

Mastering Blocking and Stuttering A Handbook for Gaining Fluency



***“If you speak fluently in just one context, you
can learn to speak fluently in all contexts.”***

Bobby G. Bodenhamer, D.Min.

Preface by L. Michael Hall, Ph.D.
Foreword by John Harrison

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Disclaimer: We have designed this book for training and education and not as a substitute for psychotherapy or psychiatry.

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Acknowledgments

Without question, this project would never have been initiated were it not for the encouragement of one of my first clients who had a blocking and stuttering problem, Linda Rounds. Her knowledge of the stuttering community and her willingness to share it with me and to encourage me in this pursuit launched me on the path of dedicating much effort to this work.

In addition to Linda, there are Tim Mackesey, SLP, David Lock, John Harrison and many other people who stuttered; that encouraged me to continue my work and research in this field in order to bring healing and fluency to many who have no other hope. To those who attend the “Mastering Blocking & Stuttering Workshops” I owe a special debt of gratitude for being among so many PWS in a learning environment provides the trainer with immense opportunities for valuable feedback. To all these and the countless thousands who daily fight a battle of trying to communicate, that few people other than those who share disfluency can understand, I dedicate this work.

Thanks to Robert Strong a PWS from New Zealand who gave invaluable feedback both in content and in structure. Thanks to Linda Rounds, John Harrison, Michael Hall and Larry Nolan for their reading the text and providing suggestions and feedback in editing the text. And, a very special thanks to L. Michael Hall, Ph.D. for much of the material found in the text. Many of the patterns are adaptations from his work in Meta-States[®] and Neuro-Semantics[®].

Preface

You hold in your hands *a treasure chest* of proven and tried models and patterns for mastering any dysfluency of speech that you may have. If you stutter or block yourself from stuttering and are overly conscious about your speech, what others may think of you, of embarrassing yourself, or a thousand other little fearful demons – you now have in hand everything you need to put an end to that.

I could write extensively about how Dr. Bob Bodenhamer has studied and used the cognitive-behavioral models of NLP and Neuro-Semantics, how he has trained these materials for years, written numerous books about the patterns here, and worked with thousands of clients. I could equally write about his intellectual honesty and integrity and his committed search for finding patterns that work. Yet what is the point of a solid intellectual background and wisdom? What you want to know is, “Can it work for me?”

I could even write a number of pages about his caring heart and tell you how it comes from his years of experience as a pastor and as a counselor. Yet I know that as you read this text, you hear and feel his *heart*. He wrote it from his heart and he wrote it to yours. Yet what is the value of that, so what if the author really cares? What you want to know is, “Will the patterns and models here work for me to become fluent?”

What I can tell you about are the numerous people that Dr. Bob met and worked with in 2002 who considered themselves “stutterers” and who *no longer* so define themselves. Sometimes in just a few sessions, sometimes over the period of several weeks, many people who have suffered a lifetime of over-self-conscious apprehension, fear, and dread about opening their mouths are now living in very, very different states. Many have completely stopped stuttering. Others have found a release and freedom that borders on the miraculous. And they come from around the world – from the USA, Australia, Europe, Mexico, England, South Africa.

All of a sudden Bob has become internationally known as the foremost authority in using Neuro-Semantics and NLP to work with people who stutter. Articles have been published about his successes in NLP journals and Journals for people who stutter. Numerous speech pathologists have examined what Bob does and joined hands in this new approach.

Why should you buy this book and read every page thoroughly, practicing every pattern and process? *Because it works*. It works to shift your frame of mind, emotional state, and everyday behavior. On the surface, the book is about stuttering, but don't be fooled. Inside the covers of this book it is about so much more. It is about self-mastery, emotional intelligence, running your own brain, gaining freedom from your past, healing old dragons that lurk in the back of your mind, finding your passion in life, getting free from the suffocating opinions of others, rising up to the highest intentions of your mind and experiencing an inner alignment to make you more congruent than you have ever been before.

Everything here is in line with, and follows from, an earlier work of Bob's. He here applies the tools in *User's Manual of the Brain* to the subject of fluency and non-fluency. So, you're wondering that can work for you – the gift is in your hands. From here it will be up to you to put it into your mind and actions.

To your greater Fluency!

L. Michael Hall, Ph.D.
Grand Junction Colorado

Foreword

One evening a while ago I received an email from my friend Professor Judith Kuster, who is webmaster for the Stuttering Home Page at Mankato State University.

“I have a challenging little puzzle for you,” she wrote. “See if you can solve it. Here are ten numbers. Can you tell me why they're in the order they're in? The numbers are 8549176320.”

There was no way I could pass up this challenge. I dropped everything and started wrestling with the puzzle. Now, I pride myself on having a mind that can grasp numbers, even if I can never get my checkbook to balance. I tried everything to make it work. I looked for hidden numerical sequences. I tried dividing numbers by other numbers. I tried multiplying them. I looked for exotic progressions. I wrestled with this conundrum on and off for the better part of two days. No luck. I just couldn't get those numbers to unlock their secret.

Finally, in utter frustration, I wrote back to Judy. “I give up,” said. “I need to get a good night's sleep. Tell me the answer.”

A little later came her reply. “They're in alphabetical order.”

It was so simple. Why couldn't I think of that?

I couldn't think of it because I was stuck in a traditional way of approaching number puzzles. I had made certain unconscious assumptions about how the problem needed to be addressed. I did not know that I had limited my solutions. But the model within which I was working automatically ruled out non-numerical solutions.

This same habit of thinking “inside the box” explains why for the 80 years since the birth of speech pathology, most people have not been able to solve the mystery of stuttering. Our paradigm, or model, of stuttering has forced us to look at the problem through a set of filters that have masked out relevant information and issues. In short, for 80 years, stuttering has been incorrectly characterized, and as a result, most of us have been trying to solve the wrong problem.

I was lucky in that I never went through traditional speech therapy. So my vision was not colored by other people's ideas of what stuttering was all about. Consequently, I ended up foraging on my own for answers, and by the age of 30, I had a different picture of stuttering than virtually anybody else I knew. I had also fully recovered, and this recovery has held for more than 35 years.

What I discovered during my recovery process was that my stuttering was not a speech problem per se, but a problem with *my experience of communicating to others*. That was why I never stuttered when I was alone. I was not communicating with anyone. I also learned that my stuttering not only involved my speech, but all of me, and that included

my emotions, perceptions, beliefs, intentions, and physiological responses. These elements were joined together in a spider-like web of interconnections, where a change at any point caused a change at all the other points. In short, I had to look at stuttering as an interactive, dynamic, self-sustaining system. If I wanted to achieve a lasting recovery, I had to address, not just my speech, but the entire system,

Forces that shaped my thinking

An important part of this system was the way I thought about stuttering and about myself. Early in the recovery process, I began to question my way of seeing things. Was the world really such a threatening place, at least on a social level? Or was I creating it that way? Why didn't everyone tense in the presence of authorities? Why didn't other people panic when they had to give their name, or when they had to speak on the telephone to strangers? How was I managing to frame the world in such a negative way?

I eventually discovered that when I blocked, I did so to prevent myself from experiencing things I didn't want to experience. But if it was I who created my speech blocks, then I needed to understand *why* I held myself back and blocked. What was I afraid of? What didn't I want to see? What might happen if I let go? And how could I make my world less threatening?

There were two books back in the early 60s that provided me with a novel way to approach these issues. Both had to do with the running of my mind.

The first was a book called *Psycho-Cybernetics* by a plastic surgeon named Maxwell Maltz. Maltz makes a compelling case for the fact that your unconscious mind accomplishes whatever your conscious mind puts before it – similar to the way a technician programs a computer.

He points out that when confronting a performance fear – such as whether you can make the two-foot putt that wins the golf tournament – if you mentally image only what you're afraid might happen, you'll probably miss the putt. You need to focus all your attention on the desired positive outcome.

The problem is, my mind is also programmed to keep me safe by focusing on any imminent danger, such as the black widow spider on the ceiling or the footsteps behind me as I walk alone at night down a dark street. Not to think about the danger is counter-intuitive. Yet, I must do just that when dealing with a *performance* fear such as stuttering. The book offered some simple but compelling rules for how my mind worked.

The second book, S. I. Hayakawa's *Language in Thought and Action*, was a simplified presentation of general semantics, developed in the 30s by Alfred Korzybski, one of the brilliant minds of the day. General semantics looks at how our habits of thinking color our experiences, and how the structure of language, itself, forces us to see things in a particular way. Thanks to general semantics, I had a platform from which I could step

outside my normal frames of reference and observe and reframe my day-to-day experiences, thus making my world less stressful.

Now fast forward 35 years. In early 2002 I received an email from Linda Rounds, a 38-year-old human resources director of a company in Indiana whom I had met over the Internet. Linda wrote to tell me that thanks to my book plus several telephone sessions with a remarkable individual named Bobby Bodenhamer, she had abruptly put an end to a lifelong stuttering problem.

I quickly got in touch with Bob to find out more. It appeared that Bob was a practitioner and teacher of something called Neuro-Semantics (NS). I discovered that NS is a further development of Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) which, in turn, is a further development of General Semantics, the discipline I found so helpful back in the 60s. Now my interest was really piqued.

It was apparent from the first e-mails and later, through several phone conversations that Bob Bodenhamer and I were on the same wavelength. Although he had never stuttered himself, Bob had an intuitive understanding of issues that are central to the problem. This is in part because the Neuro-Semantics paradigm, which Bob teaches, is broad enough to explain what is really going on within the stutterer.

I was especially interested in what Bob had to say because, as a person who recovered from stuttering, I frequently am asked how I got over it. After I tell my story, people naturally ask what they can do to follow in the same path.

Until very recently, I didn't have much to offer when it came to the mind management aspect of stuttering. Maltz's book is still relevant in a general way, but many people want guidance on specific steps they can take to address their blocking. And General Semantics, though still valid in its precepts, also does not directly offer specifics on how to address the issues associated with stuttering.

All that has changed with the publication of *Mastering Blocking and Stuttering: A Handbook for Gaining Fluency*.

A new resource

Mastering Blocking and Stuttering is a compendium of concepts and tools that use the principles of Neuro-Semantics to reframe the mindset that leads to speech blocks. Several groups of people will directly benefit from this book.

If you're someone who stutters and are motivated to experiment with and explore your own stuttering, you'll find this book a great resource. You'll acquire workable tools for modifying your mind and emotional states. This, in turn, will help you to counter the feelings of helplessness which are so disempowering and which can make speaking such a troubling experience.

Therapists and speech-language pathologists who work with stutterers will also find the various Neuro-Semantic processes and tools helpful in working with clients. As a practitioner, you'll have tools for addressing, not only the specific counter-productive speech behaviors of your clients, but the habits of thought that contribute so much to the negative mind state. Tools such as those for redefining self, altering states, changing the meaning of stuttering, and remodeling behavior allow you to follow a multi-level approach.

Enterprising individuals who wish to run their own self-therapy program using Neuro-Semantics resources can be reassured they do not have to go it alone. Thanks to Linda Rounds, who serves as moderator, there is an Internet discussion group on Yahoo where you can share your personal experiences using the principles and precepts described in this book. If you want to participate, you can register at

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/neurosemanticsofstuttering>.

You will also have an opportunity to participate in some of the most intelligent discussions of stuttering-related issues that can be found anywhere on the Internet.

A clarification of terms

Finally, a few observations about the word "stuttering." Although stuttering is a commonly used word, it unfortunately contributes to the confusion because "stuttering" means too many different things.

People who have advanced cases of Parkinsons and who talk in a halting or jerky manner are often referred to as stuttering.

Young children who find themselves linguistically over their head might be labeled as stuttering, even though their speech may be effortless and without any attendant struggle behavior.

Anyone who finds himself upset, confused, uncertain, embarrassed or discombobulated may also have stretches of dysfluency, even though it is totally unself-conscious. I call this *bobulating* to distinguish this form of dysfluency from the that in which the individual is momentarily blocked and unable to say a word.

Then there is *blocking*. Without a speech block, there will be no helplessness, frustration, embarrassment, and feelings of disempowerment. The speech block sits at the center of the problem and should not be confused with other kinds of dysfluency.

For reasons of clarity, we encourage people to use the word "blocking" when talking about their speech difficulties. But many remain wedded to the word "stuttering" and are not apt to easily give it up. This is understandable. It's a familiar and commonly used word, and old habits die hard. Consequently, throughout this book, you will see

references to the compound word “blocking” to distinguish this kind of dysfluency from more general and non-disabling garden varieties of stuttering.

Go at your own pace.

A word about the handbook as a whole. You are not encouraged to consume it in one or two sittings. There is too much to think about and too many different processes to absorb in a short time. Rather, it is a reference book rich in understanding and replete with tools and techniques that can help you get to the heart of your blocking behaviors and issues. So sip it a bit at a time, live with the information, try out the processes at a comfortable pace, and share your thoughts and experiences on the Yahoo group with others of like mind.

Remember, too, that blocking is a complex system, and while your world view and the way you think are likely to be major contributors to your blocking problem, there may also be other parts of the stuttering system that need to be addressed. If there are habituated speech behaviors that are counterproductive to speaking freely and fluently, you may also want to enlist the support of a qualified speech-language therapist.

Finally, be prepared for a series of “ah-hah” experiences as you begin to explore blocking in a new light and make new and powerful discoveries about your speech and about yourself.

John C. Harrison

San Francisco California

About John Harrison

John C. Harrison is no stranger to the problems of stuttering. He showed a marked dysfluency at the age of three and two years later underwent therapy at the National Hospital for Speech and Hearing Disorders in New York City. But this and later efforts at therapy during his school years were not successful and he struggled with stuttering throughout college and well into adulthood.

Harrison’s involvement in a broad variety of personal growth programs over three decades have given him a unique insight into the nature and dynamics of the stuttering person. Today, he is fully recovered and no longer deals with a stuttering problem.

One of the earliest members of the National Stuttering Association (NSA), Harrison was an 18-year member of the Board of Directors and is currently the editor of the NSA’s monthly newsletter *Letting GO*.

Harrison has run workshops for the stuttering and the professional communities across the U.S. and Canada as well as in Ireland, the U.K., and Australia. He has been published in *Advance Magazine* and the *Journal of Fluency Disorders* and has presented at conventions of the American Speech Language Hearing Association and the California

Speech Language Hearing Association, as well as at the First World Congress on Fluency Disorders in Munich, Germany.

Harrison lives with his wife, Doris, a graphic designer, in San Francisco where he works as a seminar leader, speech coach, speaker, and freelance writer.

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Mastering Blocking & Stuttering

Introduction

I did not plan to work with people who block and stutter. Indeed, it happened quite by accident. I have been working in Neuro-Linguistic Programmer (NLP) since 1990. In 1996 my colleague, L. Michael Hall, Ph.D., and I started developing a model called Neuro-Semantics[®]. Our work in this model came out of our experience in NLP and is an advancement of that model. As an NLP/NS practitioner, I have worked with hundreds of clients covering approximately three thousand hours of therapy. Working with fears, anxiety and phobias have been a major component of my work.

Some years ago, a sales seminar participant asked me if I could help people who stutter. I told him that I didn't know but I sure would be glad to give it a try. His son, a 25 or 26 year old came in for a two hour session. After one hour's work we discovered that behind his blocking and stuttering were some fears of speaking that rooted in childhood. Once he realized that he was mentally causing the stutter, he thanked me, paid me and left. Though we had two hours scheduled, we finished in one hour. As far as I know, he gained complete fluency. The key for him was his understanding that he was mentally causing the stuttering and it wasn't something physical and out of his control.

Excited about the results, I wrote up a case study of the therapy and sent it to Michael. He utilized his expertise and expanded the case study into an article entitled "Meta-Stating Stuttering" that I posted on the web site:

<http://www.neurosemantics.com/Articles/Stuttering.htm>

After posting the article, a friend of mind that I had worked with early in my practice contacted me. He had a stutter that we worked on years earlier but it hadn't helped him. After reading the article he called me and asked me if I had learned some new things. I told him that I sure had and for him to come on in. He came for a one hour session. I saw him six months later and asked him how he was doing with the stuttering. He paused briefly and replied, "I guess I have forgotten to stutter." "Well," I said, "That sure is a great thing to forget to do."

Needless to say, I was quite elated with the outcome. Then, in the spring of 2002, the breakthrough came. Linda Rounds of Indiana e-mailed me. In her search to overcome her stuttering, she had read a work by Anthony Robbins at the recommendation of John Harrison. From Anthony Robbins she learned about NLP. She searched Amazon.com for NLP books and found mine and Michael's book, *The User's Manual for the Brain*. From that work she obtained my email address and emailed me asking me if I could assist her. In just a few therapy sessions on the phone and some emails, Linda gained complete fluency. Wow, was I ever excited.

Linda and I wrote an article entitled "From Stuttering to Stability: A Case Study." John Harrison published the article in the National Stuttering Association newsletter, *Letting Go* and I posted it on our web site at:

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<http://www.neurosemantics.com/Articles/Stuttering-to-Stability.htm>

This article really got a lot of attention. Since then I have worked with several people who block and stutter. One of the people that I assisted to fluency was Tim Mackesey, SLP. Can you imagine the excitement I had in being able to assist a speech pathologist who had blocked and stuttered most of his life to fluency? I was elated. Tim is now utilizing NLP/Neuro-Semantics totally in his practice when he works with people who block and stutter. Tim's office is near Atlanta Georgia. His web site is:
<http://www.stuttering-specialist.com>.

Let me say up front, all have not attained fluency but many have. Importantly, out of all the people I have worked with, I have total confidence that ultimately all of them have the capacity to eventually attain fluency. This will necessitate their continuing working on their *thinking*.

How Are These People Gaining Fluency?

I have a simple theory: "If you can speak fluently in any context, than you can learn to speak fluently in all contexts?" You obviously already know how to talk. You don't need to re-learn how to talk. You just need to be able to access the same state of mind that you are in when you are speaking fluently to those times when you block.

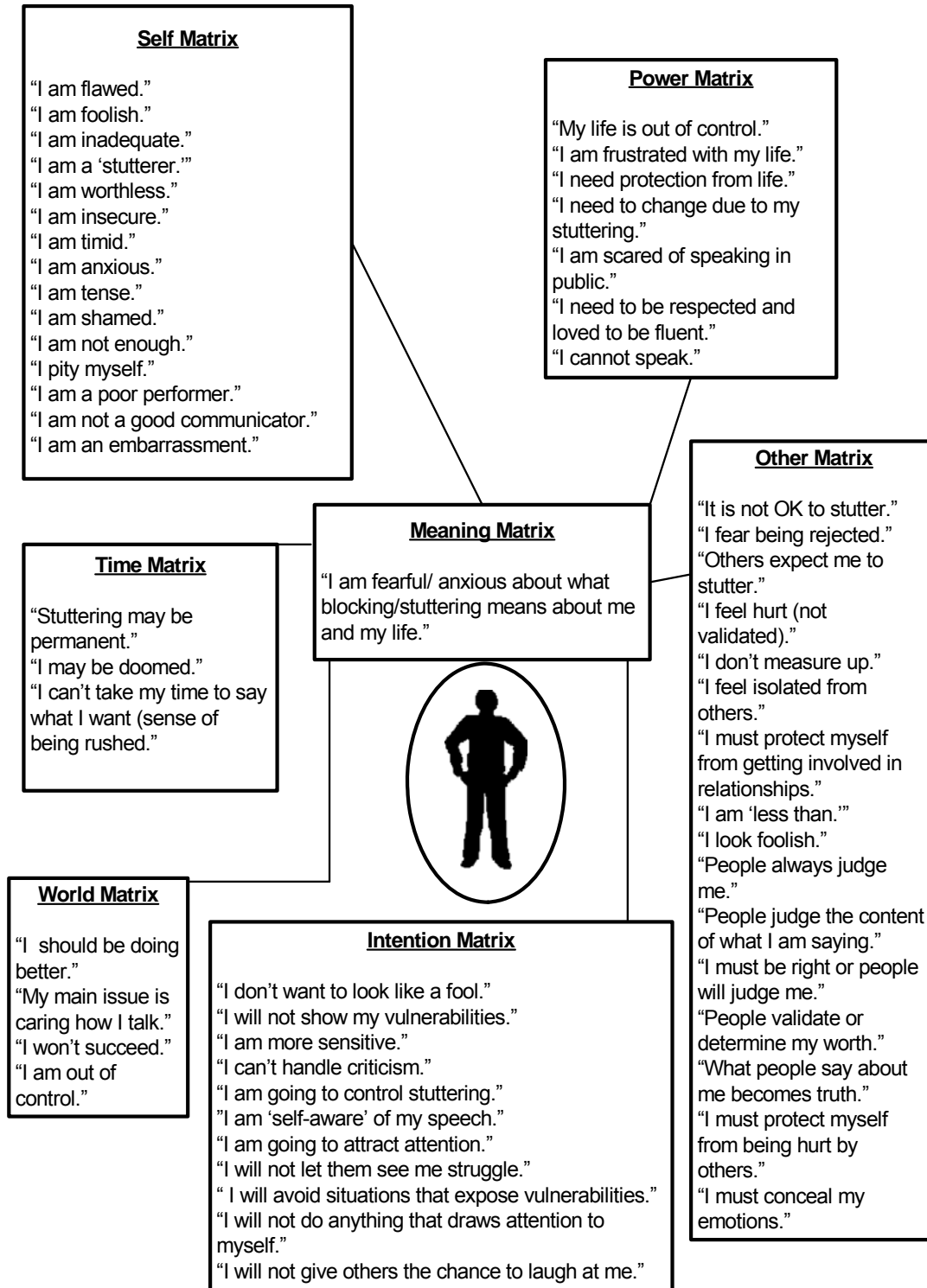
From all of our research and experience with people who suffer from blocking and stuttering, we now recognize some key factors that explain why it is possible to gain more fluency and why it is possible for *you*.

- Blocking and stuttering are learned behaviors.
- Learned behaviors can be unlearned.
- If you can speak fluently in even one context, you can speak fluently in any context. You already have the skill; it's just a matter of breaking free from the interferences.

As you can probably already tell, we believe it is your *thinking* that creates your blocking and stuttering. We do not believe that if a person is fluent consistently in certain situations and blocks in others that the problem is physical and certainly not genetic. It is a very well learned behavior that comes from childhood hurts and reinforced through years of practice. Now, in its origin, genetic influences on temperament may have contributed.

On the following page you will see the various thought patterns of a person who formerly blocked and stuttered. Her thoughts are typical of people who block and stutter. From the graphic, you will see the *learned* patterns of thought (frames of mind) that operated in those contexts where she blocked and stuttered. Does any of those frames of mind sound familiar?

Mental Frames of Mind of a Former Person Who Blocked and Stuttered



Introduction

By changing some of the key meaning frames of mind, this person has gained complete fluency. We have seen it happen over and over. For simplicity, I will use the word “blocking” or “speech block” to denote both processes of blocking and stuttering.

From our experience with blocking, we believe that:

- If a person can speak fluently in just one context, than that person can learn to speak fluently in all contexts.
 - We base this on the fact that if he can speak fluently in any one context, then that means that his mind-body system already knows how to speak fluently.
 - We believe that blocking happens in particular contexts triggered by specific events that the he has placed significant *meanings* of fear and/or anxiety. From these basic meanings, he defines his concept of his own *selfhood*.

The meanings of fear and anxiety will also determine how he will view himself as being a *resourceful* person or not. Furthermore, whether or not he will have a healthy or unhealthy concept with his past, his present and his future (*time*) comes out of these significant meanings. In addition, how he relates to *others*; whether or not he views his *world* as a friendly or unfriendly place and his understanding of his *purpose* and *intentions* in life all come out of and are determined by the *meanings* first placed on the triggering events.

- We call this the Matrix Model and this book is organized based on: (1) the *meanings* we give both internal and external events, (2) our concept of *self*, (3) our sense of *power/resourcefulness*, (4) our relationship with *time*, (5) our relationship with *others*, (6) how we view the *world* we live in and (7) our higher *purposes/intentions*. These 7 matrices determine our world. We all have our own Matrix. The Matrix defines all of our thinking/feeling/behaving and thus determines our lives. People who block and stutter have a unique identifiable Matrix. In this book we will define how people who block and stutter think/ feel/ behave in each Matrix. Michael Hall utilized the term “matrix” from mathematics to describe the framework of our mind and then used the metaphor of the movie *The Matrix*. I am very much indebted to him for this excellent model.
- Blocking is primarily a learned behavior.
- Since it is a learned behavior, it can be unlearned.
- Blocking is very similar to if not the same as, a panic or anxiety attack expressing itself in the muscles that control breathing and/or speaking. A person diagnosed as having panic attacks does not live every moment of every day inside a panic attack. Likewise, the person who blocks and stutters is not always inside a “block”. Just like a panic attack, a “block” is triggered psychologically. And, just

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like a panic attack, the person has learned to react to that panic in a particular way and for the person who blocks; the panic is expressed in blocking and stuttering.

- Treatment involves using the same tools of NLP and Neuro-Semantics® that we have used successfully many times with clients who suffered from anxiety and panic disorders. NLP means Neuro-Linguistic Programming. These two models, NLP and Neuro-Semantics, provide the technologies behind the materials in this book.
- Although we recognize that some predispositions, like a predisposition to being sensitive or some other sensitivities, may contribute to a person's developing a blocking habit. I do not believe that there is any question but that genetic research indicates that some people are predisposed towards certain thought-feeling-emotions. With blocking, we believe that the emotional issues get expressed in blocking and stuttering and that in turn gets reinforced through experiences like being made fun of, etc.
- Successful treatments, therefore, will involve primarily cognitive and not physical therapies.

How Blocking Begins – Punctuating Disfluent Speech as Stuttering

In our work with people who block, we have discovered that usually the first thing she will do is to punctuate her non-fluency as “blocking” and/or “stuttering.” This, in itself, is no problem. It is when she comes to believe that blocking is something “bad” and to be feared that the problem begins to be perpetuated.

I have yet to find a person who fell in love with their stuttering when the stuttering first began. At the onset of the blocking, she may experience difficulty speaking and then she will punctuate non-fluency as something bad. Subsequent repetitions of punctuating difficulties as bad, makes the learning groove deeper until it becomes a rut.

The knowledge that her speech is different and not “normal” usually comes from the influence of parents or other significant people who point out that there is something wrong with her speech. I have found people who block and stutter that placed the “bad” and “unacceptable” label on themselves without any knowledge of outside influences. They are in the minority.

By simply taking the child to a speech pathologist by a caring parent will inform her that there is something wrong and unacceptable to her. In every case that I have worked with, the roots of the individual's blocking came from childhood. However, sometimes the actual blocking does not appear until adolescence or even adulthood.

These influences concerning the child's speech so early in life really get “grooved into the child's muscles” and are carried into adulthood. When I say “grooved into one's muscles”, or it is “in the muscles,” I am referring to the ability of our mind-body system

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to learn something unconsciously. Our nervous system is located throughout our body. We have nerves “everywhere.” We believe that learnings literally become embodied into our muscle tissue (more about this in the next section). This is often referred to as “muscle memory.” Do you type? Then, if I were to ask you where the “R” key is, how will you find it? Did you go to your left index finger and move it up to the left? If so, that is an example of what we call “in the muscle” learning.

I began noticing quite early in working with people who block/stutter that they tend to feel the fears, anxieties, etc. that are behind their blocking in the muscles that control breathing and/or speaking. From this I concluded that blocking is very similar in structure to panic attacks and anxiety attacks. The treatment for blocking is exactly the same as the treatment for panic and anxiety attacks.

Quite often, from the experience with the adults, peers, or from the conclusions they make themselves, children who block define non-fluency or disfluency as something that they wish to avoid and/or control. The blocking does not only have the negative feedback from significant adults or from within themselves, but it also has connected to it the negative emotions from what the person perceived as the painful traumatic experiences that created the non-fluency to start with.

It is also connected with feelings of helplessness in not being able to speak when required to. This leads to feelings that one is different or strange – something that children wish to avoid at all cost.

Important, when I say “trauma,” I am not necessarily meaning something terrible or tragic happened to the child. I am simply saying that the child interpreted the divorce of the parents, the lack of affection from dad, the lack of emotional support from mom, the emotional and physical abuse, etc as being most painful and threatening. The child did what all children tend to do – she personalized the external problems, then out of these experiences with the hurt installed in the muscles of breathing speaking, she began to block. This book is primarily about how to identify those painful memories and how to heal them. For fluency to become real in all contexts, these painful memories must be healed.

Embodying Negative Emotions

Guess Where a Stutterer *Embodies* His or Her Emotions?

(Written with L. Michael Hall, Ph.D.)

Pivotal to my theory that blocking and stuttering is but a form of a panic attack is the theory that emotions find expression in our bodies.

Questions:

- Can you get negative emotions actually *installed* in your body?
- Is it actually possible to *em-body* and *in-corp-orate* negative emotional states in your muscles and nervous tissue?

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- Could it be that the feelings that correspond to and drive blocking and stuttering have gotten into the breathing and speaking muscles?

We raise these questions to first of all acknowledge that the end expression of blocking and stuttering is physiological. Of course, it is physiological. Yet, is it *caused* solely by physiology? Could the physiology that we see, recognize, and feel actually be the embodiment and manifestation of something that is primarily a mental-emotional state? Could it be the way the person is running his brain that ultimately creates the physiological symptoms and expressions?

