, you are reasoning/ thinking in terms of processes. This is yet another overall effect of the Meta-Model— turning mental and linguistic maps from static, frozen, and unmoving pictures of the world into dynamic processes. It is in this way we find out *how* a person is "doing" their experiences. How a person is *doing depression* or procrastination, or anxiety, or joy, or discipline, and so on. When you can do that, you can model.

AH, THE THINGS YOU HAVE LEFT OUT!

The simplest facet of the Meta-Model is *deletions.* Listen to anyone speaking and they regularly and consistently *leave things out.* Critical things! Often, they know what they mean and they think they have mentioned it when actually they have not. This is where you have to ask the "specifically who, when, where, how, etc." questions. Now the good thing about deletions is that all natural speakers of a language has *an intuitive sense that something is left out.*
> "He rejected my proposal?"
>> Who are you talking about?
> "She just will not cooperate."
>> Who specifically are you referring to?
> "He's rejected the proposal three times."
>> How specifically did he reject it?
> "She's much smarter than John."
>> What standard are you using for 'smarter?'
> "He sarcastically smiled and said nothing."
>> In what way was his smile 'sarcastic?'

Deletions
> *1. Simple Deletions* (characteristics left out)
> *2. Comparative and Superlative Deletions* (unspecified relations)
> 3. Unspecified Referential Indices: *Unspecified Nouns and Verbs*
> 4. Unspecified Processes — Adverbs Modifying Verbs.
> 5. Unspecified Processes — Adjectives Modifying Nouns

Even though we all have an intuitive sense about when things are left out, this intuition can grow dull. The solution is to *make a movie in your mind* from the words you hear. Only represent in the movie in your mind what is actually said that is sensory based. If your client says that someone rejected him, that verb, "reject" is not specific. I cannot see or hear "reject." It is a general category and has left out important details.
> Did the person spit on you? Did he hit you? Did she yell at you? Perhaps they dismissed what you presented and ignored it. Did he call you names? Did she curse you? Did he fire you? Did she file a lawsuit against you? How specifically did the person "reject" you?

Until you can make a movie from the word and see it or hear it in the movie in your mind, you do not have enough information to know what the person is talking about. Does this seem simple? It is! And yet it is also hard. For many people it goes right over their head and they simply do not even notice that they don't have details. Why is that? It is because they are rapidly meaning-making inside their own heads and filling in the details with their own references. You know what reject means so you fill it in and don't even question it.

Meta-Modeling is *questioning*. What makes that challenging, even hard, is that you have to stay really *awake* and conscious and not engage in *lazy listening*. Active listening is making that movie in your mind as your client speaks and constantly checking if your client is giving you specific information or not. So the challenge for you as a Meta-Coach is *listening intensely enough* to catch and detect the deletions. Listen for what is *not* there.

A large part of the problem is that we tend to take language for granted. We take for granted also the *meanings* which we attribute to words and to language and so do this so much that it is common that we think the *meaning* is in the words.   We forget that each person is a *meaning-maker* and that the meaning we attribute may not be, and often is not, the same meaning that the person speaking is making.

Once a client was speaking to her coach about her home life and parenting and how hard it was. "My child is so demanding of my time, so competitive, and I'm drained, just worn out from it, and I just need a way to keep up my energy." That was her opening statement! As I listened to how the coach handled this, he decided to focus on the phrase "keep up my energy" *assuming* that's what the client wanted. Ten minutes later I stopped the coaching session and asked, "Do you understand the situation the client is presenting to you?" He said he did. I said, "Tell me what you understand." He did. I then asked, "What is 'so competitive' in the situation?" He didn't know. "How is the competition somehow 'draining' her?" He didn't know. "When she is worn out from 'it,' what is 'it.'" He didn't know.

In this case it turned out that the client was *thinking* about one of her children, the girl, who had a twin, a brother and when she said "my child" she was *only thinking* of one of them, not both. That's a lot to leave out! It turned out the twins were highly competitive with each other, but it was the girl who was wearing her out so she felt drained. The boy was a bit stronger and more forceful, leaving his sister to always running to mom for help. Ah, now that's a different movie in my mind!

Expect your clients to know things and be aware of things *and leave them out when talking* and not realizing that they have not mentioned them. Get into the habit of asking, "What have you been thinking and *not* saying?" Learn to chase down the deletions that seem to hold critical information. Do that and you are engaged in Meta-Model Coaching.

AH, THE THINGS
YOU HAVE GENERALIZED!

When I first learned the Meta-Model, I didn't get it. I didn't get *the big deal* that all of the trainers in my original NLP training was saying. What was it that they saw in the Meta-Model that I was missing? That was my question. Prior to attending NLP, I read *The Structure of Magic, Volumes I and II,* and as a student of linguistics, I *assumed* that I understood it. And because of that, I completely missed it. So later when Bandler said that everything the founders had created in NLP came from the Meta-Model, I did a re-take. "What?" "Everything?" "How could that be?" "By the way, what is the Meta-Model?" I wrote about this in *Communication Magic* (1997/2001).

So, I went back and re-read *Magic* with new eyes. I read it through the lens of "everything in NLP was and is created by the Meta-Model." That's when I discovered the *modeling processes* and began to understand how we use the Meta-Model to model expertise, *and also* how each of us model the world and how our client's have modeled their world.

> *And when you know how a person has modeled the world, you know about the hidden structures in them (in their mind-body system) that construct the reality that they live within, enjoy, and perhaps causes them misery.*

The first process we all use in modeling the world is *deletion— we leave things out.* So the linguistic distinctions that highlight the basic kinds of deletions (Morpheus #39) enables you to recover critical information. Often this is all you have to do— with yourself or in coaching with others. Once the essential data is recovered, you have a fuller and richer map— enough so that you can continue your journey.

The second process we all use in modeling our worlds is generalizations. We generalize. Since you can't put everything on the map, you sum things up, and put things into a category that can hold multiple things. You generalize— and you over-generalize. It is one of the first cognitive distortions and what young children *have to do.* Their brains are not developed enough to make lots of fine distinctions. So when a child learns the word "doggie," at first, all animals are 'doggies." They generalize. And via generalization, we create categories for the mind, beliefs, understandings, etc. This is a much larger mapping process and one fraught with danger.

Generalizations – Linguistic Distinctions in the Meta-Model
>   *6. Universal Quantifiers* (UQ)
>   *7. Modal Operators (MO)*
>   *8. Lost Performatives (LP)*

The most obvious way to generalize is to us a universal quantifier— all, always, never, none, everybody, etc. When a young child is laughed at then, "Everybody hates me!" When you get frustrated on a project, "Nothing ever goes right with me." "I will never learn this!" The generalization here is obvious and *fun to play with*. Just take the word and turn it into a question. "Nobody?" "Always?" Some statements do not use these specific modifiers, but they *imply* them. "The way things are at work is terrible." The speaker has not said "everything" but it is implied.

Now your *mode of operation* (i.e., modus operandi) speaks about *how you go about living in the world*. Is it an operation of — possibility or impossibility? Power or dis-empowerment? Rules or permissions? Choice or lack of choice?

> Possible/ impossible: can, can't.
> Power / disempowerment: can, can't.
> Rules / permission: must, have to, should, get to, want to, shouldn't.
> Choice / non-choice: Choose, want to, can't.

If you want to know *what world* you live in, or your client lives in— listen for their modal operators. Which ones do they predominately use? Which are seldom used? Your inferential listening here will detect what is implied in the hidden frames in the back of their mind. "I have to exercise." Where there are "rules" —there is pressure and demands that you do something in a certain way. That will lead to stress. "I get to work on this project." Where there is choice, there is the power of one's will and intention. That implies empowerment.

With the *Lost Performative,* the maker of the map has gone missing. "Who made this map? When? Where? Under what conditions?" But the lost performative sounds like an eternal truth. "Boys shouldn't cry." "That's mother's intuition." "What doesn't kill you makes you stronger." Aphorisms, proverbs, handed-down advice, urbane myths, etc. are examples of lost performatives. It's like a map that someone made fell out of an airplane and landed on your front porch or in your mind, and now it is "the law." Cultural rules are passed down in this way. "Be seen, but don't be heard." "It's not your place to question your mother." For this generalization, ask for the map-maker. "Who said that?" "Where did you learn that?"

One client of mine said, "Well, you know blood is thicker than water." He was arguing against the idea that I had propose that he move out and create friendships with people who shared his values and life-style. "I just *can't* do that [modal operator] because blood is thicker than water [metaphor]." "Who told you that?" "Well, I've always heard it." "From whom?" "Well, my dad and uncles." "So you are using that metaphor about the consistency of water and blood as a rule that prevents you from making friends so you can feel supported?" Long pause. "Well, when you put it like that it sounds pretty silly." "Just how silly does it sound to you now?"

When you generalize you create a larger-level map that operates as a belief, understanding, decision, etc. and now it will govern your life. You now have a *neuro-linguistic and neuro-semantic map* that will organize your state, your perceptions, your emotions, and your behavior. So it serves to be very careful when you generalize! And when you detect the generalizations in your clients — you are dealing with highly significant factors in their lives.

AH, THE THINGS
YOU HAVE DISTORTED!

If you want to know *how* people can really create strange, weird, destructive, and even pathological mental maps— look no further than *the linguistic distortions.* And yet, these neuro-linguistic distinctions can also enable you to create extremely wonderful, practical, life-changing, world-changing ideas. Actually, we do not have a choice about whether we will use linguistic distortions in our mapping operations— it is inevitable. It is the way the brain works and how modeling the world works.

When you map something from the territory, you inevitable create caricatures. Sometimes it is because our drawings are not all that realistic, sometimes because a caricature better represents things, sometimes because our deleting and generalizing causes us to twist things around.

Distortions — Linguistic Distinctions in the Meta-Model
>   *9. Nominalization* (Nom.)
>   *10. Mind-Reading* (MR)
>   *11. Cause-Effect* (C-E)
>   *12. Complex Equivalences* (CEq.)
>   *13. Presuppositions* (Ps.)

