



“Attractive people come to believe they are smarter and more talented than their colleagues.”

Ken Eisold, Ph.D.




## The Squeaky Wheel

How to protect your psychological health, improve your relationships, and enhance your self-esteem.  
by Guy Winch, Ph.D.

### NLP Experts Speak Out

Neuro Linguistic Programming experts present their techniques  
Published on January 8, 2014 by Guy Winch, Ph.D. in The Squeaky Wheel

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A few months ago I wrote an article based on a recent study I read in a peer reviewed journal ([A Simple Mind Trick that Reduces Emotional Pain](#)). I quickly started getting (slightly) annoyed comments and complaints (both via *Psychology Today* and my website) from members of the Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) community claiming the same technique had been described by NLP researchers decades ago. Neither I nor the article I quoted attributed credit to the NLP version of the technique.

Admittedly, despite having a Ph.D. in clinical psychology, I know very little about NLP, so I looked up the technique and indeed, a very similar version had been reported by NLP practitioners decades ago. My bad!

Therefore, to be fair, I decided to offer those who had written to me a forum to present some of their techniques as a way of offering 'equal time'. Do note that I have no experience with NLP, I do not practice it, and I have never studied it, which means of course, I can not endorse it, despite the fascinating submissions below. Also, keep in mind that I asked the NLP experts to submit very short and abbreviated descriptions, as I wanted to squeeze in as many viewpoints as possible. I did try to include many links to more lengthy articles and even videos, for readers to get a more in-depth understanding, should they choose to do so.

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#### Seven NLP Experts Present Their Techniques

##### 1. Resolving Simple PTSD: by [Richard Gray](#)

Reconsolidation of [Traumatic Memories](#) (RTM) involves a brief, non-traumatizing access to the triggering stimulus, followed by an imaginal, distanced viewing (from the perspective of the projection booth in an imagined theater) of a B&W movie of the event (to further limit its impact). A second part of the process involves a very rapid, associated re-experience of the movie in full color, in reverse, ending in a safe place before the traumatic event. Anecdotal and clinical evidence supports the permanent removal of intrusive, hypervigilant and avoidant symptoms in 75 to 85% of clients.

First named The Visual Kinesthetic Dissociation technique, it was described by Bandler and Grinder as a phobia cure in 1979. An expanded version of the procedure, now described explicitly as a treatment for PTSD, appeared in *Heart of the Mind* (Andreas & Andreas, 1989). The technique has significant anecdotal and clinical support including its application to survivors of the Rwandan genocide.

#### References:

Treating Traumatic Memories in Rwanda with the Rewind Technique:  
[http://media.wix.com/ugd/d3fa30\\_d07facda8a3748568c826af22e2f5783.pdf](http://media.wix.com/ugd/d3fa30_d07facda8a3748568c826af22e2f5783.pdf)

Andreas, C. & Andreas, S. (1989). *Heart of the Mind*. Boulder, Co: Real People Press

Bandler, R., & Grinder, J. (1979). *Frogs into Princes*. Boulder, Co: Real



**Guy Winch, Ph.D.**, is a licensed psychologist and author of *The Squeaky Wheel: Complaining the Right Way to Get Results, Improve Your Relationships and Enhance Self-Esteem*. [more...](#)

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## 2. Resolving Anxiety: by Steve Andreas

This process (Kemp, 2008, Andreas, 2009) based on a discovery by Richard Bandler, seems *very strange*. However, it is a rapid, dependable and powerful way to reduce anxiety or any other strong feeling: "Think of a context that triggers your emotional response, and then notice where the feeling starts, and where it goes to." For instance, it might start in the belly, travel up the chest and then down the arms. This is the *path* of the feeling.

"Notice the *shape* of the feeling as it travels along this path." In the belly it might be the size of a walnut, spread wider in the chest, and then fill the arms. "What color is the feeling?"

Next is the weirdest, and most important, question: "As the feeling travels along this path, which way does it spiral?" If you can't tell, try doing it both ways and find out which is most *familiar*.

"Now put yourself back in that context, notice the feeling beginning, and then spiral it in the *opposite* direction, as you change the color to one you like better, and add sparkles—and find out what happens." Usually the result is a very different and more useful feeling. If not, try spiraling the feeling faster in the opposite direction.

References:

Andreas, Steve. (2009) "Resolving Anxiety" video demonstration:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g9dDsn1Ka9g>

Kemp, Nick. (2008) "Some Great New Methods" <http://realpeoplepress.com/blog/some-great-new-methods>

## 3. Treating Bulimia: by Kathy Welter-Nichols

Most of us dislike vomiting, some even have a phobia about it; I use some of *those clients* "freak out details" for resetting bulimic clients that "have no issue with vomiting" and are a little proud of it. The goal is to make it less comfortable, in fact downright repulsive. NLP Wiki.org provides a review of working with phobia, setting anchors, how we utilize sub structures of the senses).

Using my NLP *repulsed by vomiting* process, we reset this back into their awareness, eliciting the worst possible scenario for them, and then have them increase that state until it's one of strong repulsion, dislike, ab-reaction, just short of full on panic attack and touch their arm. This is called "Anchoring the state" then increasing the intensity, test it, and add some more, refine it, test it so it works delivering a very strong "repulsed by vomiting" state. They never voluntarily vomit again.