What if it is through the process of habituating the typical state of mind *about* speaking, mis-speaking, and stuttering that actually drives and causes the state to become, as it were, “locked into” his body? What if the stuttering, and all the negative emotions associated with it, actually gets into his muscles?

These questions suggest a different model about how to think about the subjective experience of stuttering and blocking, and yet one could potentially lead to more options for recovery and fluency. In saying this, we mean that it is because our mind is connected to our bodies through our central nervous system and because our mind communicates to all parts of our bodies – that the outer behavior occurs. Since the 1950s medical science and the neuro-sciences have become aware of this mind-body connection. After all, our nerve cells occur throughout every part of our bodies and receive information from all of our cortex and subcortical parts.

That *mind can embody* emotions is obvious in the most primitive and basic of all our mind-body functions, the Fight/Flight arousal syndrome. And as you well know, you don’t have to be in actual danger to set it off. All you have to do is *think, remember, or imagine* something fearful. Then your body will oblige. It is wired to respond.

Is it any surprise then that all of our emotions can and do become embodied in certain areas of our body? Today, we even know that the patterning or habituation of response can become so incorporated that it becomes what we call “muscle memory.” That is, the muscles “remember” how to run the pattern. The neuro-pathways have “worn a groove” so to speak so that they have a readiness for certain responses.

For people who block, we find that the negative emotions are typically contained within the *chest, neck* and/or *jaw*. Check this out for yourself. Ask a person who blocks or ask yourself,

What emotions are behind and within my blocking?

Where in my body do I feel these emotions?

Where in my body do I feel the fear and anxiety as I anticipate the possibility of blocking?

What do I feel *about* these feelings?

That is what we’re talking about.

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In my thirteen years of work in therapy with clients, I have literally asked these questions of hundreds of people who were suffering from some unwanted thought-feeling-emotional problem. “Where in your body do you feel that emotion?” is a question that enables a person to begin to recognize *the embodiment* of emotions.

And out of those hundreds of times of asking the question, there have been very few times when I did not get an immediate and direct reply. The individuals simply told me where they felt the emotion. Often they pointed to the body parts where the emotion seems located. This is a general rule of thumb for therapists. If a person “feels” the negative emotion, they will point to the area of the body where they feel that emotion. It is in the body (the soma) and so it is psycho-somatic in nature and form.

Neuro-Science and “Muscle Memory” or “Cell Memory”

What evidence is there in the neuro-sciences which gives credence to this understanding that memories as ways of thinking and reasoning (our semantics) can find expression in various areas of the body? This theory and paradigm is obviously foundational to our belief that the major contributing factor of blocking is that those mental frames of fear and anxiety lie behind the blocking. Then, when we add to this all of the negative mental frames associated with the early psychological development of a person, no wonder we can get some very strange ideas *embodied* somatically. Then, these mental frames, when activated by the fear of blocking or stuttering will function similar to how a panic attack operates. The only difference will be in the expression occurring in those muscles surrounding breathing and speaking.

Today, human anatomy and medical science recognizes that the nervous system is an interactive system. Today the neuro-sciences speak about auto-immune-disease, and psycho-immunology, and many other hyphenated words. There is no “mind” apart from “body,” or “body” apart from mind. Researchers today describe the brain functions and anatomy as responsive, processing, and always changing. We have a dynamic system that is alive and forever in process.

That’s why the old metaphors of the mind-body system no longer work. The mechanistic idea of steam and energy and “things” have given way to processes, systems, communication exchange, information transfer, etc. And yet how *mind* manifests itself in the *embodiment* of nervous tissue, and creates the sense of consciousness, and self-reflexive consciousness, self, identity, and internal movies of past and future events— all of this is still a mystery.

What we know is that “mind” is not a thing, but a process. We know that our mind does not have mechanical structures for "storage" of "memories" and "thoughts" that are static like what we use in a computer. There are no comparable computer chips ... there is only the constant transform of information, the exchange or transduction of energy from electromagnetic to bio-electric, to chemical to the exchange of ions at the level of molecules.

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In there, everything is so completely dynamic that the only way it can be sustained is through using the higher levels of mind (our meta-cognitions) to set up beliefs that keep on thinking the same thought so that it habituates and becomes muscle memory. Of course, if we stop that process, then that memory will be changed, altered, or erased. That's why we are such good forgetters. The things we program into our nervous system have to be constantly refreshed. And, of course, all of this also identifies processes for intervention and transformation.

Embodied Emotions

If this is true for our thinking, it is even more so for our emotions. These *somatic movements* in our body, what we call "emotions" must also be re-framed. We must also recognize that they are processes as well. They are the embodiment of our thinking, appraising, and understanding into our protoplasmic tissue— nervous tissue, signals and messages of arousal, threat, safety, etc. That everything is interconnected and affects everything else is a given in the neuro-sciences today.

What does all of this mean? It means that *there is no mind-body-emotion problem because it is an interconnected system in the first place, a system that cannot be broken up*. We can only break it up linguistically as we talk about the parts. The parts do not operate singly. Of course; this includes the cortex, the hippocampus, and every other organ come into play including muscle groups.

Neuro-Scientist Susan Greenfield states, that “consciousness, memory, learning, etc. are gestalt (connected) phenomena, and not located anywhere, but everywhere.” We recognize this *process* in terms of “cell memory” or “muscle memory.” Actually, this is a misnomer for it implies that somehow the *storing* of memory in certain areas of the body. The error in this is the nominalizing (or freezing) of a process. The memories are actually the expression of a dynamic process. With blocking, the driving emotions find expression in certain muscle groups but they are not just there, they are *everywhere* but there as well.

In all of this, the modern neuro-sciences confirm our suspicion that emotions can and do find expression in particular areas of the body. As a systemic whole, the mind-body system works together and cannot be separated.

Consider a panic attack. When a person has a panic attack, part of the diagnosis involves physical symptoms. I certainly do not believe this diagnosis is the result of some accident. It is the result of what people experience, as is the case with blocking. The DSM IV offers this description on diagnosing a panic attack:

A Panic Attack is a discrete period in which there is the sudden onset of intense apprehension, fearfulness, or terror often associated with feelings of impending doom. During these attacks, symptoms such as shortness of breath, palpitations, chest pain or discomfort, choking or smothering sensations and fear of going

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“crazy” or losing control are present.

Note the psychosomatic symptoms. Move the expression of those emotions to particular areas of the body controlling speaking and you have blocking. The structure is the same; the expressions are different. Reframe or heal the emotions and the physical expression disappears.

Summary

Can we get negative emotions actually *installed* in our body?

Is it actually possible to *em-body* and *in-corp-orate* negative emotional states in our muscles and nervous tissue?

Yes indeed. That, in fact, is precisely what all of our emotions have the potential to do. Repeat any emotional state (which inevitably comes along with thoughts and frames of mind within it) and it will become somatized or embodied in our very flesh.

Could it be that the feelings that correspond to and drive blocking have gotten into the breathing and speaking muscles?

Yes, of course. And because of this ongoing, dynamic process— when we *change* the thinking-and-feeling within that experience, the messages sent to the body that keeps refreshing and reinforcing the neuro-pathways change. This offers hope for recovery and transformation. No wonder the multiple forms of Cognitive-Behavioral therapy have taken the lead in the past three decades in creating the most significant change. And it is that model that we use in Neuro-Semantics as we are pioneering faster and more streamlined ways of getting to the source of the problem —the frames that determine the experience.

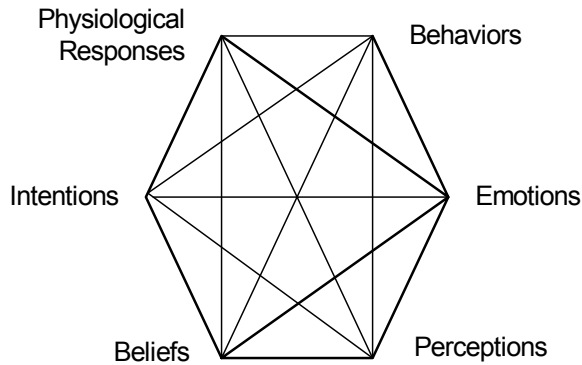
The First Ones

We are not the first ones to indicate that blocking has its roots in cognition (thinking). In the field of stuttering, John Harrison (1989, 2002) has provided a basic systems model using six key variables or factors involved in stuttering. He calls this system, "The Stuttering Hexagon."

The six factors that he has highlighted are: *physiological responses*, *physical behaviors*, *emotions*, *perceptions*, *beliefs*, and *intentions* (See Figure 1). He has noted that in a *system* every element is influenced by the other elements, positively or negatively (vi).

Figure 1

The Stuttering Hexagon



John Harrison

Harrison has also noted numerous other *systemic factors* about the stuttering hexagon:

- As a system, stuttering involves the entire person and is not just a speech problem.
- Once operating as a system, it has a life of its own (p. 3).
- As a system, the stuttering system will develop default settings.

"A permanent change in your speech will happen only when you alter the various default settings around the Stuttering Hexagon." (106)

- Change a critical factor in the system, and the entire system changes.

In NLP we point out that not everyone is likely to develop a blocking system. It calls for a natural tendency for speech to stumble under stress. What Harrison calls “bobulating” because it often shows up when one is embarrassed, upset, confused or disoriented (This is effortless disfluency and is not blocking.).

To move from “bobulating” to blocking necessitates a certain way of thinking and believing, a certain way of looking at and perceiving speech, self, others, etc. It involves a specific use of fear and apprehension, a certain attitude about how to cope and respond and it involves coaching and training the muscles and breathing. The correct interaction within The Matrix will produce blocking.

What we are calling an attitude, Harrison calls a mentality.

"You have to change to another mentality; the fight should be against the stuttering mentality that creates it, not the symptoms.

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This means that there is a non-blocking mentality just as there is a blocking mentality. In what follows we have used the *7 Matrices of the Mind Model*, a Neuro-Semantic model developed in 2002 that structures the NLP and NS patterns. We use this model for coaching, counseling, modeling, and neuro-semantic profiling. Accordingly, we here use it to make explicit the blocking system to provide systemic understanding of the semantics (meanings) that get into the body and nervous system (neuro-) to embody "blocking" so that it becomes part of physiology and a style of moving through the world.

Stuttering as a “Learned Behavior” – Wendell Johnson, Dave Elman and Others

Others as well have suggested that stuttering is a learned behavior. These range from linguist Wendell Johnson to Hypnotherapist Dave Elman.

Dave Elman was born May 6, 1900 in Park River, North Dakota and died on December 5, 1967. His interest in hypnosis was stimulated at an early age by his father who was an accomplished hypnotist. I understand that Mr. Elman only trained medical doctors and dentists. His interest in stuttering came from observing his father work with stutterers. Concerning stuttering he concluded, “There is no such thing as a congenital stutter. A stutter or stammer must be precipitate.”

Mr. Elman then goes on to speak about the times that doctors had brought stutterers to the classes on hypnosis that he taught hoping that he could help them. He spoke of the pity he felt for these children and, even more so, the distress he felt when he met an adult who had the same problem. He said that every time he saw one of those patients,

“I felt a pang, recalling my first meeting with a stutterer when my father hypnotized a young girl in her teens and stopped her from stuttering. Then, when the hypnosis was over, she stuttered as badly as ever. I use to wonder why the problems of these people couldn’t be permanently corrected. “I don’t remember the first time I ever used hypnoanalysis to help a stuttering patient but, admittedly, there have been many times when I have been unable to give them permanent relief. Nevertheless, it is pleasant to remember the many who have been helped considerably.”

Mr. Elman had a tremendous understanding of cognition in addition to anatomy and physiology. Obviously, by limiting his trainings to doctors and dentists and doing it quite successfully in the mid 20th century he had to be very knowledgeable and respected. At that time hypnosis was considered by many in the medical profession as *hocus pocus*. He knew that for hypnosis to work even momentarily and in many cases permanently, that the cause of stuttering could not primarily be physical or inherited. He concluded,

“It is my firm belief that every stutter has a basic, investigable cause. Over the years, I have tried to get doctors to change their attitude towards stutterers and treat the *cause* rather than the *effect*...”

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“Even a minor trauma can, like suggestion, be compounded by repetition. Every stutter has its beginning in a situation in which the victim reaches a point where he doesn’t want to talk and yet is obliged to.”

He firmly believed that blocking was caused by “traumatic situations.” It would appear that our discoveries about stuttering being primarily a learned behavior parallel Dave Elman’s findings.

John Harrison provided me an article by Carl H. Scott, Ph.D. entitled *The Mind-Body-Spirit Model for People Who Stutter*. Dr. Scott who passed away in 2001 was a California State licensed and ASHA-certified speech pathologist whose degree included a special emphasis in clinical psychology. In his article Dr. Scott relates his belief that blocking is to be treated not just as a physical problem. In working with people who block, he “considers the whole person and works toward a balance in mind, body and spirit.” Dr. Scott has a “three stage” approach for therapy with people who block:

1. The first stage in this healing process is to guide the individual to identify the beliefs, attitudes, thoughts, feelings and behavior that may serve as obstacles in daily living and in accessing fluency.
2. The second stage is this therapeutic journey calls for initiating a healing process. This may involve working with his inner child, dialog or forgiveness.
3. The third stage of therapy is to guide the person who blocks into a healthy belief system with new and powerful positive thoughts and the ability to experience self acceptance and love. It also calls for manifesting changes in behavior.

It is obvious from his article that Dr. Scott holds very similar views with John Harrison, Dave Elman, those of us in Neuro-Semantics, and a growing field of other professionals that blocking and stuttering is primarily a learned behavior.

More and more we are recognizing that stuttering behaviors that are built on blocking are primarily a learned phenomenon and therefore primarily require cognitive (thinking) techniques to lead the people who block and stutter to fluency. That is what this book is about.

Chapter I

Introduction to the Stuttering Matrix

&

States of Mind

The Stuttering Matrix

- How does blocking happen?
- How does the brain learn to block in certain situations and not in others?
- What structural components of the brain function in order to create blocking?
- How do the structural components of the brain function together in order to create blocking?

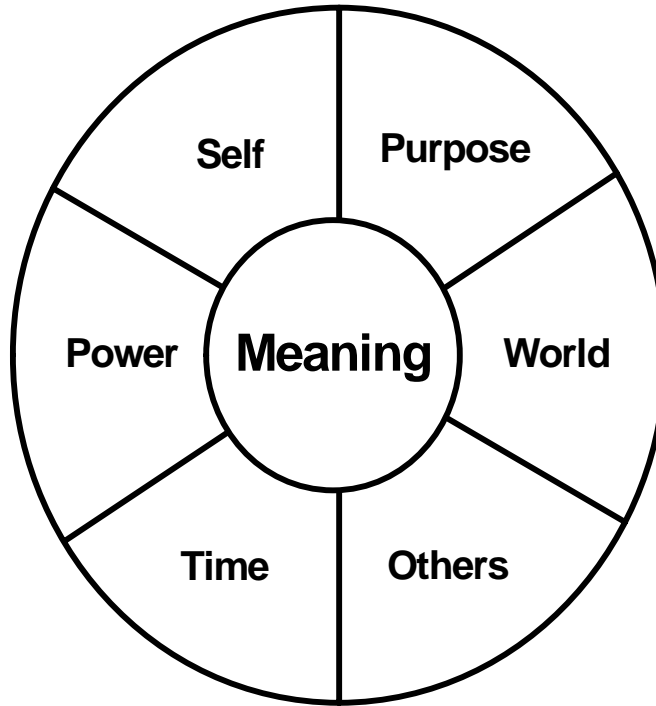
Throughout this book, we will be referring to the term “Matrix.” As I have mentioned earlier, Michael Hall utilized this term from mathematics to describe the mental frameworks of our mind-body system. He also played off on it using the movie by the same name. It is a great metaphor for how our brain works. We use the term to summarize the vast numbers of “mental frames” or thinking patterns that operate primarily unconsciously.

The Matrix Model is quite simple in its basic format and will be utilized as an organizing model for this book (See Figure 1:1 and Figure 1:2):

1. We begin with *meaning*. "What does ‘X’ event mean to you (*Meaning Matrix*)?" In Figure 1:1 you will see the seven matrices revealing “meaning” as the center and determinant of all the other matrices. What does that *meaning* say to you about:
 2. Your concept of you as a person (*Self Matrix*)?
 3. How you view yourself as having adequate or inadequate *resources* to live a productive life (*Power/Resource Matrix*)?
 4. How you view your relationship to your *past*, your *present* and how you view your *future* (*Time Matrix*)?
 5. How you *relate* to *other* people and how you allow them to exercise control, if any, over your life (*Other Matrix*)?
 6. How you view the *world* you live in? Is it a friendly or non-friendly place (*World Matrix*)?
 7. How your higher *purposes* affect your life in each one of the above and how you view whether or not you can live out your higher purposes in life (*Intentional/Purpose Matrix*)?

So, when we talk about the Matrix Model, that is, what we are talking about.

Figure 1:1
The Matrix Circle

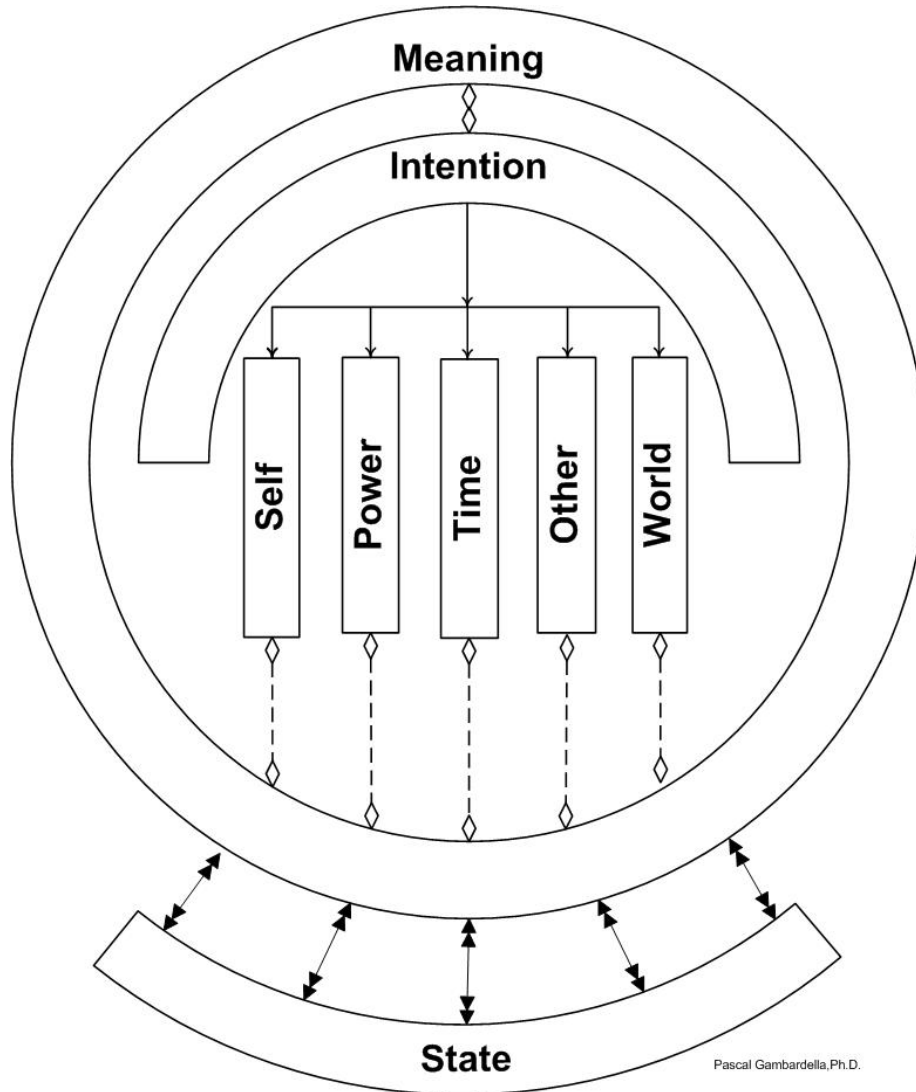


For sure, you never leave home without your “Matrix” filled with all these and many more frames of mind. Your Matrix gives you your *model of the world* through which you navigate through life. If you view yourself as a person of worth with innate powers to navigate the world in which you live, you will live your life one way. If, however, you view yourself in a negative light and with little or no power to navigate your world, you will live your life in a totally different way.

Your Matrix to a large degree determines how you live and experience life. We believe that we have seven key matrices which determine all the other matrices of our mind (beliefs, values, understandings, etc, i.e. all of our thinking patterns both conscious and unconscious). Throughout this book, we will be referring to and explaining this model. It will serve as the basis for the entire book.

In Figure 1:1, I illustrate how *meaning* as the center of all the other matrices determines all the other matrices. In Figure 1:2 (next page), I utilize a graphic created by Pascal Gambardella, Ph.D. that more accurately illustrates how the model works. In this graphic, Pascal shows how *Meaning* does determine all the other matrices. But, your desires, your wants, your intentions are involved in creating five of the matrices. Thus *Intention* sends your mind or directionalizes your mind to the created meanings of your concepts of *Self, Power, Time, Others* and *World*. Your “want to” or your outcome assists you in determining the meanings you give those matrices. This is mostly done totally out of conscious awareness.

Figure 1:2
The 7 Matrices of Your Neuro-Semantics



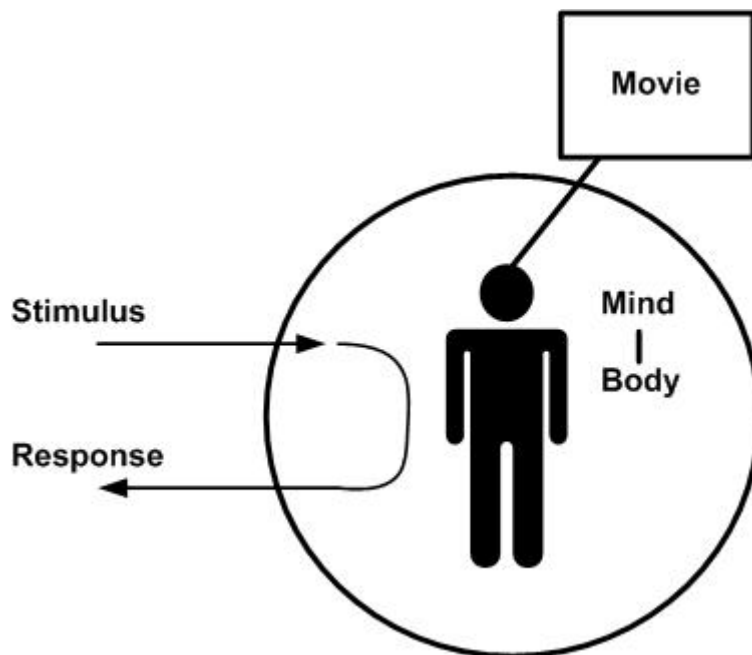
When a person who blocks anticipates an upcoming conversation, she may fear that she will block based on past experiences (*Time Matrix*). But, she does not want to repeat the past behavior of blocking (*Intention Matrix*) due to all the negative meanings that she has associated with blocking (*Meaning Matrix*). These meanings find expression in the other matrices such as, “I don’t want to appear like I am a weirdo because I block” (*Self Matrix*). Or, “I am powerless to overcome this” (*Power Matrix*). Etc.

So, in this illustration, note how the person’s defining of self is mostly determined by the meanings associated with blocking and stuttering. And, the intent or desire of not repeating past behaviors due to the meanings associated with blocking drives the meanings given to the other matrices: “I don’t want to appear like I am a weirdo because I block” (*Self Matrix*). Or, “I am powerless to overcome this” (*Power Matrix*). Etc.

States and the Matrix

It all begins with your everyday *states of consciousness*. If I were to ask you what state of mind you are presently in, you could probably answer quite readily. Since you are reading this book, you may answer, “I am in a learning state.” Or, you may say, “I am in a curious state.” Or, “I am in a state of confusion.” You tend to know what state of mind you are in at any given moment. I mean, if you are in one state when you are fluent and in a totally different state when you block, would it be of interest to you to learn how to *get out* of the “blocking state” and *get in* the “fluent state?” These are your mind-body states that you never leave home without. You are always in some state of mind or emotion (unless we are dead).

Figure 1:3
A Neuro-Linguistic State



You live inside these states. They govern your perception, communication, behavior, memory and learning and so color your life by determining how you respond to and live in your world. What determines these states? The various frames of meaning which operate at any given moment determine the state in which you live. And, it is those “frames of meaning” that determine whether you block or whether you speak fluently.

When you consider an upcoming conversation and then create an imaginary movie of you blocking during that conversation, then your body will *obey* the created movie and create a fear state out of the imaginary movie. Check yourself out. Think about an upcoming conversation with someone that you usually block when you speak to them. What do you immediately do? Do you create an imaginary picture or a movie of your seeing the person and of you blocking? The mind-body system doesn't know that the movie is

imaginary. It just responds from the movie and to the meaning that you have given to the movie of the impending conversation.

In this work, I will be leading you to “go inside” and determine what frames of meaning (thoughts) create your blocking. I will then direct you to discover those frames of meaning that allow you to speak fluently. You will be provided with techniques and language patterns that will “expose” those meanings that lead to your blocking so you can change them. Techniques will be provided that will allow you to change those meanings so you will not feel compelled to hold back and block. After all, you do know how to speak fluently in some contexts so you already have those meanings installed. This book will give you several tools that will permit you to move those meaning frames to operate in all contexts of your life.

First Encounter with the Matrix

In all likelihood, you have no idea or maybe just some idea what frames of meaning you have operating that create your blocking. Usually these frames operate out of conscious awareness (in the unconscious mind). By the way, when I say “unconscious mind” I am referring to those thoughts that you are not presently aware of.

As you learn how to recognize the meanings and thought patterns (frames) that create your internal world, you are enabled to see the invisible matrices of the mind. In that way, they become visible to you – the unconscious becomes conscious. The “where did that come from” comes into awareness. Your Matrix, therefore, is your internal world of many frames – thought patterns.

You will learn that you have many frames of meaning embedded within other frames of meaning, etc. There are layers upon layers of meaning frames – (1) “When I make a phone call I get nervous.” (2) “When I get nervous I have the thought, ‘I bet I will block.’” (3) “Why do I always do this?” (4) “Why can’t I stop?” (5) “I know I will block. I always have.” (6) “Let’s see. What do I need to say when I make that call? What words can I use that I won’t block on?” Etc. This is what we mean by meaning frames upon meaning frames – layer upon layer.

The person who blocks just keeps on layering her mind with one negative thought after negative thought until she has worked herself into a full fledged block as she makes the phone call. It is a product of all the layering of one negative thought after another. Some refer to this as “stinking thinking.” The Matrix Model separates out all these meaning frames and analyze them so changes can be made. The term used in NLP and Neuro-Semantics for the process of changing meaning is called “re-framing”. This book is about changing the meanings that you have placed around blocking to the meanings you place around fluency – “re-framing”.

It is this “layering” of frames of meaning that creates your perceptual reality. You have layers of meaning that create fluency. You have layers of meaning that create blocking. They will obviously be quite different. It is like having all the ingredients of a German

Chapter I – Introduction to the Stuttering Matrix

Chocolate Cake out on the cabinet all neatly separated. Then, at the appropriate time and with the appropriate amount, you put them all together in the mixing bowl and all the parts (meaning frames) come together to form the whole – a yummy chocolate cake. Now, to create a pecan pie, you would use different ingredients. Likewise, you have one set of ingredients for blocking and another set of ingredients for fluency.

Do you know how to drive a car? Do you know how to ride a bicycle? You probably do. Both those skills are “grooved into your muscles” through numerous repetitions. You have a neural pathway for driving a car and you have a separate neural pathway for riding a bicycle. When riding a bicycle you do not move the muscles in the same way that you do when driving a car and vice-versa.

In your speaking you have probably learned how to be fluent and you have learned how to block. You have separate neural pathways for each experience. Different contexts trigger different neural pathways. While alone, you may trigger the neural pathway for fluency. The neural pathway for blocking is still present in your mind-body system. It is just not activated when you speak fluently. When you block, the context you are in triggers fear and anxiety of blocking and that in turn triggers the neural pathway for blocking and you block. The neural pathway for fluency is still there – it is just not activated.

Our goal will be to change the meanings around blocking so that you do not automatically activate those meanings when you are in the context of fear and anxiety. Once you have changed the meanings (re-framed) around your speech so that you do not activate the neural pathways for fear and anxiety and thus blocking but the neural pathway for fluency, then you have obtained your goal. The aim is to minimize those frames of meaning that have “locked in the block” through re-framing (the purpose of the language patterns and techniques in this book) so that you can access the neural pathways that activate fluency.

The Movie Matrix – The “Structure” of Your Frames of Meaning (Your Thoughts)

Your “state of mind” drives your behavior. That is true for every human being on the planet. You experience many states during the day. In blocking you have states of mind composed of fear and anxiety? But in fluency you have states of mind composed of calmness, focus on what you are saying (instead of how you are saying), relaxation, enjoyment, etc.

These states of mind are a product of your thinking. You think one way while blocking and another way while fluent. Since your mind-body functions as one system, as soon as you have a thought, your body responds to that thought. Well, how are thoughts constructed? Thoughts have two key components: the *movie of the mind* and the *language of the mind*.

