

JoyTech – Circle of Excellence, an NLP Anchoring Experience

The term 'anchoring' as used in NLP refers to a natural phenomenon, one that happens accidentally all the time. For example, when the smell of a certain food reminds you of your grandmother's kitchen from a long time ago; or when you hear an old song and are suddenly transported back in time to a specific, positive memory; or how looking through a photo album can take you down memory lane – your brain is connecting an anchor, sometimes called a trigger or a cue, to some specific representation. Our brains are naturally and automatically setting and using anchors all the time.

NLP simply uses anchoring intentionally to make a positive difference in someone's experience.

Anchoring is the process of deliberately connecting a cue or trigger to a target state. A target state could be either a state of mind, a specific positive emotional state, or a good feeling in your body ... or all three. The purpose of anchoring is to allow one to access, by remembering or recalling, that desired or target state [called a resource state in NLP jargon].

Anchoring is a highly effective method for accessing resource states simply and easily, and ensuring those resource states are available whenever needed. In fact, probably the most common use for anchoring is to make a resource state available in a situation where it could be useful. Once set up, tested and practiced, an anchor can be used in an actual or real-life situation.

The process of setting up an anchor, and practicing "firing off" an anchor can be done with oneself or with the assistance of a guide. As you think about or represent the context or the situation, you can "fire the anchor," re-creating the cue. Then the resource or desired state is automatically available. You can begin to change naturally and gracefully.

Anchoring is also used in many NLP techniques to stabilize and recall states so that they are immediately accessible to be utilized or changed.

Anchoring depends on being able to evoke (inspire, elicit) desired or target states in ourselves and others. The more flexible we are, the more likely we are to move people emotionally and influence their state of mind - to create comfort, curiosity, generosity, enthusiasm, humor and so on.

Eliciting states is an art form. The goal is to assist another to access a specific set of resources. The following methods, focused on working with others, are often effective in state elicitation:

1. Pace and lead – As the guide, first establish rapport by matching breathing, body postures, gestures or language patterns, i.e., pace, pace, pace. Then go to the desired state yourself – lead.
2. Access behaviorally - DO something! Encourage the Explorer to move ... sing a song, jump up and down, dramatically change their posture and body position.
3. As operator or guide, you could tell the Explorer a well-crafted story, inviting them through the power of language to access the target state as they connect with and relate to your story.
4. Ask the Explorer to recall a time when that desired state was fully available. Ensure it is indeed a powerfully, positive memory of a time of resource and invite them to step back into connection with those resources.

And you can adapt and practice whatever methods work for you in eliciting positive, powerful resource states when you are applying NLP to yourself and creating your own Circles of Excellence. Recalling a strong memory of a time that holds the qualities you want; or imagining a mentor that really represents those qualities and resources; or perhaps having a strong symbol; or even constructing a future scenario with only positive, supportive people present who are encouraging and advising you are all excellent methods. You can tell yourself a story about your positive, powerful memory and as you tell it, say it out loud, move around, add gestures, really play it out fully. Moving your physiology, engaging your body, shifting your breathing, hearing your own voice are all powerful tools you can use as you construct your Circle of Excellence.

A key to success with Circle of Excellence is movement and keeping the locations, the actual physical spaces on the floor, clearly sorted out. When you are in between steps, contemplating, sorting – that is one space, a neutral space. Your Circle of Excellence is another, very distinct, space. The place where you step back into the "problem" state is a third. In NLP, this is referred to as using spatial anchors.

