

**NLP and Spirituality:**

**Exercises for personal growth**

(Excerpts)

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
CHAPTER ONE: Spiritual Dimensions	17
CHAPTER TWO: States of Mind and Spirit	50
CHAPTER THREE: Four Resource States	93
CHAPTER FOUR: Anchoring	118
CHAPTERS FIVE THROUGH NINE OMITTED:	
CHAPTER TEN: Making Connections	147
CHAPTER ELEVEN: Religion, Permissions and Context.....	169
REFERENCES	185
ENDNOTES	199

## INTRODUCTION

All of my life I've been interested in spiritual things. As a young child, I was an avid reader of books about ghosts and ESP. I would spend hours looking at the pictures in my father's collection of historical books on witchcraft and alchemy.

During the Second World War, my father served in the US Army. A good part of his enlistment was served in Sri Lanka where he developed an avid interest in Buddhism (Theravada) and Hinduism. In grade school, I turned in book reports on Dutt's abridgements of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. I had an aunt who was a spiritualist minister and often heard my father describe his disappointments with her contacts from beyond.

With all of this openness to other religions and ideas, my father still believed that, in order to be a full participant in Western Civilization, it was important to be indoctrinated into the beliefs and practices of the Christian Church. As a result, every week my brothers and I were marched off to church and Sunday School. We were acolytes and sang in the choir. Later that day, we went to my Grandmother's house where we always managed to convince her to turn off Billy Graham and Oral Roberts and to turn on the cartoons.

As early as the sixth grade my best friend, Roddy, and I got interested in hypnosis. Like most kids we sent for instructions through the mail. I even sent away for a terrible induction on a 78 RPM record that never seemed to work. Around the same time I labored through *Autobiography of a Yogi* --I didn't understand much. I sent away for a yoga course from the back of a comic book and spent some weeks learning to sit in the full lotus position and seeing how long I could hold my breath. I didn't really get it.

Hypnosis and an interest in the paranormal stayed with me through High School. Being rather shy, I found that doing some basic inductions and catalepsies would make parties much less painful for me.

I remember being terrified by readings of Revelations and the Apocryphal books of Esdras in High School. At the same time I was experimenting with astral projection. I spent lots of time with Ouija boards and much more time trying to influence things and people with telepathy and psychokinesis.

Before I went away to college, my father and I went into New York City for a meal and a book buying adventure. There, we stocked up on hard to get books on the history of witchcraft and the occult. We got Fredrick Meyers' *Human Personality and its Survival After Bodily Death*, several of Montague Summers historical works and then, at Brentano's in the Village, he picked up a book and said, "If you're interested in magic and the paranormal, this might be the best book for you to read." It was Crowley's *Magick in Theory and Practice*. It never occurred to me, until just a few years ago, what a very strange gift that was for a father to give his son.

By the time I got to college in 1966, I was more than ready for the psychedelic revolution. I somehow managed to get through college despite the fact that I passed most of the time between 1967 and 1970 in a haze of marijuana smoke, the lingering daze of multiple acid trips, and the paranoia induced by too much speed. Once, while sitting in the Student Union, recovering from several long nights of speeding, a psychology professor came up, looked into my eyes and said, "Do the words 'simple schizophrenia' mean anything to you?" The words burned in my brain and for months I wondered if he had meant it as a diagnosis or a joke.

After graduation I became more interested in Kabbalah and the I Ching and at one point received a left-handed invitation to teach Kabbalah in an Occult School. I never followed through and became increasingly disorganized and depressed. In 1972 I took a trip to California and there, on the Long Beach Pike, I became a born-again Christian. From there, my life stabilized, I married had children, became a probation officer and went back to school

Christianity, surprisingly, provided me with a great deal of experience with spiritual realities. I had already spent considerable time and energy seeking spiritual experiences and here, essentially for the asking, they came to me. The combination of faith, with the structure of permissions and support within the Pentecostal community, provided a powerful guide for opening to and interpreting spiritual experience. Although not acknowledged for the most part, there is also a considerable body of techniques that are taught informally in the churches that parallel practices from other traditions. While I noted the similarity, like my peers, I usually talked them away; after all, **we were saved**: so it had to be different.

As time went on, I began to discover that God was much bigger than I had come to believe and began to understand that no matter what my beliefs, his love extended to all. I began to see that there was a universal hunger for the experience of spiritual reality and that, like it or not, aside from content, we were all getting to the same kinds of places and strangely,

we were all using the same kinds of techniques.