States and their construction will be covered more fully later in chapter 3. In this section the *movie of your mind*, which is the first component of your mind-body states, will be

Chapter I – Introduction to the Stuttering Matrix

covered. How you create various movies in your mind which drive the two states that produce blocking and fluency will find particular emphasis.

I just got off the phone with a person who blocks and stutters. He has a tremendous fear of talking to people on the phone. Of major concern are those people with whom he does business. Before he calls them, the first thing he does is to create a picture in his head of the other person answering the phone. Immediately, after he sees the picture, he starts talking to himself (the other component of our states) about his fear of losing this client.

Now, note how he first made a picture. This is what I mean by the creating of movies in your head as the first component of your states. People who block and stutter have a profound efficiency of creating horror movies in their head. Who needs Stephen King the “Master of Horror”? You can do your own movie making. And, sometimes, you scare the hell out of yourself about an upcoming conversation. You create movies of the person judging you because you block. You create movies of the other person laughing at you, etc.

In Figure 1:4 you will see that as a species you process the world primarily through your five senses: what you see, hear, feel, smell and taste (**V**isual, **A**uditory, **K**inesthetic, **O**lfactory and **G**ustatory). This makes up the movie of your mind – its structure.

As you experience the external world through your five senses; what you see, hear, feel, smell and taste, you re-present your external experiences by creating a *movie* in your mind of that experience. By “re-presenting” I just simply mean that when you see something and recall it later, you will “re-present” it on the movie screen of your mind. You “map” it out with your movie.

For instance, when you create the “fear of blocking,” you probably first create a movie (it just may be a still picture) of you blocking when you converse with that person. You *re-present* that imaginary experience on the screen of your mind, your movie, with a picture or pictures. This is a strategy that I discover most people who block and stutter do just prior to a speaking engagement that usually produces a block.

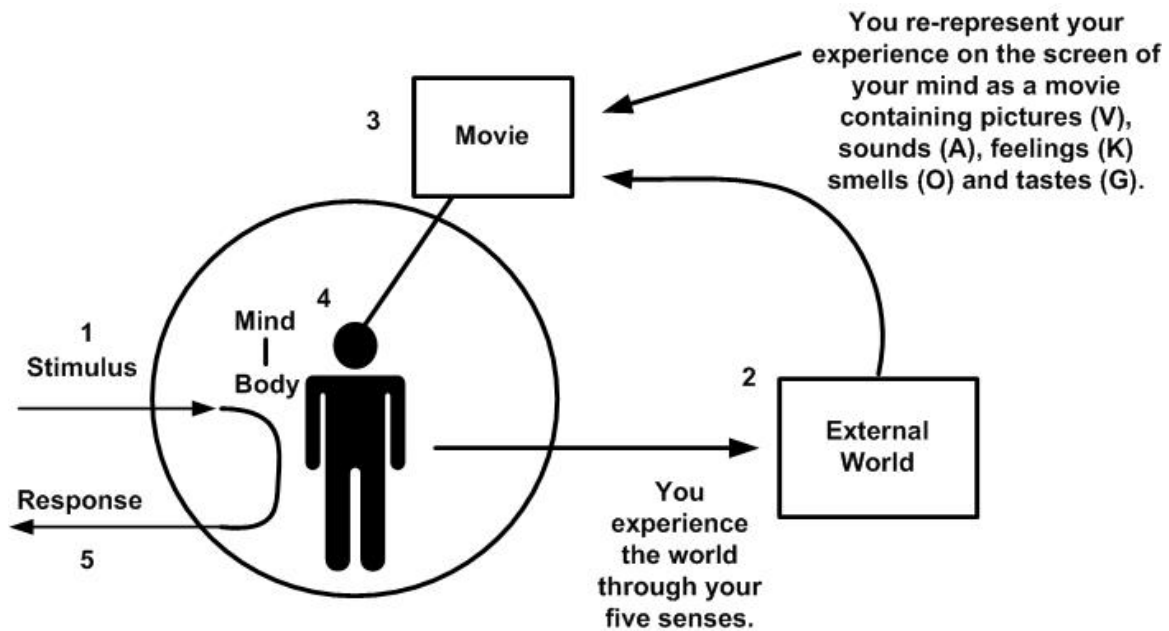
In the “movie of your mind” you create the first level of meaning given to your experience and you do that, not with words, but with pictures, sounds, feelings, smells and tastes. NLP and Neuro-Semantics deals primarily with the first three: pictures (V), sounds (A) and feelings (K). Now by feelings, the reference is not to your emotions (more about emotions later); the reference is to your ability to feel – like temperature, pressure, textures, etc. This is about both external (tactile) and internal (proprioceptive) feelings.

The Steps to Movie Making **An Example of Anticipatory Anxiety** **(See Figure 1:4)**

1) You experience a stimulus that requires speaking.

- 2) Based on previous experiences of speaking to people and blocking (You external world),
- 3) You create a movie (or still picture, sound and/or feeling) of the experience of blocking.
- 4) Your picture or movie interacts with your body (Mind-Body Connection) to produce a state of fear and anxiety.
- 5) This state of anxiety creates a response of blocking.

Figure 1:4
The Creation of the Linguistic State



The kinds of movies you create inside your head is of vast importance; for these movies send signals to your body to obey. When you create a mental movie in your head of blocking, guess what that almost guarantees? If you create a movie of blocking in that next conversation, it is as if your mind-body says, “OK, you want to block, I shall oblige and create a block for you.” I bet you don’t create a movie of blocking when you go to talk to the person with whom you don’t block. You probably don’t even think of blocking. You just carry on a comfortable conversation.

What kind of movies do you create inside your head when you block? Do you create movies of you blocking? Stuttering? Being embarrassed? Hesitating? When you don’t block and stutter, what kind of movies do you create? How do the movies differ between blocking and not blocking? These are important questions for you to ask yourself.

Associating/Dissociating

We humans can really create some horror shows inside our heads; that our body obeys with fear, anxiety, etc. Now, *inside* the movie, we find further distinctions. This *structural* truth may have major implications for blocking. When you create a movie of yourself blocking, how do you do that? Do you make the pictures big, bright, in full color and up close? Do you imagine yourself out there in the future actually blocking? When you imagine yourself blocking, you probably do not see yourself in the imaginary picture. More than likely you actually experience it by being *inside* the movie. If you are not aware of creating a movie with pictures, do you do it primarily talking to yourself? If so, what kind of voice do you use? What kind of tonality do you use?

In NLP this is called *associating* into the picture. You know you are associated when you create a picture of the past or future and you do not see yourself in the picture. You are mentally there experiencing the experience. For most people, but not all, imagining yourself associated inside a picture intensifies the emotion.

Try this. Imagine you're in your kitchen and going to the refrigerator. Open the door of the refrigerator, then open the vegetable drawer and take out a lemon. Close the vegetable drawer and then the refrigerator door. Walk over to the cabinet and get a cutting board and a knife. Imagine cutting the lemon into halves. Imagine picking up one of the halves and cutting the half into quarters. Pick up one of the quarters and imagine sticking the quarter slice of lemon into your mouth and squeeze the slice. Imagine and feel the lemon juice squirting into your mouth. Are you salivating as if you have lemon juice in your mouth? With most people, their mouths salivate. Does yours?

This simple experience illustrates how the mind directs the body and does not differentiate between real and imaginary experiences. For some people, there will be a difference in intensity. As it represents, so it signals the body; whether the images are remembered, imagined or real time.

Now, if you create a movie in your mind of a forthcoming conversation with a person and you imagine yourself *inside* that movie blocking when you speak to that person, in all likelihood, your mind-body system will say, "OK, I will do what you tell me to do. When you are in front of that person talking, I will make sure that you block/stutter." If you do not wish to block/stutter, you stand a much better chance of being fluent by seeing yourself (dissociated) speaking fluent with the person. And then, after you see ourselves speaking fluent with the person, you may wish to imagine yourself there in front of the person (associated) and speaking fluent just for practice for the real thing.

Movie Qualities

We not only associate/dissociate inside our movies, we have other distinctions as well. In Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP), these distinctions are called "submodalities." Don't worry about that term. We will call them *qualities* of the movie. Table 1:1 lists some of the key qualities in the visual, auditory and kinesthetic systems.

Table 1:1
Qualities

Visual (Pictures)	Auditory (Sounds)	Kinesthetic (Feelings)
<input type="checkbox"/> Brightness	<input type="checkbox"/> Pitch	<input type="checkbox"/> Pressure
<input type="checkbox"/> Focus	<input type="checkbox"/> Continuous or	<input type="checkbox"/> Location
<input type="checkbox"/> Color	Interrupted	<input type="checkbox"/> Extent
<input type="checkbox"/> Size	<input type="checkbox"/> Associated/Dissociated	<input type="checkbox"/> Shape
<input type="checkbox"/> Distance	<input type="checkbox"/> Tempo	<input type="checkbox"/> Texture
<input type="checkbox"/> Associated/Dissociated	<input type="checkbox"/> Volume	<input type="checkbox"/> Temperature
<input type="checkbox"/> Movie/Still	<input type="checkbox"/> Rhythm	<input type="checkbox"/> Movement
<input type="checkbox"/> Location	<input type="checkbox"/> Duration	<input type="checkbox"/> Duration
<input type="checkbox"/> Foreground/ Background	<input type="checkbox"/> Distance	<input type="checkbox"/> Intensity
(What is up close and what	<input type="checkbox"/> Location	<input type="checkbox"/> Frequency
is in the background that	<input type="checkbox"/> Clarity	
you normally wouldn't		
see?)		

At this first level of abstraction of your movies comprised of pictures, sounds and feelings; you apply meaning via the inner qualities of your movie. How do you do that? Let's play with this. Think of a pleasant experience and see it as a movie. Notice if the movie is "close" to you? When you see the movie of that pleasant experience, do you experience the movie as being very close to your face, or far away? Is the movie in bright colors, dim colors, or is it black and white dim, and maybe dark with no color in it? Is it a big broad panoramic picture or is it small like a snap shot? Most people make their pleasant pictures up close, in color and many times panoramic. But, not everyone does it that way.

You may wish to play with the movie of the pleasant experience just for practice. If it is close to you, move it away and notice if it changes the strength of the pleasant feeling. If it is in color, make it black and white and very dim or vice versa. Does that change the feeling of the experience? We call this *structure* and it is the beginning point of learning how to *run your own brain*.

We use these qualities for encoding distinctions. "Close," "far," "bright," "dim," etc. give us a *symbolic way* of encoding higher level concepts like "real," "unreal," "past," "future," etc. Recognizing this enables us to then use these qualities as leverage points in numerous change techniques. Given that we mentally structure our experiences in these codings, these qualities provide our brains a coding system for making distinctions. We often use such symbols for the difference between various emotions (fear or courage) and between differing experiences (procrastinating or going for it).

Consider the following statements:

"I feel pretty dull today?"

"I hear you loud and clear."

"Something smells fishy about his proposal."

"I have a bright future."

These seemingly metaphorical sayings can actually enable us to track back to the individual's internal movie making in terms of her representational system (pictures, sounds, feelings) "modes" (modalities). Until the discoveries of NLP, most people treated such language as "just metaphors." Today we know better. With the insights of NLP, we know that such metaphors typically cue us about the person's internal representing of the world and so we hear such as literal descriptions of the speaker's internal world.

Exercise

The Qualities of Blocking and “Not” Blocking – Editing Your Movies

- 1) Imagine two different experiences of speaking in the near future. In one of those experiences, you block and in the other experience you do not block.
- 2) Create a picture of the two experiences if you haven't already done so.
- 3) Take note of the visual qualities of the two different experiences. Write these down side-by-side on a piece of paper. Use Table I as a guide. After listing the visual qualities, list some of the key kinesthetic qualities and auditory if applicable.
- 4) Now, change the qualities of the “blocking” image to be like the qualities of the fluency picture. Use the quality of location first and distance second to begin the shift. Just move the picture of the blocking experience into the same location as the fluent experience and change the other qualities of the blocking experience into the same qualities of the fluent experience.
- 5) Play with “editing” of the movie as you experiment with the qualities to develop a more suitable experience for the formerly blocking experience.

Foreground/ Background – Qualities that Make a Powerful Difference

(Edited from *Games for Mastering Fear*)

As you are learning, the qualities within your movies do matter. You can do some neat things with your mind-body states by experimenting with them. One of the most significant qualities that I have found in working with clients is the one titled *foreground/background*. This comes from Gestalt psychology.

Exercise

- 1) Think of the next time you are likely to block. Chances are you will have a picture of the person/ situation when you block.

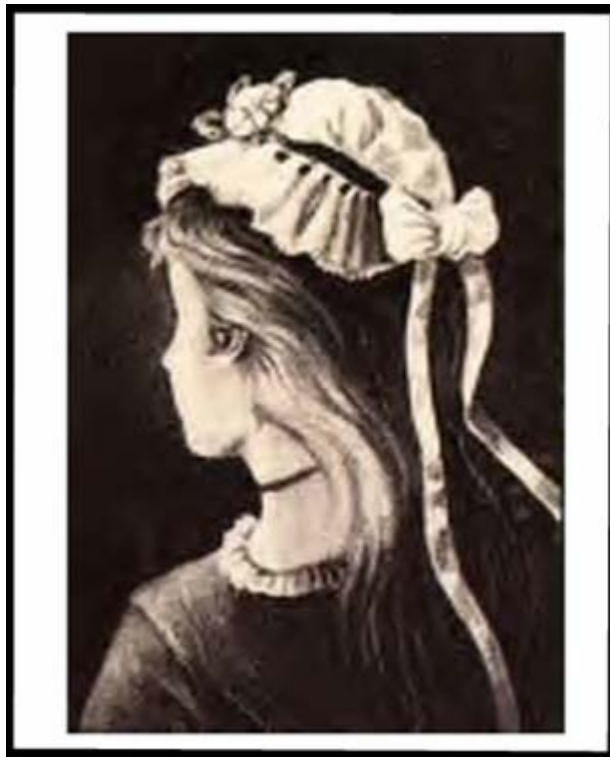
Chapter I – Introduction to the Stuttering Matrix

- 2) Note where in reference to your eyes that you see that person/situation. In all likelihood that picture will be right in front of you and it is *all that you are looking at*.
- 3) Now, what are you *not* seeing? What? Yes, what is in that picture that you are *not* seeing? You are so focused on the person or context that you are afraid will trigger your blocking that you don't see anything else. Step back from that person/context and see behind it, beside it, beyond it, etc. What else is *out* there that you were not seeing at first?

In order to “step back,” go into peripheral vision. When you focus on something to the exclusion of everything else, that is called “foveal” vision. Now, just step back, go into peripheral vision and see everything off to each side but do more. Not only look to each side, but look and see what is behind the picture of the block. Allow your eyes to go *beyond* the image of the block. What is *back there*?

In every picture, image, and movie that you are seeing, some things are in the foreground and other things are in the background. When you *foreground* problems – they become bigger and more challenging. When you *foreground* resources – you become more skilled, competent and bold.

Figure 1:5
Foreground/Background



Look at the picture in Figure 1:5. An old woman or a beautiful young lady picture – What do you see? (Hint: The old woman's nose is the young girl's chin.) In order to see

the young girl the old woman must go into the background. In order for you to see the old woman, the young girl must go into the background. It all boils down to – whom do you want to see, the young woman or the old hag? What about that? It boils down to *whom do you want to see* assuming that one is aware that both are present.

Consider the individual who had an image of himself as a scared little kid who froze in the presence of authority figures. When he froze he blocked. He had another image of himself as a resourceful adult who always spoke fluently. When he saw the scared little kid, guess where the adult was? The scared little kid was in the foreground and the mature fluent adult was in the background.

Foregrounding Resources

What resources would you like to foreground in the theater of your mind? How about faith, courage, relaxation, presence of mind, sense of feeling centered, sense of being whole, permission to feel more empowered, etc.?

Exercise

- 1) Look for the resources in your “fearful and anxious” sensory-rich movie of your blocking.
- 2) Get one of those pictures that you normally get that creates great fear of blocking.
- 3) Now, look *behind that* or *beyond that* and notice **the resources back there**. Yes, those resources are back there and you can see them if you look close enough. The resources probably exist so far back in the background that you can just barely imagine them. You may see yourself speaking confidently and fluently with those resources *back there*. You may see confidence, calmness, courage, faith, etc.
- 4) And yet, if you allow this process to continue, you can begin even now to recognize those resources in the background... and *call them forth*. You can call them forth to the foreground.
- 5) Experiment with this process.

Note: If you are a person of religious beliefs, if you look far enough you will see God. Yes, that is right, if you will just look *far enough* back there you will see God.

As you notice those-resources, you can let the foreground of fear and anxiety of blocking fade far, far away into the background as you at the same time bring those resources to the foreground. You have your choices – you can do it slowly, gradually, in an ever-increasing fashion, or you can do it suddenly, radically, and with a jolt that all of a sudden, completely and fully lands you there.

How to Play:

This pattern is primarily written as a visual pattern. You can also do this with sounds and with feelings. You will have sounds in the foreground and other sounds in the background. You will have some feeling in the foreground and other feelings in the background. You can do it with concepts (words, self talk and voices). Some concepts will be foreground and others in the background. Some voices will be foreground and others background. For rehearsal, I prefer doing it visually but you use what works best for you.

We have the pattern below for backgrounding fear of blocking. However, it will work with many unwanted thoughts. The process of shifting background/ foreground in order to bring more resources to bear on your experiences runs as follows:

<p style="text-align: center;">Foreground/ Background</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Detect the foreground/ background structure.2) Become aware of your own foregrounding / background patterns.3) Decide to take charge of switching the images.4) Commit yourself to foregrounding resources.5) Swish the background to the foreground.

Exercise

1) Detect the Foreground/Background Structure

- Get a visual image of fearing blocking. Notice what you find in the foreground. What's up front? What stands out?
- Next, shift your awareness to the background against which it stands. What is "back there?"
- You may need to step way back to get a clear view of what is behind and/or surrounding the fear or anxiety.

2) Become aware of your own Foregrounding/ Backgrounding Patterns

- What do you typically foreground in order to fear blocking?
- What do you regularly and systematically background or avoid in order to not experience the fear of blocking?
- In other words, what do you "not see" that allows you to experience the fear of blocking? *What is it that you must foreground in order to block that you do not foreground when speaking fluent?* It is back there. Look!

3) Decide to Take Charge of Shifting These Images

- The fact that you foreground some things and background other things simply describes an aspect of how the brain works. *Taking control* over the way you run your brain so that you learn how to foreground resources, solutions, getting things done, etc. however describes, how you can use this information for running your brain more effectively.
- So check constantly on your backgrounding and foregrounding to make sure that your learned patterns work for you rather than against you.

4) Commit Yourself to Foregrounding Resources

- If you know that you *can* put resourceful thoughts, beliefs, pictures, sounds, music, feelings, etc. in the foreground of your mind, then make a commitment to yourself to do so. In your mind, move up and utter a profoundly powerful “*Yes!*” to that resource. “I will make that picture, idea, feeling, sound, music, etc. *stand out* in my mind!”
- If what *stands out is non-sense* – hurtful old pains, old fears, resentments, regrets, etc. — guess what states of mind that will evoke in you?
- Will that do you any good?

5) Rapidly exchange the Background Picture to the Foreground Picture.

- Once you feel strongly compelled to *get away from that old fear of blocking*, then go to the background and discover those resources.
- Shift your attention to the new referents.
- *Swish* the fear of blocking to the background and the resources of fluency to the foreground. Do it fast and repeat five times – more if needed.
- Every time you think of the fear of blocking — see, hear, and feel it fading out to the background as *the new resourceful fluent you* comes rapidly into the foreground.

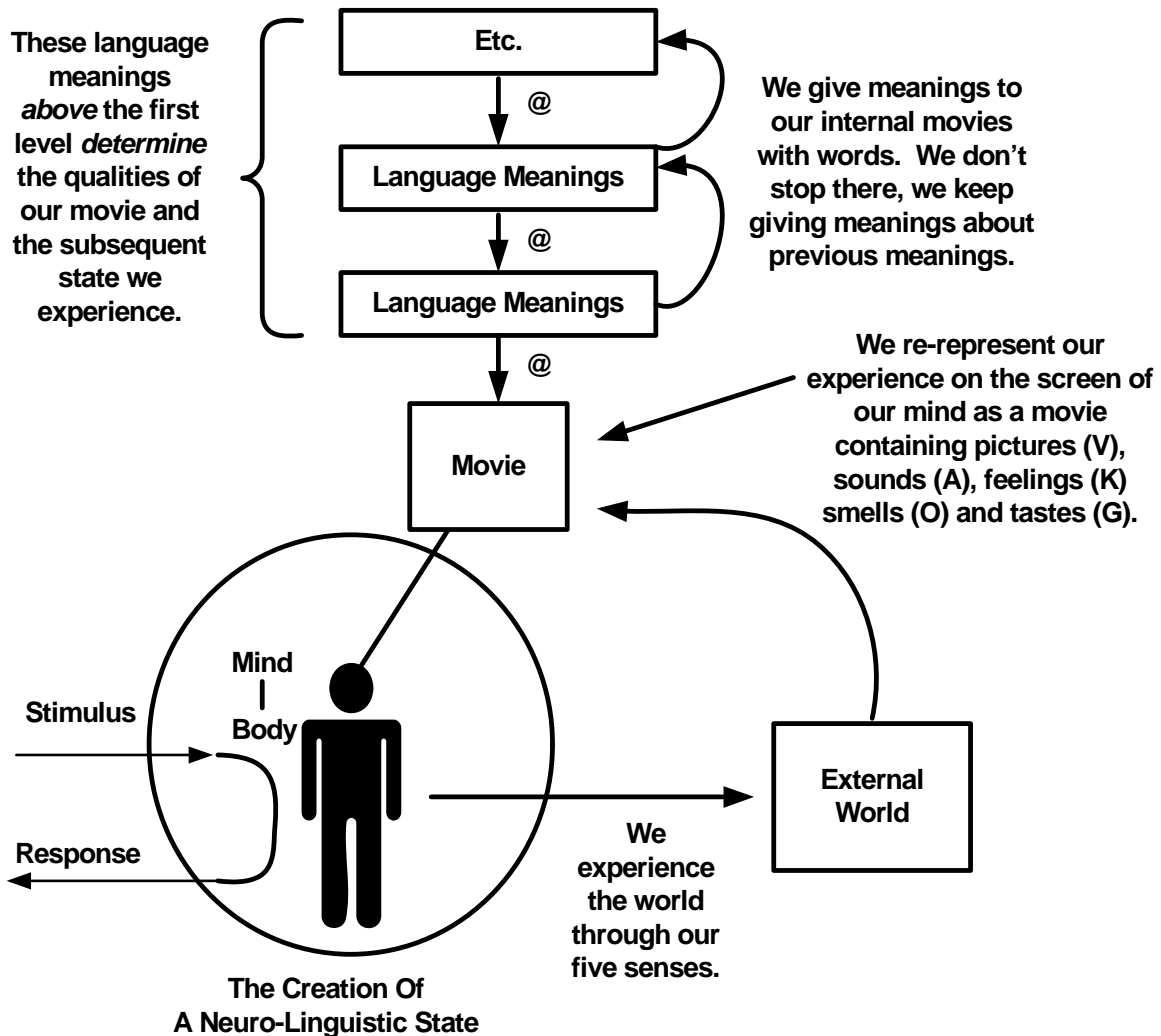
Language – Words *About* the Movies

So, back to theory, at the first level of *meaning* you have the qualities that are inside your pictures, sounds and feelings. However, something else is at work determining the quality of your movies – the language meanings that you give to your experience.

In Figure 1:6 you will note that *above* the “movie” box we have another box that has been added labeled *language meanings*. It is here and the subsequent language meanings *above* (the “meta” meanings) the first level that *determine* the qualities of your movie and the subsequent state you experience. The qualities you give to your movies are determined by the meanings you give to your experience. These qualities of your movies don’t just happen on their own – your definition of your experience determines the

qualities given the movie. Whether you see a movie as large, up close and in full color is determined by how you define and give meaning to the experience out of which you created the movie. Language then becomes the 2nd level of abstraction with your movie being the first level of abstraction.

Figure 1:6
The Higher Meanings of Language

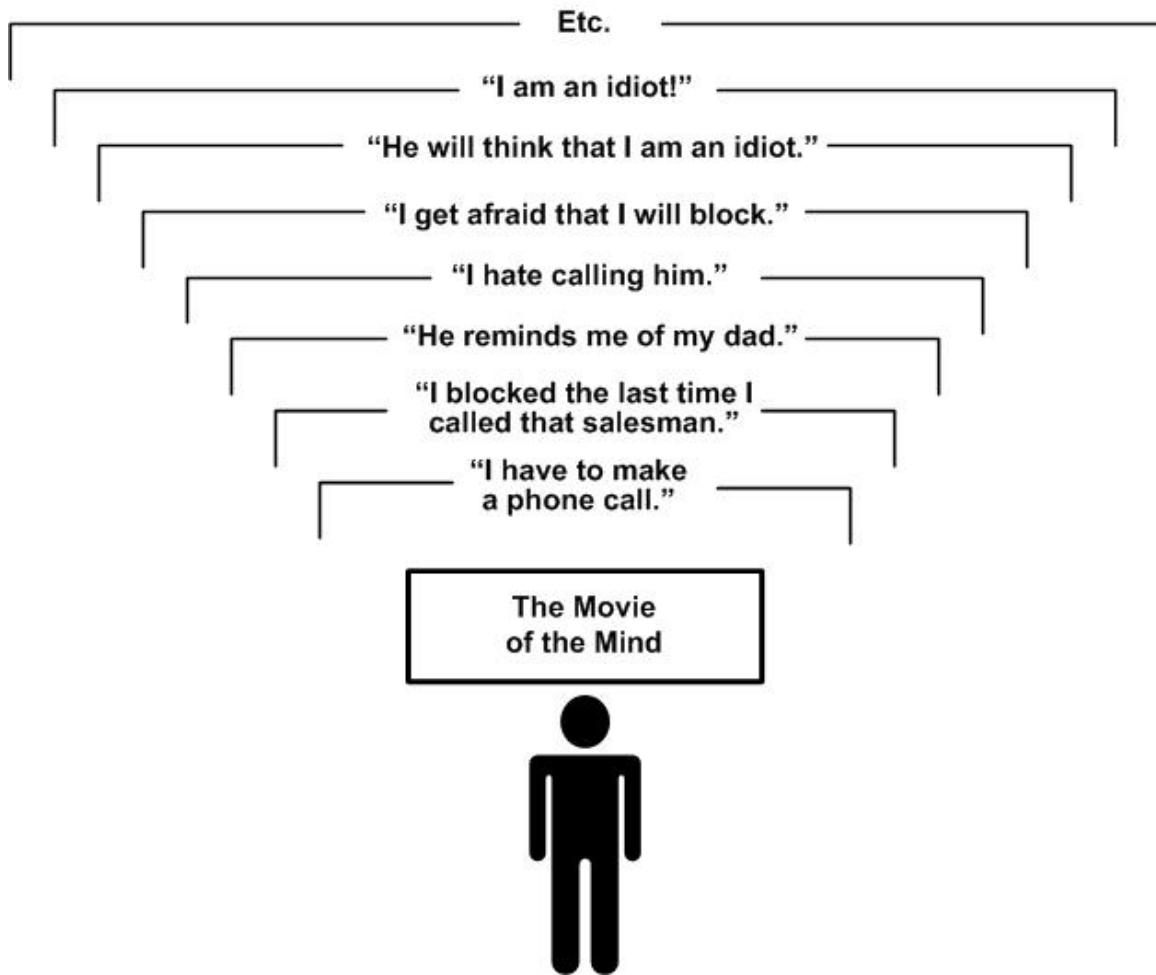


As we go further in our study, we will learn that your brain doesn't just stop with the second level of abstraction called words or language, but the brain keeps going with the 3rd level of abstraction, the 4th level of abstraction, etc. We do this because we keep having thoughts about thoughts (See Figure 1:7):

- 1st Level – the movie of the experience
- 2nd Level – “I have to make that phone call and order that book.”
- 3rd Level – “I blocked the last time I called that salesman.”

- 4th Level – “He reminds me of my dad.”
- 5th Level – “I hate calling him.”
- 6th Level – “I get afraid that I will block.”
- 7th Level – “He will think I am an idiot.”
- 8th Level – “I am an idiot.”
- Etc.

Figure 1:7
The Levels of Abstraction



We sure do keep having thoughts about thoughts, don't we? Yes we do. And it is these meanings that we give our movies that determine the qualities of the movie. If you start talking to yourself about fearing you will block (anticipatory anxiety), you will talk yourself into a Stephen King horror movie. It is the creating of these mental frames with words that determines our problem states; for these movies interact with our body and

Chapter I – Introduction to the Stuttering Matrix

produce the state of fully blocking. Yes, that is where you get into problems, but cheer up; this is also how you get out of problems:

- I have to make that phone call and order that book.
- I blocked the last time I called that salesman.
- He does remind me of my dad.
- I was afraid of my dad.
- But, wait a minute.
- He isn't my dad.
- And, I am a grown adult.
- I don't have to worry about being called stupid by my dad.
- Goodness, dad doesn't even live in this town.
- How foolish of me to act as if I am a child. That person isn't my dad.
- I know how to speak without holding back.
- I don't block when I talk to my dog.
- I know what I will do. If I start to get anxious when I talk to him, I will just picture him as my dog. ☺
- Hey, that just might work.