Bob says, "My relationship with Sue is at a cross-roads." The problem is that you cannot make a movie in your mind of that. Too much is deleted, too much is generalized, and in the process, there's a big distortion in the language of that statement. To make a movie of that, you have two persons, Bob and Sue. Then there is their *relationship.* That word is a nominalization. It sounds like a noun, but since it is not a true noun (e.g., person, place, or thing) something is messed up about it. But what? Ah, the actions between Bob and Sue. How are they *relating*? Now you know what a nominalization is— a *false verb.* It is a verb indicating action that has been frozen into a static noun-like word. Of course, because *relating* is an unspecified verb, we are back to deletions and we have a generalized category, relating.

It's in this way that nominalizations offer a tremendous challenge to clear communication. What should be coded as a verb, indicating actions, is mis-coded as a false-noun which, in turn, triggers us to falsely represent and then understand. This is big time distortion. And it is the way that we tend to use language especially in academia, business, education, science, etc. We tend to over-rely on nominalizations and in the process, we forget *what we are actually talking about, that is, referring to.*

If that wasn't bad enough, we humans also have the tendency of multiplying nominalizations by nominalizations. George Orwell illustrated how thick and unreadable to say nothing of how challenging to understanding the multiplying of nominalizations can be:

> "*Objective consideration* of *contemporary phenomena* compels the *conclusion* that *success* or *failure* in *competitive activities* exhibits no *tendency* to be *commensurate* with *innate capacity,* but that a *considerable element* of the *unpredictable* must *invariably* be taken into *account.*"

Clients do the same only with more personal references:

> "Due to my *relationship* with Sue, my *self-esteem* has been compromised to the place of *an existential crisis* of my *integrity* which is only deepening my *depression* and *anxiety.*"

As the words in italics are actually false-nouns—nominalizations, they create a lot of twisting and turning and distorting of meaning. In the end, it's difficult to figure out what a person means. Joe Cheal notes that "even the word *nominalization* is a nominalization" (*Solving Impossible Problems,* p. 118). He further says that "part of the human mindset appears to need to convert processes into things." *Things* are easier to handle, so we freeze frame a process (described by a verb) and turn it into a *false-thing*.

There are two tests you can use to determine if a so-called noun is a true noun or a nominalization. 1) The Wheelbarrow Test: can you put it in a wheelbarrow? 2) The Ongoing Test: Does it fit or make any sense to say "it is an ongoing X?" An ongoing relationship? Yes. An ongoing motivation? Yes. An going chair? No. Joe Cheal adds another test, 3) The Polar Opposite test: Does it have a polar opposite that makes sense? Nominalization do, nouns do not. Competition – collaboration; simplicity – complexity; stability – change; empowerment – control, etc. What is the polar opposite of desk?

> "Perhaps one thing that distinguishes a nominalization from a 'non-nominalization' is that it has a meaningful polar opposite." (Ibid, p. 120)

We all *distort* information as we turn it into knowledge and one of the primary ways we do that is by creating false nouns. Now because nouns and nominalizations *imply a static world,* the more a person is oriented to a static world, rather than a dynamic world, the more that person will defer to using nouns for verbs.

> "Love" as an abstraction something you *have* rather than what you *do.* Then you might falsely conclude that you possess those you love. But love is not a thing that you can have, it is a process, an inner activity that you engage in.
> "Problem" sounds like a thing. It is not. If you have a *problem,* you have made something into a "thing" that you possess and own. And imagine the distortion if you map that you not only have a problem, but you are a problem.

Now you know why we challenge the distortion of nominalization and seek to de-nominalize.

WHY NSTT IS EASIER THAN ACMC

You may or may not be aware of the fact that we give certificates to 98% of the participants at NSTT *during* Trainers' Training whereas with ACMC we provide 0% Certificates (the only exceptions are those who are re-visiting). Wow! So what is the big difference? Further, 98% of all people who participate in NSTT reach the benchmarks in their final presentations ... but hardly anyone does at ACMC. Now that is truly a world of difference? So what makes presentation skills so different from coaching skills?

In Trainer's Training, there is very little focus on content. There is some, but it is minor. We do give out a 26-page questionnaire to each person to fill out before coming. That tests a person knowledge and understanding of NLP and Neuro-Semantics. And we spend maybe 5% of our time on that. Actually very little. Why? The reason is because prior to NSTT a person has studied the NLP Practitioner level, the NLP Master Practitioner level, the Meta-States Model and if he followed the recommendations— then he has read 10 or more books on the subject. So in terms of content, a person has already been exposed to the major domains of NLP and Neuro-Semantics. Many have done dozens and dozens of applications workshops as well.

Given that, the main focus is on *the presentation skills.* In fact, the training manual for NSTT, which we fondly call "The Treasure Chest" is more than 250 pages that is mostly about *presentation.* That is, on *how* to present material. How to engage an audience, how to use one's voice, the stage, props, how to induce state, how to frame, etc.

At NSTT, every person is up on one's feet and making presentations every day. They present as a review whatever they heard which was just presented. We present something about presentations and then they are to get up in front of their team and re-present it. As they do, they are challenged in some way. That enables them to develop the competence of flexibly adjusting in the moment while maintaining their presentation state. Each person is then given a particular pattern to present. Day after day they present bits of it ... and receive immediate feedback and then they do "Take Two" of the same which enables them to integrate the feedback on the spot.

Then during Days 11 to 13, each person gives a 30 minute presentation. They have not only become thoroughly familiar with the pattern and know it inside-out, they have refined their presentation skills so well that most hit all of the 9 competencies in the first go. Those who don't, hit it in the second go.

That's very, very different from coaching. While in presenting, you know your subject and have well practiced it, in coaching, you don't even know *what subject* the client will give you to deal with. The client decides on the topic, not you. And if the client is unsure about "what he wants" then you first have to get that clarified before you can coach on the subject. And along the way, you don't know how the client needs in order to have the subject developed. As a trainer or

speaker, you decide on how you want to develop the subject. Not so in coaching. So a big, big difference in coaching is that you are completely at the mercy of the client in terms of the subject and its development.

Coaching is also much more dynamic in that it is a dialogue, line by line, sentence by sentence between you and the client. Presenting is far more a one-way conversation. You have something to present and so you make your presentation —all the while keeping the audience engaged and in rapport with you. You're doing nearly all of the work. In coaching, however, the client does most of the work. You facilitate your client doing that work— getting clear, making a decision, creating a plan, making internal changes, confronting blind spots, etc.

Coaching therefore requires a lot more flexibility and the ability to adjust in the moment to the client to keep the client on track. In presenting, if you have done your preparation, you have created the track, you have practiced it, and you know how to keep yourself on track. That's a hundred-times easier than keeping clients on track.

For these reasons most people find NSTT a lot easier than ACMC. What you learn in NSTT is how to get up in front of a group of people and effectively communicate so that you win their hearts and minds. You learn how to stay relaxed, focused, and operating from your genius state of presenting. You learn how to adjust your presentation in real time, ever so subtly, to your audience. You learn how to work with the collective mind of a group— informing and inspiring them to develop a set of new or more refined skills.   So *easier,* yes! But that doesn't mean that the benchmarks are low— in fact, they are the highest in all of the field of NLP.

10

DISTORTIONS ALERT

The ability to twist and distort language so that you can construct new ideas and concepts holds the power to create exceedingly inventive things that can make life a hundred times better *and* the power to invent things that make life a living hell.   It is the same power either way. This means that language can be used for both good and evil. It means that language can go far beyond merely representing what is there and doing so with accuracy and precision. You and I can use language that invents concepts that do not exist naturally in the world.

Welcome to the realm of distortions! Nominalizations distort things by turning verbs into nouns. Mind-reading distorts things by second-guessing what another person is thinking, feeling, or intending. Cause-effect constructs "causation" out of correlation or out of nothing. Complex equivalence makes two things the same which are not, and presuppositions constructs premises and then hides them in assumptive frames.

Distortions — Linguistic Distinctions in the Meta-Model
       9. Nominalization (Nom.)
       10. Mind-Reading (MR)
       11. Cause-Effect (C-E)
       12. Complex Equivalences (CEq.)
       13. Presuppositions (Ps.)

Mind-Reading
"You are upset with me." "You are really angry." "You are intending to take advantage of me." These *mind-reading statements* start with the word "you" and then asserts something about a person that is an internal state of thinking, feeling, and/or intending. Even if what is asserted is true, the statement is still just a guess. In that case, it would so happen to be a correct *guess,* but a guess nonetheless. To assume that you can "read" someone's mind is a tremendously big distortion. Well, try to read your own mind! What are you thinking? Feeling? What are your intentions? Actually, it is challenging enough to read our own minds. Assuming that you can read another's is a form of megalomania. You can't. You can guess. But your guessing is your meaning-making, not the other's. a mind-reading statement therefore distorts the information by assuming it is true about the other person without checking with that person.

Cause-Effect
"She makes me angry." "He makes me feel appreciated." "That job is depressing." In a cause-effect relationship between two things there is a direct causational mechanism and this is what we search out in every science— How does X cause Y? Science is devoted to figuring out *how* something works and what are the variables that make it so. The problem is that we live in a

process world (Korzybski) such that there are usually multiple factors contributing to generate something.

What is distorted in the statement, "She makes me angry," is the over-simplification. And the key factor that is "causing" the anger has not only been left it, it is completely missing. Factually, each person is responsible for his or her own emotions. If I am angry, I am *making* myself angry about something. My anger is a response to thinking that something is violating my values and it occurs inside my neurology. That's what anger is. So perhaps "she" did something that the speaker thinks, evaluates, assumes, etc. constitutes a violation of his values. Still, he has to see that, make that interpretation, mobilize the neurons in his brain to activate certain ideas, release certain neuro-chemicals in his system, and on and on. What a distortion to say that "she makes me angry!" At best, she only provided a stimulus for him to go to work to create the experience of anger. Neither the world or the people in it are so simple.

Complex Equivalence
The distortion here is making two things equivalent or the same which are not the same. "His harsh tone of voice is disrespectful." "I know what she means by rolling her eyes when I talk, it is dismissing my ideas." Here something *internal* is equated with something *external*. External: harsh tone, rolling of eyes. Internal: disrespect, dismissing ideas.

