

January 7

9:00 AM

Discussion and questions

**Break out:** reviewing the states

Polling the group

Content free?

Ecstatic?

Directable?

Automatic?

10:30 to 10 45

Break

10: 45

Questions

**Review of states.**

Exercise three: stacking the anchors, creating NOW.

Instantiating the deep self.

**Group Exercise:** review anchors. Crank them up. Chain the anchors.

Discussion of language.

**Break outs:** Reassemble NOW.

Questions and Discussion

12:00

Lunch

1:30

Questions

**Group Exercise:** Review of NOW ...New Worlds to Gain.

Positive resource Day Planner.

Generalize the behaviors into other contexts

Future pacing the new skills

**Break Out Exercise:** Access now, imagine three places in the next 24 to 48 hours where this will be useful and imagine using this or another anchor to change that situation. Notice its effects on you and the people around you. Do it subtly. Make appointments with yourself to step inside and use it in different part of your day.

Discussion

3:00 to 3:15

Break

3:15 to 5:00

Meditations

Language skills

Intonation, ambiguity, analogue marking

**Break Outs:** New Worlds to Gain

Discussion

5:00

Adjournment

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## **Exercise 4**

### **Getting To Now**

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#### **Presuppositions Underlying the Exercise:**

- The human psyche is a complex system and that system principles give rise to properties that are not necessarily predictable from the individual elements.
- This exercise illustrates the capacity of unique experiences to constellate a positive sense of Self that is both familiar and new to the individual.
- Every positive mood or state of mind that becomes consciously available to the individual also becomes a reason to do something other than use illegal or destructive substances.
- The exercise presupposes that one of the important prerequisites of self-esteem is the possession of a relationship with a deep-enough representation of Self, one that continues over time.
- This exercise awakens the individual to a deeper sense of the choosing Self, the Self that is always there.

#### **Working Presuppositions:**

- The participants have created the conditioned stimuli for the basic states
- They have learned to enhance those states.
- In each case, the state anchors should all be experienced at a level of pure feeling. Neither content nor context should remain.

The exercise explicitly does not presuppose that the Self is ONLY an artifact of mechanical stimulus response systems. It does, however, presuppose that what we call the Self can be made more conscious and more accessible as a continuing reality through the synergistic interaction of conditioned response systems.

#### **Expected Outcomes**

Participants will use their growing expertise in creating anchors and following behavioral instructions to assemble a positive resource state as an entity independent of any specific memory precursor. They will be able to enhance the state and anchor it to a specific stimulus motion.

#### **Instructional Notes**

Getting to Now proceeds in a straightforward manner from the previous exercises. In order for it to work well:

- The participants must have successfully created and enhanced the initial five states (Focus, Solid, Good, Fun, Yes).
  - The states should be pure feeling states; they should be fully dissociated from memory associations.
- Have the participants review each of the states. Address any problems and make sure that all have mastered the process.
  - Instruct the participants to fire off FOCUS. Suggest that they notice how the state arises in the body, where it starts, how it spreads, its temperature, etc. Instruct them to pump it up and

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pay attention to its feel, where it centers, its patterns of relaxation and tension, its warmth, its character.

- Suggest that they hold the felt pattern of these perceptions in mind as they move their fingers to the SOLID gesture.
- While holding the felt pattern of FOCUS in mind and body, suggest that they begin to pump SOLID and notice how the feelings associated with SOLID combine and interweave with the feelings from FOCUS.

**“Weave them and harmonize them, integrate them and note how they compliment each other. Get a sense of their dance as you add the next one.”**

- Take the time for each state to arise and integrate with the last and continue as follows:

**“Notice how they compliment each other... Notice their contrasts. ... Hold the combined pattern in mind and body as you move your fingers to the GOOD gesture. ... Fire it off and notice how the specific sensations associated with GOOD dance with and compliment the feelings already present. ... Become aware of the changing patterns ... of tension and relaxation, ... warmth and light. ... Notice how they weave together into a new pattern.”**