Yes, we do keep having thoughts about thoughts and what we say to ourselves sure does make a difference in how we feel (and talk).

Note: I know that it usually isn't just this simple. Those old horror movies are really grooved into our muscles and run unconsciously. They become so "deep" that just talking to ourselves using "positive thinking" will not instantly "fix" them. Yet, you will be surprised what you can do just by rehearsing the above type language. The brain learns through repetition and many people have achieved remarkable results by rehearsing frames of mind like the above ones. Don't despair. We have more great things coming. Read on.

Chapter Summary

- Blocking, as all human behavior, can be explained, analyzed and profiled by the Matrix Model.
- The Matrix Model has seven components. The first component, *meaning*, determines all the other matrices: *self, power/ resourcefulness, time, others/ relationships, world and intention/ purpose*.
- All of the thinking (cognitive) components (frames of mind) that drive blocking will fit into one or more of these matrices. These will all be covered throughout this book.

Chapter I – Introduction to the Stuttering Matrix

- All behaviors, including blocking, begin with our state(s) of mind. You live in your states. They govern your perception, communication, behavior, etc and color how you live in the world.
- Your frames of mind (your matrices) determine your states.
- Your states are primarily invisible when you first encounter them.
- The “movies of your mind” are the first level of subjective experience. Your movies have *qualities* based on how you internally represent your pictures, sounds, feelings, smells and tastes.
- A very important *quality* of the visual component of our movies is your ability to *step in* (associate) or *step out* (dissociate) of your pictures. Such movement can make a major difference to your experience.
- Another extremely important *quality* of your movie is whether or not you *foreground* (bring into focus) or *background* (push into the back of our minds) the images of your mind. You want to foreground resources and background limitations.
- You give meaning to your movie with *words* which are *above* or *meta* to your movies. Your word definitions determine the *quality* of your movies.

Chapter II

The

Meaning

Matrix

The Meaning Matrix

Recently, I e-mailed one of my clients who blocks a question, “What would happen if you didn’t have fear and anxiety about blocking?” The purpose of the question was to get him out of his blocking way of thinking. I wanted him to consider some alternatives. This type questioning does a great job in “getting people out of their box” to consider other alternatives. In his e-mail response to me he listed the following:

- I would be confident.
- I would be centered.
- I would be an equal to others.
- I would be more of a risk taker – more adventuresome.
- I would be positive instead of cynical.
- I would stop taking the responsibility for other people’s actions, but still feel compassion for them.
- I would feel the presence of God in my life on a consistent basis.
- I would be joyful and loving.
- I would know that however it turns out; it’s not the end of the world as long as I gave it my best effort.
- I would have other interests other than work. (This client has used his work to hide from facing himself and other people.)
- I would be excited about lots of stuff.
- I would give more time to those people who care and love me.
- I would be non-judgmental and more understanding.
- I would have close friends.
- I would be accepting of myself without worrying what other people think or what they would do to me.

Wow! Look at all those frames of mind that are prevented and interfered with because of the fear and anxiety around stuttering. This is a typical response and illustrates just how important “meaning” is to perception and behavior. Just changing the meaning attached to the fear and anxiety around blocking would make profound changes in this person’s life. One person on the road to fluency said, “I am removing the *meaning* from my stuttering.” To gain fluency, ultimately you will be removing and/or changing the meanings that you have associated with blocking.

Above and beyond the internal movie, are frames of meaning that influence the movie of the mind. We never just “think” – we think *about* our thinking. We direct our thinking to different objects; we edit our thinking with different kinds of thinking; etc. This describes the higher levels of our mind.

Thus, we think in more ways than just *representing* via the movies of our mind. We also think in terms of *editing* our movies. We think in terms of *directing* the movies of our mind. We do this through our use of the higher levels of our mind. From these higher levels, we can choose the qualities of our internal movies – for “up there” is where we *create* and *control* our movies. From the illustration above of all the higher level meanings my client gave the thought of not fearing blocking, imagine how that kind of

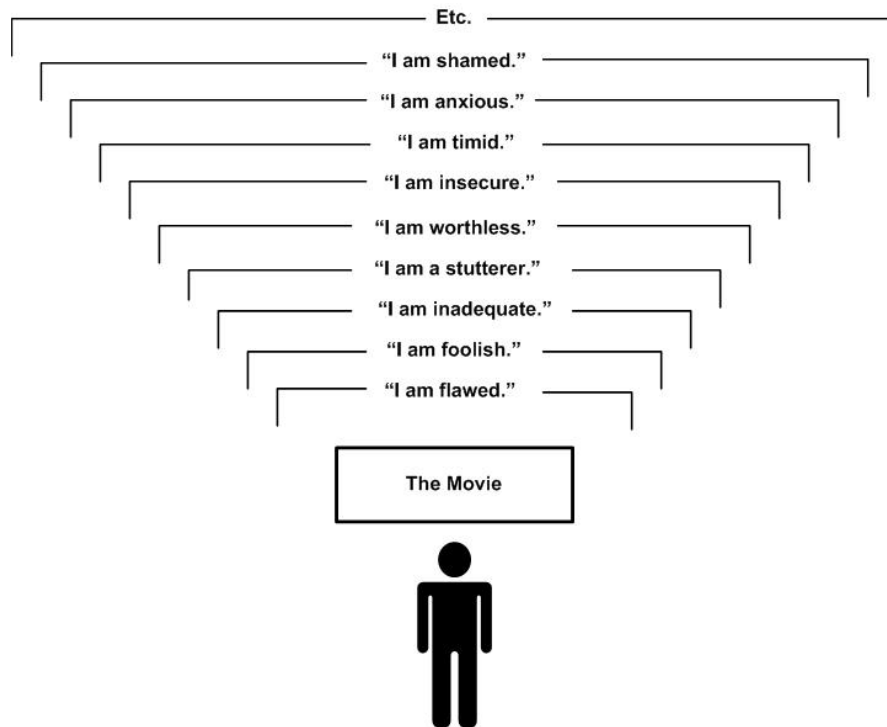
thinking would edit a new movie compared to the one edited through fear and anxiety. Yes, how we think matters.

As you map things out inside your head, you generate meanings that you encode into your movies with the qualities of the visual, auditory and kinesthetic systems. The “meaning movies” interact with your body through your central nervous system and that in turn create your states. ”Meaning” is the way you “make sense” of your world through language. This is the foundation or core or *funnel* of your mind-body-meaning system (See Figure 2:2.).

When an individual creates an image of blocking, say in the context of public speaking, the person will generate meanings of fear and anxiety associated with the image. This will, in turn, generate a state of fear and anxiety. If intense enough, the entire fight/flight or General Arousal Syndrome will kick in. Adrenaline then starts flowing. Blood flow leaves your body organs and your brain and goes to your outer extremities for fight/flight. This response keeps you alive when under real threat; but it doesn’t serve you when you live in that state all the time. Since speaking is a large part of living, then living in constant fear and anxiety *of speaking* can keep one’s General Arousal Syndrome constantly activated. This is not good!

Multi-level Meaning Making

Figure 2:1
Example of Layered Meanings

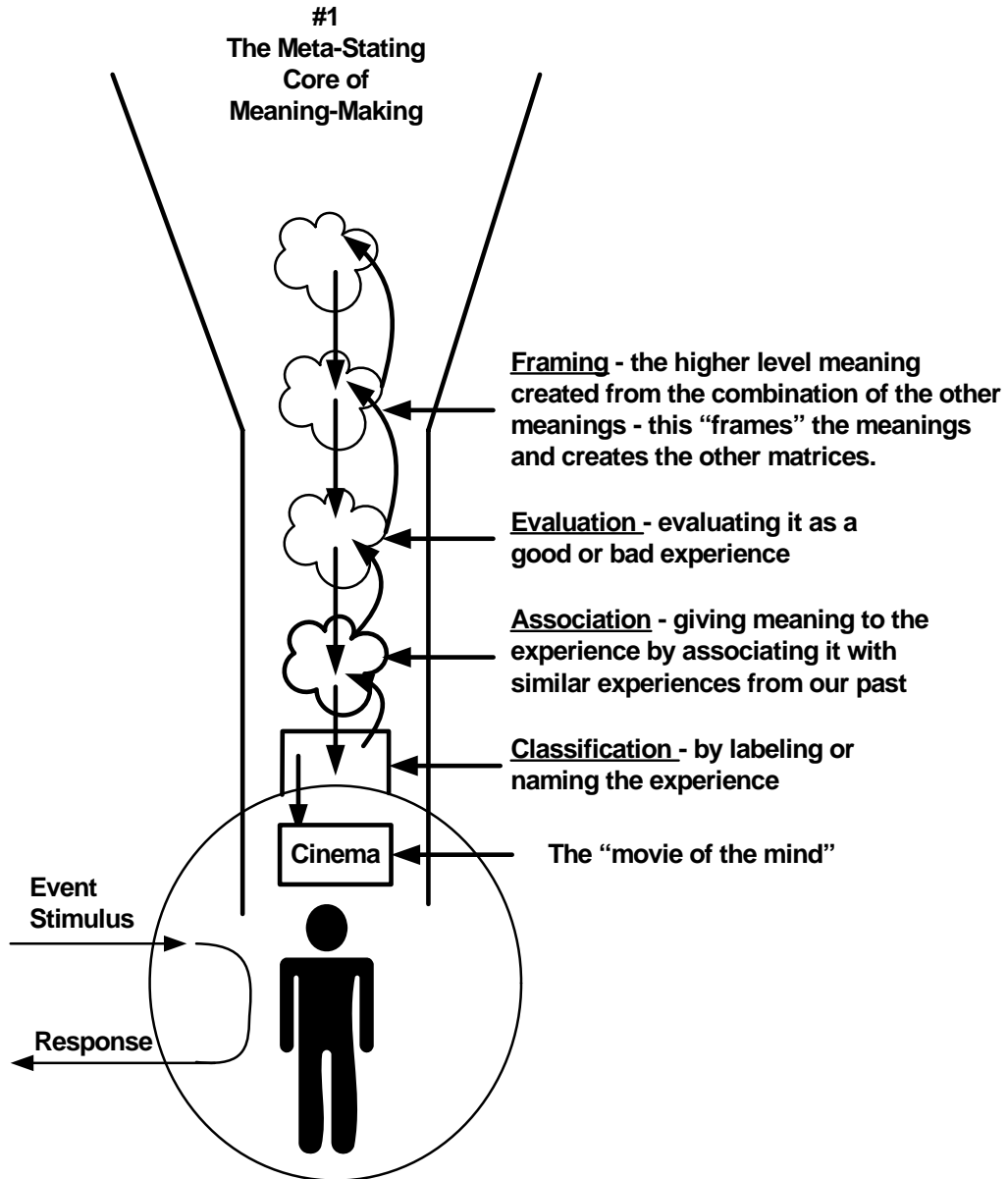


With regard to your states, it is the “meanings” or frames that count most. They drive and create the layered nature of your consciousness as you layer one thought on top of

another thought (See Figure 2:1). When you experience a stimulus like “the need to call a customer,” you frame your understanding with meanings upon meanings and these activate your state, and that, in turn, evokes your feelings and behaviors.

The Funnel of Meaning-Making

Figure 2:2
The Meaning-Making Funnel



Chapter II – The Meaning Matrix

In making sense of your world through meaning, you *classify* or label events so as to give them definition. In classifying an event, you give it a name. You *evaluate* these in terms of what meaning they have to and for you. You *associate* the event to embodied memories of similar events and out of this you generate ever more meaning:

1. You *classify* non-fluency as “blocking” (*Meaning Matrix*). Thus the behavior of blocking now has a label or a name. It becomes a “thing” of consciousness. You bring it into existence in your mind.
2. You *evaluate* it as something “bad” and to be avoided (*Meaning Matrix*). Based on previous experiences, the thing called “blocking” is evaluated as being bad and unacceptable.
3. You *associate* fear and shame with it by linking your emotional states to your experience with the world (*Meaning Matrix*). “I will block and then stutter when I call that customer. I have to *block* that!”

By layering meaning upon meaning by having thoughts about thoughts, you create your meaning-making “funnel” (See Figure 2:2).

Meta-Stating the Meaning-Making Funnel

Via the central and core Meaning Matrix you create all of the other matrices in your mind (Self, Power, Time, Others, World and Intention). As you give meaning to things by associating states with experiences, by framing, classifying, evaluating, etc. you call the other matrices of the mind into existence (See Figure 2:2).

What you *hold in mind* becomes your “meaning” precisely because you hold it in mind and use it as your reference structure. You hold such meanings in your mind mostly through language. *Yes, how you talk to yourself matters; it really does.* This explains language as “the structure of magic.” Thus, you have seven essential matrices that you almost never leave home without: Meaning, Self, Power, Time, Other, World, and Intention.

It is the “meanings” or frames that count. Those higher level meanings you give the movie of your mind create the states of consciousness that drive your behavior. In Neuro-Semantics we believe that meaning drives everything. The meaning you give any experience determines all the other matrices or frames that you place around the experience. Your meanings “hold” everything else in place. Indeed, the etymology of the term “meaning” means to “hold in mind.”

Later we will be looking at reframing which is basically changing the meaning of something. When you change meaning, you change experience. As you go through the Matrix Model for creating blocking, you will come to understand that it is the *meaning* given to non-fluency that creates the matrix. The matrix of fear and anxiety drives all the

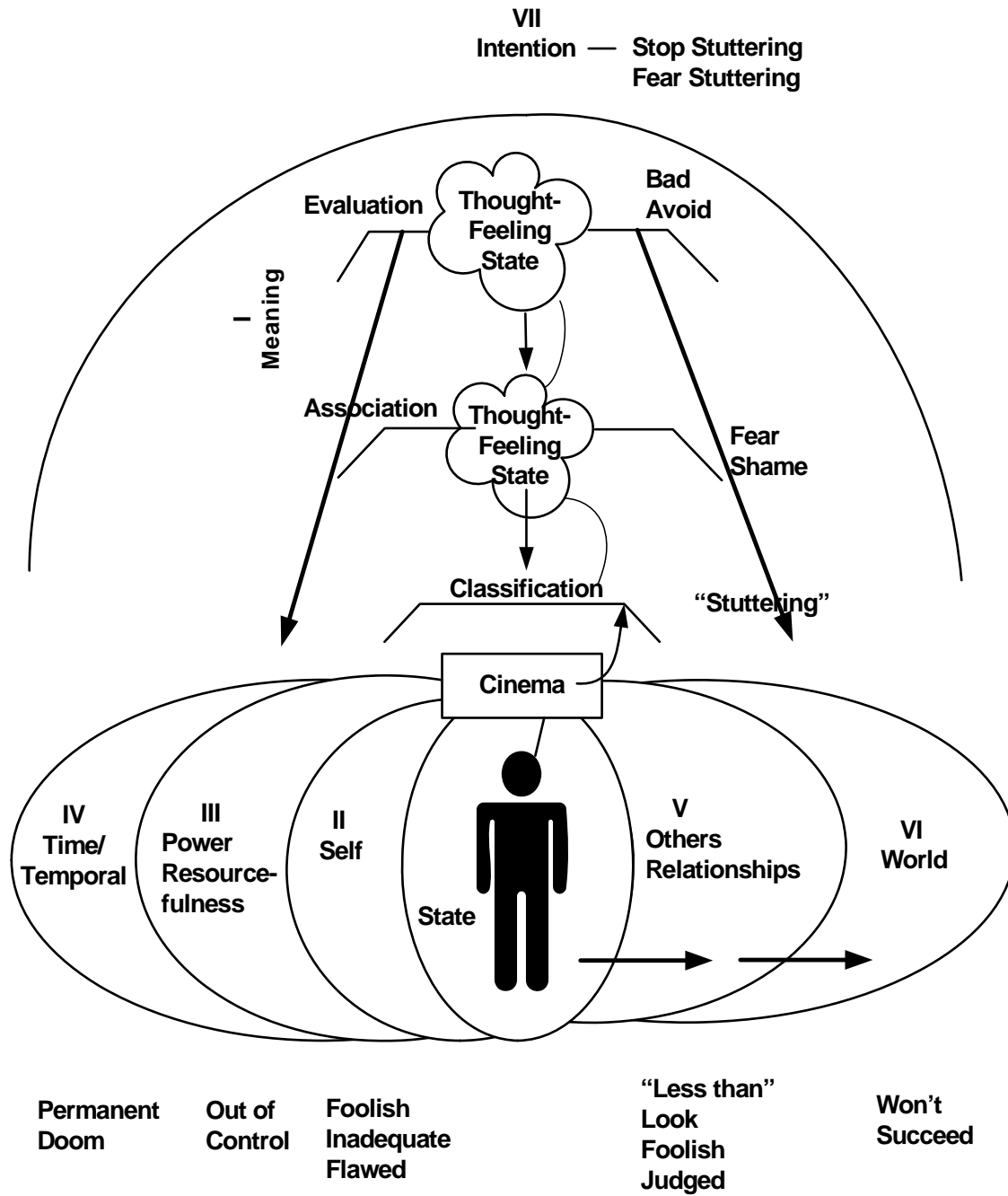
Chapter II – The Meaning Matrix

other meanings of the matrix. Through the interaction with your physiology, this intense fear creates the blocking.

Indeed, no matter the behavior, it is the *meaning* given to some internal or external experience that will create the matrix that drives the behavior. So, at the root of behavior, including blocking is the *meaning* – that which is *held in mind*. So, once all those unconscious meanings that create blocking are no longer *held in mind* then that matrix becomes history and with it blocking. When those meanings are no longer held in mind, blocking and stuttering are no longer a problem. When you are fluent, you don't hold the blocking and stuttering meanings in mind; do you? Now, the challenge is getting those meanings *out of mind* for they can sure get grooved in real deep; however, there is hope.

In every case that we have worked with or know about, the person who blocks will inevitably place the *meaning* of blocking as being something *bad* and to be *avoided*. Because it is something very bad, the person will *fear* blocking. As you shall learn, the very act of *fearing* blocking creates the blocking. The following diagram (Figure 2:3) illustrates this phenomena – by *fearing blocking, the person actually creates the matrix of meanings that guarantee the blocking*. See the following page for an explanation of Figure 2:3. We will cover this Stuttering Matrix in great detail throughout this training. Let this serve as an introduction.

Figure 2:3
Stuttering Matrix



Chapter II – The Meaning Matrix

In creating the blocking matrix of Figure 2:3, the formula goes something like this:

1. You must first call it into existence by giving it *meaning*. You give it meaning by:
 - a) *Classifying* non-fluency as blocking (*Meaning Matrix*).
 - b) *Evaluating* it as something bad and to be avoided (*Meaning Matrix*).
 - c) *Associating* fear and shame with it (*Meaning Matrix*).

Because blocking is associated with something bad and to be avoided, you will have as a higher *outcome/intention* to stop stuttering (Matrix #7 – *Intention Matrix*). This higher level *intention* will drive the remaining matrices:

2. Not wanting to look foolish, flawed, inadequate, etc., (*Self Matrix*) you attempt to anticipate stuttering so as to prepare *to not stutter*. These fears of what stuttering means to you (*Self*) will in fact trigger the block. After you block, you then enter that grueling effort to *break through* the block which causes stuttering.
3. Because you want to control blocking but cannot break the habituated behavior, you experience yourself as being out of control and totally *powerless* and unresourceful (*Power Matrix*).
4. You perceive the ongoing problem as being something *permanent* (*Time Matrix*) and believe yourself *doomed* to continue the behavior. It is as if you say, “I always stutter in this situation and I always will. So I believe the past determines my future.”
5. In relating to *others*, you think like this, “I will avoid any situations around people or groups that attract attention to me and will expose this weakness I have. I will try to cover up by not blocking and stuttering if I am around people so I won’t look foolish. I am afraid they will judge me.” (*Others Matrix*). As time progresses and the problem becomes habituated, the block happens first and then you struggle in an attempt to release the block – stuttering results as you try to *break through* the block.
6. With the intent of not doing anything to draw attention to yourself from the external *world*, you often avoid opportunities to speak. You attempt to avoid situations that would draw attention to yourself because you are uncomfortable around many of the people in your world (*World Matrix*).

Chapter II – The Meaning Matrix

On the following page (Table 2:1), I include a table that provides numerous frames from a large cross section of people who block and stutter. From this table, you can detect how the thinking patterns (frames) of these people fit inside the Matrix. Following the table, I have included another chart from actual case study of a person who blocks and stutters. This chart, along with the one provided earlier, provides the various frames in each matrix that created the blocking and stuttering in these two clients.

Table 2:1 – Frames that Create Blocking

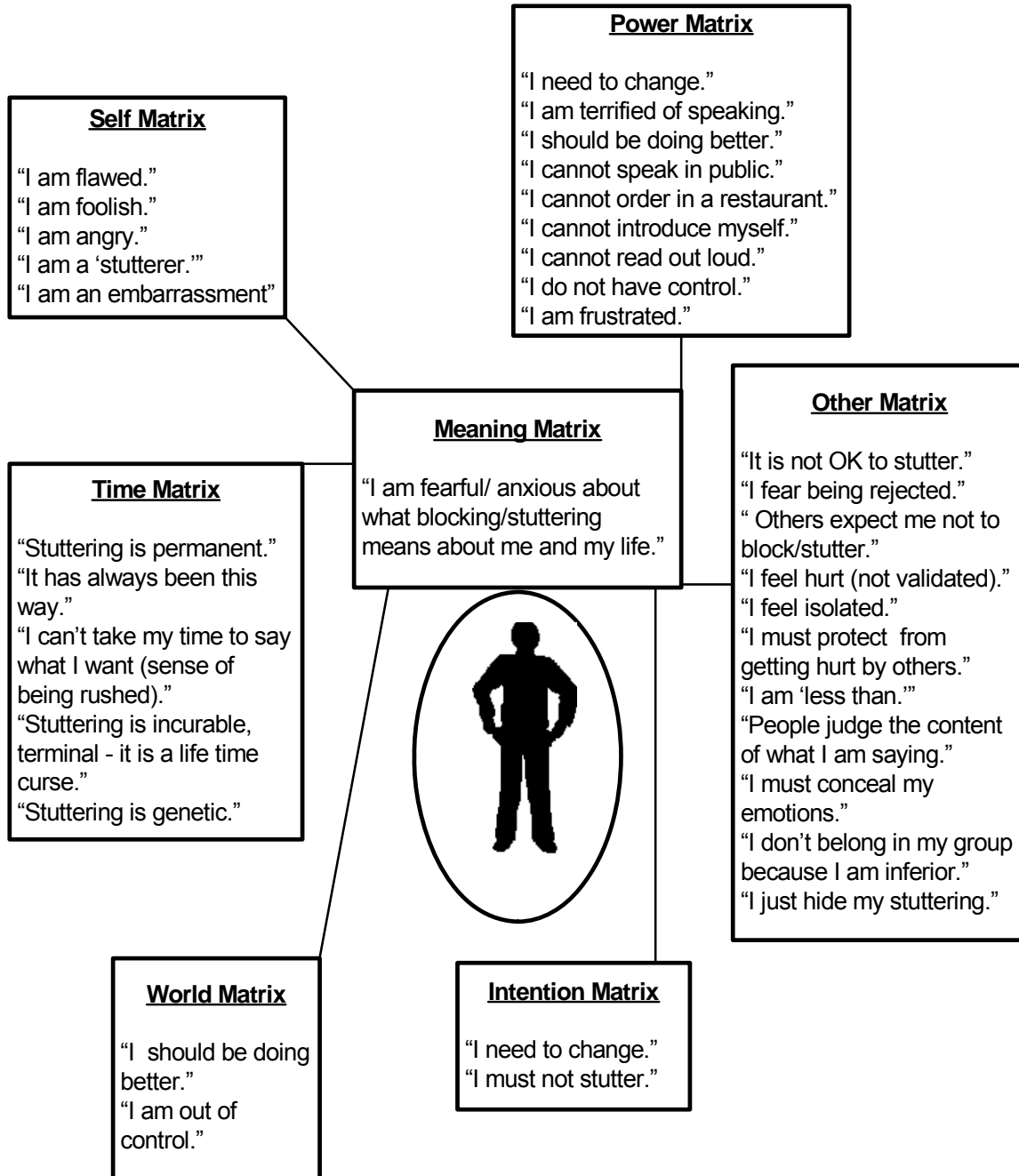
#1 Meaning/Value – Meaning Determines the Matrices –

- a. Classification** of non-fluent speech as blocking.
- b. Associating** blocking with fear and shame.
- c. Evaluating** blocking as bad and unacceptable.
- d. Framing** blocking has the following meanings in the other matrices:

#7 Intention/Self	#7 Intention/Power	#7 Intention/Time	#7 Intention/Others	#7 Intention/World
(Attempted solutions that make the problem worse)				
I don't want to look like a fool? I will not show my vulnerabilities or weaknesses. I will play it safe and create a sense of security because I am not like others. I am more sensitive. I can't handle criticism well. I've got to stop this. This shows me to be inadequate and flawed. I will "block" myself from stuttering!	I am going to try to control this? I am going to try to control every word that comes out of my mouth. I need to change. I must not stutter. I have to catch this. I will do that by becoming very self aware of my speech. I have to try really hard not to block and stutter or I will look foolish.	I am not going to repeat the past. I am not going to make a fool of myself with my speech anymore. If I block any emotion in this moment, it will give me more control. I'm afraid this will be permanent so I will try hard to not to continue stuttering so I will "block" more.	I am not going to attract attention. I am not going to let others see my vulnerabilities. I will not give others a chance to laugh at me. I will not let them see me struggle. I will avoid any situations around people or groups that will expose this weakness. I will try to cover the stuttering up.	I will not do anything that will draw attention to me in my work, career, etc. I will avoid speaking situations that will attract attention to me. I will try to be successful by avoiding all opportunities to speak.
#2 Self	#3 Power	#4 Time	#5 Others	#6 World
I am flawed. ("There is something wrong with me.") I am broken. I am not enough. I am inadequate. I am flawed. I am foolish. I am worthless. I am insecure. I am timid I am shy. I am anxious. I am tense. I am "shamed." I am "possessed." I can't be enough. Embarrassment I am ashamed. I am angry. I am abnormal. Self-pity My value is in my performance. Unique (I stutter – I am special.)	Loss of control Frustration Lack of protection Perceived hurt. I need to change. I can't be enough. I am terrified of speaking to _____. I need to be respected and loved in order to speak fluently. (Other) I should be doing better. I have to do something. I have to get it done. "It" (becoming fluent) works for everybody but me. I cannot speak— In public On the phone On stage I cannot order in a restaurant. I cannot introduce myself. Hesitation is a sign of weakness. Hesitation is a sign of fear. Hesitation means you are unsure.	Permanent Doomed It has always been this way. I am not making progress. I have to do something. I have to get it done. I can't take my time to say what I want to say (sense of being rushed).	It is not OK to stutter. Fear (of being rejected) Expectations from others Inability to measure up to expectations Hurt (not being validated) Rejection Isolation Protection - (From getting involved in a relationship.) I am less than. I look foolish. Judged. People validate or determine my worth. What people say about me becomes the truth. People judge the content of what I am saying. I must protect myself from being hurt by others. I must conceal my emotions. I am doing something "bad" to them if I stutter.	I should be doing better. I have to do something. I have to get it done. "The whole issue revolves around 'caring how I talk.'" I won't succeed. I am out of control.

Figure 2:4

Case Study #1



The Second Thought Changes the First Thought, Etc.

How do all these frames of mind work to create blocking? As illustrated in Figure 1:6, you do not stop at the level of the movie; you give the movie meaning with words. And, you don't even stop there; you keep on giving more meaning with more words (and sometimes another movie) about the first meaning. Michael Hall, Ph.D. calls it the *self-reflexive consciousness*. This means that you continually have thoughts about thoughts. And, as you do this, **each time you have a thought about another thought, the second thought will change the first thought.**

All of these “frames of mind” create layer upon layer of negative thinking that leads to blocking. Gregory Bateson's classic work *Steps to an Ecology of Mind* explains how **higher levels modulate lower levels**. Each layer of thought creates another layer of meaning that informs and modulates the lower levels or the levels below it. Take the layer of frames presented in Case Study #1 in Figure 2:4 and let the negative emotions become embodied in the chest, neck, stomach and/or jaws and you have blocking.

Thus, it is the layering of these negative frames that lead to blocking. Good news – the same mental exercises that create the blocking and stuttering are the same mental exercises that will create fluency – instead of layering negative frames, we layer with positive frames.

An Experiment with Applying Higher Levels to Lower Levels (Figure 2:5)

1. Consider the fear-ridden thought that you will block and then stutter.
2. Now, access a thought of faith or courage. What do you have faith in? What are you courageous about? Step outside (dissociate from) the state of “fear” and access one of those resourceful state of “faith” or “courage” or both.
3. *Apply* the thought of faith/courage to the fear of blocking. Take the thought of faith/courage and *bring it to bear* (apply to) on the fear of blocking.