Equating external things with internal things is *the structure of meaning.* It is how you and I, as meaning-makers, *make* meaning. By itself, nothing *is* something else. Each thing is what it is and that's all it is. But when you add in a human being, now you are inventing a formula for *meaning*. Now the human *connects* X with Y and lo, and behold, *meaning is constructed.* But it is a distortion. Now it might be a distortion that works in your favor and makes life better or it may work against you and create all sorts of problems for you. And for that reason, we always want to run a *quality check or ecology check* on the meanings we create.

"On the surface, the statement sounds like a simple equation. Just adding two things together, so how is it a *complex* equivalence?" The complexity arises from the fact that each exists in a different dimension or level. One inside, the other outside. One phenomenological, the other empirical. Then, they are equated as if they were from the same dimension, and that's the complexity.

PRESUPPOSING DISTORTIONS

Having covered the first four distortions, there is the last one in the original Meta-Model list— presuppositions. This is a distortion that you inevitably make, and you do so *all the time!* That's because whenever you open your mouth and speak, you are making all sorts of assumptions. You are making assumptions about whatever you are talking about— life, reality, other people, business, health, exercise, and on and on. It is inevitable because it is how language works.

Now to complicate matters further, when you do use presuppositions, *you tend to hide the those assumptions away in the back of the mind* so that even you yourself are not aware of them. They are there as presuppositions and premises. These are the things that have to be true for what you say to make sense. If I say, "The dinosaurs are rampaging in New York City," that presupposes that there are dinosaurs, that they are alive, and that they are in New York City. These are *implied* by the statement, and from the statement you can *infer* them. It is in this way, that we do inferential thinking, reasoning, and listening.

Distortions — Linguistic Distinctions in the Meta-Model
  9. Nominalization (Nom.)
  10. Mind-Reading (MR)
  11. Cause-Effect (C-E)
  12. Complex Equivalences (CEq.)
  13. Presuppositions (Ps.)

A client says, "I want to lose weight, but I just can't. No matter what I try, before I know it, the weight has come back." What is presupposed in that? The obvious ones are right before your eyes. With hardly any effort at all, you can *infer* them from what the person said:
  He wants to lose weight.
  He struggles in losing weight and fails in losing weight.

That much is obvious—so at this point your inferential listening is fairly shallow. Let's go deeper. What else is implied? What has to be true for the speaker to say this? We can identify (infer) the metaphor that the speaker is using: "Weight" is like a person who keeps coming back. And given this metaphor, this implies that "weight" is an active thing that has a mind of its own. "It keeps coming back." Now a bit deeper we have this implication— namely, that the problem is *not* losing the weight, but keeping it off. The person *can* lose it. So the first part of his statement is actually false.

The word "can't" in the statement, a modal operator of impossibility, *implies* the lack of ability. The speaker is operating from the premise or frame that "I can't lose weight and keep it off." The *can't* is about keeping it off because "it comes back." The *implication* is either that the

person does not know how to keep it off or does not have the capacity to keep it off. Isn't it amazing how much you can infer from what's implied when you begin to flush out the hidden presuppositions?

To flush out a presupposition, plant this question in your mind. "What is logically implied by this sentence or statement?" Here's a simple sentence that is foundational to Neuro-Semantic NLP: "A map is not the territory it represents, but, if correct, it has a similar structure to the territory, which accounts for its usefulness. ... A word is not the object it represents..." (Korzybski, *Science and Sanity,* 1933, p. 58). The obvious implications are:

> Maps represent territories.
> Words are like maps.
> Comparing words to a map is a metaphor about language's role to reality.
> Maps need to be correct (have similar structure) to be useful.

Yet there is much more implied. Thinking in words is like drawing a map so that you can navigate the actual territory (or reality). Yet our linguistic thinking is not actually the real thing, only a map of it which may be accurate or may not be. The world that we see, hear, and sense in our minds is not real, it is only a simulation of what is real.

Now here's the thing about presuppositions, there are layers of presuppositions upon presuppositions in how we think and reason as we seek to come to know and understand the world. I like to picture them as layers of premises or layers of frames. With each one, there is yet another one, a higher frame above and behind the last one. And together they make up a system of frames as a complete matrix of the mind.

Do presuppositions distort things? You bet! And here's the key to sanity, some distortions help us in managing life and some do not. Some of the invented things that we create, some of our maps are distortion very helpful. Look at any map and it is all a distortion. It shrinks some things, expands others, adds yet other things. The fact that it is a distortion is not the most important thing. What's most important is its usefulness.

THE EXTENDED META-MODEL
Under / Over Defined Words

You know about the original, classic Meta-Model of Language that was developed in NLP in 1975, that I have been covering in the past articles. But do you know about the *Extended Meta-Model* that I created in 1996 at the behest of Richard Bandler? That is less known although it was published in 1997 under the title, *Secrets of Magic,* then under the title *Communication Magic* in 2001. Frank Pucelik, one of the original developers of NLP liked it so much that he and Byron Lewis put it in their 2015 book, *Magic DeMystified.* So you might think that it is well-known in the field of NLP. But it is not. Even among Meta-Coaches, it is not well known. In *Communication Magic* I introduced the following nine additional distinctions to the Meta-Model. The first seen come from Korzybski and *Science and Sanity.*

     1. Over/Under Defined Terms (O/U)
     2. Delusional Verbal Splits (DVS)
     3. Either-Or Phrases (E-O)
     4. Multiordinality (M)
     5. Static or Signal Words (SW)
     6. Pseudo-Words (PW)
     7. Identification (Id.)
     8. Personalizing (Per.)
     9. Metaphors (Mp)

We can classify four of them as generalizations— Over/Under Defined Terms, Multi-ordinality, Static Words, and Identification. Two as Deletions— Either-Or phrases and Pseudo-Words. And we can classify three as distortions— Delusional Verbal Splits, Personalizing, and Metaphors.

1. Over/Under Defined Terms
This distinction shows up when you do a clarity check with a client. "How are you using the term X?" If the person defines the term by other terms— he's operating *intensionally* [notice the 's,' it is not a 't']. If the person points to examples— he's operating *extensionally*. He is *extending* out into the world giving you his reference. He is detailing the specifics. The intensional person is operating on the term *with an internal focus.* He is pointing to other ideas and meanings *in his head*. S.I. Hayakawa (1980), a General Semanticist, described the difference between extensional and intensional meanings:

> "The extensional meaning of an utterance is that which it *points to* or denotes in the extensional world... the extensional meaning is something that *cannot be expressed in words*, because it is that which words stand for. An easy way to remember this is to put your hand over your mouth and point whenever you are asked to give an extensional meaning.... The *intensional meaning* of a word or expression, on the other hand, is that which is *suggested* (connoted) inside one's head. Roughly speaking, whenever we express the meaning of words by uttering more words, we are

giving intensional meaning, or connotations. To remember this, put your hand over your eyes and let the words spin around in your head." (pp. 61-62)

We mainly *over*-define terms and operate from an *intensional orientation*. That means we move into the world assuming that a dictionary definition offers a satisfactory mapping of things.

> "We live, happy or unhappy, *by what actually amounts to a definition*, and not by the empirical, individual facts less coloured by semantic factors. When Smith$_1$ marries Smith$_2$, they most do so *by a kind of definition.* They have certain notions as to what 'man', 'woman', and 'marriage' 'are' *by definition*. They actually go through the performances and find that the Smith$_1$ and his wife, Smith$_2$, have unexpected likes, dislikes, and particularities—in general, characteristics and semantic reactions *not included* in their definition of the terms... " (Korzybski, p. 415)

We have over/under defined most of our terms. We over-define (or over-limit) words *by intension* when we over-trust the formal verbal definition. As we believe in the definition of word as "real," we give it (in our mind) too much substance and concreteness. We under-define words by using too little *extension* (that is, failing to use sufficient specific facts and details that *extend* out to actual referents which we can point to). This results in generalizations becoming merely hypothetical (Ibid., p. lii). Effective evaluating occurs when you *extensionalize.* You do this by *pointing to* the extensional facts thereby operationalizing your terms.

Consider what happens when a woman finds and marries "a good husband." What does this phrase regarding the conceptual linguistic reality ("a good husband") point to?   It exists, totally and absolutely, **not** as something in the world, but as *a verbal definition* in the woman's mind. To the extent that she fails to recognize this, she is setting herself up for disappointment and neurological shock. Ultimately, she will suffer semantic reactions as she encounters *the extensional facts* (he snores, he leaves his dirty clothes around, etc.) of a specific man. Then, she will find the meal (her marriage) very different from what she thought the menu offered.

While Erich Fromm was not talking about under/over definition of words, in *The Art of Being* (1974/ 1993) he wrote about the importance of identifying the references of our words.

> "I beg the reader to be aware of the fact that *words,* in and by themselves, *have no reality,* except in terms of the context in which they are used, in terms of the intentions and the character of the one who uses them. If they are read in a one-dimensional way, without a depth perspective, *they hide ideas* rather than communicate them." (p. 13)

To meta-model under/over defined words:
a) ***Extensionalize the over-defined words*** to evoke a richer descriptions of the person's meanings.
> What is the extensional evidence for this intensional term? When you *operationalize* your term, what can you point to?
b) ***Explore presuppositions in the undefined terms*** to get the speaker's epistemology on the table.
> *What does this assume or presupposed in your statement?*
c) ***Train yourself for the extensional orientation*** to recover the natural order of evaluation, facts first, then conclusions and evaluations.
> *What are the fact upon which you've based this term or this idea?*

The New Meta-Model book is now in The Shop: **www.neurosemantics.com/shop/page/5/**

NEW META-MODEL DISTINCTION:
Static Words

Several sent in questions this past week asking about when and how it came about that I extended the Meta-Model. What triggered it was reading Korzybski in 1989 and 1990. As I did and as I was still reading and rereading the original Meta-Model, I began finding new *linguistic distinctions* that I thought could be considered additions. As I collected them, I began writing about it in *Anchor Point. T*hose articles were then picked up and republished in England and Germany, and other places. That was 1992-4. Sometime later Bandler read them or heard about the articles, and so contacted me about co-authoring a book. It would be published on the 25th year anniversary of the Meta-Model.. That is the story in brief, I will tell more as this series continues.