- Add the other states in the same manner: hold the new pattern in mind and body and add the next gestures: FUN and YES.
- Continue with this, or similar language:

**“Fire off YES ... and become aware of its contribution ... to the new patterns of feeling. ... Notice how it rises in the midst, ... creating a new space, ... a new harmony, ... a new pattern of feeling. ... Become aware of its temperatures and patterns, ... its silences and sounds. ... And, ... as you notice, really notice ... how they all come together ... in a new kind of way; make a fist, ... the anchor gesture for NOW. ... Pay attention to the new state that is now arising. ... As you do so, gently pump or pulse the fist. ... Use the skill of pumping and anchoring as you have been practicing it with the other anchors. ... Continue to become aware ... of new facets ... of the experience, ... pumping as you go. Explore the depth ... and height ... and breadth ... of the new state ... and pump it. ... Rest into it ... and pump it. ... Allow yourself to float. ... And pump it, ... and pump it, ... and pump it, ... and pump it. ... Gently ... turn your attention ... to some wonderful part. ... Pump it into the center.”**

- Remind them that they have already had significant practice anchoring and pumping. Suggest that they relax into the rhythm of the learning.
- Keep the new state going by suggesting that they notice more and more of the sensory qualities of the feeling: e.g., How deep, what temperature, how wide and broad.

**“Notice that you can gently turn your attention to the very best part and pump it so that it expands to fill the center. Discover something new about how much deep joy can be yours as you pump.”**

- Where necessary, as the new state arises for the first time, hold the felt sense of it in mind as you go back to Focus and follow the same process through all of the anchors again.

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**“Weave them and harmonize them, integrate them and note how they compliment each other. Get a sense of their dance as you add the next one.”**

- When the second sequence is coalescing, make the “NOW” gesture (gently make a fist).
- Repeat the process until the gesture reliably produces an enhancement of the new state. Pump up the state using the same technique described in the previous exercises.

**Problems associated with timing or content issues:**

- A small number of participants have reported dizziness.  
Dizziness usually results when an anchor is still attached to the visual part of the memory. This suggests that, for one or more of the root states, they have anchored and enhanced the intact memory, not just the kinesthetic elements.  
Participants may practice accessing the anchor by focusing on the very first hint of felt bodily experience and practice until the anchor is context free. As an alternative, have the participants who report this problem speed up this exercise so that they shift to the next anchor before any visual stimuli appear. That is, after firing off the anchor for the first state, they should move to the next one more quickly– just as they note the feeling arising in their body.  
In each case they should move at the first hint of a kinesthetic rush and before there is any hint of content.
- Some participants have reported that they are unable to make the transition from state to state, or that the states will not mix.  
This usually means either that they have come out of one state before going into the other or, again, they have retained incompatible content. Have them speed up the transitions and make sure that they fire off the next state while the one before it is still increasing. It might be useful to tell them to let the states overlap or to keep the feeling of each in mind as they add in the next.  
In each such problem evocation, it is wise to repeat the anchoring of the NOW state several times, adjusting the instructions each time to ensure that all of the problems are ironed out. Persistent problems can be handled in a one-on-one session.

**In the session when NOW is created, allow the participants to stay in state for as long a time as possible.**

- Encourage them to explore the dimensions of the state and encourage them to discover its depths and heights.
- Remind them repeatedly to allow the attention to move gently towards a particularly pleasant or interesting facet of the experience and to pump it so that it expands to become the center of the experience.
- After several repetitions, return and debrief the group.

After debriefing, participants should be instructed to test the state just as they did the others: With no effort, close the eyes, make the gesture, and pump at the first hint of bodily feeling. Continue pumping for 10 or 15 minutes. Recall and debrief.

After several initial installations of NOW, reinstall it using a different order of the initial states.

**Behavioral Standards**

- Participants will be able to describe a distinct state independent of the component states.
- It should be a coherent whole with elements of centeredness, energy and objectivity. It often provides a surprising contrast to the intensity of the component states.
- Participants will be able to access the state at will and suggest places where it might be useful in their lives.