## 4. Core Transformation: by Connirae Andreas

Core Transformation is a 10-step process in which a troublesome emotion or behavior becomes the doorway to a felt sense of "peace," "presence," or "oneness." The client begins by asking the troublesome symptom, "What do you want?" Next the client asks the part, "If you have that, what do you want *through having that*, that's even more important?" By asking this question recursively for each answer, the client discovers a series of increasingly valued wants. The deepest want is always a state of *being*, such as "peace" or "presence," (in contrast to a specific thing or behavior). The method then invites a "turn around"—the part is invited to experience how *beginning* with the state of being transforms each of its wants in the series, and also transforms the original symptom.

This is a way to actually experience what spiritual traditions talk about, and people usually experience a dramatic shift quite quickly. For example, after one session, a woman who was distraught over her son's choice of fiancé, convinced he was making a terrible mistake, and agonizing that she has lost him, experienced what she described as an "opening of the heart," through which she now could see this woman's good qualities.

Reference:

Andreas, Connirae. (1994) *Core Transformation: reaching the wellspring within*. Boulder, CO: Real People Press.

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by David Niose
- 3 [7 Reasons Most People are Afraid of Love](#)  
by Lisa Firestone, Ph.D.
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### 5. Failure into Feedback Process: by **Robert Dilts**

One of the core presuppositions of NLP is *There is no failure, only feedback*. This implies that success is not a function of immediate results; it is a function of an ongoing feedback loop. While many agree that it is better to interpret lack of success as *feedback* rather than *failure*, changing feelings about an unsuccessful situation is easier said than done. The Failure into Feedback Strategy uses several NLP concepts to help transform experiences of failure into productive learning experiences.

The procedure was designed to alter beliefs that limit capabilities. The process assumes that a belief is a synthesis of several sensory experiences which form a kind of "molecule" of experience. A belief about an experience usually includes a visual memory of the details of the event, and feelings or self-talk, mental fantasies, recalled messages from others, etc., that are attached to the memory. When these representations are detached from one another and considered separately, they are found to have no particular meaning. The Failure into Feedback Strategy offers a method to identify and break-up limiting "molecules" of experience, and then to enrich and reassemble the cluster of experiences into a more useful and appropriate model of a situation.

References:

<http://www.nlpu.com/Articles/artic18.htm>

<http://www.nlpu.com/Patterns/patt18.htm>

### 6. Merging techniques: by **Hugh Comerford**

I combine two NLP techniques to create a more complex intervention: a variation of spatial anchoring and timelines. Anchoring is the NLP term for various forms of conditioning. This variant uses a series of differently colored paper circles as conditioned stimuli. A client stands on one circle when recalling or creating an emotional state (or resource)—the unconditioned stimulus. By associating differently colored circles with different emotional states, the client can learn to chain a series of emotional states by stepping from one circle to the next so that one state becomes the stimulus for a series of other state changes. With practice, the process streamlines so that the first color evokes the final state. I call the procedure StateShift and Timelines (first described by Andreas).

Timelines are representations of how people organize their past, present and future. By creating the conditioning procedure using their subjective sense of time in physical space, the impact of the procedure is enhanced. Combining the StateShift with the timeline orientation has helped hundreds of people make transformative and lasting changes as one state becomes a trigger for a more desired state. This combination of techniques underpins dozens of NLP processes including Dilts' Re-Imprinting process.

References:

<http://nlpuniversitypress.com/html3/R30.html>

[http://www.steveandreas.com/Articles/brief\\_history.html](http://www.steveandreas.com/Articles/brief_history.html)

<http://nlpwiki.org/wiki?s=anchor#anchoring>.

### 7. NeuroCalm: by **Nannette DiMascio**

My NeuroCalm process starts with the NLP technique, following feelings. It then asks an experiential question rooted in the NLP technique of talking to the part. Certain problems amenable to resolution by NLP and other advanced methods are rooted in what I have termed "Mind Pirates," metaphorical parasites that enervate the client by imprisoning them in their long-held experiential and traumatic emotions. Remove the Mind Pirates and the client is freed to live their life. I have used this simple 4-step technique on a regular basis to stop psychologically-caused insomnia, panic attacks and anxiety:

1. Take a deep breath and relax.
2. Notice where the feeling is in your body. Even though it may be uncomfortable, be present with the feeling and stop your inner dialogue. Just feel it.
3. Now ask the feeling a question. Yes, this may seem a little odd—but it

works: "What do I need to know to let you (the feeling) go?" Note the first thing that pops into your head.

4. Determine whether the feeling is still present. If so, be present with it, and ask the question again. Repeat until the feeling is gone.

My thanks to the many NLP experts who sent me suggestions and my apologies to those who were not mentioned above--I had limited space and could not include them all.

I wish you all a happy and healthy 2014! Speaking of 'health', feel free to check out my new book, *Emotional First Aid: Practical Strategies for Treating Failure, Rejection, Guilt, and Other Everyday Psychological Injuries* (Hudson Street Press, 2013).

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