

Using
Your
Brain
For A
Change
Summary

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John@nlpcourses.com

Using Your Brain -- for a CHANGE by Richard Bandler Summary

The book *Using Your Brain -- for a CHANGE* by Richard Bandler Summary, shows the reader how Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) can be used to change experiences by transforming aspects of internal imagery, inner sounds or voices. Bandler's book covers motivation, sub-modalities, confusion, strategies and shows individuals how to take control of their own thought processes. The book contains numerous exercises that individuals can follow to change the way they use their own brain and how they experience the world. The book begins from this simple starting point and goes ahead to provide a deeper understanding of other areas including how to cure phobias, how to use motivation, how to change beliefs, and much more.

Chapter 1 Who's Driving the Bus?

Bandler explains what happens in the lives and relationships of individuals. To begin with, the title itself "Who's Driving the Bus?", suggests that individuals do not pay attention to the patterns of activities that take place in their brains. The author cites that most individuals have become prisoners of their own brains and encourages them to learn how to take control of their brain (Bandler, 8). He maintains that if an individual fails to impose a little control, the brain will run on its own, or other individuals will try to run it. When teaching individuals how to use their brains, it is crucial to begin by helping them understand how they are presently using their brain ineffectively. Bandler likens the idea of fixing people through therapy to studying cars in junkyard to understand how to make them run better (Bandler, 15). He questions the validity of psychiatric diagnosis indicating that psychologists' attempt to find the deep hidden meaning prevents them from understanding the salient

characteristics that determine diagnosis (Bandler, 16). He asserts that individuals have power to control their lives and that taking the responsibility for change and seizing the power within oneself allows one to achieve his or her desires.

Chapter 2 “Running Your Own Brain”

Provides simple experiments to teach readers how to run their own brain. Bandler introduces sub modalities, the smaller elements of the visual representational systems to allow the reader to have an experiential understanding of how to control experiences. The chapter uses sub modalities, universal elements used to change visual images (Bandler, 22). Bandler demonstrates how brightness and size variation can be used to alter a visual image. He concludes that an individual has the power to control the mind since he or she is affected by everything that occurs in the mind (Bandler, 23).

Chapter 3 “Points of View”

The book covers the point of view from which individuals view the world from memories of their past experiences. According to Bandler, it is possible to view something from any point in space (Bandler, 38). For example, one can choose to be a neutral observer in an argument in order to understand the issue from the two differing points of view. The chapter explores dissociation and association and how they can affect an individual in different areas of life. Individuals view the world from two standpoints: *associated* whereby the person views the world from inside the body, and *dissociated* which involves viewing the body from outside, looking into oneself from a distance (Bandler, 41). The ability to observe oneself gives the person a chance to review an event from different perspectives and experience it in a

different way as if it is happening all over again to someone else (Bandler, 39). This chapter shows that changing the stand point from which an individual views a memory has a profound effect on the person's understanding and emotional reaction to the content of that particular image.

Chapter 4“*Going Wrong*”

The book shares humorous, powerful and painful encounters of individuals attempting to trace their steps and correct problems long after something has gone wrong rather than identifying the problem in time to avoid negative outcomes. Most individuals tend to have a perverse tendency. When something fails to work, they will continue doing it over and over again. For example, when a child does not understand something, an adult will repeat the same sentence loudly instead of using a different set of words (Bandler, 55). Bandler argues that instead of focusing on something that is not producing the intended results, the person should try something else. If something fails to work then anything else could work better than the same thing. Trying out something different has the potential to make life much more interesting and enjoyable.

Chapter 5 “*Going for it*”

Introduces the reader to motivation strategies to allow them to have some level of control over what they are motivated to do. The book provides that it is possible for individuals to learn motivation strategies. For someone to be ready to learn a powerful motivation strategy, the person must have effective decision making skills. Bandler emphasizes the significance of teaching the individual new decision making strategies as the basis for teaching new motivation strategies (Bandler,

78). He maintains that attacking and criticizing individuals is not the best way to make them change. Instead, the best way to go about it is to find out how they already motivate themselves and apply that information to achieve the desired outcome (Bandler, 72). He notes that individuals motivate themselves in different ways: (1) by imagining how disappointed they will be if they fail to do something and thus they make efforts to avoid that bad feeling and (2) by using pleasant feelings to achieve what one wants to happen rather than avoiding what one does not want to happen (Bandler, 79). All the aforementioned strategies are effective though some are more tenacious and a lot faster and more enjoyable compared to others. For example, the motivation strategy of using pleasant feelings to achieve what one wants reduces anxiety, stress and unpleasantness that most individuals experience. Most of the problems that cause individuals to seek therapy or that result in incarceration are associated with motivation (Bandler, 80). This can be attributed to the fact that individuals are either motivated to engage in something that they want to do, or in something that others want them to do. In addition to that, some are motivated to do things that they, or people around them do not want them to do.