As part of this spiritual odyssey, I was led to seek employment as a local probation officer and later entered the Federal System. After several years as a line officer and special assignment to an automation project, I was assigned a drug treatment caseload. I had just finished my Ph.D.

In the course of my work with addiction spectrum disorders [\[1\]](#) I came to understand several things. First, the old remedies were pretty much bogus. All of the research available seemed to indicate that the standard 12-step programs were no better than anything else and often were worse. Second, I had a real intuitive experience of how a conversion experience could change one's value systems. My own experience of getting saved had delivered me from a downward spiral of depression and substance abuse. Third, I had a set of tools from Jungian theory and Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) that seemed to provide the hope of structuring real tools for change.

As time went on, I began to realize that there were patterns of human growth that were capable of outframing addictions and rendering them irrelevant. This was the pattern of conversion but the same pattern appeared whenever people fell in love, found a job or role that they thought was heaven sent, or just when people 'came to their senses.' Something larger and more fundamental had impacted their lives and, for them, the world changed.

In Jungian and Maslowian psychology I began to discover patterns of personal growth and development which, once initiated, could propel a person into new patterns of living. It occurred to me that these patterns could be awakened in a secular context while still retaining their power to compel change.

Between 1993 and 1994, with my friend Stanley Cunningham, I worked the details from this insight into the exercise that became the heart of the Brooklyn Program, a 16 week substance abuse treatment program for Federal Offenders on community supervision. Since starting NLP training in 1989, Stanley and I had met weekly to practice skills and to develop new techniques. After working out the theoretical base and roughing out the original exercise (now presented as Chapter Seven: Where Are We Now?), we presented a personal growth workshop called the Gift of Love Seminar. It didn't get too far.

Later, however, Larry Cavagetto, a friend and co-worker, had the idea that the Federal Government was wasting a lot of money paying for substance abuse treatment. He pointed out that the Government had a lot of well qualified staff who could do the job as well, if not better than most contractors, and that we could save money besides. I told Larry that if he would get permission, I would develop the program. He got permission and I began to create the program.

Over the years, the program grew and as time went on the classical addiction treatment elements with which it began, disappeared and the program became more and more based upon the development of powerful altered states of consciousness. The more we focused on teaching our clients how to feel good, the more they identified the program as intrinsically spiritual and the practice as meditative. In general, the Brooklyn Program—as I called it—gradually revealed itself as a deeply spiritual set of exercises that would be worthwhile for anyone who wanted a deeper level of experience. Clients from every imaginable tradition found that the exercises helped their spiritual life and opened up new depths of meaning and experience. People with no tradition began to find deeper meaning in their interactions with the world and the people that they loved. In general, the program manifested as a gateway to deeply felt spiritual experience.

As the program grew, it also provided opportunities for training potential users. In a series of trainings that ranged from service providers among the Navajo Nation in New Mexico, to treatment staff at Georgetown University, I found that wherever I taught the program, the providers got as much from it as their anticipated clients. This led me to offer the program in the present form: a set of exercises that open up access to a deep experience of the Self. In the program I often spoke of it as "the place where you touch God and He touches you." Here, it is offered without qualification as a tool for awakening self exploration and growth.

### ***About the Text***

This is not a book for readers; it is a book of exercises. It is designed to lead you through a process that will provide consistent and predictable results. To get the most out of it, you must **do** the exercises.

If you have some experience in Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP), you will find some interesting techniques and applications of that technology. Feel free to browse through the chapters and discover how I've used and modified them.

If you are not interested in NLP, but come to it for personal growth, take your time with the exercises. You will get the most out of this book by taking time to play [\[2\]](#) with each of the experiences as offered. Take a day or two to work with each chapter.

Ideally, you might take as much as a week. Find a pace that will allow you to fully experience each stage of the program. You'll be glad you did.

Highlands, NJ

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## CHAPTER ONE: Spiritual Dimensions

When we begin to think about spirituality one of the first things that we must do is understand that spirituality is not about a specific content, but it is about feelings and ways of being in the world. All of the words and formulae are designed to awaken modes of being and perception: states.

Many of us come from religious and spiritual perspectives that have names and traditions associated with those states. Many of us identify those states with someone or something much greater than ourselves. Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) cannot address the reality of those contents, what we can do, however, is examine and recreate the states so that you can apply them within your own tradition, or try them out in a new one--if you'd like.

