
What Do You Want?

NLP, Coaching & More #1

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What do you want? A simple question, as it may seem. Yet, a question not asked often enough in the lives of so many people. What do you want? A question that is common in both fields of NLP and of coaching. During session after session, both being the “coachee” and the coach, we come back to the question... “So, what do you want?” Our NLP outcome model also starts with the same question: What do you want, and then follows with: How will you know when you have it?

When talking with friends, whether it be at a casual dinner or during coaching sessions, when asked, “what they want” this questions points people inward, answering quickly and sometimes with much thought—looking as if they were asked this for the first time in their life!

NLP offers a model for communication and personal excellence that is unmatched. Coaching models, therapy and counseling models, business models all benefit from the presuppositions, models and techniques offered in NLP, let me offer the outcome model today.

The outcome model focuses on goals, on what people want. How often have you asked yourself or others what they want, only to be offered the response of what they don’t want? Or perhaps offered a story about “things” and still not being quite clear on the answer of what they want? And of course, once you do get an answer, is it clear? Is it something achievable? The SMART model offered in many business and training arenas is a good start to the NLP outcome model. You recall, SMART is an acronym that represents: **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**ealistic and **T**imely or Time bound. The outcome model offers ways to meet this, repeatedly.

The outcome model also presupposes the importance of being goal oriented, very much like the presupposition I hold deeply: of living a purposeful life. The model is covered extensively in many early NLP Practitioner Trainings. The question “what do you want” points our brains in a particular direction. It is a much different question than “what’s wrong?” or “how do you feel?” questions too often asked in the helping professions; questions which point peoples brain in directions much less useful for forwarding action and achieving positive results.

The outcome model does have its limits. Once you achieve your goal, then what? Let’s shift then to focusing on generative change and learning. Generative change creates a process and direction, rather than a “goal” “What do you want?”, although pointing us in a certain direction, has limits lie in its presupposition of permanency. Once you attain your outcome, are you done? I think not. It is my premise to point people in the direction they want to go, with the outcome in mind and then with the suggestion or question of “what else?” What are the possibilities? (Or what do you think is impossible, and what do needs to happen to make it possible!?) What is beyond your goals? What are your dreams and how do you live them today, tomorrow and all-ways? Well?