How to do it –

How to “Apply” One State of Mind to Another State of Mind The Cognitive Process of Meta-Stating

That sounds well and good, Bob. But “How do I apply one mental state to another mental state and actually make a change?” That is a good question and one that needs answering. In Neuro-Semantics you constantly read or hear someone say, now “apply” this resource state to the resource state (See Figure 2:5). Or, how does this resource state transform and enrich that problem state as you “bring it to bear” on it?

In speaking with one of my clients during a phone consultation, he said that before he called me he was becoming anxious about the call. He was worried that I would be thinking that he should be further along with the fluency than he was. So, again, we hear a person who blocks worried about what the other person may or may not be thinking about his or her speech.

Chapter II – The Meaning Matrix

By the way, people who block do not have a monopoly with such thinking. Take heart, you have a lot of company in the so called “normal” world. Overly caring about what others think is foundational to co-dependent dysfunctional thinking. And, in my opinion, we all have or do suffer from it to some degree or the other. It is a part of just being human. We learn this in childhood and none of us had perfect parents. And, if we had, we would have screwed it up with our own thinking.

He told me that in some areas he was having much more fluency. And, he said that when he did stutter that it wasn't as important to him as before. He was coming to the point that he was giving himself permission to stutter without feeling so bad about himself. Indeed, he said, “It is really not blocking; it is more stumbling.” Here again, we have an example of how one's speech improves once one stops identifying oneself with “how” one talks.

However, he said, in some contexts he works up a lot of anxiety over an upcoming conversation with others as with me this morning. It was around the theme of what I would be “expecting” from him as a result of our therapy and his fear that he could not or was not delivering for in some contexts he was still blocking and stuttering.

He went on to explain how that he is now able in some contexts to reframe this problem but in others, as with me, he hasn't been able to reframe it away. I asked him how he was doing it in other situations. He said that he could reframe away those old fears with the thoughts:

1. “I give myself permission to be vulnerable.”
2. “I give myself permission to feel who I am and not to think about other people's feelings. I can do this and not be selfish.”
3. “I am not going to judge other people by guessing what they may be thinking about me and **deprive them of knowing who I am.**” (This one is a powerful reframe for him.)

We had uncovered these resource states in previous sessions and they are proving most helpful.

Desiring to build on these resource states and to apply them to the problem at hand about his fearing my “expectations” from him, I asked him “how” he was able to apply the above frames of mind to the old fears. In Neuro-Semantics, we don't only want to tell you “what” you need to do, but more importantly, we want to tell you “how” to do it.

He explained how he would have a picture that represented the resource state right out in front of him. And, then, he would place a visual picture that represented the problem state behind the picture of the resource state. He would then bring the picture of the problem state up and into (and sometimes through) the resource state. From this procedure he could:

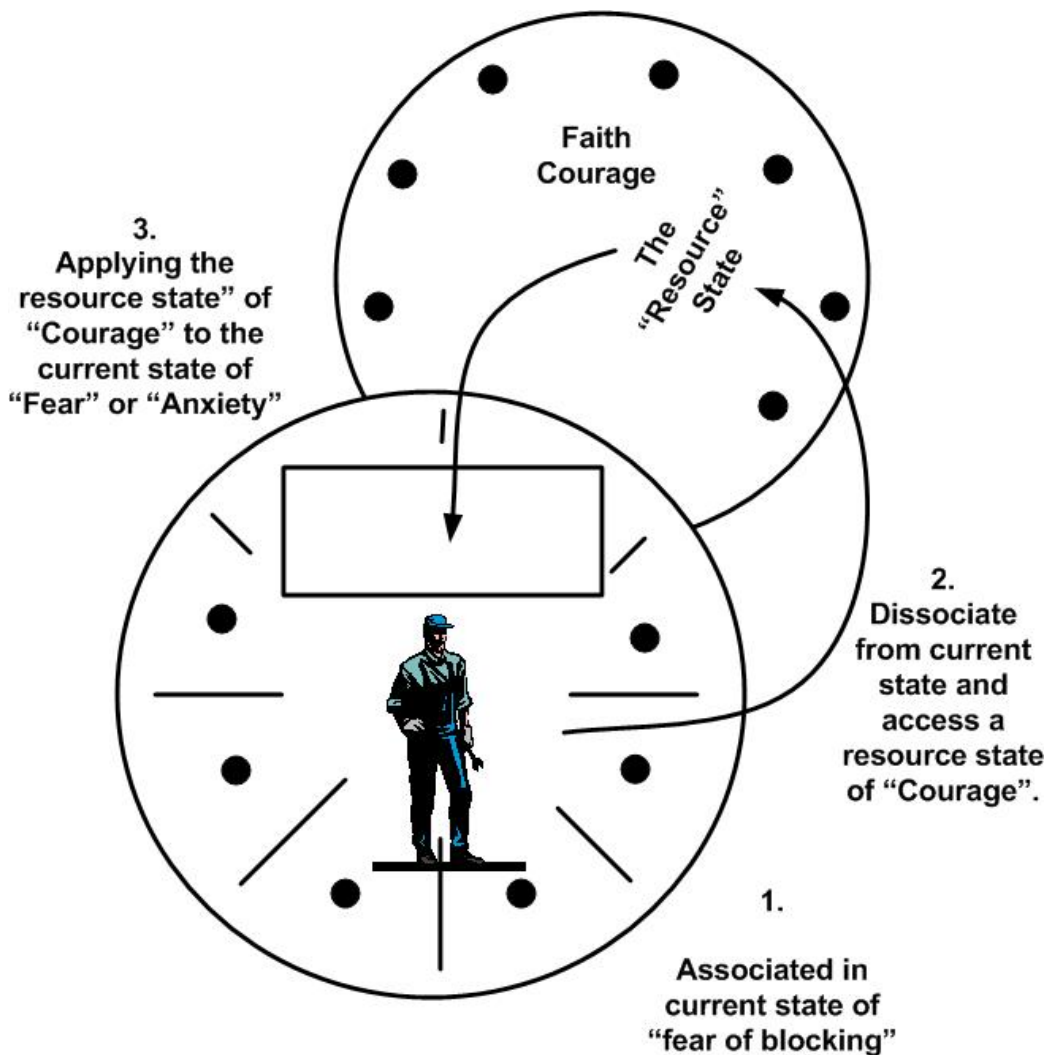
1. See the problem state “through” the eyes of the resource state and reframe it.
2. He could “mesh” the two together resulting in a reframe.
3. He could totally reframe the problem state away.

Well, what happened with the situation with me? The picture of the “anticipatory anxiety” of his fearing that he wasn't meeting my expectations was of the two of us

together and his saying to himself, “Bob will think I should be further along than I am.” “Bob has helped others quicker than he has helped me.” “I am not progressing fast enough.” Etc. Does this sound familiar? That is how you work up a good state of anticipatory anxiety that once it is embodied in your gut, torso, throat and jaws as with my client, you have a full fledged block.

When he brought that image forward and meshed it with his resource image the meaning totally changed. He said, “It is just two guys talking.” Well, what about his speech? He was fluent, perfectly fluent. At the beginning our session he was having difficulty speaking – stuttering quite a bit but not really blocking. At the end of the session, he was totally fluent. He will be taking today’s learning and he will be practicing it to “install” it much deeper. For, as you know, it is one thing to speak fluent with your therapist; it is another to speak fluent with your peers. So, now is the time for practicing which he does very well with fantastic results.

Figure 2:5
Courage Applied to Fear



Chapter II – The Meaning Matrix

This is the way this particular person applied one thought-state to another thought-state (Meta-Stating). You may do it differently. Think of fearing blocking. Now, put that thought aside. Access a thought of courage and/or faith and *apply* the thought of courage and/or faith to the fear of blocking and stuttering. My client did it visually. I have a visual of the word “fear” and above that I have another visual of the word “faith.” Behind my visual of the word “faith” is a picture of Jesus who, for me, empowers the word “faith.” I then move the visual of the word “faith” down on top of the word “fear” and “faith” shatters the word “fear”. The word “fear” breaks into a thousand pieces.

Some people apply one thought to another with just the words – they *sense* that once the resource state is applied to the problem state, the problem state minimizes or disappears. Others do it kinesthetically as they will move the feeling of courage and/or faith into the location of the feeling of fear. So, you will end up with "courageous" fear or "faithful" fear. How does that change the fear? (See Figure 2:5).

To gain fluency, it is an absolute imperative that you learn how to *apply* one thought to another thought. This is a major key to learn how to run your own brain. When you learn how to run your own brain, you can then maintain state control. And, maintaining state control is the key to overcoming blocking. Indeed, learning how to maintain state control is the key to much in life. In the following section we will be looking at materials from the *Accessing Personal Genius* course of study (which is the basic Meta-States course).

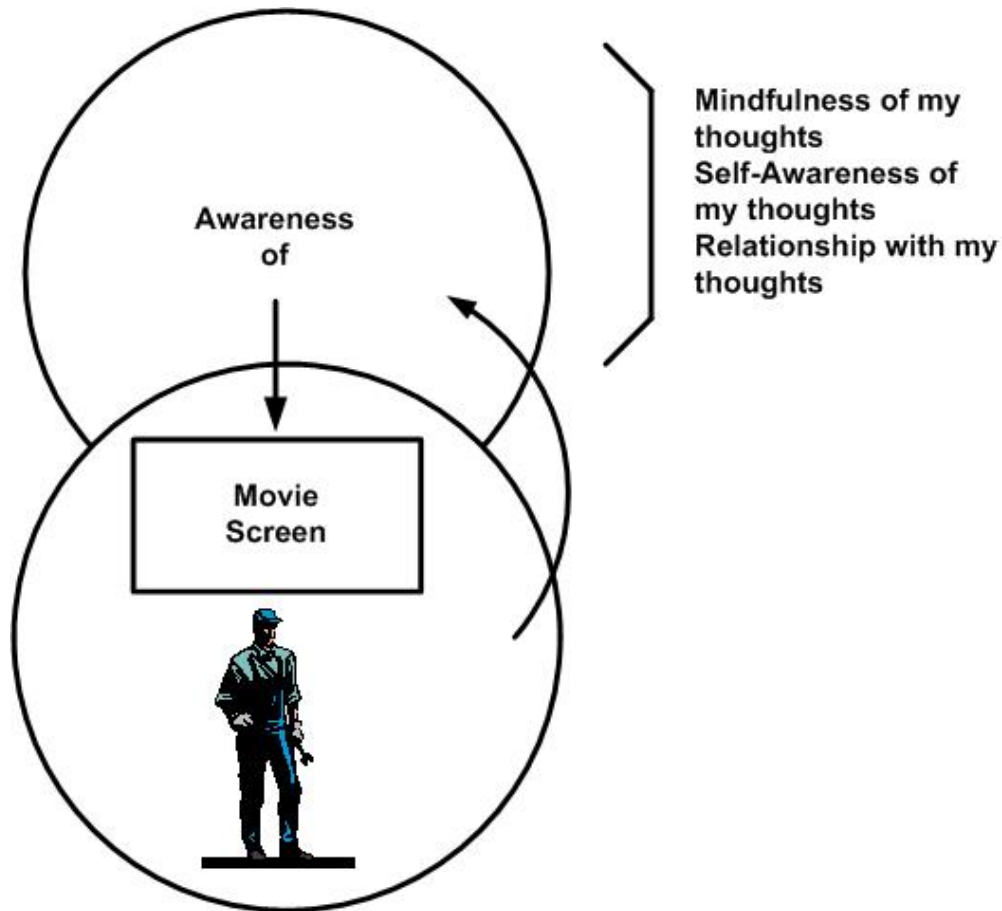
We will be looking at some key elements in learning how to run your own brain and thereby managing your own states. Those people who block that I have assisted have become proficient at managing their own states in all contexts. They have been able to transfer those states of fluency into contexts that formerly led to blocking.

Relationship With Your “Thoughts” – What kind of relationship do you have with your thoughts?

In Neuro-Semantics we believe, indeed, we are quite convinced, that in order to create blocking one must move to a higher level and add *fear* to what the blocking may *mean*. Yes, we can become afraid of what something may *mean*. Indeed, American President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s famous statement during WWII expressed this cognitive (thinking) reality when he said, “We have nothing to fear but fear itself.” Here Roosevelt was expressing man’s ability to have *thoughts about thoughts* and to literally fear our thoughts of fear. To fear our fear is to build a fearful relationship with the thought of fear.

As a species, *we sometimes develop poor relationships with our thoughts*. Yes, you sure can have fears about what something may mean. If you are afraid of what something may mean, will not the fear about the meaning affect your internal response to the meaning? Yes it will. That is how you create the problem but, good news, that structure is also the key to overcoming blocking.

Figure 2:6
Relationship With Your “Thoughts”



How can you fear what something may mean and create blocking? You do it the same way you create any mental problem or challenge. By fearing what blocking may mean, the multi-layers of the stuttering matrix are given birth. Of course, you recognize this as it finds expression in your body. This makes it seem so real. Should this surprise you? I don't think so. For, if I ask you, "Where in your body do you feel your emotional hurt?"

Chapter Summary

- *Meaning* is the way you make sense of the world of language. *Meaning* is the foundation, the core, the determinant of our mind-body-meaning system.
- In making sense of our world through meaning, you *classify* or label events so as to give them definition. You *evaluate* these events as to what meaning they have for you. You *associate* the event to embodied memories of similar events and out of this you generate ever more meaning.

Chapter II – The Meaning Matrix

- Your *classification* called blocking is evaluated as being *bad* and to be avoided. *Associated* with blocking is fear, shame, etc.
- Your brain does not stop with giving your movies one meaning, it keeps on giving more and more meanings. This process creates the other matrices and all of your other thought-feelings. This continues layering your minds with meanings after meanings. This phenomenon *locks* the created state into your neurology due to the process called Meta-Stating – all the layering of negative thoughts on top of negative thoughts multiply into a negative state that once embodied, creates blocking and stuttering.
- Each time you have a thought *about* another thought; the second thought will change/ modulate/ affect the previous thought. We can anxiously fear blocking or we can courageously fear blocking. This process of layering one thought with another thought is called Meta-Stating – it works!

Chapter III

State

Management

Accessing Your

Personal Genius

State Management

Introduction to “Accessing Your Personal Genius” “States” – The Foundation of Meta-States

(Adopted from *Accessing Personal Genius* by L. Michael Hall, Ph.D.)

We now begin a journey of looking more closely at how our mind and body work together in producing behavior. Before there is behavior (blocking), there are states of mind and states of body (like fear and anxiety). What kind of state of mind are you in when you speak fluently? And, what state of body are you in when you block and stutter? There are major differences, aren't there?

In this section on “State Management” more information will be provided on just how the mind creates states of mind-body and how unwanted states may be changed. In order to learn how to *run your own brain and maintain desired states* you need some basic knowledge in how they work, how to recognize them, how to change them and how to utilize your new states of mind for more fluency.

As we begin looking into managing our states, there are some key principles that must be understood which will allow for appreciation of the wonderful truth – “We run our own brains.” We may think others do or circumstances do but the bottom line is that “We run our own brains.” No one else does. The question becomes, “Are you pleased with how you are running your brain?” If not, grasping the following principles will launch you into the journey of learning how to run your own brain, manage your own states and, therefore, speak more fluently in all contexts. You have already been introduced to some of the basic principles. We will review them here. So, let's enter “State Management” by studying the following principles:

1) Neuro-Linguistic states have two basic components:

- **Linguistics** – Linguistics refers to the languages of the mind; how your mind thinks and encodes information. For instance, when speaking fluently, are your pictures in color or in black and white? Are they bright or dark? Is the sound associated with fluency loud or softer? Etc. The **language of the mind** has two components (See Figure 3:1):

The first component of the language of your mind is the sensory representation systems inside your movies which consist of:

Visual: pictures, scenes, images

Auditory: sounds, noises, music

Kinesthetic: sensations, touches, tactile, proprioceptive, motor movements

Olfactory (smell), Gustatory (taste)

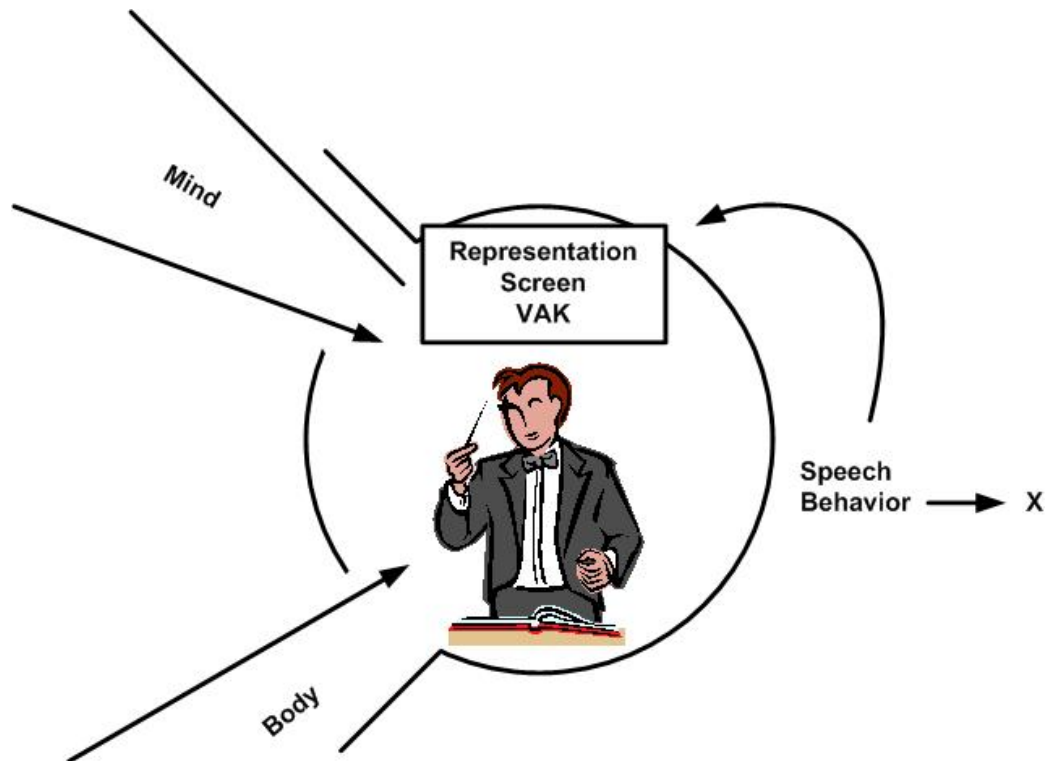
The second component of language is the “language meanings” that you give to your internal movies:

These are your words – sentences, linguistic structures, mathematics, music symbols, metaphors, stories, symbols

Language provides the higher level frames of mind that control/determine your movies – the qualities of them and how they affect your mind-body states. If your language frame says, “All people in authority will judge me as being inadequate because I stutter.” then that will produce an internal movie with certain qualities. If on the other hand, you come up to talk to a person that you are comfortable with and whom you do not fear will judge you, the qualities of your movie will look different from the one based on fear of judgment.

- **Physiology/Neurology:** By physiology/neurology we refer to the functioning of your nervous system as it interacts within your body and physiology of your Central, Peripheral, and Autonomic Nervous Systems.

Figure 3:1

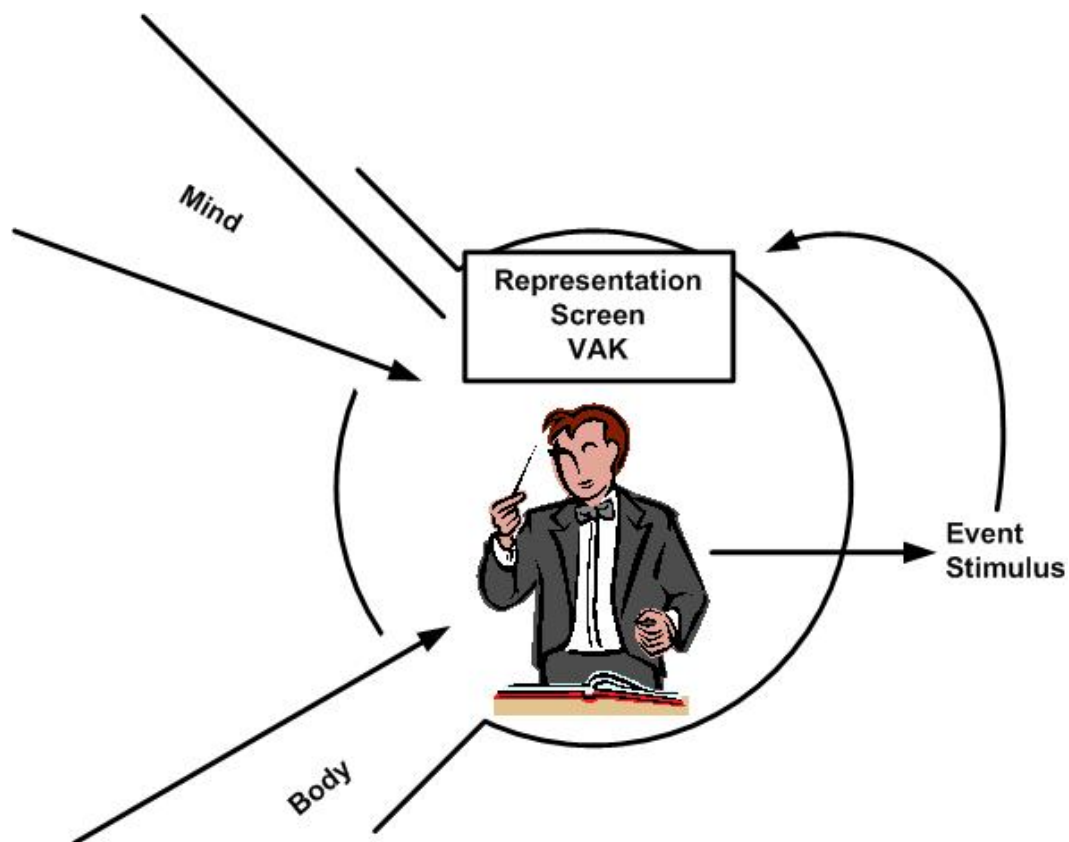


All behaviors are a product of these two basic components. When you block, you have a movie in your mind consisting of pictures, sounds, feelings, smells, and/or tastes. Also, in the linguistic components you will have word meanings that are controlling the movie. The linguistics (movie and words) of the block will be interacting with your *neurology* through your body. These two components interact to produce the mind-body state of a block and hence they produce the block.

2) Because Neuro-Linguistic states have two basic components, those two components provide the “Two Royal Roads” to state control:

Because your states are a product of the interaction of your internal movies and your higher level thoughts interacting with your body (physiology), then you have two basic elements involved in creating states: *your mind* (your movies and word meanings you give to your movies) and your *body*. Thus, the way you create movies and word meanings and the way you use your body both determine your mind-body states and provide the pathway to controlling your mental states. Change your movie and word meanings and you change your state. Change your body stance and you change your state. Breathing properly (from your abdomen) can be most helpful in maintaining a fluent state.

Figure 3:2



Thus, because your states are a product of mind and body interaction, you *create* your states from your mental-body mapping. This gives you *two royal roads* to states – two avenues that you can use to evoke or induce a state (See Figure 3:2).

- a) **Internal Representations** specify your state of mind – the things that you internally map out with pictures, sounds and feelings as well as the things that you say to yourself (language) – your understandings, learnings, beliefs, values, etc. that make up the representations on the theater of your mind. And because you have a choice about what to represent and how to code that representation (create the qualities of our movies), you have *representational power* – you create and edit your own movies.
- b) **Physiology/Neurology** describe the physical state or state of body – the things that you experience in your body involving health, posture, breathing, bio-chemistry, etc. You have a physiology for blocking and you have another physiology for fluency. Note your posture and especially your breathing for both states.

Neuro-Linguistic or mind-body states are your mental-physical **response** to some **stimulus** in the world. For example, you may say, “When I am speaking on the phone, I block. When I am speaking to someone I am comfortable with, I speak fluently.” Different stimuli produce different responses; all based on how you have trained your mind-body system to respond to different stimuli. Of course, this is unconscious and usually very, very well learned – embodied in your mind-body system.

- 3) **State Object:** In order for a mind-body state to exist, there must be an object of attention. In primary states (i.e., fear, anger, joy, calmness, sadness, etc.) the **object** usually refers to something “**outside**” and “**beyond**” your nervous system. Obviously, during those times of fluency, the object of your state, or, you may say, the object of your attention, is quite different from the object of the state when you block and stutter.

When you are blocking, *what* do your thoughts-and-feelings refer to? What’s on your mind? When you are fluent, *what* thoughts-and-feelings do your refer to? What is on your mind when you are fluent? What do you foreground?

People who block tend to focus exclusively on themselves and their present experience of fear, anxiety, etc. Instead of focusing on the other person with whom they are communicating and the content of what they are saying, they allow the fear of stuttering to “grab” their total attention. When you are focusing on your fears and anxiety (which is usually *about* fearing the judgments of the other person), you become dissociated from the other person and their needs as well the content of what they wish to communicate.

You may say, “Now wait a minute Bob, I am focusing on the other person and how they will judge my speech. It is not myself that I am focusing on. It is the other person’s perception of how I speak.” That is absolutely true. However, let’s move up one more step above what you perceive from the other person to the *fear* of blocking. It is that level that the focus gets hung up. By allowing the fear to take over, the object of attention becomes *the fear of blocking* and then the block itself and how to break through it which produces stuttering.

On the other hand, when you speak fluently what is the object of your state of fluency? Is it fear of blocking or are you primarily focused on just enjoying the conversation with the other person? This topic will be covered more fully in the chapter on the Other Matrix. Recently, during my first session with a young lady who blocks, she related how she “could not force herself to block when she was by herself.” In inquiring about the difference between her states when she was alone and her state of blocking when speaking to certain people she said, “When I am by myself I have confidence because *no one can hurt me.*” What is a major object of her state of blocking? It is the *fear of being hurt* by other people. Because the person that triggers the object of fear is not there when she is alone, she is fluent – there is no fear. When, however, she is with most people, the controlling object of her state is the *fear of being hurt* which is triggered by her speaking to someone. She is focused on the fear *inside her* instead of focusing on the content of what she is communicating to the other person. Blocking, like most of our problems, is an *inside job*.

Exercise – Where is my focus?

- 1) Access a recent state of blocking.
 - 2) While in that state, notice what is the object of your attention? What is in primary focus while you block?
 - 3) Access a recent state of fluency.
 - 4) While in the state of fluency, what is the object(s) of your attention? Where/what are you focusing on?
- 4) **State Awareness:** To take control of our states, you must become aware of the states and the factors that drive them. Because all states **habituate**, they drop out of conscious awareness. Now, when you are in a block, I am most certain you are aware of that state. But, what about when you speak fluently, what state are you in?

Thus, you must bring your states into conscious awareness in order to start controlling them rather than your states controlling us. So, begin by noticing the quality of your state: Do you experience the state fully without any competing internal dialogue? Is it congruent with what you really want? Note the meanings you give to various states. What are the differences between your fluent state and your blocking state?

Exercise

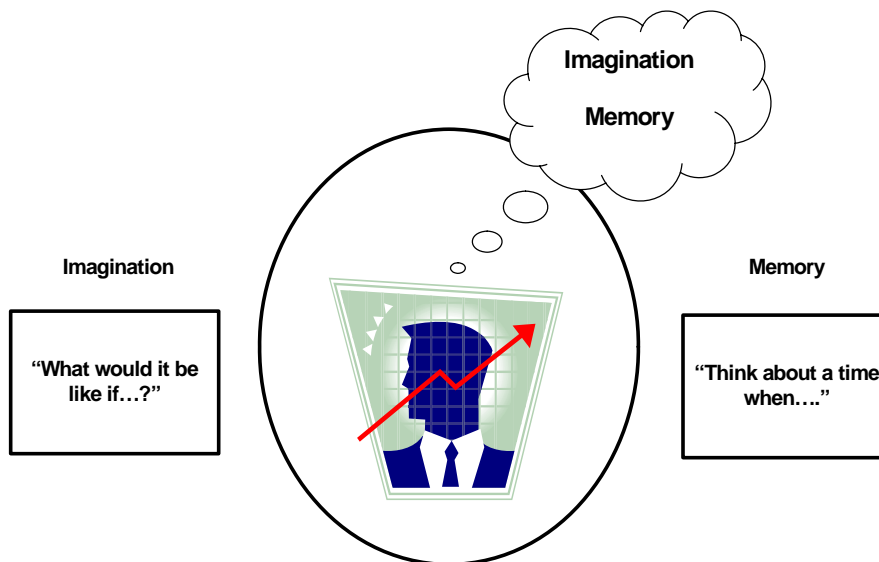
- 1) How are the states encoded and structured? How have you constructed your movie? How have you languaged it.

- 2) Identify the qualities, properties, features, distinctions in the representations governing its intensity (i.e. vivid, sharp, closeness, color, movement, location, word meanings, etc.) of each state.
 - 3) How do they differ based on your mental frames of mind, the emotional components, how you feel them in your body?
 - 4) What does each mind-body state say about you as a person?
 - 5) Are there spiritual components of each state?
- 5) **State Accessing/ Inducing:** In order to run your own brain and maintain state control, you must know how to access and induce the desired state. There are two primary ways to access a particular state:

Memory: *Remembering a state* (Recall a time when...)

Imagination: *Creating a state* (What would it look, sound, and feel like if...)