## **Meditation**

Although we often skip the meditations, here we use the meditation, New Worlds to Gain. This meditation sets up a link between the present experience of NOW and an imagined future experience. It multiplies the depth of the experience using the Ericksonian pseudo-orientation in time discussed in later segments (Erickson, 1954; Gray, 1997b, 2001).

Use the meditation after several iterations of testing and enhancing NOW.

## **New Worlds to Gain**

### **Presuppositions underlying the exercise:**

This meditation is designed to provide specific experiences of the strengthening of the NOW response in an imagined future. By imagining NOW at a level of intensity it might have after practicing it for five or ten years, the participant creates a real time experience of NOW in the imagined future. The imagined future allows them to freely add dimensions that might be difficult without this mechanism for disarming the critical faculties. The meditation is wholly compatible with the state intensifications mentioned in Exercise Four.

Basic to the meditation are the assumptions that the participants have mastered NOW and that the participants have developed significant expertise in developing and maintaining the altered states taught in previous exercises on their own

## **Instructional Notes**

The meditation is much sparser than the others. It is a basic outline providing a few prompts for the participants as they enjoy the NOW state (or any other). Take your time and allow the temporal ambiguities to sink in. Ad lib using the verbal patterns presented.

### **PLEASE NOTE that the scripts are to be read column by column; each page should be read before proceeding to the next.**

Fire off NOW.

As soon as you become aware of the beginnings of the feeling, pump it. Continue to pump it at the first hint of the rush.

Pump it up.

Make it very intense.

(Pause- wait for obvious indicia of relaxation and unconscious responding)

As the feeling intensifies.....

Allow yourself to float.....

Float into the feeling and...

As the feeling intensifies...

Find yourself floating....

Floating up and up.....

Up and up.....

Out of your body.....

Floating.....

And pump it.....

And pump it,.....

And pump it.....

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(Pause)  
Let the feeling .....  
Take you .....  
To a time .....  
In the future .....  
When .....  
you have been using NOW .....  
for five years or ten years. ....  
You have been using it...  
expertly. ....  
Practicing, ....  
Learning new ways to .....  
Experience NOW.....  
Finding new depths .....  
in NOW.....  
Float into a time.....  
NOW.....  
When NOW.....  
has become.....  
your normal.....  
mode.....  
of being.....  
in the world.....

See yourself....  
experiencing NOW.....  
after using it for.....  
ten years.....  
How do you look.....?  
How do you breathe.....?  
What is new.....?  
And pump it.....  
And pump it.....  
And pump it.....  
(Pause)  
Step all of the way into.....  
The experience.....  
Experiencing NOW, then.....  
In the future.....  
Let the feeling.....  
wash.....  
over you.....  
Note something.....  
about.....  
how.....  
it feels.....  
GOOD.....  
What.....  
new dimensions.....  
are you.....  
aware of.....  
How.....  
strong.....

How deep....  
Pump it.....  
Explore it.....  
Rest into it.....  
And pump it.....  
Float into.....  
New dimensions.....  
Of NOW.....  
And pump it.....  
And pump it.....  
And pump it.....  
(Pause)  
As you enjoy.....  
This future.....  
Experience.....  
NOW.....  
Realize.....  
Really realize....  
You are.....  
Experiencing.....  
That future.....  
NOW.....  
and that NOW.....  
and then.....  
and then.....  
and NOW.....  
Intermingle.....  
and merge.....  
And because.....  
You have.....  
Experienced.....  
That Now.....  
NOW.....  
It must be.....  
Still stronger.....  
NOW.....  
(Pause)  
Focus into your future.....  
NOW.....  
And notice.....  
some.....  
new.....  
depth.....  
In.....  
The future.....  
NOW.....  
And Notice.....  
How Now.....  
And then.....  
And then.....  
And NOW.....  
Converge.....  
And merge.....

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Grow.....  
And expand.....  
together.....  
And pump it.....  
and pump it.....  
and pump it.....  
and pump it.....  
And when you are ready.....  
When you know.....  
Really Know.....  
Certain things.....  
That you do.....  
Know already.....  
Come fully back, ....  
Refreshed and fully present. ....  
NOW.

