BOOST YOUR BODY-IMAGE WITH NLP

Nick Ritchie

Just a couple of quick words…

I started writing this book with the intention to add value to those who are on the same body-image journey I was on, or who are exploring ways to build on the breakthrough's they've already had, and help any others that they may come who are on a similar path. Any income I derive from this book is secondary, and most certainly a latter priority.

If you decided to buy this book from me… Thank you for supporting my work! When you decide to support my work it helps me to produce more content like this, so I can go onto help many more people. Every book sold gets me one step closer to a happier world, where many more people are introduced to the idea that happiness around your body doesn't come from changing how you look on the outside, but from changing how you think about yourself on the inside. This is the primary message I'm delivering.

If you did not buy this book… I hope that you get a lot of value from it, and that you really enjoy reading and applying it as much as I enjoyed writing it. If it really helps you to breakthrough, please consider paying for the book retrospectively by buying a physical or electronic copy from http://nickritchielive.com and going on to share it with your friends.

Please feel free to share this book with your friends.

"When you change the way you look at your body, the body you look at changes."
~Nick Ritchie

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How I Started

Growing up for me was really no different from anyone else. I had the ups and downs of going through the traditional schooling system, battling my own inner demons and outer nemesis. It always seemed as though life was constantly throwing me hardballs... From the get-go my father was sentenced to life imprisonment as my 17 year old teen mother was trying to bring up a two year old *me*, while giving birth to my younger brother. I struggled through school with bullies constantly using me as a bulls eye for their latest amusements, and teachers constantly telling me I wasn't good enough and that I needed to work harder if I wanted to get a good job. But somewhere along the line, I also developed a range of issues around the way I looked, and at the age of around 10 years old, I found myself screaming hateful thoughts at myself in front of the mirror. This way of thinking about myself went on to affect the way I thought of others, and subsequently, the way they treated me. Later on, I was fortunate enough to attract some mentors into my life who really helped me to breakthrough a lot of my past baggage and teach me an entirely new way of thinking and attitude towards life.

When I first heard of NLP I was sitting across from one of my business mentors as he was sharing his insights with me about personal development and how the rate in which you grow as a person, was in direct relation to the rate in which your business grows. He leaned in and said, "Nick, if you want to grow a highly successful (and profitable) business, you're going to have to commit to growing yourself every single day." Several of my business (and personal) mentors during this time all felt the same way, and so I thought to myself, "There must be something to all of this personal growth stuff!" And I've never looked back...

NLP just happened to be one of the tools my mentor used to help create change with the people he worked with, and when I asked him how he came to develop such an extraordinary ability to help people breakthrough their 'issues' he shared that he had sat an NLP course and that taught him a lot of very useful techniques

in belief system change, and altering people's perceptions and subsequently, their reality – in a way that served them towards a happier more fulfilled life.

Well that sounded really cool to me, and so the seed was planted, that I needed to grow, and that one of the things I could do along my journey to grow, was to learn NLP, and that's just what I did.

Body-Image Explained

Body-Image refers to how a person feels about their physical body, and this is broken down into how they feel about the level of aesthetics and sexual attractiveness they think they possess. Aesthetics encompassing the shape, weight and proportions of the body, and sexual attractiveness referring to how 'sexy' they think they are (or are not) to the opposite sex (or same sex if one is homosexual).

From the moment we are born as a (mostly) clean slate, there are many factors in our environment both inside and outside of us that can create poor body-image from cultural and social ideals, to past personal experiences along with what some say are biological predispositions. Biological predispositions in my opinion, are misguided in that we are all predisposed to the elements around us, yet how we respond to those elements determines the result we get. We know for a fact, that poor nutrition leads to a lack of function in the brain which can result in various symptoms such as depression and anxiety, but as with everything we experience, the power lies within ourselves to create the changes we want.

Poor Body-Image is also not something we are born with, therefore it is something that is gradually developed over-time. For many people, poor body-image is perpetuated through a series of frequent comparisons. Comparing their hips to that person, their arms to that person, their waist and legs to that person, and their butt and shoulders to that other person – do you notice where this is going? The more comparisons you make, the worse your body-image becomes. Some comparisons were made at a very early age, through a child's impression of the world, and thus, tend to be much more distorted than a comparison made as an adult. Sometimes that requires us to dig into our past and turn over a new leaf with that memory (so to speak), and other times it doesn't. As with everything, the approach to therapy varies depending on the individual.