5. Static or Signal Words
Because we use words to construct meanings, words are creatures of definitions. Ultimately, they are entirely arbitrary. Verbally all words are only *forms of representations* that evoke semantic reactions within you. They refer to events outside of your skin which are literally un-speakable. The *words **are** not* the things, but are like a map or symbol *of* the thing.

When you set or fix the context of a word, you specify its meaning. You then get a specific and definite meaning to the term. Now if you do this by constructing a fixed and rigid meaning, you construct a *Static Word.* How? Take a process, nominalized it into a vague word and inappropriately locked it down with a rigid and "true for all time" definition. You can then freeze it using Aristotelian logic (i.e., "Whatever is, is."). In this way, you essentially confuse your verbal map with the territory. You treat it as having a one-valued significance.

A static word is therefore one that is rigid and absolute which conveys a false-to-fact understanding leading you to over-evaluate the word and treat it as a "thing." It falsely ascribes an objectivity to a word which it cannot bear. When you ask "What do you mean by that word?" you gain some psychological distance so that you can *feel* it is a symbol and **not** the territory.

Because we so naturally *nominalize* verbs by naming processes, we can easily create static and absolutistic terms. When you use these static expressions, you and others are induced into an absolutist and dogmatic state. The statements then sound like pronouncements from heaven. No wonder why Korzybski described such language as speaking in "the deity mode."

> "We humans ... have a tendency to make static, definite, and absolutistic one-valued statements." (p. 140)

By ascribing certitude to a nominalized process and giving them a certitude they cannot have, you load them up. They become "heavy terms" which affect your neurology. You experience the words as *the things*. This "the thinghood of words" creates a mapping delusion. Like an animal you now react to words as if they were mere *signals* for reactions. They cease to be symbols standing for something else. Then when you come to believe that words *"are"* the things they stand for, you treat the words as static, rigid, and unchanging. You speak about the truth, intelligence, the unconscious mind, intuition, science, research, etc.

Bottom line: You can treat words statically or as symbols indicating *processes*. Because of this, we have static words and we have process words. When a word does not seem like a symbol of a process, meta-model it to discover the processes. When you do, the word will come alive— it will reveal the process world that you and your client live in. Many problems are solved by this simple procedure. Many problems vanish in a second when you translate a static word into a description of a process.

Meta-Modeling Static Terms
1) *Extensionalize.*
>   Unfreeze the static word by enumerating the collection of items involved in the term. Extensionalize by dating and timing the referents. For truth— *"Point out to me specifically what you mean when you say 'truth?'"*
2) *De-infinitize the state.*
>   Static words seem infinite. So put the word in context to make it semantically harmless. Identify the stages and variables (processes) within the static word. Index time, place, and person. Doing this communicates, "Not true for all time, all space, all people, etc."
3) *Repeatedly ask the meaning questions until you get sensory-based process words.*
>   *What do you mean by...?*
4) *Loosen up any Multi-Ordinal terms.*
>   If there are any rigid and absolute multi-ordinal term, loosen it up by indexing. Who used it? On what level? When? In what way? Flush out the hidden verbs to find the processes.. For *truth*— ask "true" about what? In what way?

The Extended Meta-Model Distinctions
Generalizations
1. Over/Under Defined Terms (O/U)
2. Static or Signal Words (SW)
3. Multi-ordinality (M)
4. Identification (Id.)
Deletions
5. Either-Or Phrases (E-O)
6. Pseudo-Words (PW)
Distortions
7. Delusional Verbal Splits (DVS)
8. Personalizing (Per.)
9. Metaphors (Mp)

NEW META-MODEL DISTINCTION:
Multi-Ordinality Words

When it came to the original Meta-Model, I never thought of it as exhaustive or "the last word" so that nothing else could be added to it. Actually, I thought the converse. In reading Korzybski's work, I got the idea that here are some more distinctions that could be added. I also got that idea from the original book, *The Structure of Magic* (1975).

> "... our Meta-Model covers only a portion of the verbal communication which is possible..." (*The Structure of Magic,* 1975, p. 107)   "... we suspect that some of the research currently being conducted in Generative Semantics ... will be particularly useful in expanding the Meta-Model further." (Ibid., p. 109)

This means that in 1975, John and Richard themselves *anticipated expanding the Meta-Model.* Later John Grinder wrote that he never anticipated more to be added, but that some of what is there should be taken away. He also developed a strong dislike to the idea that *I* added more distinctions to *his* model. Once in Moscow someone handed him a copy of *Communication Magic* (my book) and asked him to sign it. He refused and that afternoon he carried on about how I had no right to extend the Meta-Model. Of course, that just created more demand for the book.

Multi-Ordinality

When you have a word that you can *apply to itself* so that the word can *reflexively* refer back onto itself, you have a word that can be used at multiple levels. Can you *know* about knowing? Can you *learn* about learning? Here we have two levels. And the second level of knowing or learning is about what you know or learned at the first level. It's a different knowing and a different learning.

As a term moves up the levels, its reference becomes broader. If I learn NLP, or mathematics, or grammar, or any one of a thousand subjects, that first learning is much more specific than when I *learn about learning.* In meta-learning, I'm learning about something broader and more general— how the learning process itself works. Same word "learning," but it refers to something different at each level, hence multi-ordinal.

Counting up the levels with numbers (ordinals, 1, 2, 3, etc.) means that the meaning expands and/or changes as we go up *the levels of abstraction.* Korzybski called these infinite-valued terms *multi-ordinal.* These terms have *a reflexivity* so you can use them on themselves. What's deleted in multi-ordinal terms is *the level* of abstraction.

When we turn "thinking" (a verb) into a noun-like word (nominalization), we have "thought." It sounds like a thing. "I *have a thought* about where to go for dinner." Yet we can also use this nominalization on itself and we can do so at multiple levels. "I have a thought about that thought." This enables us to use these terms on many different levels of abstraction.

Now what might be surprising is that these multi-ordinal, infinite-valued terms include many of our most everyday common terms. We also argue about these highly *ambiguous* terms a lot without taking the time to identify the level of abstraction. What are some examples?
> "Mankind, science, mathematics, man, education, ethics, politics, religion, sanity, insanity, iron, wood, apple, object, etc." We use them not as one-valued terms for constants of some sort, but as terms with inherently infinite-valued or variable referents (Korzybski, 1933, pp. 138-9, 433)

A majority of our everyday terms consist of names for *infinite-valued stages of processes with a changing content*. This is what makes them multi-ordinal in nature. As infinite-valued variables they are not true or false, but *ambiguous* in meaning.

Consider "love" as a multi-ordinal term. We use this term to describe our thoughts and feelings about people and things (objects on the primary level). "I love Jane." "I love ice-cream."   "I love my dog Nero." Though very different, yet our "love" at this level has an actual referent, something you can see, hear, smell, touch, and feel. Our thoughts and feelings all involve an attraction, desire, want, etc. for the object.

We also use this term in reference to concepts. "I love democracy." We can use it in reference to imagined experiences. "I would love being in love."   These concepts are non-objects (no-things) that we have constructed which exist only in the mind. They exist at a higher or meta level. When we say the following, we go further:
> "I love my love of democracy."
> "I love being in love" which creates infatuation.
> "I love the feeling of infatuation" which could be romanticism.

Meta-Modeling Multi-Ordinal Terms
1) **First, check for reflexivity.**
> The multi-ordinality test: check if you can reflexively turn the word back onto itself. Distinguishing multi-ordinality words as those that can operate on many levels of abstraction enables you to recognize their nature and how they function in language. Can you move to another level and still use the term?
>> "Do you love someone? Do you love loving them? Do you love loving love?"
>> "Do you have a prejudice? What about a prejudice against prejudice?"
>> "What science relates to this?" "Do you also have a science of this science?"
> The reflexivity test will not work with non-multi-ordinal words. "What a beautiful tree!" "Can you tree that tree?"
2) **Supply a context.**
> Since these words essentially operate as terms without a context, supply a context for them. This enables you to determine its usage and meaning. As you supply a context, you fix its meaning to a single referent.
3) **Use co-ordinates.**

Use co-ordinates to assign single values to the variable to locate it in time and space. When you identify time co-ordinates or space co-ordinates, you contextualize specific referents. If a word or phrase expresses ambiguity, to understand its meaning, contextualize the level or dimension of your use. This makes the multi-ordinal word specific and precise.

4) **Chunk down.**

Chunk down to the specific referents at each level of abstraction. Develop "a behavioristic and functional set of words" to map with specific descriptions. Using descriptive language orders the happenings on the objective level in sensory-based terms. Operationalize your terms. Functional words enable you to translate dynamic processes into static forms and static processes into dynamic forms.

> "In science, we have to use an actional, 'behaviouristic', 'functional', 'operational' language, in which we do not say that this and this 'is' so and so, but where we describe extensionally what happens in a certain order. We describe how something *behaves*, what something *does*, what we *do* in our research work..." (Korzybski, p. 639)

5) **Put Quotes Around Words**

Since words are not the territory to which they refer, put quotes around slippery words ("mind," "love," etc.) provides a way to alert ourselves to the danger of forgetting their map-like quality.

NEW META-MODEL DISTINCTION:
Identification Words

Identity / Identification

Identification speaks about the factor that Korzybski considered central to sanity and unsanity. For him *identification* represented the heart of Aristotelian logic and *the* most basic false-to-fact structure. Read *Science and Sanity*— there Korzybski as much as declared war on *identification.* So what does *identification* mean? It means *identifying* phenomenon on different levels as the same. Do that and you will not recognize differences.

He defined identity as *"absolute sameness* in all respects." *All* in this definition makes identity impossible. Eliminate "all" and the word *absolute* loses its meaning. Then we simply have "sameness in *some* respects," an acceptable concept. The concept of *similarity* allows us to create, work with, and use generalizations, labels, categories, etc. appropriately. By eliminating "absolute" and "all," we no longer have "identity," only *similarity*.