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## Exercise 4

### Getting To Now

The roots of the current exercise lie in the idea that each human life has at its heart a center and a purpose. Discovering that center and the purpose towards which it points are crucial. Carl Jung called the process of coming to know one's self, *individuation*. Abraham Maslow called it *self-actualization*. In general, the first step along this road is the experience of what it means to be you. Just You.

This sounds simple, but in practice it is among the most difficult of tasks. Who we are is often masked by 'shoulds' and 'ought-tos' imposed from without. We have spent years seeking external approval and transient pleasures. It is hidden by the habits of a lifetime spent learning the acceptable ways to act and think as dictated by family friends and associates. More often than not we are not even aware of what is truly important to us as individuals. This exercise represents the first of several that are designed to awaken experiences of your deep self. This first provides a foundation for growth, a starting place for further exploration.

The exercise itself is taken from Jung's idea that our experience is organized and understood in terms of a web of felt associations. The Self is the center and root of that sense (Jung 1979a, 1979b). In more recent neurophysiological research this idea has been vindicated by the work of Damasio, LeDoux and others who point to just such a felt sense and its determination by the activation of specific brain regions (Damasio, 1999; Damasio, Grabowski, et al., 2000; LeDoux, 1999, 2000, D'Aquili & Newberg, 1998, 2000).

It is also rooted in the idea that every feeling, when felt deeply enough, carries within it the seed of wholeness. Every feeling points down to the true center of who we are. So, we begin with the five resource states that we have been practicing. You may have already noticed that they have awakened a deeper sense of what it means to be you, of what is important and what is not. This is how we experience individuality as it awakens in consciousness. We will now take the five basic anchors, **Focus, Solid, Good, Fun** and **Yes** to create an experience of how these five simple things can create something rather



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surprising. This is the new anchor, NOW. Its gesture is a gently formed fist. You will use it just as you did the other gestures. Please read through all of the instructions before doing the exercise (Gray, 2001, 2002).

### Getting to NOW

1) To begin, elicit the five states, one at a time. Make sure that each one is strong. Make sure that each is a pure feeling state with no remainder of pictures or context from the original memory. Pump them up and shake them out, one at a time.

2) Once you have elicited the states one at a time, begin to stack them as follows.

Fire off FOCUS. Notice how the state arises in your body. Pump it up and pay attention to its feel, where it centers, its patterns of relaxation and tension, its warmth, its character. Hold the felt pattern of these perceptions in mind and move your fingers to the SOLID gesture. Begin to pump and notice how the feelings associated with SOLID combine and interweave with the feelings from FOCUS. Notice how they compliment each other. Notice their contrasts. Hold the combined pattern in mind and body as you move your fingers to the GOOD gesture. Fire it off and notice how the specific sensations associated with GOOD dance with and compliment the feelings already present. Become aware of the changing patterns of tension and relaxation, warmth and light. Notice how they weave together into a new pattern. Add the other states in the same manner: hold the new pattern in mind and body and add the next gesture.

3). When you have added YES and have begun to become aware of its contribution to the new patterns of feeling, make a fist, the anchor gesture for NOW. Pay attention to the new state that is now arising. As you do so, gently pump or pulse the fist. Use the skill of pumping and anchoring as you have been practicing it with the other anchors. Continue to become aware of new facets of the experience, pumping as you go. Explore the depth and height of the new state and pump it. Rest into it and pump it. Allow yourself to float. Pump until ecstatic.

### Further Applications

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NOW is, for most people an extraordinary experience. In its construction we bring together multiple feelings to create something new. What other combinations can you make? Can you discover a recipe for a feeling that you have never had before? What happens when you combine the anchors that you already have in different combinations? What might you add to NOW to increase its depth or value?

#### **References for the Exercise**

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## Exercise 5

### Pacing The Future

Presuppositions Underlying the Exercise:

Pacing the Future presupposes the need for seeding the generalization of wanted behaviors into multiple contexts. In every case where new behavioral skills are learned, their value is limited to the level to which they are contextually bound. In previous exercises we have learned to create powerful altered states of consciousness, but if they remain relevant only in the meditation room or therapy chamber, their real life utility is limited.