History shows us that in many cultures there has existed ideals among society of the way the perfect body should look, which the people have always struggled to live up to. To show how far reaching these ideals are in our own western culture we only need to look around to see how prevalent the emphasis on beauty truly is. In fact, a large study was recently completed by the American Psychological Association finding that the sexualization of women was contributing to increased anxiety associated with body-image.

In fact, body-image has become such a problem in our western culture that we don't even notice it exists; because almost everyone has the same issues! In one of the largest international studies on body-image conducted (which spanned over 10 countries), 3200 women were interviewed and the researchers found that only 2% considered themselves beautiful, and nearly 50% believed they were too fat.

There are many factors associated with developing a poor body-image, and so awareness around what causes it, and how it is perpetuated helps provide us with a launching pad to breakthrough it.

Body-Image & NLP

Body-Image in itself, has a lot to do with how we perceive the world around us, and NLP is an extremely valuable tool in changing our MAP (view of the world) which subsequently changes our experience (for the better). I found this with my own experience of learning about NLP, and how my mind works, I was better able to let go of old negative habits, and replace them with newer more empowering habits. Habits of thinking, as I call them, are perpetuated by us in our repeated efforts of thought. Much of body-image is unconscious, meaning we are not consciously (on the surface level) always aware of the thoughts that are running through our minds, and as such, NLP is a powerful tool in modifying our unconscious thinking habits to create a completely different conscious outcome. Although in some people, negative body-image can lead to mental illnesses such as eating disorders, depression or anorexia, this is not always the case for everyone. But do keep in mind that men are not exempt from negative body-image; Recent research suggests that many men wish to become leaner and more muscular like they see on the covers of men's magazine covers, or what they perceived as children when playing with action figurines or watching cartoons of muscular heroes. In a recent study, western men, compared to their Asian counter-parts, wished to gain an additional 30 pounds of muscle mass than they perceived they currently had. In a survey completed by *Psychology Today*, researchers found that 56% of women and 40% of men were dissatisfied with their overall appearance. To the modern western man, it appears as though a link between the amount of muscle mass and their level of masculinity has been created, which is in my opinion, a false expectation. NLP is valuable in making adjustments to the way in which these men are perceiving masculinity, through a series of processes that I will explain and (share how to use), throughout this book.

In a recent survey women were asked, what was the first thing they noticed about other woman when out with friends, and the majority of the respondents replied, "How fat she is." Continuing, the researchers found that women had an average

of 13 negative things to say about themselves each day such as, "I hate my stomach", "I hate my thighs" or "I'm ugly". In an even larger international survey, researchers found that 90% of women aged 15 to 64 want to change at least one thing about their body, most of all their body weight. So we understand that the majority of people are affected in some way by poor body-image, it's just that because this way of thinking about ourselves is so widely accepted amongst society, it's difficult for many people to realize they have a problem, or could even do something about it if they knew they were struggling. Body-Image is so emphasized throughout our culture that even girls as young as five have strong ideas about weight, such as "fat is bad" and "skinny is good". These perceptions around the body are created so early for most people that we tend to accept them as truth, and thus, live our lives according to that truth (or world-view). When in actual reality, those perceptions are completely false because ideals are subjective, and that means we are living our lives according to a false sense of reality, in much the same way that a person with depression believes that the world is an unhappy place to live in, when in actual reality, the world is what we make of it.

Body-Image can be measured by comparing yourself to images of what you think the ideal body should look like. When making the comparisons, the difference between how you perceive your body, and the 'ideal body' is what determines the level of dissatisfaction (if any). Researchers have found a link between body dissatisfaction and women who smoke cigarettes, along with a discomfort around engaging in behaviors associated with intimate relationships, such as being able to express their sexuality fully. What if there were a series of switches we could flick that would automatically change the way we perceived our bodies and ourselves, so we could go on to feel completely comfortable with ourselves (and enjoy intimate relationships in the way we desire)? With NLP there are a variety of techniques and tools that allow for that to happen, which will be explored in this book.

As you continue reading I want you to decide to set your intention (on what you wish to achieve) by absorbing the information contained within this book. The

clearer you are on what you wish to gain from reading this book, the more value you will receive as a result of that intention.