The first thing we might want to do is look at some descriptions of the perceptual realities towards which the nominalization <sup>[3]</sup> 'spirituality' might point. As we do this, the first thing we will notice is that the reality described as *spiritual* is beyond words and beyond thought. Most of the words that we use are poor shadows that tend to show what that reality is not.

In Taoism's great text, the Tao Te Ching, we find the following:

Even the finest teaching is not the Tao itself.  
Even the finest name is insufficient to define it.  
Without words, the Tao can be experienced,  
and without a name, it can be known. <sup>[4]</sup>

The Tao is not a teaching, it cannot adequately be named but can only be known through experience. Without claiming to reveal the Tao, we already understand that it is not something that can be intellectualized or described. Another passage suggests that the Tao has something to do with emptiness:

Though thirty spokes may form the wheel,  
it is the hole within the hub  
which gives the wheel utility.

It is not the clay the potter throws,  
which gives the pot its usefulness,  
but the space within the shape,  
from which the pot is made.

Without a door, the room cannot be entered,  
and without windows it is dark.

Such is the utility of non-existence. <sup>[5]</sup>

This is an emptiness of ideas and words; it is also referred to as *peace*. Other traditions make reference to the ideas of peace, emptiness and wordless experience. Kabbalists, Jewish mystics, have developed one of the most finely articulated intellectual schemes for contemplating the miracle of creation. All of their complexity leads to the contemplation of the Eternal in the negative veils of existence in which the true mystery of God dwells. These are called the Ain, the Ain Suph and the Ain Suph Aur: the Nothing, the Limitless and the Limitless Light.

Meditations rooted in Kabbalistic tradition involve a level of cognitive overload that is astounding to most who contemplate such things. While focused inwardly, imagine pronouncing each of the (22) letters of the alphabet in turn, combining each with the six possible vowel points (22X6). After the first revolution begin adding one letter at a time (with each of its vowel points) until you've gone through the entire alphabet. At that point, begin adding a third level of alphabet and systematically recite the permutations. Eventually you will have recited every possible combination of letters in creation. The most elementary understanding of the workings of the frontal lobes will tell you that in very short order this will produce a deep trance by overloading the conscious capacity of 7 +/- 2, inducing a very deep trance. <sup>[6]</sup>

Buddhist meditators practice mindfulness meditation which may begin with focusing on a specific idea, sound, feeling, or just whatever comes to the senses. As one continues in meditation one notices any distractions and gently returns attention to the original object. Gradually, one becomes centered and notes the movements of consciousness itself. After

a while, the meditator moves to a place of deep quietness that is distanced from the noise of the world and of consciousness itself. The business of the world is still there, out there, but it just doesn't seem to matter.

Rumi, the Sufi poet, pointed to the identity between love as intoxication and total abandonment, and the revelation of the eternal. It was in the total immersion of love-drunkeness that one might truly experience the eternal as a total and joyous surrender. [\[7\]](#)

When a gnostic says, "wine,"  
what does he mean?

How does he make a liquid  
refer to that!

.....

Young lovers like to drink red wine  
and listen to love songs,  
but there's another  
Lover, another Wine, another Lovesong,  
another Tavern.

Hand me, says the mystic poet  
to the One he can't see, Your Cup.  
You are my face. No wonder I can't see You.  
You are the intricate workings of my mind.  
You are the big artery in my neck.  
When I call out in the desert, O God,  
I'm only pretending, to distract the others,  
so they won't notice Who sits beside me. [\[8\]](#)

In Christian practice, some of the highest virtues are defined in terms of what they are not, as the reality cannot be captured in words:

Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, (love) is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things (1 Corinthians 23:4-6 NAB).

Love is known to us as a feeling, an attitude, and a way of being in the world. It remains, nevertheless, indescribable in any practical terms. This seems to be the quality of all spiritual states; the attempt to describe them or transmit them via rational means is doomed to failure. Jesus himself reflects the idea that the nature of the spiritual life exists beyond words and beyond teaching:

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. (John 14:27 KJV)

In Zen Buddhism the movement from structured attention to the unstructured perception of reality reflects again, the reality of spiritual experience:

When the nun Chiyono studied Zen under Bukko of Engaku she was unable to attain the fruits of meditation for a long time.

At last one moonlit night she was carrying water in an old pail bound with bamboo.

The bamboo broke and the bottom fell out of the pail, and at that moment Chiyono was set free!