Rossi (2000) suggests that every strong affect has an effective life span of 20 minutes to two hours. So, we can expect effects to linger into other contexts. But what happens after the state runs down or we are confronted with real life stressors without free or practiced access to resources?

There is a growing literature on the utility of meditation, acupuncture and alternative practices in substance abuse treatment. The research points to positive effects but often the effects end with the termination of treatment (Margolin et al., 2002; Morel, 1996).

- Positive results obtained from these practices tend to be contextually bound.
- Yoga effects are often bound to time, place, postures and patterns of meditation. Acupuncture effects may be stimulus bound to the practitioner and the office where s/he applies them.
- Other practices may depend upon the continuing support of a community that reinforces the values imposed.

**The crucial value of this exercise is the spread of the experience of choice and control into the real world as an endogenous experience with a strong internal locus of control.**

Bandura (1996) suggests several methods for seeding the generalization of positive behaviors to other contexts.

- One depends upon the strength of the response itself: powerful experiences generalize to other contexts.
- A second depends upon imagined association.
- A third involves practice of the behavior in the appropriate context.

**Throughout the exercises we have sought to increase their behavioral salience through the intensity of their reward value. Here we use the other two methods to seed generalization.**

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The exercise depends upon:

- The existence, in the anchors, of strong affective states that possess a high degree of behavioral salience.
- Because these behaviors increase personal efficacy in any context, their expression tends to be self reinforcing.
- By practicing them in multiple contexts we hope to establish those contexts as conditioned and discriminative stimuli for the states themselves and for the behaviors of eliciting the states.

**The exercise explicitly presupposes that one can attach a positive resource state to a future state of need by using an imagined representation of that future need state. The principle is soundly rooted in behavioral techniques. In the literature of NLP the technique is called Future-Pacing.**

**Generalization** is presupposed to be a crucial part of the mechanism of addiction and substance abuse.

- If a behavior works in one context, or provides reinforcement in one context, it will tend to spread to others.
- Strongly positive responses tend to spread further than the less powerful.
- The Program presupposes that the capacity for the individual to exercise choice over feelings will generalize into other contexts and that this generalization can be seeded using imagined encounters.

**Appropriate performance of the exercise should result in the spontaneous generalization of applying the states in other contexts.**

#### **Expected Outcome**

- Participants will practice the resource states on a daily basis.
- From the resource states they will identify and describe a series of need states where the resources will be available.
- They will plan a series of appointments for accessing the resources and monitoring their progress through the day.
- Participants will obtain practice using the resources in multiple contexts.
- They will have experiences of increased efficacy with regard to mood and behavior.
- They will experience the utility of the states on a practical level.

#### **Instructional Notes**

- The current incarnation of the exercise is derived from Milton Erickson's classic paper on Pseudo-Orientations in Time (1954).
- Participants to begin by entering the resource state that they want to use.
- From that state, after pumping it up, they are asked to imagine several points during the day when the resource will be particularly valuable.

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- This links the positive affect to internal representations of the need states and makes their appearance more probable as a simple matter of classical conditioning.  
A series of planned appointments throughout the day when the participant will stop, fire off the anchor, enjoy the state and take some time to appreciate how well they have done through the day.

**The technique makes use of:**

- Pattern interruption (Grinder & Bandler, 1975; Watzlawick, Weakland & Fisch, 1988; Cade & O'Hanlon, 1993) to interrupt the progress of the day with experiences of feeling good. This allows the participant to reorient their attention towards more positive ends.
- It requires them to reset the affective tone of the day on a scheduled basis.
- Strong positive experiences that set up felt effects that can last two hours or more (Rossi, 2000).