Now that you've set your intention on what you would most like to gain from reading this book, let's continue exploring NLP together…

About NLP

Later on when people would ask me what NLP was and how it helped me, I found myself saying things like, "Have you heard of Anthony Robbins? That's what he does, he helps people breakthrough stuff, that's sort of what NLP is." And I would get a slightly ambiguous look from people, as if they sort of new what I was talking about, but were also still confused. Then I tried having them imagine that their mind was like a computer, and that NLP was the software that allowed you to reconfigure the way the computer operated. That got me a little further, but I still had similar confused looks, and that's because NLP really is such a wide field of study. There's so many applications, that it can be tricky to define it in one single conversation (unless the person has a good half an hour with you).

NLP can also be defined as a tool or skill that allows you to find out the difference between people who excel in a particular area, and those who don't. Once you've found what the difference is, NLP can then allow you to take those bread crumbs of excellence (so to speak), and follow the trail so that you can eventually reach that same level of excellence quicker and easier than the originator. Almost like uploading a new piece of software on your computer.

If you wanted to excel in acting, then you would use NLP to study some of the Oscar award winning actors such as Al Pacino or Robert De Niro. NLP would allow you to find out what they do in their minds before getting on set and acting that allowed them to create the type of results on film that you see today – like the movie Scarface. Maybe you want to feel really good about your body, and so you seek out someone who feels really good about their body, and you use NLP to study the way they think about themselves, their body, and how they perceive the world, and then you apply what you've learned to your own experience – by uploading that program for your own use. Kind of like in the movie, The Matrix, where Neo gets plugged in and taught a range of martial arts in only a few hours and in that defining moment he sits up from the chair and looking at Morpheus says, "I know Kung Fu…"

This is why NLP is called, "The art and science of personal excellence."

NLP is broken down into three core parts:

Neuro… This relates to the way we process our experience through the five senses of touch, sight, smell, hearing, and taste. As the signals get interpreted by us, they are then converted into signals that are sent through our central nervous system where they are then converted in the brain as meaning.

Linguistic… This relates to the way in which we perceive our world through verbal or non-verbal communication. Information enters our central nervous system, and then gets decoded by our brain so that we can assimilate that information. This includes pictures, sounds, tastes, smells and words (self-talk).

Programming… This relates to how we go through a particular pattern inside our head that leads to a specific outcome almost every time.

To sum it up, NLP is the technology of using the already pre-set processes of the mind to create a specific result quickly and easily.

How NLP Was Created

In relative terms, NLP is still in its infancy compared to many other behavioral change technologies, however the basics of NLP began a very long time ago.

A man by the name of Alfred Korzybski studied the behavioral patterns of the people in society of the 1940's and later released a book called *Science and Sanity* that broke down the key challenges that people had who were suffering from any number of diagnosed mental issues. He shared a particularly interesting phenomenon when he said, "Almost all psychological problems are the result of the inability of a person to traverse logical levels." What's interesting is that he described that in the future there would be a way to describe the processes of a human being, and that is what we today call Neuro-Linguistic-Programming (NLP).

In the 1970's Richard Bandler and Frank Pucelik were friends who had a desire to heal themselves of their unpleasant pasts, and in turn, they came across Gestalt Therapy (a form of psychotherapy). They studied in great detail what Fritz Perls (the founder of Gestalt Therapy) was teaching as part of the program, and as a result, they found they were really good at copying the processes Fritz was describing (modeling). In fact, Bandler and Pucelik became so good at modeling Gestalt Therapy, that they began teaching it in classrooms as a form of therapy for other people who wanted to breakthrough their own past emotional baggage. Their techniques and teachings became so well known that they caught the attention of John Grindler, a professor of linguistics.

Grindler just watched them for a few weeks and then after careful consideration, approached the two men and asked them if they knew *how* what they were doing was working. Grindler had a gift of being able to breakdown the specific structure (linguistically) of what they were doing, and offer that up as a process that could be duplicated. Before working with him, Bandler and Pucelik did not really know why their methods worked. They had just become really good at copying what

worked. They all began working together, and as a result, formulated a linguistically structured science which was then called "Meta."