In commemoration, she wrote a poem:

*In this way and that I tried to save the old pail  
Since the bamboo strip was weakening and about to break  
Until at last the bottom fell out.  
No more water in the pail!  
No more moon in the water!* [\[9\]](#)

How very like the words of Jesus:

No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse. Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved. (Matthew 9:16-17 KJV.)

Like the teachers of Zen, Jesus points to the futility of the attempt to capture the reality of the spiritual life in words and practices taken from a world of rules, laws, concepts and limitations.

Wherever we turn in the literature of spirituality we find parallel experiences from worlds of seemingly contradictory doctrine. This is the difference between spirituality as process or experience and spirituality understood as content. If it is content based, it is unreachable, when content and expectation are let go, a deep common reality unites us.

Here is another story from Zen:

The master of Kennin temple was Mokurai, Silent Thunder. He had a little protégé named Toyo who was only twelve years old. Toyo saw the older disciples visit the master's room each morning and evening to receive instruction in sanzen or personal guidance in which they were given koans to stop mind-wandering.

Toyo wished to do sanzen also.

"Wait a while," said Mokurai. "You are too young."

But the child insisted, so the teacher finally consented.

In the evening little Toyo went at the proper time to the threshold of Mokurai's sanzen room. He struck the gong to announce his presence, bowed respectfully three times outside the door, and went to sit before the master in respectful silence.

"You can hear the sound of two hands when they clap together," said Mokurai. "Now show me the sound of one hand."

Toyo bowed and went to his room to consider this problem. From his window he could hear the music of the geishas. "Ah, I have it!" he proclaimed.

The next evening when his teacher asked him to illustrate the sound of one hand, Toyo began to play the music of the geishas.

"No, no," said Mokurai. "That will never do. That is not the sound of one hand. You've not got it at all."

Thinking that such music might interrupt, Toyo moved his abode to a quiet place. He meditated again. "What can the sound of one hand be?" He happened to hear some water dripping. "I have it," imagined Toyo.

When he next appeared before his teacher, he imitated dripping water.

"What is that?" asked Mokurai. "That is the sound of dripping water, but not the sound of one hand. Try again."

In vain Toyo meditated to hear the sound of one hand. He heard the sighing of the wind. But the sound was rejected.

He heard the cry of an owl. This was also refused.

The sound of one hand was not the locusts.

For more than ten times Toyo visited Mokurai with different sounds. All were wrong. For almost a year he pondered what the sound of one hand might be.

At last Toyo entered true meditation and transcended all sounds. "I could collect no more," he explained later, "so I reached the soundless sound."

Toyo had realized the sound of one hand. [\[10\]](#)

Now, compare this to the experience of Elijah in the cave at Horeb.

The LORD said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by." Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave (I Kings 19:11-13 KJV).

The unifying realities of spiritual experience lie outside of our capacity to categorize, outside of our ability to describe. It seems that wherever we look the Spirit advises us to let go.

How, though, can we use this information to create a practical approach to a state of mind that will provide the benefits of spiritual experience? There are significant clues in the work of neurophysiologists Eugene D'Aquili and Andrew Newberg.

In their book, Why God Won't Go Away, D'Aquili, Newberg and Rause report a series of brain imaging studies on Buddhist Monks and Franciscan Nuns. All of them were expert meditators but, needless to say, their ideas about what they were doing and with whom they were communicating differed significantly. Nevertheless, the scientists found that, independent of religious perspective, the brains of every member of each group did the same kinds of things. In every case, the parts of the brain responsible for the sense of position in space--where we are--turned off; they all felt like they were floating. In every case, the part of the brain that perceives separation and discord turned off while the part that senses connectedness and unity turned on; they felt connected to the eternal. In every case, the part of the brain that registers strong positive emotion turned on, while the part that registers negative experiences turned down; they all experienced a spiritual ecstasy. [\[11\]](#)

D'Aquili and Newberg were very careful to say that their research did not and would not claim to show that all of spirituality was just a secondary product of brain states. What they did say was that spirituality needs to be connected with physical experience through the brain. If it happens, it has to register in the brain. This does not mean that there is nothing 'out there' causing it, it just means that it must register 'in here' using the standard equipment—the brain.

We really don't 'know' what exists beyond our brain and body. We have traditions and definitions, but in a very real sense we have little in the way of verification for the ultimate meaning of anything. There are a few things, however, that we do know.