Figure 3:3
State Accessing



You can use the *Two Royal Roads* to state control by using your mind-and-body system to *access* previous states (memory) or states that you can imagine (imagination) to access a desired state (See Figure 3:3). **Note:** To get good at this requires practice. Now, you have spent years to get good at blocking. Now, you want to spend some time (I am not talking about years.) to learn how to *fly into states* of choice. The following information is fundamental to learning how to switch from one state of mind to another:

Exercise: Accessing States of Non-Fluency/ Fluency

I believe that recalling a time when you were in a particular desired state is the best way to access a desired state. Imagination also works but not as well. The key to accessing a state is to associate into a time when you experienced that state.

Chapter III – State Management

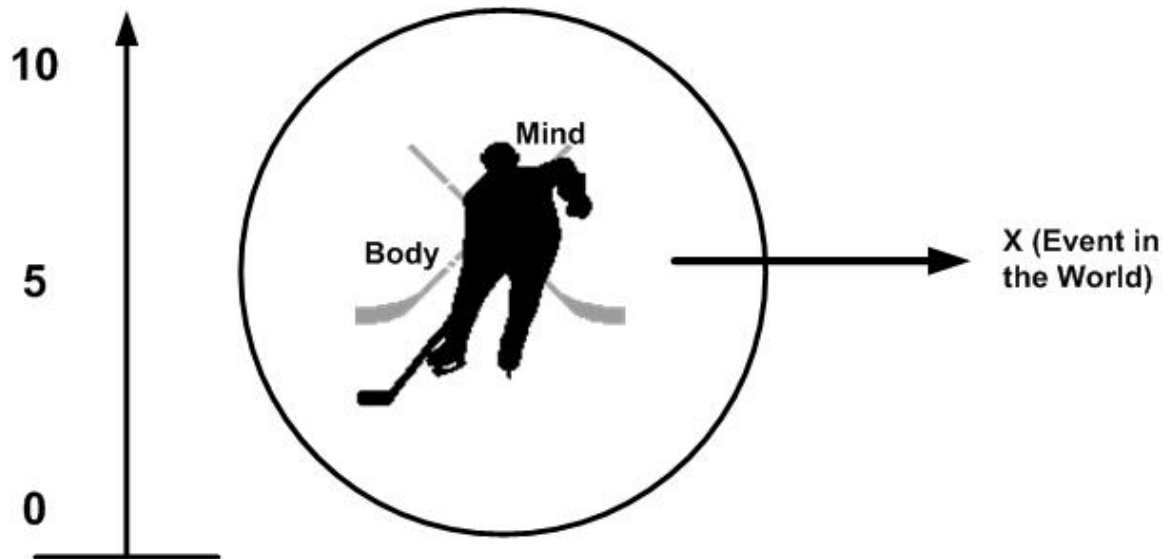
Remember, when you associate into a memory, you are fully there. You imagine yourself back there looking through your eyes and seeing what you saw. You imagine hearing the sounds you heard and feeling the feelings you felt. For the purpose of this exercise, you want to practice going in and out of a state of fluency and dis-fluency.

Exercise

- a) Recall a recent time when you were very fluent. Imagine yourself back there in that state of fluency. Be looking out of your eyes (Do not see yourself but what is around you including other people.). Hear through your ears all the sounds around you and detect how it felt being totally fluent now.
 - 1) Note how you are feeling being in the state of fluency.
 - 2) Note how you are talking to yourself.
 - 3) Note the qualities of your picture(s).
 - b) Now, recall a time recently when you blocked. Do the same thing. Imagine yourself back there in that state of blocking. Be looking out of your eyes (Do not see yourself but what is around you including other people.). Hear through your ears all the sounds around you and detect how it felt being totally in the block. (I bet you find it really easy to associate inside a block. You have that well learned, don't you?)
 - 1) Note how you are feeling being in the state of blocking.
 - 2) Note how you are talking to yourself.
 - 3) Note the qualities of your picture(s).
 - c) Write down the ways that the two experiences differ.
 - d) Practice going in and out of these two states – from one to the other.
- 6) **State Altering:** States do not stay the same, but forever change. Count on your states to alter, to shift, and to transform. Some people have taken the time to write down all the states they go in and out of in a given day. You may wish to do that. It will amaze you to discover just how many states you access during the day. By the way, you will discover that you are not always in a state of blocking. I mean that you don't live your entire life blocking. That simply means that your mind-body system knows how to *get out* of the state of blocking. Of course, the context in which you are in determines whether you block or not. However, you do *get out of blocking*. How simple that is, yet how so very profound. Spend some time noting how you *get out* of the blocking state into another state. How do you do that? How does your focus change? How do you talk to yourself differently? Etc.
- 7) **State Intensity and Amplification:** Our states have different intensities (See Figure 3:4). Some of your blocking states will be more intense than others.

Gauge each state in terms of intensity. **How much** do you experience the state? What level of strength or weakness does the state convey? How much does it dominate your consciousness?

Figure 3:4
State Intensity



How much do you feel or experience blocking compared to fluency?

Need more fluency? Crank it up by increasing or intensifying the internal cinema (movie) of your mind. You have two ways to crank up the movie. First, you can intensify the mental pictures, sounds and feelings. The second way to intensify your movie is to change the way you talk to yourself (language).

It does matter how you talk to yourself. You intensify your movie (internal representation) by using empowering language, i.e., “I can speak fluently. I do it all the time.” You will experience more of the state. All states do not have the same level of intensity, so gauge for intensity level. Do you need more “juice”? What processes do you rely on for amplifying your states? How do you crank them up?

Managing states necessitates developing high level awareness of our states. This means identifying **what** state, **how much** you have that state, **its direction, focus and object**.

- 8) **State Strategy:** All behaviors are a product of an ongoing process (strategy) of pictures, sounds, feelings, smells, tastes and the higher-level word meanings that you give to the experience. If this seems a little complicated, don't worry about it. I just wish to introduce you to how the brain moves from a stimulus to a response. Stephen

Covey said that *in between stimulus and response, there is choice*. Yet for there to be choice, you need some understanding of what goes on in between the moment you receive an internal or external stimulus and when you react. This happens so fast in most cases that it is hard to believe that there is a lot of processing going on in our mind-body system in the production of behavior. How long does it take you to fly into a block?

The brain creates strategies with the movies of our mind and the words we use to describe them. Think about it, you have a strategy for creating blocking. You also have a strategy for those times when you create fluency. Your brain has learned how to do both. Since your brain has learned how to do both, the brain can learn how to utilize the same or a very similar strategy for fluency in all contexts of your life. With the blocking strategy, we will be providing you with many patterns to intervene and change that strategy so that it will not run in those contexts that did trigger blocking. Once that is complete, then you can be free to use your fluency strategy in all contexts. *You do not have to learn how to speak fluently. You already know how.*

- 9) **State/ Strategy Interrupts:** These strategies are unconscious and run automatically. However, they can change. This must be true or one would never change any behavior. You can learn how to interrupt the blocking strategy and send your brain some place else more useful. By state interrupt, we mean the stopping of any and every mind-body-emotion state that you wish to stop by jarring, interfering, sabotaging, preventing, etc. *State interrupts* refer to ways for **stopping** or **preventing** a state from functioning.

Since all states are produced by a strategy; then you interrupt states by interrupting the strategy that did produce the behavior, so that the state producing strategy no longer runs. When you are arguing with your spouse or significant other and the phone rings and that triggers you into that “professional voice,” that is a state or strategy interrupt.

I have a suggestion for you. Give someone permission to interrupt you every time you start blocking. Once they interrupt you, access a resource state like courage, faith, determination, calmness, etc that leads to fluency and work on speaking fluent from that resource state (When you get to the point that you can do this, you are well on your way to unconscious fluency in all contexts and you can learn to do just that). In NLP this is known as “strategy interrupt.” By constantly breaking into the strategy and not allowing it to run, you are training your brain to do something else when you experience the old triggers.

One client remarked upon first learning about state interrupts,

“I used to scream really loud inside my head to interrupt my state. I got the idea when I was reading Tony Robbins’ book, *Awakening the Giant Within*. It worked pretty well. If I was alone in the house I would scream out loud really loud. It made me laugh every time because it was so ridiculous. It served its purpose...my state was interrupted every time.”

10) State Anchoring: How many triggers are there for triggering you into a block? We call those triggers anchors. We become anchored to a certain trigger to respond in a certain way. For instance, “When I speak to someone in authority, I become fearful and I block.” The person in authority serves as an anchor for you to experience the fear of blocking. Here you want to use that mental phenomenon of the brain to serve you. You want to set up a **trigger** (sight, sound, sensation, movement, gesture, word, etc.) and link it to a state that *you want* instead of one you *don't want* (This is also referred to as re-framing.). So, instead of the person in authority triggering fear of blocking it will trigger a resource state of fluency – “I know how to talk and I have something valuable to say so I will not block but speak fluently and I will be very calm and confident about it.”

Anchors are set just like we learn anything – through pictures, sounds, feelings, smells, tastes and words. A picture can trigger a certain state. Consider the flag of your country. When you see it, what state does it evoke in you? Likewise, when you see or imagine a person that you usually block in front of, what state does it elicit in you? What about someone's voice? Are you anchored to particular voices or sounds? What kind of anchors trigger your blocking? Note if they are primarily visual anchors or sound anchors (i.e. someone's voice, etc.). The meaning you place to those anchors, determine the state those anchors elicit in you? To change your state, then the meaning you give to those anchors must be changed. Changing the meaning given a certain anchor to some other meaning is meaning reframing.

11) State Dependency: Many years ago, hypnosis came up with the idea that “all learning is state dependent.” To a large degree, your state of mind determines how well and what you learn. Once in a state, in a strong and intense state, you experience a dependency on that state for how you think, learn, remember, perceive, communicate and behave. We call this experience **State Dependency**. It means that the state has you, and feels as if it has a life of its own.

You see and experience the world in terms of that state. In this way, your neuro-linguistic states color your internal world. Blocking is a superb example of state dependency. Once you enter into a “block,” it tends to “have you,” doesn't it? Because you are so *inside* the state of blocking, you are not only unable to *get out* of it, but it also determines your thoughts, your feelings and your behavior.

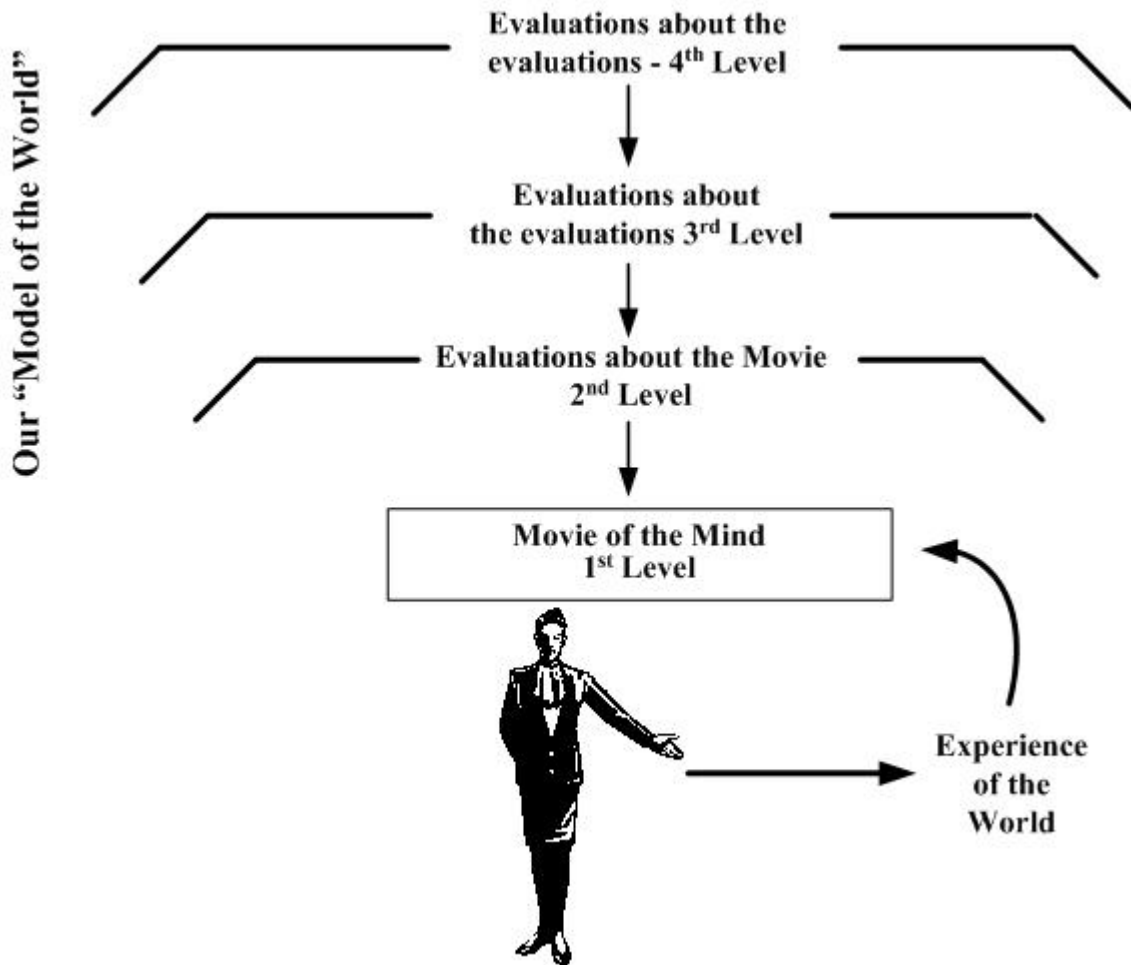
12) From State Dependency to Meta-States – Self-Reflexive Consciousness:

When you experience a powerful **state dependency** (like a block), it becomes very easy to **reflect** that state back onto another state. Much of the block is made up of fear – you “freeze.” Once you “freeze,” from fear and anxiety, you then *apply* this strong and powerful state to all your thoughts and feelings. It *dominates* your total being. It is “boss.” It is *applied* to all thinking and reasoning. It has become a meta (above, about, beyond) state for it “rules the roost.” It is *layered* on top of other states.

Now you are thinking-and-feeling (not about the world of some stimulus out there), you are thinking-and-feeling about your states (other thoughts, feelings, ideas, memories, etc.) You are now in **self-reference** to your own experience. This raises your awareness to a new level. It creates **self-reflexive consciousness**. What kind of relationship do you have with your thoughts? That is something to think about.

In creating a state of blocking, the focus of *fear* and *anxiety* around blocking become powerful states of mind into which you associate when you block. These states then become meta-states which you apply to other states. As meta-states, they *control* you when you block and stutter to the point of contaminating and controlling your very state of being. That is why this is called “blocking.” These states of fear and anxiety “block,” i.e., meta-state all other states including the very human state of speaking.

Figure 3:5
Meta-Stating



But, you can take this same self-reflexivity and let it serve you, for just as when you apply *fear* and *anxiety* of blocking to other states which *locks* you inside the block; you can instead, go to a higher resourceful state and apply it to the *fear* and *anxiety* and change the fear – maybe even eliminate it. What happens when you apply *courage* to *fear*? When you apply *faith* to *fear*, what happens? (See Figure 3:5.) We first introduced this concept to you in Chapter 2. It is one of the *absolute* keys to learning how to run your own brain and to maintaining your own states. The following “Basic Meta-Stating Pattern” utilizes this dynamic principle and functions as the basis of many of the patterns you will be doing through-out this book.

The Basic Meta-Stating Pattern

The Basic Meta-Stating Pattern

- 1) **Access** a resource state.
- 2) **Amplify** and **Anchor** the resource state.
- 3) **Apply** your resource state to the limited state.
- 4) **Appropriate** into your future (future pace).
- 5) **Analyze** the ecology of the results for you.

1. Access a resource state.

What empowering (resource) state do you want to *bring to bear on* or apply to the limiting state of the fear of blocking (or some other limiting state)? It could be courage, faith, compassion, calmness, love, harmony, etc.

A *resource* can be a thought, feeling, idea, belief, value, memory, or imagination.

2. Amplify and anchor the resource state.

Juice up the resource state and establish an anchor for it by touch, sight, sound, word, or a combination, etc. Remember that you can create an anchor by associating the resource state to a word, a feeling or a picture.

3. Apply your resource state to the fear of blocking or other limiting state.

Bring the resource *to bear onto* the fear, anxiety, etc. *Apply* your resource state to the fear of blocking.

By doing this, you *embed* the *fear, anxiety, etc.* inside the resource state.

4. Appropriate to your life by putting into your future (Future Pacing).

Imagine having this new state of mind as you move out into your future. What will it be like acting from the resource state and not the fear when you speak?

5. Analyze the quality, health, balance (ecology) of the results for you.

Will it enhance your life to set this resource as your frame-of-reference for the limiting belief (fear, anxiety, etc.)? Would every facet of your mind-and-body agree with this?

13) State Utilization: This principle has much practical application. We wish to detect and then use resourceful ways of thinking-feeling, perceiving, communicating, etc. Your brain over the years has learned some very powerful states. The question is, “Are they useful and if not, where and how can you use them?” Ask yourself, “**Where would I like to use this state?**” What would it look, sound, feel like to have this state in this or that situation?

A neat thing about states is that the mind-body system does not care about the content that created the state. It only cares about the state. Because of this phenomenon, you can take the state created from one content and apply that state to some other state unrelated to the original content. For example, you may easily access a state of courage when thinking about speaking to a friend but not to a stranger. With meta-states, you can access the state of courage when speaking to a friend and *apply* that same state of courage to the context of speaking to a stranger and effect a change. It is the state of mind, and not the content of the state, that makes the difference.

14) State as Emotion

Are emotions involved in your blocking? Is that a ridiculous question? I am sure that for most, emotions are a major component of blocking. This principle is about understanding how you construct emotions. By understanding emotions, you can more easily control them rather than letting them control you.

For most people the key to both understanding and controlling emotions lies in the understanding that emotions are a product of our *evaluative judgments, beliefs, meanings, values*. If you evaluate (map, perception) your experience of the world as a good experience, you will have a positive emotion. If, on the other hand, your experience of the world does not validate your expectations, values, dreams, desire, etc., you will have a negative emotion (See Figure 3:6). Your emotions have much to do with your *expectations* from the world and whether or not your experience of the world and the people in your world fulfilled your expectations.

When you *expect* love and acceptance from people in your world but; instead, you receive rejection, how does that affect your emotions? Furthermore, even if you do not in fact get rejection from others but you believe they reject you because of your

blocking and stuttering, what kind of emotions does that generate and how does it affect your speech? What would happen if you did not generate those emotions?

Figure 3:6
The Neuro-Semantics of Emotion



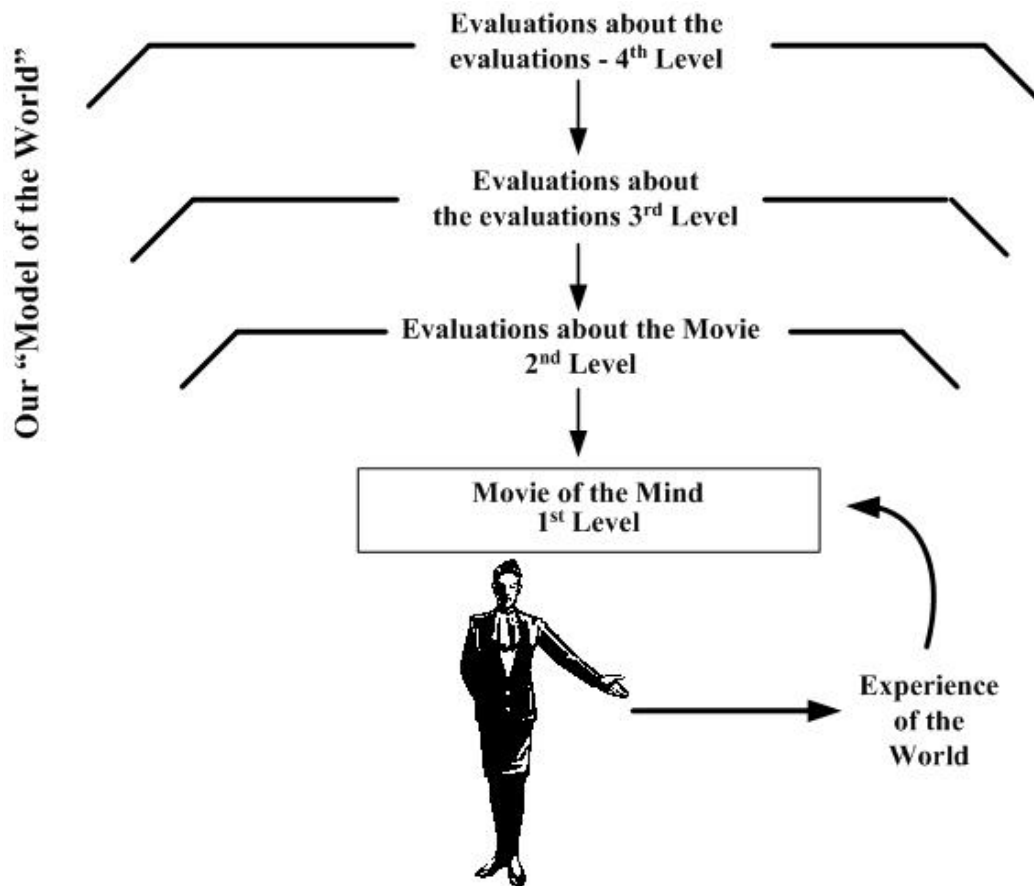
Just like states, emotions code your programs to help you evaluate your functioning in the world. To summarize, your emotions are *just* a product of the *evaluative difference* between your *map or perception of the world* (wants, expectations, shoulds, understandings, etc.) and your *experience of the world* (See Figure 3:7). As with thoughts, emotions are constructed of pictures, sounds, feelings, smells, tastes and word meanings as are all of our constructed realities.

Importantly, because you create your emotions based on your evaluation of your experience of the world in any given moment, your emotions are always accurate to *that* moment. You had an experience. You received what you expected and you felt good about it. Or, you had an experience and you did not receive what you wanted so you felt bad about it. Therefore, as to *that* experience, your emotions were accurate to your evaluation of that experience.

However, when we take emotions from one experience and color other experiences from that emotional experience, we can easily get into trouble. We are taking the emotional state from one experience and coloring or meta-stating other experiences with those same emotions. For instance, when you were a child blocking and stuttering, you probably experienced a lot of teasing from your peers. And, of course, you evaluated that as a horrible experience.

The problem develops when you bring those very same emotions into adulthood and color most of the people in your world with that or those earlier experiences. How many adults tease and make fun of you like your school peers did? Now, be realistic. Careful that you don't mind read and end up judging that others are judging you when in fact they are not judging you. So much of blocking is caused when the person fears the judgments of others over how he or she speaks. This fear often times has deep roots in those painful emotional experiences of the past that become connected to speech through the embodiment of those negative emotions in those muscles controlling breathing and speaking.

Figure 3:7
Emotion: The Difference Between Model and Experience



So, to be able to put your emotions into proper perspective and to control them can have profound effect on whether or not you block and stutter. The following exercise will provide further explanation.

Exercise: “Emotions Are Just Signals” Pattern

<p style="text-align: center;">“Emotions Are Just Signals” Pattern</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Recognize that emotions are just signals.2) Access a witnessing state.3) Recognize the triggers of the event.4) Say to yourself, “It is just an emotion.”5) Design engineer a new meta-stating structure.6) Meta-state the negative emotion with a powerful resource state.7) Quality control the permission and add needed reframes.8) Put into your future and install.

1. Recognize that “emotions” are just signals.

As you have learned, the *motions* that you feel in your body (the somatic responses) arise from your *evaluations* (hence, e-motions). You evaluate things between your **model of the world** (internal mapping) and your **experience of the world**. The *difference* between these is *registered* in your mind-body system as an “emotion.” This means an emotion is an information signal about the difference between model (your mental map) and experience.

2. Access a “just witnessing” state to one of the major emotions around your blocking.

Take a deep breath and step back (You may wish to visually dissociate.) to just observe that emotion. Know that this negative emotion came from your evaluation of your model of the world and your then current experience of the world. Answer these questions:

- What did you expect at that time? What are your standards for making your evaluations?
- What did you experience? How did you perceive it? What factors influenced your perceptions when you gave birth to that emotion?

3. Recognize the triggers in the event/s of the world that evoke this response

- In the presence, what has to happen for you to experience this emotion? What triggers those emotions in the now?
- What contextual factors also influence this? What was going on in your life when you created this emotion? Are those events still going on? Are they true to fact – accurate to what is *really* out there?

4. Say to yourself – “It’s *just* an emotion.”

Use your most resourceful voice. “I am more than my emotions. I e-mote. I experience emotions, but I *am not* merely my emotions.” To be able to separate your identity from your emotions is a vital step towards learning how to run your own brain.

- If it’s just an experience – what information do you know that will help you to use that information for greater effectiveness?
- Refuse to “take counsel of your emotions” as if they were a final arbitrator, as if they were a report card on your standing, status, destiny, etc. Rather, decide to *learn* from your emotions as signals and messages about relationship between your maps and the world.
- What’s the most effective response to this particular experiencedifference?

5) Design engineer a new meta-stating structure.

Go inside and give yourself permission, congruently with a strong and resourceful voice that reframes – changes the meaning of the emotion(s), and notice how that settles.

Examples:

“I give myself permission to feel fear because it allows me to recognize things that are a true threat to me and to take appropriate action early.”

“I give myself permission to feel the tender emotions because it makes me more fully human.”

6. Meta-State the negative emotion with a powerful resource.

Discover some resourceful states that you could use in applying (meta-stating) to the emotions which would minimize or eliminate the power of that negative un-useful emotion.

You may wish to consider this menu list of resourceful states: calmness, courage, faith, being centered, etc.

Access each and amplify fully, then *apply* to the negative emotion that you do not want: calm fear; courageous fear; apply faith to fear; centered fear, etc. (See Figure 3:8)

7. Quality control the permission and add needed reframes (new and useful meanings).

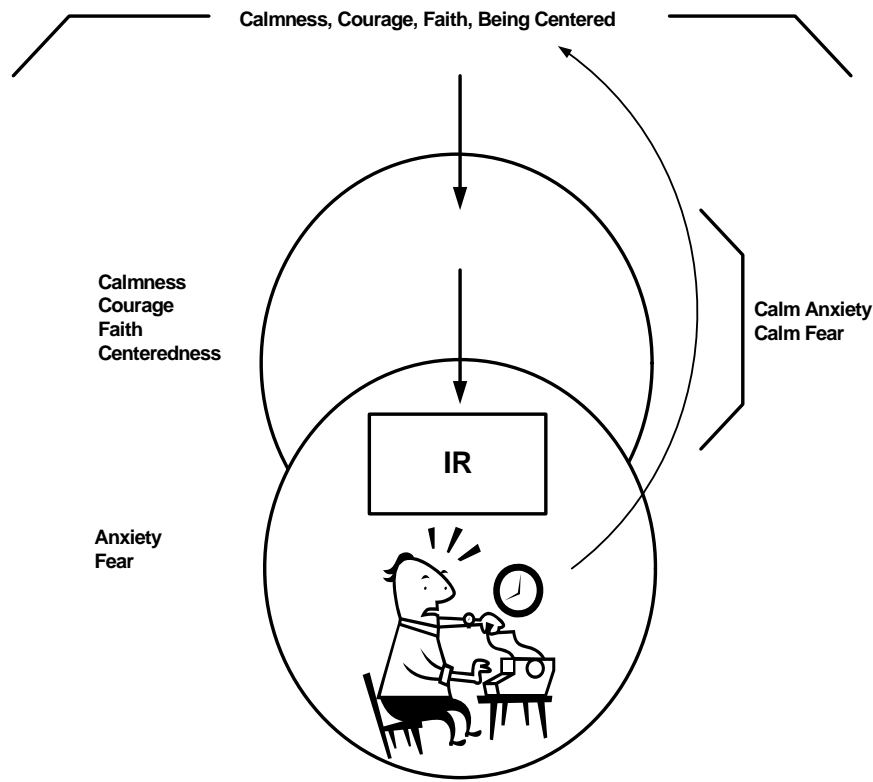
Imagine fully and completely moving into your tomorrows with this new meaning on the negative emotion. Does any part of you object to letting this operate as your primary style in dealing with this emotion? If so, go back to step 5.

8. Put into your future and install.

Would you like this to be how you move through the world?

Meta-Stating allows us to texture emotional states that you might experience as “negative” so as to refine and qualify them in new and exciting ways.

Figure 3:8
Texturing Fear and Anxiety from a Higher State of Mind



15) State Extending / State Containment

You can both *extend* and *contain* states – these properties of neuro-linguistic states enable you to take the thoughts-feelings of one state and contaminate other experiences with that state. When you have a state of fearing blocking and stuttering and that leads into an actual block then you both extend and contaminate other states with the state of fear.

Due to the intensity of that state of fear, it over flows into other mind-body states such as the desire to be calm, relaxed and fluent and contaminates them. This will in turn create the actual block. The state of “fear” has contaminated the other resourceful states through the process of meta-stating. You have applied “fear” to “calm and relaxed.” And when this happens, the state of fear being more intense than the states of calm and relax overwhelms them. Indeed, in a full fledge “blocking,” could you not say that it has “taken over” the entire mind-body state? It has become “boss.”