Over the years, they created Neuro-Linguistic-Programming after working tirelessly with no financial backing and ridicule from people who were apparently 'well studied' in psychotherapy and psychology. During this time, Pucelik split from the group and went his own way due to various disagreements. Bandler and Grindler then locked arms and began even more rigorous exploration of this new technology.

In the early days, there was much experimentation and testing from various people who decided to join them on their quest to advance the understandings of human internal processes for the benefit of people world-wide. During this time, many people contributed to the development of Neuro-Linguistic-Programming and that is where the idea of NLP comes from; having the ability to find someone who's reached a particular level of excellence in any given field, and to learn exactly how that result is produced. That all starts from a simple question of, "How do I take that behavior and apply it to myself to get the same results?" You then follow the bread crumbs (clues) to achieve that same level of excellence.

The three people they copied (or modelled) were Fritz Perls, Virginia Satir and Milton Erickson. As these people were considered at the time to be the top behavioral change experts in the world, creating huge shifts in the people whom they worked with. NLP all begins with an attitude of curiosity to find out how someone does something, and when we look at a human being who does something that appears truly magical and remarkable we only have to ask the question, "How does this person behave this way, despite their current circumstances?"

Bandler and Grindler went on to produce their first two books in 1975 and have gone on to release many more volumes since then. Once they had produced those books, their material began being picked and read by psychotherapists and psychologists (and other behavioral change professionals) with many of their previous nemesis' (people who ridiculed them) calling them for advice and help

with many of their own patients *(funnily enough).* After the huge interest in these books, and their work, they continued to develop the technology of NLP and studied Milton Erickson who's apparently one of the best hypnotherapists of our time, and from this, published another book called *Patterns of the Hypnotic Techniques of Milton Erickson, Volumes 1 and 2*. These books contained the basis of a new model called the Milton Model, which works by using vague language, and inserting generalizations, distortions and deletions into people's language and thoughts. Fascinatingly enough, the Milton Model is almost the complete opposite of their original Meta Model, but both somehow managed to get very consistent results. This new birth in behavioral change technology proved Alfred Korzybski correct; by traversing logical levels it is possible for problems to just disappear.

But this all turned out to be just the tip of the iceberg for Bandler and Grindler, as they began exploring these concepts and information further, taking their original models and expanding them further. Perceptual positions, representational systems and reframing submodalities were all new tools they had created following their initial work, and began to be picked up more and more by people in the behavioral change professions. This prompted Bandler and Grindler to produce additional books and seminars as their work became more popular and sought after. The work that they produced from the 1970's to today, has created a large body of information, tools and techniques that have not only improved the lives of many others, but have gone on to inspire many other people to learn NLP and create their own versions, books and seminars on the subject.

These days NLP is regarded world-wide as being one of the most influential tools for producing positive results in the way people perceive themselves, the world within them, and the world around them. This technology became mega-popular starting in the 1980's and 1990's with huge personalities like Anthony Robbins using it to improve the lives of millions of people across the globe. As our awareness as a society increases around the areas of personal empowerment and responsibility, NLP and the tools that it offers will become more easily available and accessible every day.

Learning NLP Basics

Why would you want to learn the basics of NLP? Sometimes one of the most empowering things someone can do when they suffer from poor body-image and self-esteem, is to learn how their mind works. Learning how your mind works, will in-turn allow you to become more aware of what is going on when you feel a negative emotion (or positive one for that matter), and to make adjustments accordingly. The first step to any change, is awareness. Once you are aware of something, you can change it. But if you're running around looking for a hole in the ground with a blindfold on, you're going to trip over it a few times, but you'll never find the gold buried deep within until you regain your sight and find the map. NLP increases your awareness of yourself and the way you think about your body, thus lifting the blindfold of ignorance, and shining a new light on the way you perceive yourself and the world around you. In saying that, the beauty of NLP is that it doesn't matter what areas of NLP you learn, because every single technique can be applied to improve any area of your life immediately (not only body-image). Now there are some basic concepts that we can cover right away to get you started with boosting your body-image using NLP, so let's get started with those, which are:

1. Sensory Acuity
2. Submodalities
3. Rapport
4. Reframing
5. Anchoring
6. Meta Model
7. Milton Model
8. Modelling

The area of sensory acuity is really valuable in becoming an effective communicator (with others, and yourself), and for becoming good at applying NLP to your own life. It gives you the ability to notice the most subtle changes in

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