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Demystifying Neuro Linguistic Programming

Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) is well established as a powerful method to develop your potential and enhance performance. It can help you create order from chaos and encourages resourceful ways of thinking while expanding awareness of choices.

We're all born with the same basic neurology. Our ability to do anything in life, whether it's learning a new skill, cooking a meal or doing business, depends on how we control our nervous system. So, much of NLP is devoted to learning how to think more effectively and communicate more effectively with yourself and others.

Neuro is about your neurological system. NLP is based on the idea that we experience the world through our senses and translate sensory information into thought processes, both conscious and unconscious. Thought processes activate the neurological system, which affects physiology, emotions and behaviour.

Linguistic refers to the way human beings use language to make sense of the world, capture and conceptualise experience, and communicate that experience to others. In NLP, linguistics is the study of how the words you speak influence your experience.

Programming draws heavily from learning theory and addresses how we code or mentally represent experience. Your personal programming consists of your internal processes and strategies (thinking patterns) that you use to make decisions, solve problems, learn, evaluate and get results. NLP shows people how to recode their experiences and organise their internal programming so they can get the outcomes they want.

NLP explains how we define and experience reality based on our neurological filters. These filters are programmed in our mind as a result of our cultural and educational upbringing as well as our significant life experiences. Our personal filters (like beliefs and values) determine how our mind perceives all our experiences. These perceptions influence our mental and emotional state - leading to related behaviours. So it's our perceptions that determine the quality of each moment of our life.

NLP enables us to be in control of our minds by means of changing our perceptions. When we change our internal maps of reality, we change our external experience of reality too

A few definitions

NLP can be described in various ways. The formal definition is that it is 'the study of the structure of our subjective experience.' Here are a few more ways of answering the question: 'What is NLP?'

- The art and science of communication
- The key to learning
- It's about what makes you and other people tick
- It's the route to get the results you want in all areas of your life
- Influencing others with integrity
- A manual for your brain
- The secret of successful people
- The way to creating your own future
- NLP helps people make sense of their reality
- The toolkit for personal and organisational change

NLP began in the early 1970's when Richard Bandler, PhD and Dr John Grinder, PhD, studied people, they considered to be excellent communicators and agents of change. From those days, the field of NLP has exploded to encompass many disciplines in many countries around the world. Some have made NLP more practical and humanistic - helping transform and enrich the lives of many people. The literature on NLP is prolific. Today you'll find NLP applications amongst coaches and therapists, doctors and nurses, taxi drivers, sales people, accountants, managers, teachers and animal trainers, workers, parents and teenagers alike.

NLP informs us that the difference between successful people and unsuccessful people is not in how many resources they have, but in the way they think, in the way they talk and in the way they act. The way you think is what you create in your inner world. The way you talk and act is what you express in your outer world. If you want to be fully successful, you must align your thoughts, speech and actions and apply the following 5 basic principles:

1. **KNOW YOUR OUTCOME**
What is your desired end result? Focus on what you want.
2. **TAKE ACTION**
What is the next smallest achievable step that leads in the direction of your outcome?
3. **HAVE SENSORY AWARENESS**
Use all your senses to notice the signs which confirm that you're on the right path, or warn you that you've detoured.
4. **HAVE BEHAVIOURAL FLEXIBILITY**
Keep trying new approaches until you get your desired result.
5. **OPERATE FROM A PHYSIOLOGY AND PSYCHOLOGY OF EXCELLENCE**
Be the person you wish to become through achieving your outcome.

Some of the areas where NLP is used are:

Business:

Coaching, Training, Negotiation, Sales, and Leadership Development. NLP provides the "how to do it" for all the "what to dos" of the other leadership models.

Education:

Classroom management; incorporating the concept of different learning styles: Visual, Auditory and Kinaesthetic, including values and other deep structural "filters" that influence each individual's interest and capacity to learn; accelerated learning technologies; photo reading; spelling and other strategies to enhance learning.

Therapy:

Highly effective Brief Therapy models to treat: phobia, trauma, post-traumatic stress, habit & addiction cessation, allergic response, relationship problems, grief, depression, healing of negative emotions, ADD, ADHD and more.

Sports Performance:

NLP is renowned for its capacity to enhance performance in Golf, Tennis and Diving. NLP is also used extensively in enhancing sports performance for athletes from the amateur to the world class level. Both individuals and teams can benefit greatly by including NLP principles in their training.

On the personal side, NLP will enable you to:

Enjoy far greater control and freedom over your own state of mind, responses, and interactions with others. You'll find it much easier to clarify your dreams for the future and identify barriers that may be holding you back. Change the unwanted habits and

behaviours that are standing in your way. Understand you partner's and children's needs and communication styles more fully. Enhance rapport and communication with others. Recognize how others are using language to influence you. You'll find it easier to achieve your personal and professional goals, because you'll gain greater access to your internal resources.

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