You can also build **boundaries** and **barriers** around a state so as to disconnect from other states. A state can become so intense, that it functions on its own without any influence from other states. (Taken to the extreme, this creates multiple personalities.) In the process of blocking, you so associate into this state that it functions without any interference from other states. Indeed, in a state where you experience a full fledge block, the blocking becomes quite difficult to “penetrate” with other states. But, take heart, they are penetrable.

For example, when you get a thought in your mind of having to speak to an authority figure and then you jump up a level and *fear the thought* of speaking to an authority figure your fear is not about the authority figure. Your fear is *about* a thought. That is meta-stating and it can be your blessing or your curse.

The good news is that in various contexts, if used appropriately, both phenomena provide new resources. Because states can contaminate other states, you can take a resourceful state and let it “contaminate” an unresourceful state. As you know, we call that meta-stating. Likewise, you can take a resourceful state and so associate into it and frame it so it is “yours” that you build barriers around it with empowering meta-level structures. In doing so, you can then have access to this state in any context.

Consider that once you develop a state of “courageous fluency;” you will no doubt like to build barriers around it so that no matter the context in which you find yourself; you can speak fluently without any contaminations from fear, anxiety, etc. You build barriers around a state primarily with language. Why do you want to be fluent? Just answering this question will give you *reasons* for fluency. These reasons provide higher level structures that can effectively be used to *lock* fluency in.

Changing Meaning by Reframing

How Reframing Works

NLP offers some basic tools for changing meaning. This section deals primarily with changing meaning (conscious reframing). By “conscious reframing” we are referring to changing meaning on your own and with your own will. When it comes to blocking, changing it consciously is quite a challenge. However, conscious reframing can be most powerful when practiced and installed in the muscles. There are numerous people who blocked who have gained complete fluency consciously. It can happen. Later we will provide a technique for installing a desired principle into one’s muscles.

Meanings work in powerful ways. Whenever you change the meaning of an experience, you change your response. It's inevitable. If in *framing* (thinking, giving meaning), you create a mental context by which to think about something, then in *re-framing*, you attach a new meaning. This leads to a new response, a new experience, and a new behavior. The content remains the same but *another piece of meaning* is put around it (a higher frame or state, hence meta-state). Reframing is like saying, “A does not equal B. A equals C and that is far better.”

Consider this statement – “People will judge me as being an inadequate person if I block.” Now change that thought to “If people judge me as being inadequate if I block, that is their problem. My adequacy comes from how I view my sense of self-worth from within myself and not from what others may or may not think of me.” This is an example of reframing. Reframing that affects changes in meaning obviously is the basis of all change. Therefore, as we say in the Matrix Model, “Meaning is the determinant of all the matrices (mental frames) of our lives.”

We have two basic ways to reframe meaning:

1. *Content/ Meaning reframing* involves giving the experience (or behavior) new meanings; so that, while everything remains the same externally, the behavior now means, suggests, or implies something new and different. (The earlier statement about changing the meaning of someone judging you as being inadequate for blocking is an example of content/ meaning reframing.)
2. *Context reframing* involves finding a new context where the experience could be useful. An example of context reframing would be – “Where could this *fear* that I have around blocking be useful?” “Well, if I am in physical danger of losing my life, that fear could serve me but I sure don’t need that kind of fear when speaking.”

Framing

Frames critically determine our meanings and responses. The frame that you put around any behavior strongly impacts how you think about it, consider it, and respond to it. In

running your own brain and managing your own state, you will want to develop the ability to shift the frames that you place around things.

Figure 3:9

Content Reframing:

“What else could this mean?”

Content Reframing takes the form of: “This is X — No, it is Z and Z is far better.”

Context Reframing

“Where would this be really useful and valuable?”

Content Reframing

Since changed meanings lead to new responses, when you change the meaning (or significance) of something you alter the way you respond to it. “What would happen if you absolutely did not care if you blocked and stuttered?” The response usually is something like this, “Well, I wouldn’t stutter.” This question simply asks the person to change the meaning of blocking as something bad, feared and to be avoided to something not all that significant. We can say this with certainty – those who overcome blocking cease giving so much negative meanings to those times when they do block or even stammer a little bit. Everyone has those times of stammering.

John Harrison has pointed out the difference between stammering, stuttering and blocking. We agree that there is a difference and a big one. (In Europe what we Americans call “stuttering” is called “stammering.”) However, we encourage you to begin consciously working on ceasing to give so much meaning to disfluency. You will note from the stuttering matrix and the case studies the huge numbers of negative frames coming off the meanings of stuttering as bad, to be feared and to be avoided and “blocked.” This kind of meaning attached to blocking guarantees blocking.

A content or meaning reframe are the same that basically says, “X doesn’t mean Y, it means Z and that is better.” A good question to ask yourself to come up with a meaning reframe for yourself or for someone else to generate a meaning reframe is “What else could this mean that would be useful?” For example, a content reframe could change the belief “If I block, I am weak.” To “If I block, that isn’t the end it is the beginning for I am making progress with my speech and that takes strength.”

Context Reframing:

Context reframing asks the question, "In what context would this behavior or response be useful?"

Bateson (1972) stated that “All meaning is context dependent.” This statement has found

its way into the NLP community as one of the key presuppositions or beliefs of NLP. What does he mean by this? He simply means that external to a context, nothing has meaning within itself. Meaning is always established when one thing is related to another thing and that is always in some context.

I am typing this book on my laptop computer. In this context my laptop computer has the meaning of being a word processor. However, my laptop computer has absolutely no meaning until a meaning making machine called a human brain comes up and gives it meaning. And, the meaning I give it presently will be determined by how I am using it – its relationship to me in the context of what I am doing with it. When I am using it to access my E-mail, it has another meaning. When I use it to balance my checkbook, it has another meaning.

At a recent Meta-NLP training, one of the participants was having a difficult time understanding what context reframing meant. We were in Grand Junction, Colorado and forest fires were raging in the state (2002). I asked him to get a picture of anything. He did. I inquired, “What do you see?” He said I see a meadow with flowers and a forest of trees at the edge of the meadow.” I asked, “And, what does that mean to you?” He said, “Peace, quiet and harmony.” I directed, “Now, take that same picture. Keep the content the same and put it in the middle of one of the raging forest fires nearby.” His facial features changed as did his breathing as he visually moved the picture of the meadow into a raging forest fire. I inquired, “And, what does that same meadow mean now?” He replied immediately, “Destruction.” In the example the content remained the same but in changing the context to the forest fire the meaning changed.

Some years ago my wife and I were driving to the mountains of North Carolina to visit my father. It is about a two hour drive and, at that time, we took a country road that went by some dairy farms. It was in the spring time and we had the windows of the car rolled down to enjoy the spring breeze. As we drove by a dairy farm, from the cow manure came waves of aroma wafting into the car. My wife pinched her nose with her fingers and exclaimed, “Sheeeew that stinks!” I said, “To you it stinks. To the farmer it is money.” Same pile of cow manure but in different contexts it has totally different meanings. In relation to my wife’s sensitive nose the manure was just a horrible odor. In relation to the farmer’s business, it was just a byproduct of making a living for his family. We have designed the following exercise to assist in changing the meanings that drive blocking and stuttering:

Conscious Reframing
The Art of Giving Experiences New Meanings

- | |
|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">Conscious Reframing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Identify a behavior2) Engage3) Identify frame4) Chunk down to more specifics5) Context Reframe6) Content Reframe7) Integrate8) Test |
|---|

1) Identify a behavior you wish to change the meaning.

Is there any part of yourself that you don't yet appreciate? Identify a behavior around your blocking that you would like to change.

Menu list: any behavior or response that you make (an emotional response, a habit response, etc.). An example could be, "When I make a telephone call, I block."

Identify specifically this part of you and give it a name – what is this part? What would you call it? Is it a fear part? A stubborn part? An overly sensitive part? An angry part?

2) Engage the part and “chunk up” to its higher positive purpose.

To enter into communication with this part of yourself, quiet yourself and notice the "thoughts" that flutter through your mind – the visual, auditory and kinesthetic components of your movie that come to you when you make the following statements or pose the following questions.

"I have this part of me that does this specific behavior, what are you trying to do for me that's positive? What is your purpose for me?"

Keep asking this question and step outside (going meta) until you find a meaning that you find acceptable.

"And by doing that, what is that to do for me that is positive? And by seeking to accomplish that, what value is that to have for me?"

An example of engaging and chunking up on a part:

Bob, “What is the purpose of the part of you that blocks your speech?”

PWBS, “To protect me.”

Bob, “To protect you from what?”

PWBS, “To protect me from being hurt.”

Bob, “And when you are not being hurt, what does not being hurt give you that is of more value or more important?”

PWBS, “It keeps me safe.”

Bob, “Great, so the purpose of blocking is to keep you safe?”

PWBS, “Yes, that is correct.”

Bob, “And by being safe, what does that give you that is more positive and important?”

PWBS, “It gives me security.”

Bob, “Oh, so the purpose of blocking is to keep you safe and secure?” (**Note:** We have “chunked up” to a very high positive intent of blocking. Obviously, blocking doesn’t keep one more safe and secure so we need to *reframe* blocking and find a better and more healthier way to keep the person safe and secure. These answers are typical for the higher purpose of blocking.)

3) Identify the frame of the behavior.

Notice the movie the meaning is within, as well as any belief frame.

How is it represented? What images, sounds and sensations?

What are the qualities of the movie?

What beliefs run this behavior? What do they mean to you? And if that's true, what do you believe about that?

Keep recycling until you obtain enough of the frame-of-reference for this behavior/ emotion that you can describe it accurately to someone.

4) Chunk down to more specifics.

How could you alter this frame-of-reference so that it will better serve you?

What quality change would effectively alter your frame representation?

5) Context Reframe.

In what context would this behavior/ emotion be highly valuable and useful to you as a person?

Where would you like to keep this achievement?

What would you see, hear or feel that would let you know to use it?

6) Content Reframe.

How is this behavior, emotion, habit valuable to you?
What can you appreciate about yourself for being able to generate this response?
What does this response say about you as a person?

7) Integrate.

Is there any objection in using this new context or content reframe, or altering the representation in your conscious thinking about this behavior?
Give yourself permission to consciously use these new frames.

8) Test.

Now think about the part of you that generates the behavior. What happens? What do you feel?

Changing Meaning With the “Miracle Pattern”

The ‘Miracle Question’ was developed by Steve de Shazer, popularized in Brief Therapy. We use it here to *step aside* and *out of* the problem space, so that we can do a *different kind of thinking*. This empowers us to engage in solution-oriented thinking. This pattern allows us to construct a new perspective from outside the *frame* you are living in. From “out there” you can devise new meanings, knowing that all meaning is a constructed reality; and therefore, subject to reconstruction or re-framing.

"Let's imagine that tonight while you were sleeping that a miracle happened and in the morning you woke up and all the fear and anxiety around your blocking and stuttering were magically gone. How would your thinking change and how would your life be different? Yet, because you were asleep, you don't know and cannot know that it happened or how it happened. How will you discover that a miracle happened? How will your loved ones know? What will be different? What will you notice?"

How to Play with the Pattern (See Figure 3:10):

- The “Miracle Pattern”**
- 1) Identify your problem.**
 - 2) Identify your beliefs-about-your beliefs.**
 - 3) Sketch out the higher level meaning structure of the experience.**
 - 4) Run an ecology-check state about the meta-beliefs.**
 - 5) Imagining the night of the miracle.**
 - 6) Describe the day after.**
 - 7) Confirm and future pace.**

1) Identify a problem (Think of some limiting belief, fear, etc. around blocking).

What prevents you from getting on the highway of life and living in a vital, happy, and ferocious way? What holds you back? Make a list of all of the words and beliefs that arise. Or, think about some *problem* that you don't like. Use the sentence stem:

'I don't like _____',

(authority figures, being out of control, public speaking, making phone calls, etc.)

Or, 'The *issue/problem* that really rattles me is...
_____'

2) Identify your beliefs-about-beliefs.

What do you believe *about* that problem? What meanings do you give to it?

3) Sketch out the higher level meaning structure of the experience.

And what do you believe about that? And what do you believe about that? Etc.

[Fully identify the higher level belief structure using a separate sheet of paper.]

4) Run an ecology-check state about those beliefs.

Does this kind of thinking-feeling about that help? Make things better? Empower you as a person? Have you had enough of that?

5) Imagining the night of the miracle.

Close your eyes. Imagine its night and you've gone to bed. Suppose that tonight something special happens... a miracle happens... and tomorrow you will wake up thinking-and-feeling in a completely different way... Take your time to do this thoroughly and vividly.

What thoughts-feelings, beliefs, and states do you need to explode into tomorrow with grace, power, love, passion, confidence?

What state would this state presuppose?

What supporting meanings/ beliefs would empower this? How would you represent this?

When you are ready... I want you to open your eyes, move to this other chair... move to the chair of the day after the miracle...

6) Describe the day after...

If this was indeed the day after the miracle, how would you know? What would be different? Describe this day after the miracle. Who would be the first to know? What would that person notice?

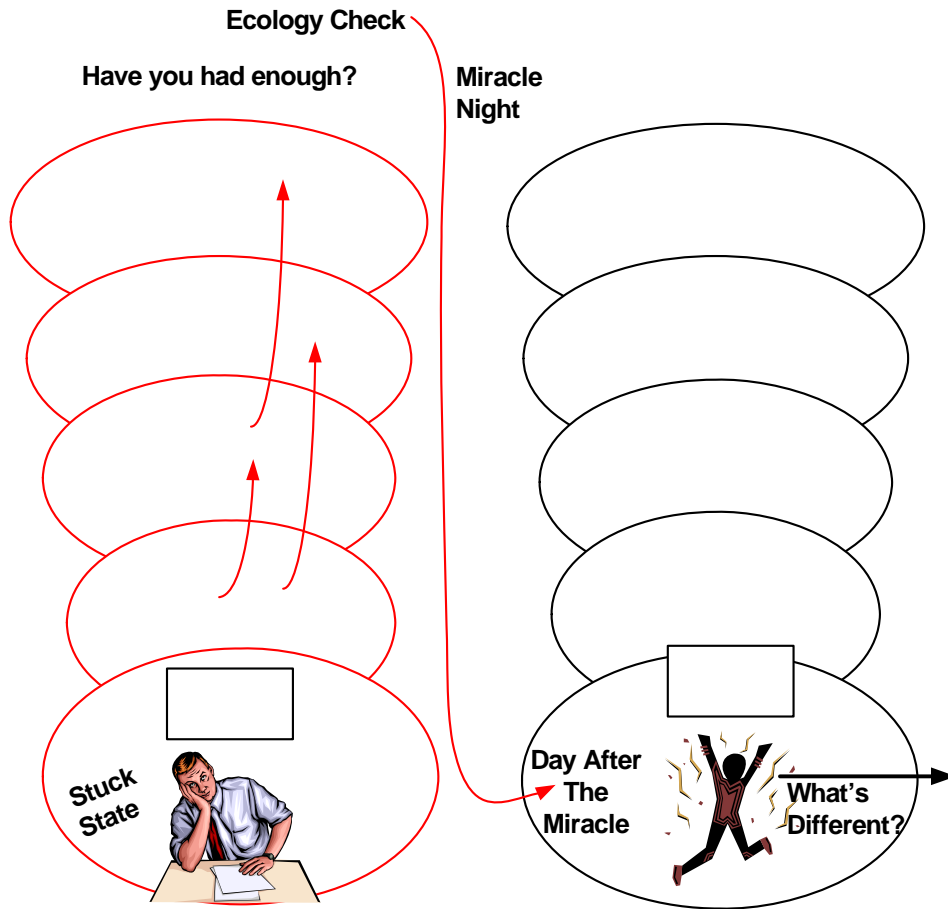
[Describe fully... accessing the states and beliefs.]

What belief would support this? What values?

7) Confirm and future pace.

Do you like this? Do you want to keep this? Imagine your future with it.

Figure 3:10
Creating a Miracle



**Meta-No-Ing And Meta-Yes-Ing
Changing Meaning by Changing Beliefs**

- What is the difference between a thought and a belief?
- Can you hold a thought in your mind that you don't believe?
- How do you change a thought into a belief?
- How do you turn a belief back into a mere thought?
- How many things have you formerly believed true but you no longer believe to be true?
- How were you able to change a belief into something that you no longer believe to be true?

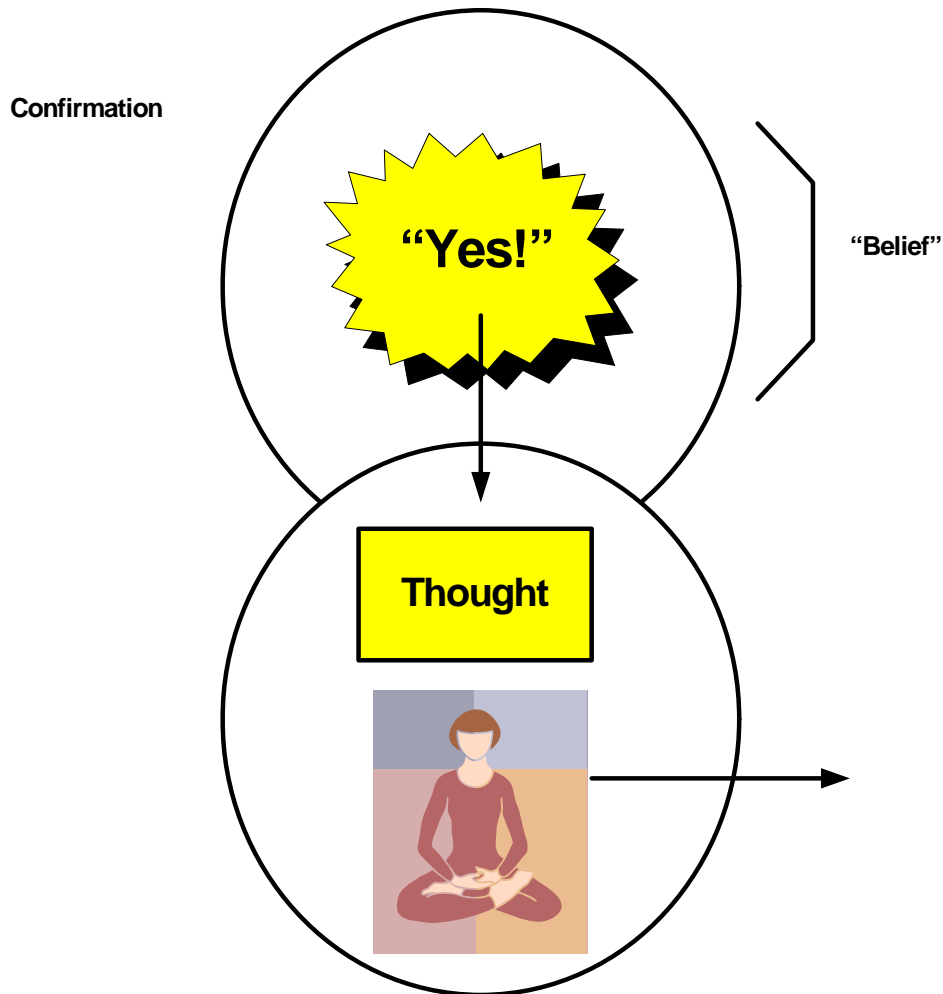
Can you hold a thought in your mind that you don't believe? Sure you can. I can hold the thought that the sun will come up in the west in the morning but I don't believe it. I can hold a thought that when I die I will be worth a billion dollars but I sure don't believe it. Well, what distinguishes a thought from a belief? Actually, it is quite simple. A belief is merely a thought that you have said "yes" to.

When you say "yes" to a thought, you meta-state the thought with a confirming "yes." The meta-stating effect of the "yes" that is *brought to bear* on the thought converts the thought from a mere thought into a belief (See Figure 3:11). Of course, this may take a great deal of repetition. Meta-stating a mere "thought" with a confirmation (a confirmation state) creates a new gestalt, a "belief." – which then operates as a command to the nervous system. We then feel sure about the thought. The "feeling sure" about the belief makes it seem real.

If saying "yes" to a thought makes a belief out of the thought, how do you convert a belief back into a mere thought? You probably guessed correctly – you convert a belief back into a mere thought by saying "no" to the belief. Again, this may take some repetition. But, guess what? It works! I have had more than one person state, "It can't be that simple!" Well, basically it is. I really do believe that the foundation of all behavior change lies basically in saying "no" to what you don't want and "yes" to what you do want – and doing that is changing meaning and changing meaning is reframing.

How many beliefs did you use to hold that you no longer hold? I use to believe that Santa Claus came down the chimney but I don't believe that anymore. Gradually and painfully I gathered enough evidence to say "no" to that belief. Now note that I said, "I gathered enough evidence." Basically you change a belief into a thought by saying "no" to it, but usually, there are a lot of reasons and other frames of mind behind the saying "no." We usually just don't do it though we can. Behind our "no's" and our "yes's" are other frames of minds. This brings us to "frames by implication."

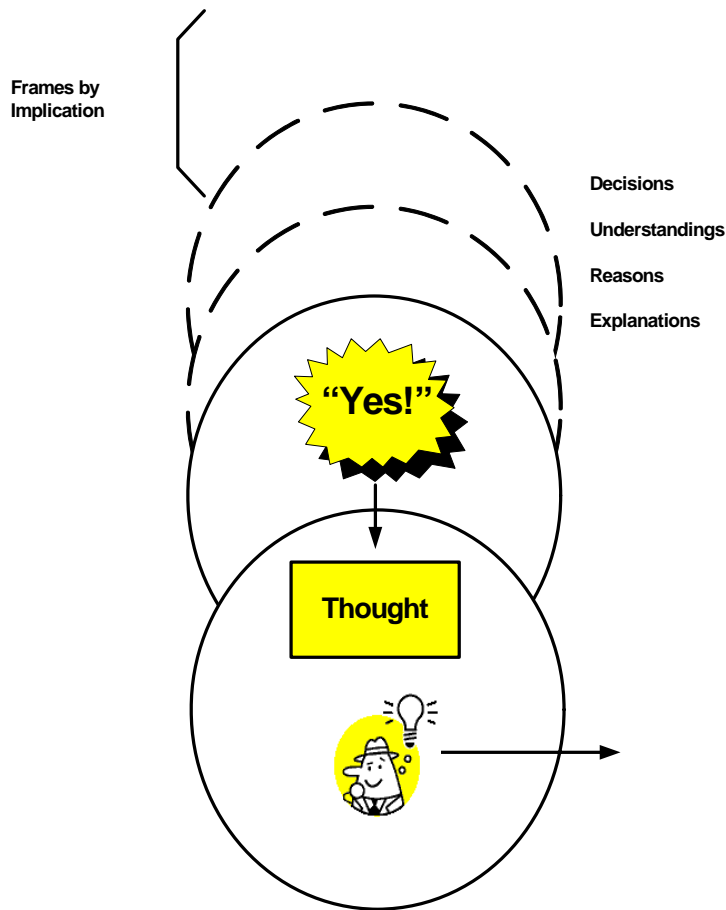
Figure 3:11
Meta-Stating a Thought into a belief



Frames by Implication

Behind or above our yes's and our no's (and any other thought) are many other frames of mind – usually unconscious (See Figure 3:12). The reflexivity of mind never stops but continues forever... the "infinite regress." You constantly have thoughts about thoughts. This "infinite regress" over the years has layered your mind with frames of mind innumerable. Even when you seem to just be working with a level or two, you implicate additional frames. This is where many of our outside of conscious frames reside. In the *Accessing Personal Genius* training, we have formulated a series of questions that will elicit many of these key frames. We provide these in the following section. As you read the following section, be aware that each one of the following frames represents key meta-level structures of most experiences. They are not all present in every experience. They will vary as to importance in each experience. The list is not complete for there are more frames, yet, these represent the key frames of mind that make up subjective experience.

Figure 3:12
Frames by Implication



**Meta-Questions for Teasing Out
Meta-Structures and Meta-Frames**

All higher-levels in our mind are made up of the same stuff that you have at the primary level (See Figure 3:13). You use your see-hear-feel representations and words to build up meanings at the higher-levels – the matrices of our mind. The following set of questions in various categories offer lots of ways to explore and elicit the higher-level structures. As you use these, remember the different categories are *not* different things - they are just *other ways* of expressing the same thing, the higher frame. In asking the questions, you are going a long ways in discovering the *structure* of the person’s state of mind – a very important exercise.

After eliciting the meaning frames of mind around your blocking, “step back” from them and ask yourself, “Which ones do I need to change the meanings of? What meanings do I give to blocking that actually makes the blocking worse?”

Chapter III – State Management

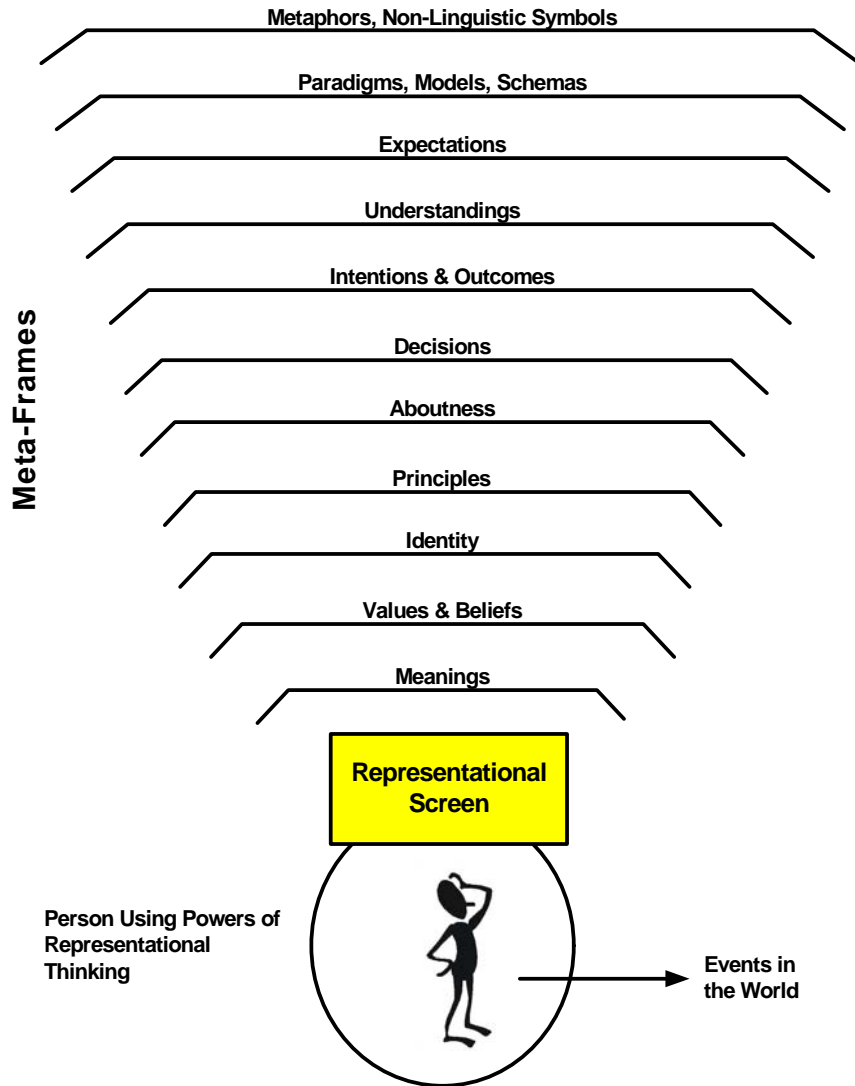
1. **Meanings:** the ideas that you keep holding in mind.
What does this mean to you?
What else does it mean to you?
How much meaning does it hold for you?
2. **Beliefs:** the ideas that you affirm, validate, and confirm.
What do you believe about that?
How much do you value that belief?
Do you have any beliefs about that belief?
How have you confirmed that belief?
How strong is that confirmation?
3. **Values:** the ideas that you value, treat as important and significant, esteem.
How is that important to you?
What do you believe about that value?
Why is that important or valuable to you?
4. **Identity:** the ideas you build up about our self – the ideas you use in self-defining.
Does this affect your self-definition or identity?
How does it affect the way you think about yourself?
What does this say about how you perceive yourself?
5. **Aboutness:** the ideas you have *about* other ideas.
What do you think about that?
What do you feel about that?
What comes to mind when you entertain that thought?
6. **Principles:** the ideas that you treat as guidelines, laws, settled conclusions.
What principles do you hold about that?
I understand _____ ('what' about 'that')?
How does this idea work?
7. **Decisions:** the ideas that you separate and cut off (*cision*) from other ideas or choices so that you say 'Yes' to some and 'No' to others.
What decisions drive this?
So what will you do?
How would you complete the phrase, I will _____ ('what')?
Or, if you use, I choose _____.??
Or, I feel _____.?
8. **Intentions:** the ideas you have about your motive, intent, desire, and wants.
What is your purpose in this?
What is your intent in this?
What do you get from that?
And when you get that (as you want it), what will that get for you?

Chapter III – State Management

Why is that valuable to you?