**It is crucial to emphasize that the scheduled evaluations are to be positive.**

**For each appointment:**

- Enter the state and note how well you are doing.
- In the evening it is important to plan to feel good for the morning and to finish the day in a positive state.
- Make written notes for two reasons:
  - They are a commitment to the positive tone in a record that enhances its reflexive credibility.
  - It is a record that can be checked and so, leads to increased levels of compliance.
  - The act of writing requires a certain level of reflexive analysis that marks out the positive experiences of the day.

**There is often a certain level of resistance to taking the time required.**

- Remind the participants that these are very short breaks and can be done anywhere.
- They should also recall that this exercise represents a significant means of caring for one's self. It is as valid for them as a coffee or cigarette break is for those who employ them.
- Reemphasize the value of caring for yourself. "What have you done for yourself lately?"

**Challenge the participants who have used the anchors solely as meditative tools, to use them in normal consciousness—with open eyes.**

- Suggest to them that they will enjoy the sense of mood changing as background to their activities.
- Discuss contexts where they might find the states especially useful.

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## **Behavioral Standards**

Participants will produce a daily record of situations where they have applied the anchors. They will be able to articulate changes in their subjective experience of those situations after using the techniques.

## **Meditation**

Any of the meditations provided can be used with this exercise.

- At this point every session should begin and end with an access of the NOW resources. Take the time to enhance the state so that it provides a dramatic experience of the deep self and an attractive altered state.
- Make sure that the participants have lots of time to enjoy the NOW state. As they access NOW, invite them to explore new dimensions of feeling and being.

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## **Exercise 6**

### **Pacing The Future**

An essential element of personal growth is flexibility. Biologists speak in terms of the Law of Requisite Variety—the organism that has the most options in any given environment is most likely to survive. Part of our efforts in these exercises is to increase personal flexibility and to increase the number of responses available to us.

One of the pleasant discoveries that typically arises from the Program is the surprising variety of responses that are available through the use of the anchors. We began with a weak memory that provided us with access to a feeling. We then spent time using the brain's own strategies to enhance the feeling and the memory. When the feeling reached a certain level of intensity, we abstracted the feeling from the memory and created a powerful state of positive potential that expanded to fill a range of possibilities beyond the original experience. When we had developed a series of five such states we created a deep sense of Self that embodied a full range of possibilities.

In each step we increased the depth and range of choice and experience. In the last several steps we have emphasized that each of the feeling styles that we have experienced represents a range of possibilities. FUN expands to include, deep joy, exhilaration, wonder, curiosity and play. YES awakens learning, synthesis, wonder, discovery, surprise and release. All of the states are now capable of multiple expressions.

Up until now, we have mostly used the states as meditative devices to create powerful altered states of consciousness. Most of us have already begun to use the states in real life settings. Almost everyone can attest to the awakening of new choices and new felt options in the world. With this exercise we are going to intentionally seed our daily experience with the new possibilities provided by the anchors.

In the exercise that follows we will be choosing one specific anchor each day for practice and observation. This does not mean that you can't use the others, it just means that for the exercise itself, use one of the anchors consistently. Over the course of the day, please take the time to notice a few things:

- Notice that when you use them with open eyes, in real life situations, the anchors tend to come up subtly in the background as mood changers.
- Notice that the anchor tends to produce a felt sense that is appropriate to the needs of the moment: alert where alertness is needed, distant where distance is needed, prudent where prudence is needed, etc.
- Notice how all of them are characterized by a sense of centeredness and safety.

The exercise will take a few minutes every day at scheduled times of the day. You will begin and end the day with a state of your choice and visit it several times during the day. We would like you to consider these as important appointments with yourself. They are times we would like you to set aside, just for yourself. They don't take long but they can change the quality of your daily experience. Please keep a record for yourself on copies of the Positive Resource Day Planner or something similar.

Please use all of the anchors. Don't just rely on your favorites. If you have favorites, alternate them with your less preferred states. Discover how many choices you have available. Remember, the appointments are times for you to enjoy. Each of the appointments that you take is really a time for you.

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## POSITIVE RESOURCE DAY PLANNER

Upon arising, ask yourself: How do I want to feel today? State it positively (as what you want) and remember that it must be under your personal control. Make it something that you feel from within, not dependent upon your external performance, other people or events. Use one of the anchored states to access that feeling. Please try to use different anchors each day.