Circle of Excellence Steps

1. **As Explorer, you can think of a problem situation** - one in which you would like to have different behaviors, more choices, in other words, a more resourceful "state". Identify a location, a space on the floor, where that can live.
2. **Identify Resourceful State:** You can ask yourself, "*What powerful resource state do I wish I could have in that situation?*" A powerful resource state is one that allows you to act with total capability and complete flexibility ... having all your skills, talents and resources fully available to you.
3. **Set up your Circle of Excellence:** Imagine a space on the floor in front of you, an actual physical space which can represent your Circle of Excellence. In whatever way works for you, using the full spectrum of your imagination, add into that circle anything that symbolizes or represents your powerful resource state. Begin to notice all the elements over there, inside your circle. For instance, does your circle have a color? Sound? Soundtrack? Texture? Tone? Pulse? Rhythm? (You can add in whatever visual, auditory or kinesthetic elements apply, anything that represents and holds the energy of your powerful resource state. Using multiple senses – seeing, hearing and feeling can add even more punch.)
4. **Access the Resource and Anchor to Circle:** Check and double check. You can say things like ... "*I am thinking of a time when I was in this state in a way that was fully satisfying to me.*" When you feel it, step into the circle, adding the resources from this memory to your circle.
Note - When you step in to your circle, and any time you are standing inside your circle, make sure that your powerful resource state is fully accessed. If you find yourself wavering, or accessing other states, or sorting through a series of mental options, or having any form of distracting thoughts, then simply step out. Keep the space inside your circle pure and pristine, so that inside your circle, there is ONLY that resource, or set of resources.
5. **Separator State.** Step back out of the circle into a neutral space. [If working as a guide, you can ask a 'break state' question, distracting the Explorer with a neutral statement that re-directs their attention, like "*Don't think about pink cats.*" To make sense of the statement, one must represent pink cats, thereby shifting attention.]
6. **Testing.** Now you can step back into your circle, and discover first hand how fully your circle elicits those feelings. Once you have discovered and experienced your powerful resource state, then step back out of your circle. [Another Separator State or attention-shifting question may be appropriate here, either distracting yourself or allowing your guide to offer break state suggestions.]
NOTE – If you are not fully satisfied that your circle does contain all that it needs to fully represent your powerful resource state – for instance, if when you step in, you notice anything missing, then go back to step 3 and add in any new ingredients which will make it even more powerful. You can also imagine mentors – people or places that hold the energy of that resource. Mentors can be real people, fictional characters, places in nature, celestial bodies such as the moon or stars, natural forces like the wind or the rain – again, whatever mentor represents that powerful resource state. Imagine the mentor bringing those resources, adding them into your circle.
7. **Chaining.** Now think of the original problem situation from step 1, and allow yourself to experience it briefly, for a second or two at the most. You can step into the location on the floor, if needed. As soon as you are just barely beginning to access the "problem state" again, then immediately step forward into your circle. As you stand here, you may imagine having this powerful resource state fully available to you – changing your internal emotions, your external behaviors, and shifting all that is needed - in the original context or situation. You could say something to yourself like "*I am now re-experiencing the situation with all of these powerful resources fully available to me.*"

Final Testing / Future Pace. Step completely out of your circle and take a comfortable position in another location in the room. If working with a guide, you can allow the guide to assist you in moving into a neutral space. You may simply have a quick conversation about the weather or the color of your first car. To test, begin to discuss how you will be when you next encounter this situation. You can notice that how you remember that original incident is different. You may not be able to remember it in exactly the same way. You may access the former "problem state" only briefly. And you may automatically start describing how it is with the new resources operating. If working with a friend or guide, they can serve as a witness, noticing any shifts in your non-verbal behaviors. Your posture, mannerisms, tone of voice, breathing, gestures, even skin tones may have shifted, communicating to you and others your newly crafted, and fully available, powerful resource state.

Join us each third Wednesday at our *Explore NLP San Antonio* meetup. Details can be found at this link, <http://www.meetup.com/nlpsanantonio/>. For JoyTech services, to set up an individual NLP, **VISIBLE WOMAN** empowerment, or Spiritual Mastery session, or to schedule a Ceremony Design consultation, by phone or in person, please contact us at joytechconnect@yahoo.com, or visit us at www.joytechconnect.com. *Mahalo.*