9. **Outcome:** the ideas you have about goals, outcomes, and desired ends.
How do you want to see this turn out?
What do you want from this?
What consequences do you hope will come from this?
10. **Understandings:** the ideas you have that stand under you as mental support for your world.
What do you understand about that?
What knowledge do you have about this?
11. **Expectations:** the ideas you have about what you anticipate will happen.
So what are you expecting?
Where did you learn to expect that?
12. **Paradigms, Models, Schemas:** the ideas you have that come together as more complex mappings about things.
What paradigm (model, schema) drives and informs this?
What paradigm are you relying on in your understandings?
13. **Metaphors, Non-Linguistic Symbols:** the ideas that you form in non-linguistic ways.
What is this like?
If this was a color, what color would it be?
If this was an animal, what animal would it be?
What would this sound like, if you put it to music?
If you made up a poem or story about this, what would you say?
14. **Realizations:** The ideas you suddenly develop as new insights, understandings, Eureka experiences.
How does it feel to realize this?
When you realize this, what do you think?
Now that you know, what do you want to do?
Now that you are aware of this, what comes to mind?
15. **Permissions:** The ideas regarding allowing an experience verses being tabooed.
What happens when you give yourself permission to experience X?
As you give yourself permission for this, notice what happens.
How well does it settle?
How many more times will you need to give yourself permission?

Figure 3:13
Questions for Teasing Out Meta-Frames



Back to the “Meta-Yes/No” Pattern

Once you have discovered some **limiting beliefs** that you want to get out of your head and neurology so that they no longer operate as your **programming**, you can use this Meta-State pattern for changing limiting beliefs. It will give you a clear, quick, and effective way to deframe the old unenhancing beliefs and to install the empowering beliefs that support your commitment to success.

Preparation: Ecology for this pattern has to occur before you begin the pattern. Make sure you have a top-notch idea that you want to confirm.

What enhancing and empowering beliefs would you really like to have running in your mind and emotions? Which belief stands in your way?

How does this belief sabotage you or undermine your effectiveness?

Have you had enough of it? Or do you need more pain?
What empowering belief would you like to have in its place?

Meta-stating a limiting “belief” enables us to de-commission old programs.

Figure 3:14
Meta-Stating & De-Commissioning Limiting Beliefs

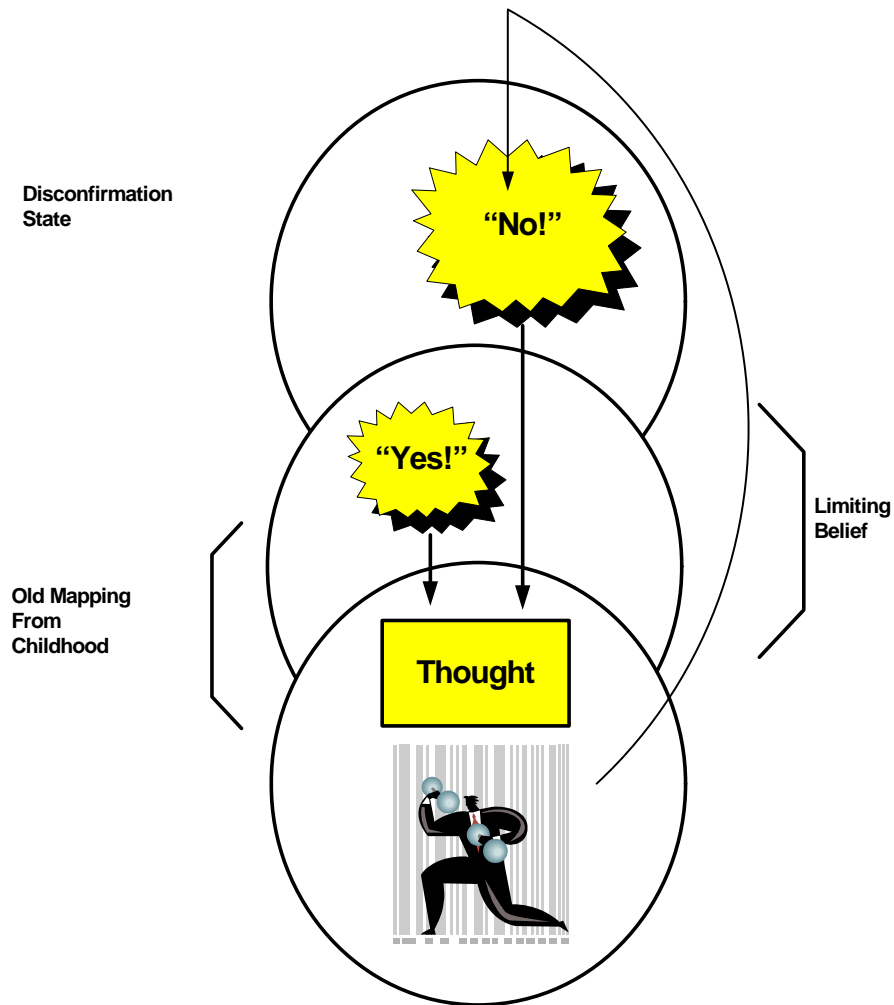
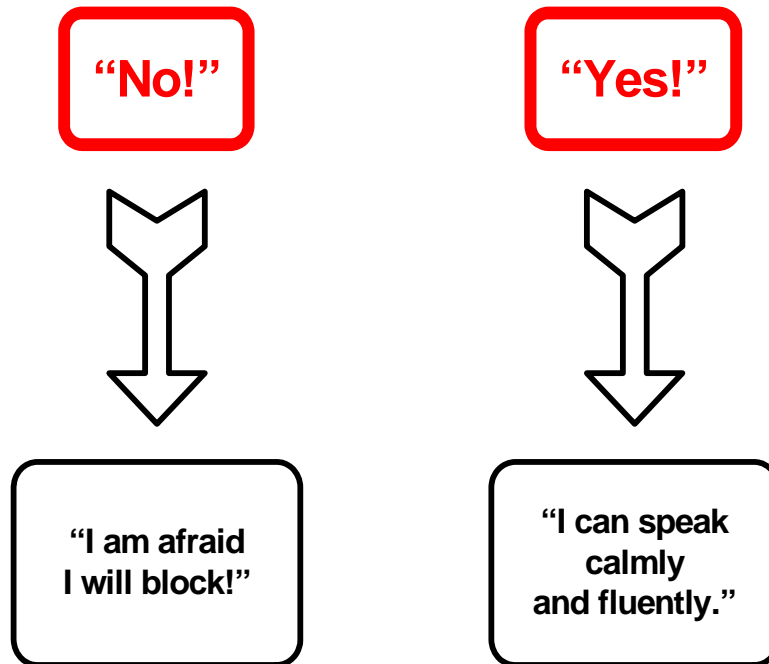


Figure 3:15
Meta-No/ Meta-Yes



The Meta-Yes/No Pattern

- 1) Access a limited belief and “get a strong “no!”
- 2) Meta “no” the limiting belief.
- 3) Access a strong and robust “yes.”
- 4) Meta “yes” the enhancing belief.
- 5) “Yes, yes it repeatedly and put it into the future.

How to Play with the Pattern:

1) Get a ‘NO’ - Access a good strong ‘No!’

Think of something that every fiber in your body can say ‘No!’ to in a way that is fully congruent.

Say that ‘No!’ again and again until you notice and snapshot it on the inside.

Anchor your ‘No!’ with your hand gestures. Feel it. Hear your voice of ‘No!’

Examples: Would you push a little child in front of a speeding bus, just for the fun of it?

Would you eat a bowl of dirty filthy worms, when you have delicious food available?

2) Meta ‘No!’ the limiting belief.

Feel all of this powerful ‘No!’ fully as you think about that stupid, useless, limiting belief (suggestion: “I am afraid I will block.”).

And you can keep on saying *No!* to that limiting belief until you begin to feel that it no longer has any power to run your programs, or that it has no more room in your presence or in your mind.

And how many more times, with what voice, tone, gesturing, do you need to totally disconfirm that old belief, so that you know deep inside yourself that it will no longer run your programs?

3) Access a strong and robust ‘Yes!’

Think about something that every fiber of your being says ‘Yes!’ to without any question or doubt. (suggestion: “I can speak with calmness and clarity.”)

Notice your ‘Yes!’ Notice the neurology and feeling of your ‘Yes!’ Notice the voice of ‘Yes!’

Gesture the ‘Yes!’ with your hands and body.

Amplify this ‘Yes!’

4) Meta ‘Yes!’ the enhancing belief.

And feeling that ‘Yes!’ even more fully, utter it repeatedly to the empowering belief that you want.

Do you want this? ‘Yes!’ Really?

How many more times do you need to say ‘Yes!’ right now, in order to feel that you have fully welcomed it into your presence?

5) YES the ‘Yes!’ repeatedly and put into the future.

This is only an exercise. Do you want to keep this!

You really want this?

Would this improve your life?

Would it be valuable to you?

Changing Meaning by Changing our Reactions Meta-Stating Fears

Discussed in an earlier chapter, we believe that meaning drives everything. It is the meaning you place on both external events and especially on internal experiences that create your blocking and stuttering. It is the meaning that “holds in place” the structure of your subjective experience. The two common meanings (and the two most important) given to disfluency that create blocking are stuttering are:

1. Fear of what others may think of me.
2. Fear of what blocking and stuttering will say about me as a person.

Note: these fears are not primarily *about* something that is a real physical threat to you. The fears are *about* what others may think and what that will mean about your definition of yourself. It is all a part of thinking (cognition). It is all an “inside” job. Therefore, gaining fluency will be largely determined by changing these meanings to more realistic and resourceful meanings. Since blocking is an “inside” job, fluency is also an “inside” job.

When you block, you are reacting to the meanings that you give to both the possibility and the fact of blocking and stuttering. The reaction is not to a “thing” but to an abstract meaning. Have you ever stumbled over a “fear?” Have you ever stumbled over a “meaning?” No, because they only exist in your head and are not real.

Now, because, fear is an “inside” job and only exists internally as a constructed reality, you can de-construct it and re-construct more useful meanings. The following pattern utilizes the Meta-State Model in installing new, more useful meanings to our fears.

Changing Meaning by Changing Reaction

- 1) I will learn the distinction between map and territory.**
- 2) I will use my neurology as a human being.**
- 3) I will manage the higher levels of my mind.**
- 4) I will not take counsel of my illogical fears.**
- 5) I will access my higher resources.**
- 6) I will create a new “gestalt” from my higher resources.**

1) Decide to fully and completely learn the distinction between Map & Territory.

Decide to take a great and incredible step toward sanity and resourcefulness the day you fully realize that you never deal with “reality” directly, but always and

only *indirectly* – *through your mental movie maps and meanings*. Whatever you say or think about anything is “just a map” – an internal representation of your perception of the particular event that you are focused on. To know this is to lighten up and quit being so serious about the symbols that you entertain in your head.

The good news is that whatever *relationship* you’ve developed in regard to fear, you learned it. And if you learned it, you can unlearn it as you learn a much more effective frame game. The good news is that your way of relating to fear has developed from how you have mapped your experiences and understandings. Repeatedly throughout this book we will say,

“It’s just a map; it is just internal representations and words; it’s not real; it’s not the territory ‘out there’ that you are dealing with...”

By “territory” we refer to the world outside your thinking. What is *out there* in the world is the “territory” (See Figure 3:16). This understanding is crucial. Sure it is “real” in your mind and body. That’s what we mean by our mind-body states, that is, by our “neuro-linguistic” states of consciousness. Once you create the mental software in your head *about* something, it becomes your way of thinking-and-feeling about that thing; your map. And whatever you *map* inside your head, then governs your body and emotions. So “inside,” it is “real.” Yet that “reality” is only as real as you believe it to be.

Your internal “reality” or perception is entirely governed by how you map out your perception with your internal representation system.

So since perception is a constructed reality through our representational maps, this is *the ticket for taking full control over mind-body states*. If you think or believe (a map itself!) that the outside world “makes” you think and feel as you do; you thereby give up your personal power, choice, freedom, responsibility, and personal resourcefulness. Then you’ll never learn how to run your own brain.

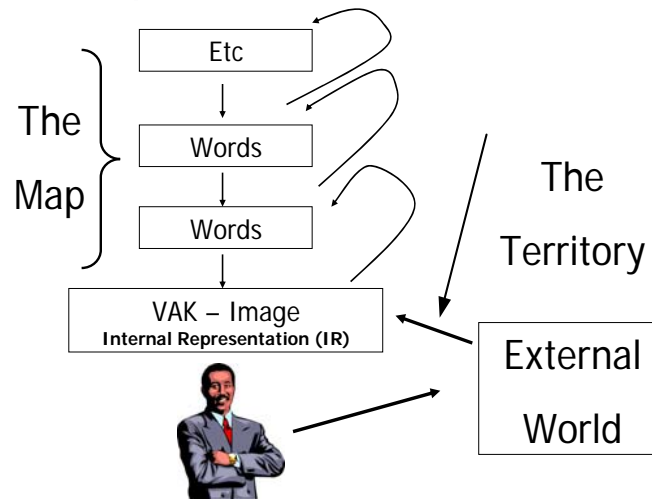
Your experience with fear and anxiety are really just a game ... and it flows from, and makes sense by the thoughts (frames) that you have in your head. That’s the good news because it invites you to journey into the domain of truly **Mastering All Fears**.

2) Decide to fully and completely use your neurology as a human being rather than an animal.

“No more blind, unconscious *reactions* for me. I shall take full responsibility for my thinking, feeling, speaking and behaving. These are my responses. No one ‘made’ me think, feel, speak, or act as I did. They might have invited me, but I accepted the invitation. And if I can do that, I can also turn down invitations to feel fear, operate from fear and take counsel of my fears.”

Figure 3:16
The Map/Territory Distinction

Basic Structure of Perception



- 3) Decide to fully run your own brain and to manage all of the higher levels of your mind.**

“I shall learn the Meta-States model of Neuro-Semantics and any other effective model in order to take charge of all of the higher levels of my mind as it layers level upon level of thoughts and ideas. I shall access my higher level states and use them to *slay the dragons of fear and anxiety.*”

- 4) I shall stubbornly refuse to take counsel of my fears. Instead, I shall take counsel of my values, empowering beliefs, and desired outcomes.**

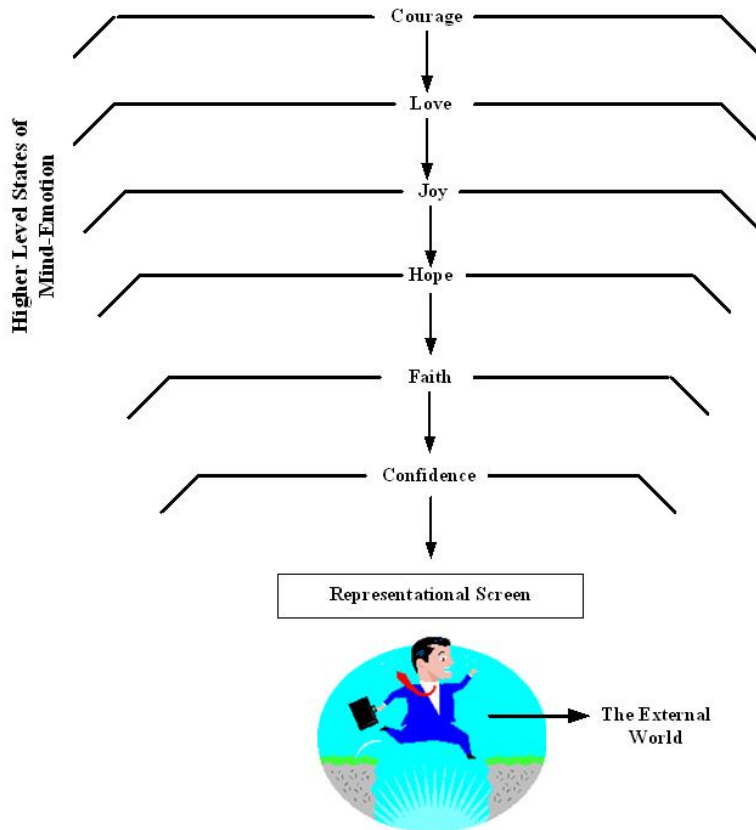
“Taking counsel of my fears is just a bad habit. Some fears I’ll respect and hold myself back from acting foolishly; other fears I’ll respect as signals of all ideas that no longer serve me and boldly face down from my resourcefulness, confidence, and greater understandings.”

- 5) I shall access my highest resources of confidence, faith, hope, joy, love and courage, etc.**

“As I treat fears as messages and check them out for accuracy, I shall live primarily from an empowered state of knowing my self, my values, and from a bold and courageous vision of what I want to do with my life.” (See Figure 3:20.)

- 6) **Create a new “gestalt” of confidence, faith, hope, joy, love and courage (You may wish to choose your own states that, once brought to bear on fear, will eliminate the fear of blocking and stuttering.).**
 - a. Access your state of fear and anxiety about blocking and stuttering.
 - b. Access each resourceful state one at a time. Remember a time when you were very confident. Associate into the memory. Go be there seeing out of your eyes, hearing with your ears and feeling that confidence all through you.
 - c. Once you access the state of confidence, *bring it to bear* on the fear and anxiety of blocking and stuttering. *Apply* confidence to fear and anxiety.
 - d. Repeat this process with faith, hope, joy, love and courage (or your own menu list of resource states).
 - e. Repeat this over and over even after you leave the training; saying “yes” to the new “gestalt” that you are creating around *not fearing* blocking and stuttering.

Figure 3:17
Meta-Stating
Meaning Fears



Change Meaning by Changing Language **It really does matter how you language yourself.**

We have looked at the *structure* of our perception by focusing on the cinema of our minds and the internal qualities of our movies. We have looked at and experienced what happens when you change how you meta-state your perceptions by bringing higher level thoughts to bear on lower level thoughts. Now let's look "inside" the language of stuttering itself. What do I mean by the "language of stuttering?" It is the language of the matrices that I refer to. Look in Table 2:1 (Chapter 2) for an extensive list of the language frames that create stuttering. We have questions (The Meta-Model of Language) that effectively challenge the structure of language. These questions take the language and put it out in front of us where you can look at it with a magnifying glass and challenge its appropriateness for our lives.

Presently we are working with the meanings you have given to blocking and stuttering. As you go through the book, you will be discovering even more language structures within the other matrices. Use the following questions to challenge those frames as well.

Tearing Apart the Language of Blocking

Let's explore the stuttering and blocking that you experience. For the purpose of fully understanding the actual mechanisms involved, let's get really curious as you find out how you do it so regularly, systematically, and methodically. Have your partner ask you the following questions (From the Meta-Model of Language¹) in the context of blocking:

- When do you block? When do you *not* block?
- Where do you do this? Where do you not?
- How do you do the *process* of blocking? What do you see, hear, feel and how do you talk to yourself in order to create the block?
- What do you do with you breath? How does your breathing change?
- How does your face change from fluency to blocking and stuttering?
- Do you have any taboos or prohibitions activated prior to stuttering or blocking?
- What thoughts are driving the experience?
- What are the thoughts in the back of the mind about that?
- Do you have any memories that contributed to your blocking and stuttering?
- Are those events now present in your life or are they old and presently irrelevant?
- Do you have any imaginations about what blocking will lead to?
What fearful apprehensions?
- Do those imaginations and fears serve you? If not, what will?
- What is the speed of your talk? How fast or slow?
- Have you given yourself permission to slow down and speak slow or do you feel a need to "get it out" quickly for the other person?
- What if you didn't care about what the other person thought of your speech?
- What would happen if you didn't care about how you spoke but focused on the content of what you wish to communicate instead?

¹**Note:** The Meta-Model of Language is the core model of all NLP. Yes, all of NLP is based on this model. Therefore, if you wish to proceed further in your study of this model, read L. Michael Hall's book, *Communication Magic: Exploring the Structure and Meaning of Language*. This book presents the most recent work on the subject. I highly recommend it for two purposes: You learn how to challenge your own thinking and you learn how to challenge the thinking of others.

Changing Meaning by Removing the Fear The “Fast Phobia Cure”

This NLP pattern can dramatically assist us in running our own brain so that you will move to a more resourceful and productive state. Behind blocking will inevitably be found fear. The “Fast Phobia Cure” is especially designed to remove the visual images of the movie that creates fear. Running your own brain in order to be more resourceful remains one of the basic outcomes of NLP. The “Fast Phobia Cure” pattern provides a powerful way to actively and deliberately bring about the changes you want.

The “Fast Phobia Cure” specifically offers a way to deal with painful memory scenes from the past that need to be dealt with and to do so in a way that doesn't re-traumatize. It also offers a way to switch off those that you don't need to see and relive. You probably have some memories of a teacher embarrassing you before a class or a parent shaming you because of your speech. This pattern provides a way to “take the juice” out of such memories.

Dealing With Old Unpleasant Memories

When many people think about unpleasant things that happened long ago, their brain says, "Play it again!" And so they do. They play a full-color, three-dimensional movie of the old movie and then feel really bad. If that doesn't seem particularly useful for you, the following offers you a change method.

You can change that and gain control over what happens in your brain and put an end to being a prisoner of your own brain. As you learn to direct your own mental processes, you can use your brain in directed ways like a director of your own internal movies. If you can bring back old horrible memories into your mind, you can also bring back good, resourceful, confidence generating movies.

The key to change begins by discovering what you do inside your head. As you then begin altering the elements of that internal behavior you begin changing how you experience things (See Figure 3:18).

The Fast Phobia Cure

- 1) Step back from your painful memory.**
- 2) Step back from watching the movie.**
- 3) Let the old movie play out as you watch from the projection booth.**
- 4) Step into the movie and rewind.**
- 5) Repeat the process five times.**
- 6) Test results.**

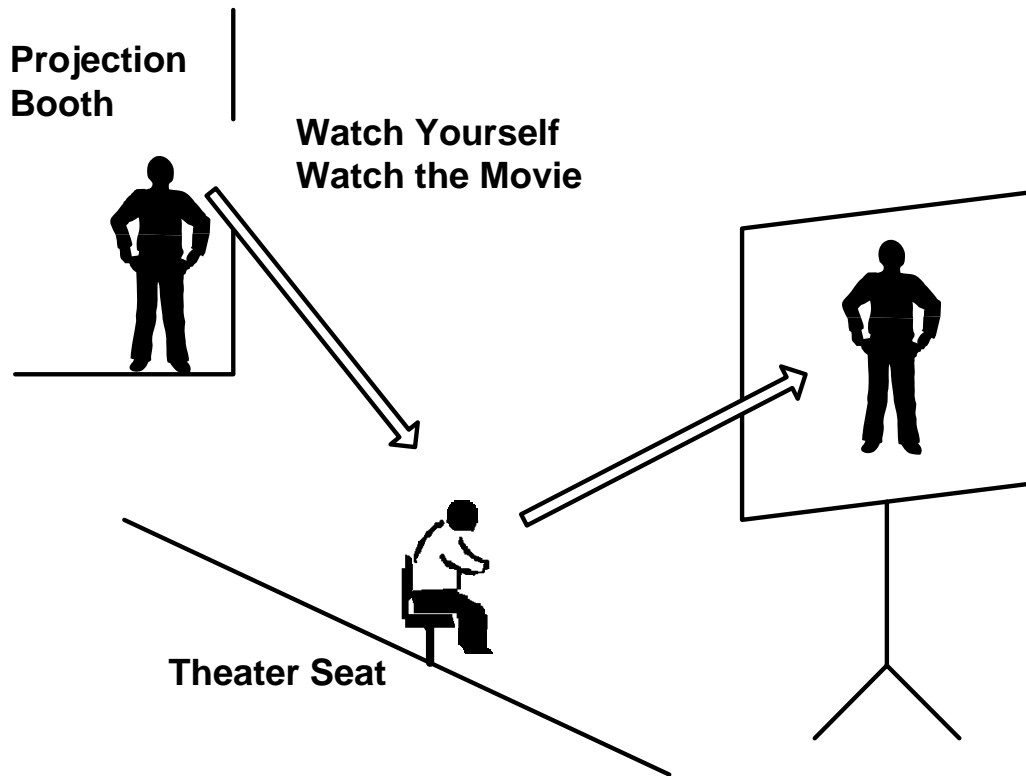
1) Step back from your painful memories.

- Begin with a “negative” thought that sets off painful emotional reactions. Pick a “thought” of a memory that “rattles your cage” so much so that you can’t even “think” of it in a calm and rational way. One of those created movies that you create to anticipate blocking may work really well. Another good source is from those memories of the past where you were made fun of or shamed for your blocking.
- Imagine yourself sitting in a movie theater. Upon the movie screen in the theater, put a black-and-white snapshot (still) of the younger you just prior to that fearful, hurtful, or traumatic situation.
- Good. This represents the scene immediately prior to the fearful memory. Now sit back and look at the snapshot of the younger you. Do so with the awareness that you have taken a spectator's position to that younger you.
- As this enables you to gain “psychological distance” from the old pain, take the spectator position so that you can *begin to learn* from that old memory.

2) Step back from the “you” watching the movie.

- Imagine floating out of your body as you watch that *snapshot* on the screen. Imagine floating all the way to the back of the theater and up into the projection booth. Place an imaginary piece of Plexiglas in the viewing window in front of you. From this new point-of-view, notice the back of your head in the theater seat sitting there watching the snapshot of the *younger you* on the screen.
- If at any time you begin to feel uncomfortable, then just put your hands on the Plexiglas in front of you and remind yourself to feel safe and secure in the control booth.
- Feel the calmness of this sense of distance.

Figure 3:18
The “Fast Phobia Cure”



3) Let the old memory play out as you watch it from the projection booth.

- From the projection booth, observe yourself watching the *younger you* on the movies screen as you let the initial snapshot turn into a black-and-white movie which you then watch until it plays out to the end.
- Watch it to the end. Then watch some more. Let it play out beyond the end to a time when that *younger you* felt safe and okay again.
- As the trauma scene disappears, see that in a state of safety and pleasure — a scene of comfort.
- If you have to fast forward several years to a scene of comfort, do that. Fast forward to any event... When you get to that place, freeze frame the picture.

4) Step into the movie and rewind.

- Now, step into the end of the movie at the *scene of comfort*. Step into it and experience it fully. See everything around you in color as it was then.
- In just a moment, you are going to do something very weird. So let me tell you

about it first.

- Rewind the movie from this *scene of comfort backwards* to the initial snapshot before the beginning of the trauma, and to do so really fast, super fast, so fast that occurs in a second, maybe two. Now you have seen movies or videos run backwards haven't you? Good. Well this one is going to rewind at high speeds but with this difference, you are going to be **inside** it.

So from that vantage point, you will see a fusion of sights and a jumbling of sounds as everything zooms back to the beginning. When you experience the fast rewinding, all the people and their actions go backwards. They walk and talk backwards. You walk and talk in reverse. Everything happens in reverse, like rewinding a movie.

- Ready? Okay, associate into the *comfort scene* at the end of the movie, feel all of those feelings of comfort, okay-ness, joy, relaxation, whatever is there. Do so fully and completely.
- Now push the rewind button. Zoouooooommmmm! Go all the way back to the beginning. It only takes a second or two to do that fast rewind.
- Good. Clear the screen of your mind. How did that feel... rewinding from inside the movie? Weird huh?

5) Repeat the process five times.

- Having arrived back to the *snapshot* at the beginning, clear the screen in your mind. Open your eyes and look around. Breathe!
- Let's do this again. Begin at the *scene of comfort* at the end again, and *as soon as* you step it, feel, see, and hear it fully... rewind the movie... do it even faster this time.

Good. Repeat four more times. Of course, as you do this over and over your brain will become more and more proficient and the rewind will go faster and faster until the rewind takes only a second each time. Zoommmmm!

6) Test results.

- Okay, let's break state.
- Now, recall that original memory of the trauma and try really hard to see if you can get the feelings back. Try as hard as you can to step into the scene and feel the full weight of the emotions.

Chapter Summary

- We have listed 16 key principles for managing our own states in gaining fluency:
 1. Two components of neuro-linguistic states: language and neurology
 2. Two royal roads to state control – our *language* and our *neurology* provide two roads in maintaining our states and gaining fluency.
 3. State object – all states have objects or references.
 4. State awareness – in order to change or utilize a state you must first recognize the state.
 5. State accessing/ inducing – you access a state either through associating into a former desired state or imagine having the state.
 6. State altering – you alter your states all the time and you can learn to do it at will.
 7. State intensity and amplification – states have intensities and you can amplify desired states.
 8. State strategy – all of our states/ behaviors are a product of a sequencing of our movies and word meanings (internal representations).
 9. State/ strategy interrupts – you have the ability to interrupt your states and our strategies. By interrupting ones you do not want you can choose ones you do want.
 10. State anchoring – all states have certain triggers or anchors that bring them into existence. Changing a response from one state to another state is called reframing.
 11. State dependency – all learning is state dependent.
 12. From state dependency to meta-states – you can take a state that you are “inside” and apply that state of mind to other states of minds.
 13. State utilization – we can take a state that may not be useful in one context and put it into another context that may be useful – another example of reframing.
 14. States as emotion – emotions are a product of how you evaluate your experience of the world to our expectations from the world.
 15. State extending/ state containmentment – states extend into and contaminate other states.
 16. State expressions versus state frames – you have four basic expressions of your states: thinking, feeling, speaking and behaving (our four central powers).

- There are two primary ways of reframing – changing context and changing meaning.

- The primary difference between a thought and a belief is that a belief is a thought that you have said “yes” to. So, to change a belief back into a thought, you primarily say “no” to the thought.