

NLP: Meaning Attribution

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Did you know that human beings tend to make the best choice available to them, at any time and in any circumstance? Hi, I'm Alan Patching, let's explore this important NLP concept.

It is true that we human beings make the best choice we perceive to be available to us at any time. So it makes sense, therefore, in order to have a better outcome in a lot of circumstances that may be troublesome for us, for example, situations of conflict, to be aware that having more and more choices gives us more and more options for solving the problems that face us in everyday life.

Let's take an example. Let's say your boyfriend or your partner, girlfriend, wife – someone you're really looking forward to hearing from - promises to give you a phone call but you don't get the phone call. Immediately you presume they've forgotten, and quite often when you say 'they've forgotten us', we tend to put a meaning to that. It's called meaning attribution, and the meaning may be 'well, they don't respect me enough, I'm not important enough'.

So by putting that meaning to it and getting the feeling that 'I'm not important', we now have negative emotions coming out of that – the negative thoughts leading to the negative emotions, and when the person comes home from work we're likely to be grumpy with them, and all of a sudden the evening relationship is off to a very bad start.

But if we took the time to say 'are there any other options of thought that are reasonable?', then we might start saying 'hang on a second, I noticed I've just said that they didn't call me because they've never respected me enough to adhere to the arrangement, and that makes me feel bad, let's look at the other options'.

And the other options might be:

- the battery ran out
- they got tied up with the boss and couldn't make a phone call
- they got caught on a train that was broken down in a tunnel and there's no signal

and any number of these sort of excuses or other reasons could reasonably come to mind.

And then you analyse each one of those and you find that 'well, if the battery run flat and they had no access to a charger, well that may be a bit careless on their behalf, but clearly it's not from a lack of respect'. If the boss tied them up that's outside of their control, that's not from a lack of respect.

And as you go through analysing all these other options, which may have been the reason they didn't call, you'll notice there's not a thought process attached to that interpretation that says 'there's something wrong with me'. Rather, it's sort of like 'well, I feel bad for them and I understand'. So there's no negative thought, and therefore there's no negative feeling.

So by creating an option range of how to think and then choosing the appropriate thought pattern for the circumstances, you can change your reaction to it. The person then comes home from work and you say 'oh, you didn't call me today but I presume there's a good reason for that and that's great, we've got all the more to talk about now'.

A completely different attitude, a completely different evening. And I can tell you now, you can extend that to a completely different life and a completely different business experience.

Give it a try, creating more options and more behaviour flexibility is a very, very important part of creating a better future life in business.

Thanks for being with me. I'm Alan Patching, and we'll talk again soon

Key words: neuro linguistic programming, NLP, meaning attribution, negative thoughts, negative feelings, good relationships, making good choices.