Fire off the anchor and take time to enjoy it.

While still in the state, open your eyes and think of three things that you must do today where the anchored feeling would provide enough extra strength, positive attitude, or humor to change the experience. List them here:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Now, schedule a minimum of three breaks during the day when you will stop, access the state and appreciate your progress towards it during the day. Write them in below. For each day, choose different times.

**During each break make a note on how good it feels and how the well you've done so far.**

| Time  | Comment on the day's progress |
|-------|-------------------------------|
| _____ | _____                         |
| _____ | _____                         |
| _____ | _____                         |

In the evening, before going to bed, access the state. Notice how good it feels and note how well the day went overall. From this state, plan the state that you might like to access tomorrow. End the night drifting off to sleep as you enjoy the state.

**Write down your observations here and on the flip side if you need the space:**



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### **Further Applications**

The inability to spread what we have experienced in the therapy room or meditation hall into everyday life has been a major pitfall of many otherwise valuable practices. The ultimate utility of each state is related to how strong the experience is when you anchor and re-anchor it. Remember that every time that you pump the anchor up, you are essentially re-anchoring it on a higher, more intense level. Whenever you use an anchor in a situation, you are linking the feeling associated with the anchor to that context so that you will be more likely to feel that way or use that anchor the next time you are there.

Imagine how your days would work if you took a few minutes to plan an anchor schedule to help you call up the resources that you need in the situations that you anticipate during the day? Each day, look through your schedule and find the places where different anchors would be most appropriate. Just before you enter each situation, take a few minutes to fire off the anchor.

### **References for the exercise**

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## NLP and Guided Visualization

On the level of physiology there is little difference between meditation, guided meditation, hypnosis and mystical experience. All of them share a general change in consciousness to either an intense inward or intense outward focus; activating parts of the brain that favor positive feelings over negative, wholeness rather than fragments and suspend disbelief in favor of present experience and suggestion.

All of these states begin with the simple transformation of ordinary consciousness into a clearly altered state. Permissive suggestion in the Ericksonian mode follows the pattern of mindfulness meditation in which the attention is gently drawn back to a center of attention or focus. In my practice, I begin with the memory of a single, specific, positive experience of love or joy or competence. Sometimes it is a state that is particularly relevant to the needs at hand. It should be something complete in itself and without baggage. The group or individual is asked to focus on the best few seconds of the experience and to associate fully into the state, noticing the difference between thinking about the experience and experiencing it from within.

**... And as you step all the way into the experience, see what you saw, hear what you heard and feel, from within your own body and senses, the experiences you were experiencing, NOW.**

Because the brain preferentially attends to bright moving objects we can follow Richard Bandler's good example and have them begin by making the experience bigger and brighter and closer. Have them turn on the sound and turn up the brightness: "**... in a way...that's right.... for you.**"

As we give them a little time for each experience to settle in, we can suggest that they

**... notice whether the image of the experience is moving or still and if it is still, you can notice how it moves, and as you notice how it moves, turn on the sound, turn up the volume, and notice, really notice, how the sound and the picture move together. ...**

In doing this we take advantage of the way the brain's superior and inferior colliculi mark auditory visual synchronies as particularly worthy of our attention.

By this point, our language will have already shifted so that we are no longer talking about the memory but about the present time experience of manipulating the experience. Steve Andreas points out that even if we started with a memory, by shifting our language to the

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present time experience, we ensure full, present-time association, by talking about this experience NOW.

As with all good NLP, the quality of the experience depends crucially on the presenter's ability to evoke a powerful, multisensory experience. Once more, the more senses that the experience incorporates the more value (salience) the brain accords it. Multi-sensory experiences are treated by the brain as more important than less fully represented experiences.

Crucially, language, pace and rapport can make or break the quality of the experience. For persons aspiring to evoke powerful experiences, all of the subtleties of tone, inflection and wordplay are crucial. In general, meditations should use the command inflection—the sentence ends on a lower tone than the rest of the sentence. Metaphors of depth should be modeled in tone and voice position:

**all  
the way down**

Ambiguities of structure and punctuation should also be used. Long pauses between phrases can aid the induction significantly.