Now you can more accurately map the world of differences in which nothing is ever the "same." Even the "same" rock is not actually "the same" from moment to moment when we recognize the sub-molecular world where the "dance of electrons" continually causes change and process. The rock may be similar from moment to moment, even century to century, but it is not "the same."

Identification leads to many false evaluations that make life unsane. Identity as "absolute sameness in all aspects" *simply never occurs in the world or even in our heads* (p. 194). Identification arises when you fail to make distinctions. It reflects you to confuse things. Yet in the world we only deal with unique individual persons, events, and things— *non-identity*. Every event is unique and unrepeatable.

Yet identification is natural. Infants develop semantic reactions as they identify things. When an infant discovers that his *cry* brings food, then neuro-semantically, his cry *is* food. He links the noise of crying to the food; he *confuses* the two and they become *anchored* together. Not only does the crying *lead to* food (cause-effect), it *is* food (complex equivalence). No wonder we learn to equate words and referents—we develop an innate feeling, "the map **is** the territory!" You have *identified* word and reality.

For an infant, he cannot distinguish map and territory, not at that stage. Later we have to correct that initial mapping or we will develop *semantic reactions* to words. Then neuro-semantically, words *are* real to you. You feel them as real. Someone calls you "stupid" and you immediately feel bad. You even think, "the word *hurts.*" Actually, you are hurting yourself with the word by identifying. In identifying, you program your neurology to *experience* a map as real.

In identifying, we erroneously evaluate our thinking as if objective existence. Yet as evaluation occurs in mind, it is a meta-stating process. The amazing thing is that we identify at the higher levels as well. We identify with multi-ordinal nominalizations when we take a state of love, joy, fear, anger, disgust, confident, trustworthy, manic-depressive, etc. and *identify* with it. That's a great way to create a form of unsanity. "I am a depressed person."

Identification arises from the tiniest nominalization—the word "*is*." You create it via an equation: "I am ... X" "He is a X." "She's nothing more than a X!" Here we have the 'is' of identification and the 'is' of predication. In the *is* of predication you predicate or assert inside qualities onto the outside world; "The rose is red." This actually fails to map *the interaction* of what we receive from the world and the contributions of our sense receptors (rods and cones).

"Is" does not always create unsanity. There is the auxiliary *is* (an auxiliary verb ("Jim is coming over," "Sally was going shopping"). This "is" supports the verb so it creates no semantic difficulties.

Meta-Modeling Identification
Question to challenge identifications and to de-identify what's been confused.

a) Extensionalize.
> Extend your meanings out to the external world to make your referents clear. This prevents identification. "How specifically are you a failure?" Index specifics (who, when, where, how, which, etc.) by making distinctions and by hyphenating.

b) Differentiate realities.
> As "identity" does not occur in the world, reject the "is" of identity and orient yourself to differences as fundamental. Look for and specify the individuality of events.

c) Sub-script words with time-dates or space-locations.
> Use a subscript to index words to particular times, places, persons, events, etc. extensionalizing creates more clarity: $Science_{Aristotle, 300 BC}$ differs from $Science_{Einstein, 1903}$. Operationalize your terms. Index by sub-scripting: $Smith_{1950}$ is a different person from $Smith_{1995}$. By time-indexing, you specify the date of your statement. You can do the same with person-indexing, place-indexing, and even process -indexing.

d) Practice silence at the unspeakable levels.
> A mental map seeks to represent the territory, it *is* not the territory. So learn to "stop your internal world" of internal dialogue running in your head, so you can feel the gulf between map and territory. Korzybski asked people to point at an object and maintain silence. "Silence on the objective levels" installs a strategy of psycho-physical delay so you don't react without thinking. This technique corresponds to the early NLP technique of accessing the "stopping the world" state (McClendon, 1991, Grinder, 1987), that is stopping your racing internal dialogue. Move back down to the wondrous sensory rich world prior to languaging.

NEW META-MODEL DISTINCTION:
Either-Or Phrases

3. Either-Or Terms and Phrases

If you want to narrow down your mind, your choices, and your creativity, there is an easy way to do it—think and reason in *either-or terms*. Of course, why would you do that? Why do people do that? Ah yes, in service of simplicity. It makes the world simpler ... and more distorted! Viewing and languaging things in *either-or terms* is Aristotelian thinking and it creates two-valued terms like good or bad. This creates the problem of mapping a false-to-fact distinction. It leaves out (deletes) excluded middles, continua, both-and perspectives, degrees, gray areas, fuzzy or indeterminant areas, etc. and so creates over-simplifications.

When you use *either-or* formats, you represent the reality *as if* there are only two choices in perceiving, thinking, valuing, and responding. You polarize back and forth between the two choices. Historically, we have tormented ourselves with the *either-or* orientation in the classic issues of philosophy: heredity / environment; nature / nurture; genetics / learning, etc. These false-to-fact concepts force you to think in a bi-polar two class category. It is *either* heredity *or* it is environment, so, which is it? You are *either* a failure *or* a success.

The excluded middle of Aristotelian logic results in this kind of thinking. "A thing either exists or it does not exist." All other possibilities are simply excluded. Yet reality is far more systemic and dialectic involving *interactions* between genes and environment. Both enter into the picture.

There is some value in *either-or thinking*. It sketches out broad outlines of things: day or night, cold or hot, water or land, etc. *Problems occur when we treat either-or as the final word.* Then we *exclude all middles* which create very limiting maps. Then there is no twilight or dusk. In non-Aristotelian thinking we recognize that we may evaluate something as something other than "true" or "false." It may also be "ambiguous," "meaningless," "doesn't apply,' or the indeterminate, "I don't know" category.

Structurally, either-or statements assume a two-valued cause-effect thinking (*Science and Sanity,* pp. 216-7). Usually, this is an over-generalization. As a result, we preclude recognizing more complex interactions, meanings that involve multiple layers, and things that are ambiguous in meaning until the context is specified. Lotfi Zadeh and Bart Kosko have popularized multivalence using the terminology of *fuzzy logic and reasoning*. The opposite is bivalence or two-valuedness, two ways to answer a question, true or false. Fuzziness is *multi*valence, three or more options, perhaps even an infinite spectrum of options. Kosko (1993) writes, "Everything is a matter of degree."

"We can put black-and-white labels on these things. But the labels will pass from accurate to inaccurate as things change. Language ties a string between a word and the thing it stands for. When the thing changes to a non-thing, the string stretches or breaks or tangles with other strings."   "Scientists had rounded off gray things to white and black things and then forgot about the rounding off and saw only a world of whites and blacks." (p. 5, 14)

Meta-Modeling Either-Or Terms & Phrases
To question either-or in language, reasoning, thinking, etc., and to get to a fuller map of potential referents that have been excluded, use the following challenges:

1) Reality-test the Either-Or structure.
> Does this truly reflect an either-or situation?
> Can I discover any choices in-between, any grays, or other considerations which may enter into consideration and influence my representation of this reality?
> If I think about the two poles presented by these terms, what lies on the continuum between them?   If there was a scale from 0 to 10 what lies at 3, 5, 7, etc.?

2) Explore the possibility of Both-And.
> Could we have overlooked that in some way, at a larger frame, or in different contexts, both of these seemingly opposite responses stand as true?
> In what way could we consider both of these choices as accurate and useful?

3) Add "Etc."
> The use of the term "etc." not only signifies "and so on," but also, "let the reader recognize that there are many other things that we could say about this, and that we have not uttered the last word about this." Korzybski used *etc.* so often in *Science and Sanity* that he developed a very extensive system of dots and commas for conveying "etc." He believed that the liberal use of "etc." would help to establish an *extensional attitude and orientation* and promote a healthy tentativeness. A key journal in the field of General Semantics is titled, "ETC."

Next time a client uses *either-or* in his descriptions— there is a 99 percent chance that the person is suffering from a self-imposed limitation on his thinking. He has just eliminated most of the choices in-between two options that he is considering. Clients who are in stress or distress are especially apt to use *either-or*. It comes with the territory when we operate from fear or threat. So tune your ears for *either-or* and begin to learn how to disturb the person's severely limited world-view.

NEW META-MODEL DISTINCTION:
Pseudo-Words

6. Pseudo-Words or Non-Referencing Words

For clear thinking, reasoning, and communication the ability to distinguish *true* and *false* words is critical. When I talk about *unicorns,* I do not refer to any animal at the zoo. Sorry, no unicorns on display! In the context of zoology, it is a pseudo-word. However, if I'm talking about mythology, then the word has a referent and can function meaningfully as a symbol. So when you hear a word, do *not* immediately assume it is a *real* word. It may not be. And since your thinking can be no better than your use of language, be careful. If you use an antiquated, primitive, and false-to-facts language, *you will think and feel in primitive ways.*

Imagine that you push a multi-ordinal nominalization so far up the levels of abstracting that you detach it from the extensionalizing feedback of reality. What happens then? You are likely to create a non-referencing *Pseudo-Word.* Magically, you have created a symbol for something that doesn't exist. Incredible! This means that you can create mental and verbal maps that *mean* nothing because they *refer* to nothing in the external world. They do not *stand for* or *point to* anything.

Just because you can make verbal *noises* or *spell out marks* on paper which look like and sound like words—that in itself does not necessarily make them true words. Korzybski designated such pseudo-words as *"noises"* (in the auditory channel) and as *"spell-marks"* (in the visual channel).

Now when you have a *pseudo-word,* you have a linguistic map which references nothing. Nothing exists in the actual world, or in the world of logic, to which the word stands as a true symbol. These airy nothings are verbal fictions which have no reality in either dimension. Yet if you use them to navigate through the territory and take action based on such—you will probably experience a disaster in living.

There's an amazing thing about us humans. We can keep on generating "words," even when the symbols that we construct have no referent. Imagine that! Yet when you use words that refer to nothing outside yourself, *you are merely making noises*. What shall we say of maps that allude to no actual territory? They can be interesting, even entertaining. Science fiction glories in such. But are they useful when we want to convey accurate information or to orient ourselves to reality?