Chapter 6 “Understanding Confusion”

Bandler emphasizes that confusion is wonderful and that it is a great starting point in the learning process. Confusion and understanding are presented in the book as internal experiences that are not related to the outside world in anyway whatsoever. Understanding is crucial to survival as well as learning (Bandler, 94). The author notes that there are there are different kinds of understanding and some of them are more useful compared to others. One kind of understanding makes it possible for individuals to justify things and prevents them from doing something different. Another kind of understanding allows an individual to have a good feeling. This is more of a conditioned response and the only gain is the good feeling. Just like the first kind of understanding, this one also

does not teach one to do anything. The third kind of understanding allows one to discuss things that have significant concepts, including equations. Although individuals may have an understanding about certain behavior in themselves that they do not like, that understanding may not help them behave differently. This example illustrates the fact that concepts can only be useful if they have an underlying understanding confusion bias and only if they allow the person to do something different (Bandler, 95). Although it is possible to make someone accept a certain concept consciously, this may not necessarily result to change in behavior. According to the author, confusion provides the opportunity to reorganize experiences in a different way. This allows one to learn and do something different and experience the world in a whole new way. In discussing different kinds of understanding, the book focuses on the kind of understanding that allows individuals to do something. Confusion to Understanding as a concept in NLP uses sub modalities to alter the meaning of internal representations. After making a diagnosis, the next step would be to determine the resources that can be added to increase the chance of achieving good outcomes. The book provides resources required by NLP to overcome generic problems such as confusion. Changing from confusion to understanding is crucial to overcoming the problem of confusion. A confusion pattern can be used to facilitate an environment of change while an understanding pattern can be used when seeking to understand something.

Chapter 7 “*Beyond Belief*”

Demonstrates what beliefs are made of and shows the reader various ways of changing them. In this chapter, Bandler provides that behavior is organized around some beliefs and thus the behavior of individuals is mobilized by the beliefs they hold. As long as one can fit a behavior into other people’s belief system, then it becomes easier to influence the actions of those people (Bandler, 103). This is rooted in the

fact that beliefs held by an individual are so powerful that they determine that person's life. Since they are presuppositions that individuals have about the world, beliefs can either create or destroy personal power. The author notes that beliefs are subject to change and this is evident in the fact that a person is not born with them (Bandler, 204). Notably, beliefs that a person holds about oneself are often more useful to change compared to beliefs about the way the world works. Although it may have been easy to change confusion into understanding, it is rather problematic to change a belief since it is more categorical and universal than understanding. When a belief has already been conceived in the mind, the old belief has to be weakened first in order to create room for a new belief to emerge (Bandler, 107). This is evident in the way the existing beliefs of individuals prevent them from embracing or even considering a new belief. To counter this problem, Bandler introduces the Belief Change Pattern. Here, the person first thinks about an undesirable belief about oneself and something that he or she doubts. The next step is to indicate the sub modality differences between doubt and belief after which each individual sub modality is tested to determine the most powerful in transforming one's belief to doubt. The final step is to state the new belief in positive terms to replace the undesirable belief (Bandler, 109).

Chapter 8 “*Learning*”

Comprises observations on ways that the current educational system has hindered the contribution of educators. He notes that current research mostly involves “objective” studies of the process of learning (Bandler, 118). In contrast, NLP provides a subjective study of the learning process. While objective studies involve a direct examination of the individuals who have a problem, NLP studies focus on the subjective experience of individuals who have a solution to the problem. The chapter includes Bandler's experiences as a teacher and researchers. He provides that when they came up with the word “Neuro-Linguistic

Programming”, critics argued that it sounded like mind control. He does not refute this claim and states that the education system should be faulted for preventing individuals from controlling and using their brains (Bandler, 118). Bandler discusses the ways in which the education systems is failing, including the growing problem of school phobias, the issue of remembering what was taught in school and learning disabilities.

Chapter 9 “*The Swish*”

Sub modality and Swish programs the human brain to take a new direction. Besides instructing participants on how to achieve more, Bandler takes questions and feedback. He also discusses analogue variables (size and brightness) and digital variables (association and dissociation) (Bandler, 140). He notes that association/dissociation is known as a digital variable since it is either the former or the latter. Thus, one is either outside of an experience or inside of it. The other remaining two analogue elements of the swish pattern can be any two aspects that pose a powerful impact for the individual. A significant factor to note about the Swish pattern relates to the fact that it sets and individual to a generative and evolutionary direction (Bandler, 131). It guides them in their transformation toward what they wish to become. The first step in the Swish Pattern as discussed in this chapter involves identifying context whereby participants are asked to identify where they are stuck or broken. The next step is to identify cue picture, which is basically identifying what the participant sees in that situation prior to doing the behavior he or she does not like. Creating outcome picture involves developing a second image of how participants wish they would see themselves differently if they had accomplished the desired changes. The next step is to “Swish” the two pictures. This begins with seeing the cue picture, bright and big, and then placing a small and dark outcome picture in the right corner of the lower part. The final part is the test whereby participants are asked to indicate what they see when they

picture the first image. Here, the picture will fade gradually and be replaced by the new image of the participant as he or she wishes to be (Bandler, 134).

In sum, Using Your Brain -- for a CHANGE

Provides invaluable insights into diverse areas including motivation strategies, phobias, belief change patterns and contrastive analysis, and Swish. The book allows the reader to develop a clear understanding of NLP and the technology behind its techniques. The book demonstrates how to use NLP to change experiences by changing aspects of internal imagery. Altering sub modalities including brightness, color, distance, point of view, size and movement of image can change the way individuals respond to it. Overall, a reader can use the rich information provided in this book to learn how to take control of his or her own life.

Work Cited

Bandler, Richard. *Using Your Brain for a Change*. Colorado: Real People Press.1985.Print.

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