During the initial access, emphasize that the process is gentle and easy. Tell them to **“Gently turn your attention to the very best part.”** You might also try, **“Allow your attention to gently rest on...”** They might also **“Begin to notice all of the aspects of the very best part of this experience that you have not yet noticed before, now.”**

Meditation and hypnosis rely heavily on the limited capacities of conscious attention. As a result, one of our foci is attentional overload. Since we can only attend to about seven things at once, we need to fill up consciousness so that unconscious process can take over. Have the group turn their attention to the center of the feeling. Let them begin to notice how it moves. **“ ... And I don't know whether it moves clockwise or counter clockwise, whether it moves like a wheel or like a turntable.”** However it moves, tell them to **“... reach out with imaginary hands and trace the loop or the circle so that it loops back upon itself and begins to increase in intensity. If the pattern is incomplete, let those imaginary hands complete the full pattern.”** Then add in the impossible dimensions of the feeling: color, sound, sparkles and whatever else you can come up with.

As in classical hypnosis, fractionation significantly impacts the depth of state and the comfort level of the participants. After a period of working on the initial state, bring them back to talk about it. Leave them with a suggestion that they can allow the state to continue to grow and increase as they JUST open their eyes and talk to you for a minute. Stop for a minute, remind them that the state will continue to build all by itself for the next 20

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minutes and get them to tell you about how good the experience is. Then have them shut their eyes and zoom back to the very best part.

Spiritual experiences arise when the frame or style of suggestion incorporates mystical, religious or spiritual themes into the induction or the ongoing trance narrative. These elements might range from the overtly religious descriptions of the life and sufferings of Christ, or one of the saints, to a classical Buddhist deity meditation in which the qualities, attributes and spiritual implements of the god are described in detail.

Less religious and more mystical or spiritual experiences can be generated by focusing on complex images, nature images and metaphorical images. Imagining a stone dropped in a pool of still water and the resonant radiation of waves of relationship and positive feeling resonates strongly as a mystical image. Just so, multiple raindrops falling into a quiet pond radiate and interrelate and communicate, crossing and meeting and connecting so that the whole is comprehended in the movement and resonances as each falls into its own place in the pattern of the eternal dimensions of interconnected wonder... Similarly the image of the net of Indra, the interweaving pattern of holographic connections in which each line in a web of connections is imagined as a jewel which is reflecting every other jewel in every other part of the net, all reflecting each and each reflecting all, is a powerfully evocative image.

In a recent meditation, I used the image of a seed, growing down into the solid earth to draw nourishment and stability as its essence joins and interweaves and interpenetrates with the warm, moist, nourishing earth; reaching down into unknown depths to find exactly what It needs. Simultaneously, the shoot reaches out towards the sun and sky, and making its way through the darkness, past or through every obstacle, it finds its way to the warm, eternal, life giving light. Natural metaphors can awaken deep experiences of nature spirituality.

Images from classical spirituality can also be valuable. In the spirit of a confusion induction, the impossible spiritual complexity of angelic visions can awaken powerful experiences. ...And if you listen carefully, you may begin to hear the rustle of the rainbow-hued wings of angel choruses, sparkling and singing impossible harmonies in complex rounds of living energy, swirling in circles of perfect order, winding and turning in the exquisite dance of eternity....

Every tradition has a set of canonical images that can be used to awaken appropriate responses for meditation. There are also fairly formulaic phrases that, although separated from any kind of religious or spiritual language, are strongly evocative. For any Christian raised with the King James Bible, the simple dimensional words, "*breadth*, and *length*, and *depth*, and *height*" are *inextricably linked to the passage from Ephesians, "And that you may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the *breadth*, and *length*, and *depth*, and*

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*height*; And to know the *love* of Christ, which passeth knowledge.” Dropped into a description of an internal state, the state is inevitably and unconsciously understood as spiritual.

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