When you create and use such "words" that only exist in the world of "mind," these *pseudo-words* become very tricky. Why? Because, though they look like words and sound like words,

they stand for nothing. Your lack of mindfulness about this can lead to lots of delusions, illusions, and deceptions.

Now a word that references nothing in the world may reference an imagined thing which only exists in "the world of mind and communication." We can talk about Alice in Wonderland. We can read about her, imagine her adventures. We can use the stories, events, and dialogues as illustrations. Yet *Alice* and *Wonderland* are only referencing in the world of imagination. In the external world, they are non-referencing words. Don't believe me? Try calling up your travel agent and book a flight to Wonderland. See what happens.

Non-referencing words have no referent that you can *point to*. The *noises* you make and the *marks* you spell out on paper only give the impression of being actual words. Like the lies of Pinocchio who wanted to be a real boy, these words lie when they try to be real words.

To discern if a word is real or not, test to see if it is a *symbol*. To function as a true word, it must operate as *a symbol* and *stand for* something.   It has an extensional connection to the world. To the extent that it stands for, or refers to, something, it serves as a true symbol, elicits internal representations, and mentally anchors a referent.   If it does not, it *is merely noise* and therefore meaningless. A *semantic noise* is a meaningless sign. Ask, Does the referent exist?

False representation is actually a form of fraud. Korzbyski illustrated using the word *"heat"* (p. 107) as a pseudo-word. Because "heat" sounds like a substantive noun—a thing, physicists searched for some substance for centuries. And because there is no such *thing,* they never found it. What is there are "manifestations of energy" which release thermo-dynamic energy. Sometimes we accommodatively use "heat" to refer to our *sense of temperature*. Yet the word is *a linguistic fiction*, it is false-to-facts.

So also with *"space"* (1933, p. 228). "Space" as absolute emptiness does not exist. The word is neither true nor false. As a delusional verbal split, it is non-sense. It makes a noise without pointing to anything in the external world, so it stands as a label for a semantic disturbance inside our skin. Other pseudo-words of unsanity that torment people include "awful," "horrible," "terrible," etc., which are *emotional amplification words* that exaggerate a situation.

Meta-Modeling Pseudo-Words
To question non-referencing pseudo-words, challenge the reality of the symbol:

1) **Reality test the reference.**
    Index the word to its date, time, place, etc. *If I could see-hear-feel X, what would I see or hear or feel? To what dimension of reality does this word refer? In what domain?* It is a symbol for what?
2) **Explore the reference**
    Does the referent of this word exist in either the world of physics or in the world of mind? Could this term be non-referencing and therefore a false symbol? Is the word a fictional and a constructed understanding of the imagination? Does this linguistic symbol reference anything that has actual or logical existence?

NEW META-MODEL DISTINCTION:
Delusional Verbal Splits

Delusional Verbal Splits — DVS

Don't you love the phrase, *Delusional Verbal Splits?* It's one of my favorites. Imagine what you can do with it for fun and provocation!

> "Well, you've got a good point there and it would make sense, but not with the *Delusional Verbal Split* inside your statement. Your sentence needs some therapy!"

What does the phrase refer to and what is its significance? The phrase highlights the General Semantics warning about the danger of *elementalism* which refers to how language compartmentalizes and dichotomizes elements of a whole. We do this when we speak about "mind" and "body" *as if* we can have one of these elements without the other. Try it if you like! Imagine a "mind" apart from a "body." Or, imagine a "body" apart from a "mind." They go together as part of a singular interconnected reality, do they not? When we speak about them as separate, distinct, and unrelated, we create a false-to-fact map. It is always "mind-body."

Consider space and time. Korzybski noted that the Einstein revolution in physics, as he healed the delusional verbal split between "space" *and* "time." He said, "There was no *and.*" Einstein re-languaged it—the "space-time" continuum. By hyphenating time-space, Einstein presented a holistic understanding that more accurately expresses the newer quantum mechanics understandings. Taking his cue from this, Korzybski suggested a similar healing for other forms of delusional splitting of the world: "mind-body," "thoughts-emotions," "neuro-linguistics," "neuro-semantics," "psycho-logics," etc.

Elementalism occurs when you take reality-as-a-whole and split it up into elements or parts If you remember that you are doing this and that you are only doing it conceptually and linguistically, all will go well. But the moment you forget, confuse the map-territory distinction, and think that the *elements actually exist apart from the rest of the system,* you then treat the elements as having a separate and unrelated existence. That's when things go amiss.

This describes one magical use of words. We can use words to sort, separate, divide, and categorize the ever-connected flow of processes of the world. By words, you can split up, sort out, organize, and punctuate the flux of reality. By doing this allows we to create theories, understandings, hypotheses, etc. along with fields, disciplines, and areas of intellectual study. We create them verbally, but not actually. You can split up the world by the way you language your concepts. By languaging you dichotomize the rich interconnectedness of the world. This creates *elements*, parts, pieces, etc. Later, if you forget that you distort the territory in your mapping, and then forget to reconnect the systems. If you get so used to the parts, you may begin

to believe that *the elements* exist as separate entities and treat them as separate entities. This is *elementalism.*

Language allows us to say "body" *and* "mind," "emotion" *and* "intellect," "space" *and* "time," etc. Yet these do *not* exist as separate elements. They *cannot* exist as separate elements. They exist as an interconnected processes. They can only be split *at the verbal level* for thinking and talking.

We cannot actually separate "emotions" and "intellect," dividing them structurally violates the organism-as-a-whole. So with "body" and "soul." Using language *elementalistically* prevents systemic thinking, feeling, and responding. If you create or use *verbal splits* without remaining conscious that your words exist *only as words,* only as verbal representations, you train yourself in *delusional semantic reactions*. You train yourself in thinking of one-valued or two-valued semantics rather than recognizing the infinite valued world.

Now your clients use words in this way. They talk about *emotions* without mentioning or having awareness of the inner-connected system. They speak about *attentions* without mentioning *intentions.* They complain about *effects* without connecting them to *causes.*

Meta-Modeling Delusional Verbal Splits
To question and challenge a *delusional verbal split,* do the following:

1) **Hyphenate** the Verbal Delusional Split.
> When you catch elementalizing and dichotomizing in language, stick in *hyphens*. By hyphenating you reconnect holistic processes that have been verbally separated.
>> "A little dash here and there may be of serious semantic importance when we deal with symbolism" (p. 289)
> Hence: time-space, mind-body, neuro-semantic, etc. Organism-as-a-whole words remind you of the systemic whole. Hyphenating stops splitting up reality into parts. Hyphens create more accurate maps of the interactive *systems* all around you.

2) **Question the elementalism.**
> *Does the DVS word truly stand alone?*
> *What context does X occur within?*
> *Can we deal with X without also considering Y or Z?*

3) **Create holistic terms.**
> Many terms are more holistic— psycho-somatic, semantic reactions, neurophysiology, psycho-biology, attitude (a mental-emotional state), etc.

4) **Look for the systemic processes—the interconnected domains.**
> Develop an "eye" and awareness for systems of interactions. This will help to overcome the Aristotelian elementalistic perspective and facilitate *systemic thinking*.

NEW META-MODEL DISTINCTION:
Personalizing

Personalizing

Two distinctions from the list of the RET Cognitive Distortions do not seem to correspond to any of the Meta-Model distinctions. These make up the categories of known as personalizing and emotionalizing. Albert Ellis identified these as cognitive distortions in the way people process information when in stress or threaten by some danger.

Emotionalizing refers to using your *emotions* for gathering and processing information. In emotionalizing, you treat emotions as if they were facts. You then over-value emotions, take counsel of them, and treat them as accurate information gathering mechanisms rather than a reflection of how your values compare to how you perceive things.

Emotions actually describe a relationship—a relationship in your mind-body. Emotions emerge from, and reflect, the relationship between your *model* of the world and your *experience* of the world. The difference between these two subjective awarenesses is what you experience as an "emotion." Think of the difference as a movement and position of a scale that weighs and compares *model* and *experience*.

When the scale tips evenly, your *experience* fits with what your *model* forecasts, predicts, describes, etc. When the scale tips down on the *experience* side, the world is not living up to your *model* of it. Consequently, this sets off *negative* emotions. You don't like what's going on. You feel endangered, threatened, or violated. When the scale tips up on the *experience* side, then you are getting more than your *model* expected. This creates *positive* emotions. You really like this. In emotionalizing, a person reacts to things subjectively thereby forgetting that emotions are but the relative weight that emerges from two phenomena: his sense of map and territory.

Personalizing, as used in REBT, refers to perceiving events, especially the actions of others as specifically targeted toward you, usually as an attack on you. You personalize whenever you "take things personally." This leads you to perceive people, events, situations, etc. through an egocentric filter. It sets the frame over whatever happens so that you take it in and use it as a reflection on yourself—your value, reputation, relationship, skills, etc. Some people do this when the events have nothing to do with them! This style for thinking and sorting obviously leads to an over-sensitivity, with giving everything that happens in your environment as affecting your self-image, ego, self-esteem, etc.

These ways of viewing things arise originally, as does *Identification*, from the way a child's mind work early in life. A child views the world egocentrically, in terms of itself, and by assuming

that the world revolves around itself. Young children don't know better. They can easily assume that events and talk by others says something personal about them. The cognitive distortion at works involves associating into all mental processing and interpreting it to mean something about oneself. Using this cognitive distortion, you see, hear, and respond to information, events, words, etc. as if whatever occurs "out there" is inevitably about *you*— a statement or reflection on you.

In *personalization*, you believe that you are responsible for external situations when, in fact, you could not possibly be responsible. "It's my fault that the picnic got rained out!" You then jump to the conclusion and *feel* the blame is yours. In so emotionalizing it, you are engaged in emotional reasoning. "Tom is talking loud because he's angry *at me."*

This cause-effect expression is also a complex equivalence (talking loud equals (=) state of anger), and personalization. "The angry behavior is directed at me." In personalizing you attach *personal significance* to events and words which could just as easily be understood impersonally.

"Linda is talking to everybody, but me, she is ignoring me." Here is over-generalizing that implies personalizing. If we ask, "What does that mean?" he says, "It means I am all alone." Now personalizing is feeding self-pity and a sense of entitlement.