From Neurophysiology, we know that powerful positive experiences change the way that we view and understand the world. Experiences that are often dubbed spiritual have the capacity to redefine the world. Whether their source lies in some entity beyond ourselves, or is a continuing part of the range of human experience, we can't really tell. But we *can* know that powerful emotions change people. Listen to what William James said:

Emotional occasions ... are extremely potent in precipitating mental rearrangements. The sudden and explosive ways in which love, jealousy, guilt, fear, remorse, or anger can seize upon one are known to everybody. Hope, happiness, security, resolve, emotions characteristic of conversion, can be equally explosive. And emotions that come in this explosive way seldom leave things as they found them (1929, p. 195). [\[12\]](#)

Powerful emotions lie at the root of conversion experiences and also accompany spiritual experience. Does their power guarantee that they are supernatural? Not necessarily. According to James, that remains an open question.

As a rule, mystical states merely add a supersensuous meaning to the ordinary outward data of consciousness. They are excitements like the emotions of love or ambition, gifts to our spirit by means of which facts already objectively before us fall into a new expressiveness and make a new connection with our active life. They do not contradict these facts as such or deny anything that our senses have immediately seized. ...there never can be a state of facts to which new meaning may not truthfully be added, provided the mind ascend to a more enveloping point of view. It must always remain an open question whether mystical states may not possibly be such superior points of view, windows through which the mind looks out upon a more extensive and inclusive world (1929, pp 418-419).

Mystical states, according to James, extend the scope of our experience and allow us to see the world in a different way. In the afterglow of spiritual experiences, things take on different meanings and new uses in addition to the ones which we

knew before. Spiritual experience adds new dimensions to the life that we live.

There is another way to interpret the data that aligns with D'Aquili and Newberg's physiology and affirms James' open question. That interpretation would suggest that these states may be the way one reaches into the spiritual. The state may not be so much the registration of a contact from an external spiritual reality, it may reflect the way we can choose to open that contact, if it is possible at all. Perhaps the state is itself the important step and the content is supplied by our customary religious and cultural frame.

As a project in NLP modeling the data from D'Aquili and Newberg provide some very important data. They suggest that spiritual experience occupies the top end of a continuum of positive physiologies that ranges from the aesthetic appreciation of beauty through romantic love, trance, experiences of oneness with nature, to absolute union with the eternal. Here is how they describe the continuum:

Thus, as one moves along the unitary continuum with progressively greater experience of unity over diversity, one moves out of the realm of aesthetics and into a realm that more properly would be described as religious experience. A transitional phase between aesthetic and religious experience may be romantic love, which might be characterized by the phrase, "It is bigger than the both of us." As one moves up this continuum, one moves through the experience of numinosity, or religious awe, into Bucke's state of Cosmic Consciousness ... As one continues along this spectrum beyond Cosmic Consciousness, one moves into various trance states in which there is a progressive blurring of the boundaries between entities until one finally moves into Absolute Unitary Being (AUB)....There are no longer any discrete entities that relate to each other. The boundaries of entities within the world disappear, and even the self-other dichotomy is totally obliterated. In AUB there is no extension of space or duration of time. If this state is suffused with positive affect, it is interpreted, after the fact, as the experience of God, or the Unio Mystica. If it is suffused with neutral affect, it is experienced nonpersonally as the Void, or Nirvana, of Buddhism (d'Aquili and Newberg, 2000 P. 44).

This seems to mean that there is a continuous field of positive experience that is characterized by the same kinds of root experience. As the intensity of this physiology increases, it becomes more and more absorbing and self defining. As the experience grows, conscious direction lessens and we find ourselves swept away into something much larger and deeper than words can express.

The implications here are these: 1. Spiritual states are, at the level of physiology, intensifications of much more common and accessible states: experiencing beauty, being in love, feeling at one with nature. 2. Spiritual states are typically positive, approach oriented, and ecstatic experiences. 3. Spiritual states typically include an experience of floating. 4. They also include an experience of connection or unity.

NLP provides specific tools that we can use to access and enhance all of these elements.

One of the root presuppositions of NLP is that we already have the resources that we need to accomplish our goals. On a practical level we can understand this as meaning that every experience that we have ever had can be used as a resource. Modern neurophysiology confirms this as it shows conclusively that memories are recreations of the physiology of the original experience, so that each memory has the potential to make the full biology of the initial experience available. This means that resourceful experiences of love, competence, peace or spiritual awakening can be revived and enhanced to create new possibilities of experience and action.

