



## Living Sanely & Why Big Business is Using NLP



### Living Sanely

Have you had that feeling of being on a mouse wheel and just wanting to get off, really badly?! A couple of months ago I found myself feeling this way, and so I took myself off for a week's break – a quiet week on retreat with no phone, email or newspapers. It was complete bliss!

When I reflected on the weeks leading up to my week off, I was surprised at how much I had wanted a break. I got curious about how I was doing my life that meant I needed to stop and get off the bus.

I realised it's not about stepping off the planet to get sane again, it's about living sanely in the first place. Now, I wasn't exactly living in-sanely, but I've realised there were a few basics I wasn't being disciplined enough about. "Ugh, discipline?!" I hear you cry. Well, yes, some discipline means we're covering the basics and looking after ourselves, which goes a long way to creating space in our life for fun and spontaneity.

So here are ten juicy learnings I've discovered or reconnected with in my recent forays into living more sanely. I hope they will help you check how you are doing the same.

#### 1 – Read **The Power of Now** by Eckhart Tolle

Now, this book is full of teachings and takes a few readings, so I recommend taking it one chapter at a time to start with. You'll probably go back to it time and again, as I have done numerous times in the last couple of years. Of course, Tolle's *A New Earth*, is also highly recommended.

In the meantime, practice paying 80% of your attention to the NOW moment. If you are going out into the future more than you are in the NOW, you are likely to be bored with your current situation, or running anxiety about what might go wrong. Be present.

If you are going back to the past in your mind, and it's not referencing a positive and helpful memory, you are better off bringing your attention back into this moment. Focus on what you want to have happen, and what steps will get you there from where you are now. Then take the one step you can do in now.

#### 2 – Learn to meditate

Meditate twice a day. It can seem like a huge ask for some people, but

### Winning Ways to Wellbeing: Mental Health Awareness Week!

5-11 October 2009

Earlier in the month was Mental Health Awareness Week and the NLP community has been very excited to be involved this year, with offering free wellbeing sessions and workshops around the country – from Whangarei to Queenstown!

We may still hold some further free sessions later this month, so keep an eye out. You can find out more at [www.nzanlp.org.nz](http://www.nzanlp.org.nz) where you will find a calendar of events and a range of articles about wellbeing. If you know someone new to NLP who would like to know more, these sessions are a great opportunity!

*By the way, how are you looking after your wellbeing at the moment?*

preferably morning and afternoon for 20 minutes. Start with 5 minutes! Your mind and body crave stillness, you just don't know it yet.

### 3 - Be realistic about what you can fit into a day, a week, a month ...

Notice when you are over stretching yourself and what needs adjusting, and let go of trying to get everything done.

### 4 – Get 15 minutes of sunshine each day

Sunshine is a potent source of vitamin D, which supports a good mood and wellbeing. By the way, being outside without your sunglasses on helps you absorb vitamin D. (Of course, take care to protect your eyes and skin when you're out there).



"I believe in myself. I believe in the hands that work, in the brains that think, and in the hearts that love."

Richard Branson

### 5 – Take regular baths to de-stress

Throwing in a handful of Epsom salts is fantastic (½-1 cup) - they detoxify the body, relax muscles and can be very reenergising.

### 6 – Do fun stuff!

Do something that makes you laugh. Find moments to be playful.

### 7 – If you have been feeling overwhelmed or overly stressed for more than a month, consider coaching or therapy

(Preferably solution-focused and holistic – obviously NLP coaching is an option!).

### 8 – Share with friends when you are stressed or facing a problem.

You know the old saying – a problem shared is a problem halved.

### 9 – Get out in nature every day, or at least a few times a week.

Do this, even if it's a city park, and notice the nature around you, connect with it. Don't go and sit under a tree and spend the whole time thinking about that work problem or an argument with your spouse. See the sun on the leaves, smell the green, listen to the wind, soak it up!

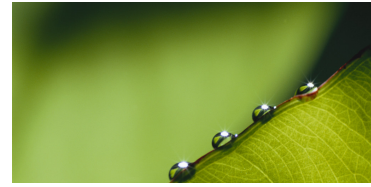


### The Eckhart Files

One of my favourite teachings is this: "The past cannot survive in your presence, it can only survive in your absence." You are absent when you are busy in your mind, thinking too much. He says "you can't think about presence, you can only be present." Eckhart Tolle, The Power of Now.

#### 10 – Make a to-do list at the end of your day for the following day

Make it helpful. Put things in priority – number or asterix them so it's easy to decide where to start the next day. Spend no more than five minutes on this. Then go home! Leave the office once your to-do list is done.



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## Why Big Business is Using NLP

Henry Ford is famously quoted as saying “If you think you can or think your can’t, you’re right”. He was talking NLP. NLP helps us understand how what we think influences our feelings and behaviours. You’ve only got to think about what happens when you imagine a meeting or project going badly to know it feels pretty anxiety-producing. If you imagine it going really well, you can’t feel anxious about it. It follows then that what people think, feel and do while they’re at work influences the organisation, either positively or negatively. NLP focuses on how we can enable people to do the kind of thinking, feeling and doing that supports organisational objectives as well as their own success.