Meta-Modeling Personalization
To explore, question, and challenge personalizing, do the following.
1) Inquire how the process works.
    How do you know to treat it as personal rather than impersonal?
    How do you know that Linda is intentionally ignoring to send you a message?
2) Explore other possibilities.
    If Linda was just preoccupied, how would you tell? What would indicate that?
3) Go meta to explore if the Personalization is a habitual meta-frame.
    Do you typically read the behavior and words of others as saying about yourself? Do you tend to be sensitive about yourself regarding such things?
    Could this represent a perceptual filter that you have learned to use?

As a Meta-Coach, expect to hear both emotionalizing and personalizing in your clients, especially when they are in stress. That's when all of us tend to regress back to these more immature cognitive fallacies. Then be sure to confront these distortions because when a person thinks with them, *that kind of thinking is itself the problem.*

NEW META-MODEL DISTINCTION:
Metaphors

Metaphors / Metaphoring

When we look at language at both the level of individual words and statements, metaphors are everywhere. They *lurk in the corners*. They often *visit us* like *angels unawares*. At yet other times, we have to *smoke them out*. Why are there so many metaphors in our language? Primarily because *language itself is metaphorical. Language operates* by means of the *structure* of metaphors. That is, in language you present symbols to *stand for* other things.

As language *boils down* to metaphor, this is one of the essential ways that we create concepts. We compare what we know with what we seek to know. We use references common in our experience as a template or format to structure a new learning. We relate one domain of experience to another. The word *meta-phor* shouts this at us. The root meaning of metaphor is "to bear"(phorein) + "above, over, about" (meta). So in metaphor-ing, you take one thing and use it as a model for how to think about, perceive, and understand another ideas.

Lakoff and Johnson in *Metaphors We Live By* (1980) pioneered the discovery that metaphors work as a way to structure knowledge. They theorize that concrete conceptual structures form the basis for abstract thinking and talking.

> "We understand experience metaphorically when we use a gestalt from one domain of experience to structure experience in another domain." (p. 230)

We use metaphors in thinking, perceiving, understanding, and talking to make sense of things—we "understand and experience one kind of thing in terms of another." As language habituates, we lose sense of the metaphorical nature of words. The metaphors die, they lose their luster. David Gordon in *Therapeutic Metaphors* (1978) devoted an entire book to metaphors. He focused on how to build isomorphic metaphors to address therapeutically problems.

> "Metaphors are a way of talking about experience ... All communication is metaphorical. What makes it possible for a metaphor to be influential is that it is isomorphic with the client's actual situation." (pp. 9, 11, 50)

We live our metaphors because they govern our thinking and feeling, structure our actions and performances, the order our culture and meanings.

> *Time is Money* (e.g., Time is a Limited Resource; Time is a Valuable Commodity):
>> You're *wasting* my time.
>> This gadget will *save* you hours.
>> I've *invested* a lot of time in her.
>
> *Ideas* (meanings) *are objects*   *Linguistic expressions are containers*
> *Communication is sending.*   It's hard to *get* that idea *across to* him.

I *gave* you that idea.   It's difficult to *put* my ideas *into* words.
Happiness is up; sadness is down.   *More is up; less is down*
Ideas are entities (the basis of nominalizations).
        Inflation is lowering our standard of living. The *theory* explains to me why language
        works. These *facts* argue against that theory.
Mind is a machine
        My mind is just not *operating* today. I'm a *little rusty* on that subject. I've *running out*
        of steam about that problem.

Metaphors set presuppositional frames and attitudes. When you frame by using the metaphor
"Theories are buildings," you want to set a good *foundation*, so that your theory has good *support*
and won't *fall apart* or *collapse*. You'll need to *buttress* your ideas. When "Love is a physical
force," then you can feel *the electricity* as you're *attracted* to another. Then the *atmosphere* feels
charged with *energy*.

We live our metaphors. They also come alive in our bodies so you feel them. No wonder it
sometimes feel counter-intuitive to question them. We embody them. Metaphors invite you
engage in a top-down processing (deductive reasoning). "How *strong* is your hope for success?"
The *strength* metaphor sets a frame for hope using intensity for hope's legitimacy and validity.

As meta-language, we hardly notice metaphors. They operate as meta-level presuppositions and
so work unconsciously. "Now I feel like I'm getting somewhere," you may not even notice the
"travel" metaphor of journeying, adventuring, etc. Lawley and Tompkins (*Symbolic Modeling,*
2000) used the Meta-Model questions to explore a person's metaphorical landscapes. They
model a person's mind asking about what is an experience *like*, what else is there, where is it,
what came before, what comes after, etc.

Meta-Modeling Metaphors
1) Identify the presence of a metaphor.
        What words or term suggest a metaphor?
        When and where does the person say "as if," "like," etc.?
2) Ask about the comparisons.
        What is that X (the target) like? It is like what?
        How is Y (the metaphor or source) like X?
        In what ways is X like Y (the metaphor)?
        In what ways is it not like Y?
3) Pursue the implications of the metaphors:
        Location, space: "Where is it?"
        Time: "Where is your past? Your future? Today?"
        Assumptions: "What has to be true to use that metaphor?"
        Outcome: "What does this metaphor lead to? What would you like *instead of* X?"
        Epistemology: "How do you know that this is X?"
4) Identify the entailments of the metaphor.
        What ideas, fragments, suggestions comes along with this metaphor?
        Which entailments are legitimate or useful, which are not?
        How ecological is the metaphor?

I HOPE YOU ARE COACHING
INSIDE–OUT

If anything is *inside*–out, it is coaching. So as a coach, especially as a Meta-Coach, I hope that you are coaching to your client's *inside* so that your client can fully live *inside*–out. But, and this is the really sad part, most coaches do not. And to make matters worse, they probably do not even know how! So the personal question to you, if you are a Meta-Coach— *do you?*

Coaching *inside*–out means that first and foremost, you know how to take your client inside. Nearly ten years ago when I began training the *Executive Coaching* program, I wrote a pattern for "how to take an executive or senior manager *inside."* Why? Because these are the people who mostly live *outside.* The world outside is their strength. They know it, they know how to handle it, how to manage it, etc. What most of them know very little about is the inside. In fact, Executive Coaching arose as a way to encourage the top leaders to take time to reflect on themselves, to know themselves, and to understand how to leave minds and hearts.

Coaching *inside*–out is especially important for anyone who feels a victim of life, dependent on external factors for well-being, success, understanding, learning, resilience, etc. To be a victim or to think and feel like a victim, you have to have an *outside*–in orientation. You have to be so focused on what's going on *outside* that you de-emphasize the source of your power to choose your own response—inside. And how many coaching clients sit in your coaching chair with precisely that complaint?

Coaching clients typically complain about their external world and situation. Have you noticed that? They come to coaching and talk about how they want to change *the external world.* For the coach who does not coach inside–out, that becomes a seductive temptation to focus on the problematic conditions and situations and to not hold the person accountable to his or her inside world. Do that and your coaching becomes pretty superficial and shallow. Then at best you are only putting band-aids on symptoms. Consequently, the client doesn't change and they later think that you didn't help them very much.

That's why *you,* as a Meta-Coach, need to make sure that you are living your life *inside*–out. Are you? Do you know, deeply inside yourself, that everything you experience goes through your meaning-filtering system and is a function of your matrix of meanings? Have you completely reformed your linguistics so that you never, but never, say things like "X *makes me feel...*"? It is nearly impossible to coach what you don't know how to experience yourself. So if you have not become an *inside*–out person, now is the time. Contact a Meta-Coach at one of the Chapter groups and set up buddy coaching between you.

Coaching as an *inside*–out Meta-Coach, you constantly challenge, push, and stretch your client to go inside. That's why you ask meta-questions! Ah, yes, meta-questions—the roadway into the highest and deepest parts of your client's mind and heart. Without meta-questions, you will almost *not* be able to take your client inside. But with meta-questions, you can invite clients to go where they have never gone before. Ready to become more effective as a coach, then be sure to sharpen your inside–out skills.

With all of that said, I am delighted to announce the latest Neuro-Semantic book, ***Inside–Out: Empowered From Within* (2022).** Like *Hypnotic Conversations* (2020), this book is now published only as a PDF file. It is on "The Shop." Here is the writing on the back cover:

INSIDE–OUT

Two worlds—one inside, one outside. One the world of *being*—person, spirit, self, the other the world of *things*—doing, using, possessing, having. One is the world of mind, imagination, and communication, the other the world of objectives, activity, and people. Because everything human is *inside*–out and everything socio-cultural is *outside*–in, we experience tension. If the socio-cultural is too dominant, the inside life suffers and is diminished. We are domesticated. Not good.

Yet the inside–out orientation is the secret for becoming *fully alive/ fully human.* It is the secret for stepping up as the CEO of your own life. Yet learning the inside–out life is a challenge in today's outside–in culture.

All of human life is uniquely *inside*–out. Thinking is inside–out, learning is inside–out. So also are all of the highly desired experiences of—love, joy, serenity, understanding, productivity, communication, persuasion, well-being, humor, resilience, etc. While all of these, and many more, operate from the inside to the outside, society is structured *outside*–in. We are also trained from childhood for outside–in living, yet outside–in reduces things to living like animals in a deterministic stimulus–response world.

The solution is to get to your center, to *being,* and to live *inside*–out. It is the foundation for personal empowerment, proactivity, and productivity. It is the secret to the joy of flow and the meaningfulness of everyday life. With the *inside*–out orientation, you have an inner aliveness and vitality that enables you to take charge of your life, an inner gyroscope for stability and mindfulness. This is orientation is a rich life since you live out of your own inner abundance.

In *Inside–Out* you will discover one of the most essential principles for personal development and personal mastery. It will accelerate your development and enable you to integrate and apply what you learn. Enough said. You can find it via:
https://www.neurosemantics.com/product/inside-out-empowered-from-within/

THE LANGUAGE FREEZE

Having now covered all of the meta-model distinctions, I invite you to step back to think about *language itself* and what you are doing when you use the Meta-Model. There you are in your coaching room with a client who wants to improve some facet of his life. He sits in your coaching chair and what he mostly has, as a way to communicate to you, are his words. You ask him questions about what he wants, why something is important, how he thinks about it, etc. He answers the questions by giving you a picture of his life, what's going on and what he wants to make happen.

