

## **Neuro Linguistic Programming**

In my version of the NLP technique, I would have you select a past shame memory and anchor it. This is done by simply closing your eyes and letting your memory take you back to a time when Mom or Dad or a teacher or preacher was laying their shame on you.

One of my clients remembered being shamed in the second grade. He was at a Catholic parochial school, and the priest who was in charge of the church handed out the children's report cards. It was this priest's custom to throw the cards on the ground if a child got a D or an F. My client was an undiagnosed dyslexic and was having a terrible time learning to read. He got an F in reading and the good priest threw his card on the ground. My client was ashamed and humiliated and somehow couldn't pick the card up. (He was a fingernail biter.) Everyone laughed, as this child suffered an excruciating moment of being shamed. This memory, as with most nondissociated painful memories, was easy to anchor. He anchored it with the thumb and finger of his left hand.

I then asked him what resource(s) he now had, which if he had had them then would have helped him handle that experience better. He thought for a moment. Then he said firmly, "I'm articulate now and I've learned to be assertive."

I said, "Close your eyes and think of a time when you were being articulate. The memory can come from any time in your life. You are speaking firmly and clearly, saying exactly what you want to say."

As my client searched for that past experience, I saw his face begin to change. His jaw loosened and he looked more confident. I asked him to touch his right thumb to a finger on his right hand. I had him hold the touch for 30 seconds as he re-experienced being articulate. Then I had him take a deep breath and relax. I suggested that he think of a pleasant memory from the past in order to separate the

experience of being verbally expressive from the next anchor we were going to make — the assertiveness anchor.

After a moment I said, "Now think of a time when you were actually being assertive." I took some time to let him get fully into the details of the memory. I asked him, "Who was there? What did they have on? How were you dressed?" When he was re-experiencing being assertive, I had him touch his right thumb to the same right finger and make the assertive anchor exactly in the same way he did for the anchor associating verbal expression. I had him hold it for 30 seconds and then I asked him to take a deep breath, and go back to the pleasant memory he had accessed earlier.

Up to this point we had:

1. Made a shame anchor (X) of the second grade report card scene with the touch of his left thumb to one of his left fingers.
2. Made a resource anchor (Y) with the touch of his right thumb to one of his right fingers. This anchor embodied two strengths which my client now had that he did not have in the second grade, viz., verbal expressiveness and assertiveness.

Now we were ready for the redoing of the old memory. It may help you understand this process if you think about a premise used in cybernetics. That premise states that the brain and central nervous system cannot tell the difference between real and imagined experience if the imagined experience is vivid enough and in detail.

Most people can achieve sexual arousal by using their imagination. This means that there is full kinesthetic response without another real person being there. Paranoid personalities live in a threatened and hypervigilant universe by virtue of fantasies and hallucinations that they themselves create. Normal people often create tenible stress and anxiety by worrying about the future — something that hasn't even happened yet. These are all ways that behavior is programmed by simply using one's imagination.

In step three of the process I asked my client to go back into the shame scene with the new resources of verbal expressiveness and assertiveness. This is accomplished by

touching the two anchors X and Y simultaneously. I tell my client not to change anyone else's behavior in the scene. He is to focus only on his own responses to the report card throwing. He is free to respond any way he wants to with his assertiveness and verbal expression. I encourage him to really tell the priest what he feels. I may even suggest things like — "How awful for you to bully and humiliate a child like me. I'm doing the best I can. You're a poor model of the love of God, etc."

It's best when the words come spontaneously. They can be actually said out loud or subvocally. What I look for is good energy in expressing the anger about the shame. Finally I ask the person to give his shameless caretaker back the shame that he has been carrying for him for years. I like to symbolize it as a black soggy bag. The symbolic giving back is important. Once the experience feels better internally, I ask the person To take a deep breath, relax and open his eyes.