Earlier this year The Times (UK) reported that a plethora of organisations are now utilising NLP methodology to help customer service teams, sales staff and managers perform even better, including Barclays, Honda, First Direct, HBOS, Marks & Spencer and Vodafone. The Times quoted Martin Moll, head of marketing for Honda who “uses NLP in conflict resolution and performance management and says that it has “immeasurably improved” his ability to deal with people and the quality of his working life.” Additionally, “at Vodafone, everyone who joins the company undertakes a training programme of techniques ‘underpinned’ by NLP, according to Terry O’Brien, head of retail at Vodafone.” The Times, 8 April 2009.

NLP is often described as the study of excellence, and excellence is what most organisations want from their people. Effective communication is at the heart of successful business, and communication skills alone make NLP based training and coaching essential to any organisation, given the skills taught have their roots in studying highly respected communicators such as Milton Erickson, Gregory Bateson and Virginia Satir. What is it that makes the difference between an average speaker and Bill Clinton? What are the roadblocks to communication we often trip ourselves up with? How do you build rapport with someone who is completely disagreeing with you, or who is very angry? How can you quickly get yourself feeling confident in a challenging situation? NLP answers these questions and more.

**"We take the very best of what people do, synthesise it down, make it learnable and share it with each other - and that is what the real future of what NLP will be."**

*Richard Bandler, Co-Developer of NLP*

Excellence comes from understanding how people work (inside their minds and bodies). It seems there are still organisational cultures that consider these ‘soft skills’ to be less of a priority when it comes to training, and yet they are the skills that really make the difference. One of Bill Gates’ most well known quotes “we’ve got to put a lot of money into changing behaviour” speaks volumes about the investment necessary to not only make a difference to people, but to help people make a difference. Microsoft is just another example of an increasing collection of businesses drawing on NLP-based training.

I'm often asked what the difference is between personal coaching and business coaching and my usual reply is 'not much'. You can't take the person out of the employee, of course, so it's always personal. When I'm working with clients on work-related issues, the changes they make invariably have a positive impact on their personal lives, and vice versa. It's about *growing people* and whether we're sprouting new shoots in our work life, home life or health, all the areas of our life benefit.

When someone is no longer taking work stress home with them every night, it can be like having a different person in the house for those around them. They are also likely to be quite a different person at work the next day since they have had true down-time at home, are rested, refreshed and ready for a productive day.

Athletes around the world and across disciplines as diverse as rugby, Olympic diving and golf are using NLP techniques to improve their performance, including our own Steven Gurney, Triathlete and extreme sportsman. It makes sense then that businesses would get on the bandwagon too and make the most of it.

### Where is NLP useful at work?

- Problem solving
- Negotiating for win-win solutions
- Improving overall communication
- Influencing and persuading
- Presentations and meetings
- Stress management
- Managing people/giving feedback/etc
- Building trusted relationships
- Creativity strategies
- Helping people buy
- Resolving conflict
- Setting outcomes/vision

For more about organisational training and coaching go to [www.avaraconsulting.co.nz](http://www.avaraconsulting.co.nz).

Recommended reading: *NLP at Work: The Difference that Makes the Difference in Business* by Sue Knight.



## *Wellbeing in the Workplace*

**Help your staff improve their health, focus and resilience  
thus enhancing morale, effectiveness and productivity**

*It's not about managing stress, it's about doing away with it.*



I've had many clients in recent months reporting generalised stress, poor sleep patterns, who are often arriving at work with low energy, a fuzzy head and minimal enthusiasm. What I'm finding is that they need practical strategies that really make a difference, rather than a general understanding of stress management.

My current focus is on 'wellbeing in the workplace' - helping people change patterns of stress, find more balance in their day, improve their health, and work more productively. I do this through transformational coaching, and training and workshops.

To find out more about specially priced packages in November for Wellbeing Coaching and Workshops for your organisation, email me today at [karen@avaraconsulting.co.nz](mailto:karen@avaraconsulting.co.nz).

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## *Treat yourself in October!*



### **Mana Retreat Centre**

When I went away last month I stayed at Mana on the Coromandel Peninsula. Mana has simple but comfortable accommodation set in bush surroundings with a magnificent view, and a range of retreats and courses throughout the year. For me staying at Mana is soul reviving. It's not just being on the mountain with its wonderful energy, walking all the bush trails or soaking up the peace of their beautiful Sanctuary. It's also in the warmth of the Mana staff who make you feel so welcome, and oh the glorious food! The delicious nourishing vegetarian meals alone make it worth the two-hour drive from Auckland!

[www.manaretreat.com](http://www.manaretreat.com)

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Thanks for reading, feel free to pass it on (see link below) and enjoy living sanely (and with fun)!

*Karen*



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