To this exchange of words, your client then adds some color by his tone, tempo, gestures, movements, breathing, etc., yet most of what he says portrays life in a linear and static way. That's how language works. When we use language, we mostly provide a series of *snapshots of life.* It difficult to describe an ever-moving, ever-changing, ever-in-flux reality with static words. Reality is dynamic and systemic, words are not. That makes it difficult to use words to accurately reflect reality. This is the language freeze.

In the classic NLP list of linguistic distinctions, *nominalizations* characterize this static nature of language. Nominalizations *name* or *nominalize* the actions, processes, and verbs that have been frozen in time and space and turned into Thing-like-Entities. In the language freeze, relating becomes "relationship." Moving, and having a motive, becomes "motivation." With nominalizations, all of the life is sucked out of the verb leaving only a lifeless and static pseudo-noun. Now in terms of abuse, this is true "verbal" abuse! [It's an abuse of verbs to freeze them into nouns.]

> It is for this very reason that we humans do not think very well or very clear when we use nominalizations. It clogs up the mind and prevents clarity!

When we let the life and energy leak out of such terms, the terms become marvelous terms to use in hypnotizing. After all, to make sense out of these words a person has to *go inside* (a trance phenomenon) and begin to invent, create, and generate references that fit the term. They then take the lifeless forms and breathe life back into them using their own internal references. That's why nominalizations make up so much of trance language.

> "And as the *realization* of your *ability* to experience an *expansive self-esteem* dawns on your *wondering mind*, you can begin to feel a deeper *relaxation* than you have ever before..."

In the field of linguistics, scholars specify different *kinds* of nominalizations. Each freezes a different aspect of the many different kinds of procesess. That's because we can make many distinctions in the kinds, qualities, and properties of *processes and actions.* For instance, some actions point to completed processes, some to incompleted processes, some to processes involving one person, two persons, or more. Some processes point to external actions, some to internal mental states, some to the past, the present, or the future.

As language freezes reality, it takes what is moving and dynamic and *reduces* it to a static symbol that does not change. No wonder then that it is so easy for people to language themselves into corners and feel as if there is no hope!

- "I am depressed" (or angry, scared, feeling guilty, etc.) sounds final and absolute. No wonder people who talk that way *talk themselves into a deterministic universe* and then believe there is no chance of change. Yet a simple recovering of the verb changes everything.

- "I am depressing" (or angering, scaring myself, etc.). Suddenly, there is movement and the possibility of transformation. Now that's what we mean by "the magic" of language.

In the language freeze, language stops movement. "I must be stupid." That sounds final and absolute whereas "I'm thinking in a stupid way" restores some movement. "I don't take time to think things through to consider the consequences" restores even more movement. With the Meta-Model you ask, "What are you referring to specially?" You can also ask, "What else is going on which is involved in that experience?" "And what else?" When you do, you prevent language from deceiving you as it portrays a static, frozen world.

As you stay alert to *the language freeze,* focus on recovering the actions of your client's description so you have an inner movie about what's going on. Where there are present tense verbs, there is life and activity. Now you and your client can do something—you can take effective action.

THE ART OF
META-MODEL COACHING

An amazing thing is how little meta-modeling most NLP people do when they coach. I know that is itself a generalization and I don't have hard data to back that up, but having attended many, many NLP conferences over the years, I can say that I have very seldom witnessed NLP trainers engage in any depth or quality of meta-modeling.

Two years ago while in Kala Lumpur Malaysia at an NLP Conference that featured many of "the brightest and best" NLP trainers— when it came to some "live demonstrations" on stage — I sat in the front row shaking my head and Frank Pucelik sat next to me shaking his head and having all sorts of semantic reactions to the non-meta-modeling that was going on. I couldn't believe it; he couldn't believe it. It was as low quality of NLP, or Non-NLP, in a supposedly coaching demonstration that I had seen in years. The trainers took the words of the client at face value without questioning what he meant with his words. They took nominalizations, lost performatives, and over-generalizations and *ran off to do some pattern to, I suppose, impress the audience.* But it did not work. At the end, the client could not say that it was helpful. I have no question that they meant well, my problem with that event was that they did not do well.

In this series on Meta-Model Coaching, I have focused on identifying the tools that you have, the kind of reasoning that is both needed and produced by the Meta-Model, and the meaning constructions that show up in the Meta-Model as linguistic distinctions that are ill-formed. When you understand all of that, you are ready to turn meta-modeling into an art. We call that art "coaching." It is a dynamic dialogue conversation between two (or more) persons who communicate using surface level statements *and* who are able at any given point to find out what is *behind* or *above* the statements. It is a search for meaning at both the surface and the deep level.

Now we say in Meta-Coaching that the essence of high quality coaching is *getting to the heart of things*. If you don't do that, then the coaching will be superficial and, accordingly, not achieve much. If you don't know how to enable a person to push back the curtains and get to *the meaning and frames creating the person's reality*— then you will only be able to deal with surface symptoms.

As the Conversation Begins
To do Meta-Model coaching, as the conversation begins— tune your ears to what the person says and your eyes to how the person is speaking (the linguistic and non-linguistic data). Using that, attempt to make a mental picture in your mind of what the person is referring to. When things are left out, and there will be a lot of things left out, question those *deletions.* When there are such broad strokes that things are fused together and there's no distinctions standing out, then question those *generalizations.* Things are just so general that the words *pinpoint nothing in particular.* When you

hear statements that propose a structure for you to build, suspect that it may be a *caricature of reality,* and then question those *distortions.* For example, "she makes me angry" is proposing a "X causes Y" structure.

Above and beyond that, listen for any of the specific *structures* that the Meta-Model *distinctions* identify. That will tell you which *meaning construct* is being used by the speaker. And when you know that, you know the basic question or questions to ask. When you are first learning this, the dialogue and your questions will seem stiff, unnatural, and forced. But as you practice, you will smooth it out and eventually, it will become conversational— even elegant. At that point, you are becoming an artist. And while you may remain conscious of what you're doing, your client will not notice. And unless you plan to teach the process, eventually, you also will become unconscious of that expertise that you have developed.

Use the language you are learning as a guide into your client's reality. Ask yourself, "The language is describing what?" "The language is implying what?" Then with curiosity bathed in comparison, explore the world that the language creates. However functional or dysfunctional that world. It is not so much a matter of right or wrong, but of useful or unuseful.

Coaching by using the Meta-Model is incredibly powerful. It is powerful for elucidating awareness and choice. It is powerful for transforming a client's maps so that they become effective as guides to desired experiences.

META-MODELING
AS A COACHING STYLE

With this article I bring an end to this series on Meta-Model Coaching. And as a way to conclude it, there is an article written originally Sept. 14, 2016 on the coaches egroup. I think it serves as a good conclusion.

The problem with *Coaching Essentials* is that we only devote one day to the Meta-Model in your training. In *NLP Practitioner* training we usually expand that to two or three days. Personally, if I were to train the course again, I would devote even more time to it, 5 to 6 days. Why? Because as Richard Bandler once said to me, "Everything we created in NLP came from the Meta-Model." Did you know that? It shocked me when I heard that at the end of my Master Prac. Training. "How could that be?" I began asking myself.

That question sent me back to the Meta-Model where I studied it and learned it inside-out. I understood how that model serves not only as a Communication Model, but also the key template for how to model an experience, how to facilitate generative change, and much more. Now if you have not studied the Meta-Model in depth, set that as a personal goal and study it deeply and thoroughly. Set your question as the *how*? question.   "How can I learn the Meta-Model if it so *essential* in Meta-Coaching?" Here's how.

1) Take each of the linguistic distinctions, their questions, and practice it intensely for three days.
Think baby steps. One distinction at a time. Then with everything you write, every email, every tweet, every article—meta-model yourself. With everything you hear people say or write that fits the linguistic distinction you are working on—turn the statement over and over in your mind and generate questions to make it precise and specific.

If you work with two distinctions each week, then it will take you six weeks to get through the original set of distinctions and ten for the extended Meta-Model. Ten weeks!   Let's call it three months. In three months you could train yourself for these distinctions so that you have some real expertise in critical thinking, detailing and meta-detailing, getting specific, engaging the Clarity Conversation, and slowing down a coaching conversation and making it a deeper conversation.

2) Once you know all of the linguistic distinctions inside-out, use the logical level template of the Meta-Model in **Communication Magic.**
Don't attempt this prior to your first three months of deliberate practice. Once you have that down, then you can begin to delight yourself with distinguishing *the levels of the linguistic distinctions.* And when you can do that, you can ask what we call at the PCMC level, Torpedo Questions. These

questions go straight for the heart. They take the person very deep into their mental mapping and to where the leverage point for change and renewal will be. Now are you interested?

All Meta-Model distinctions are not equal, some have much more expansive influence than others. But until you get your hands on these linguistic distinctions—and get a felt sense of how they work, where they send a person, how people respond to your questions, you really won't understand their *neuro-linguistic responses.*

3) Practicing meta-model coaching with a buddy coach.
After the first three months of practice, then get with a buddy coach and engage in a coaching session, but not for the purpose of coaching as much as for practicing hearing and questioning Meta-Model violations. When a statement is not well-formed and has "violations"—generalizations, distortions, and deletions, then identify what distinction is present and search for the question that will challenge it.

When you do this, make sure you have lots of fun. Make it playful.   One of the games that is in *Coaching Essentials* that I hope you played in the training is to play around and see how many Meta-Model violations you can put in a single sentence. After you create these monster statements that are loaded with violations, then generate a whole series of questions that challenge the statement. Afterwards you can do a post-play review and reflect on which questions were most powerful in terms of facilitating a transformation.

What Will You Get?
If you devote yourself to really learning the Meta-Model in an in-depth way, what will you get from this? First and foremost *you will be able to hear your client at a very, very deep level.* In a word, you will be able *the structure of a client's experience.*