We also know that using the basic sensory sequencing and submodality tools of NLP, that we can build any resource into an ecstatic experience. Using NLP, we can use the physiology rooted in a memory to create an original, present-time experience. Tools like the swish pattern and simple submodality mapping can be used to enhance, amplify and reshape any felt experience to express the intensity and qualities that we may want. [\[13\]](#)

Floating states are some of the standard repertoire of our hypnotic skills. They are strongly correlated with trance and meditation. Early on, NLPers learned the utility of overloading short term memory to produce just such experiences. [\[14\]](#) Milton Erickson reported on similar states in his work with Aldous Huxley. [\[15\]](#)

So, this means, that by taking a positive resource state we can use the tools of NLP to create a spiritual experience, doesn't it? Well, yes and no. These are the prerequisites for establishing the physiology of spiritual experience and a powerful positive state. We need to remember that unless you provide a context that will identify the state as spiritual, it may just be a nice state. Assigning the label 'spiritual' can depend on any or all of the following things: Intensity, Context, Intent and direction.

Intensity: Experiences that are overwhelming, that outframe and outclass other experiences of the same kind are often described as spiritual. Sex and drugs are often experienced as having spiritual intensity [\[16\]](#). Robert Dilts has put

spirituality at the top of his model of Neurological levels because it is more fundamental, deeper and more powerful in many ways than any of the other levels of experience. <sup>[17]</sup> In addictions, spiritual experience has the capacity to end addictive cravings by 'out-framing' them. <sup>[18]</sup>

Context: When we have a powerful experience, much of how we understand it is based on the where, when and other factors that give the experience meaning. An intense feeling may have one meaning in a place of worship, another meaning on a football field and a totally different meaning in the back seat of a car. In many cases, what you expect or what you are looking for ends up being what you get. <sup>[19]</sup>

Intent: What do you want? What do you really want? How will you know that you have gotten it when you get it? Are you being really honest about this? If you are looking for super powers, but talking about spiritual awakening, you may just get the conflict that arises between them. If you want to awaken special abilities, then be honest with yourself. Intentionality reaches out and guides the unconscious. If you are honest about what you want or are open to the journey, the whole process can be better than you've imagined.

Direction: People often think of spirituality as a destination. It is, to the contrary, a path. Spirituality is a path of personal growth and development towards something or someone much larger than ourselves. In many ways spirituality takes the on the qualities of what Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi calls 'flow'.

Let's begin by creating an intense positive state.

## CHAPTER TWO: States of Mind and Spirit

We could begin here by discussing prayer or meditation or secret traditions of the East. We are not, however, going to focus on meditation, or prayer or esoteric practices. According to our model, we will assume that spiritual experience begins with the capacity to create an intense positive state. We will, therefore, focus on a set of techniques that are purely psychological and which come directly from the NLP tool box. So, we will begin by accessing and enhancing a normal, positive state of consciousness.

I do this for several reasons. Words imply frames; frames create meanings. If we were to begin by talking about prayer or meditation there are people who cannot help but associate meditation or prayer with their own preconceived notion or experience of some positive or negative spiritual organization. This may not be useful. If our exercise differs from that experience or expectation, their experience may be devalued. Further, there is a lot of religious and superstitious baggage in the world. If we start with a purely psychological approach, we may be able to get to some very interesting places before we begin to think about what spirituality may mean for us. When people start to talk about meditation, or spiritual practice as distinguished from other kinds of behavior, they often get very earnest and very sincere and end up getting in their own way. By starting with a set of fun exercises, designed just to make you feel good, we can make use of our innate capacity for play to make the task much easier. So, here, and now, we will leave meditation and prayer behind us and look directly to the NLP toolbox.

As we said earlier, NLP views every experience as a resource, and every memory as a recreation of the specific bodily responses that were present in the original experience. Recent research in neuroscience tells us that every time that we remember an experience, neural activity in the brain tends to overlap with and even to replicate the pattern that the original event created. The more sensory systems are involved, the more vivid the memory becomes, the more vivid the memory becomes, the more completely the original pattern is replicated. This means that by using simple tools from NLP, we can evoke brain states that are nearly identical to the original.

We will take this one step further. Once we have evoked the experience of a positive memory, we will then work to focus on the experience of the state itself. Doing this will result in a powerful, present-time experience of a felt state, independent of the original memory context. We will, in a sense be practicing felt states with no context except your experience of the feeling in the present time. We will begin with a memory in order to access a felt state of mind and body. We will then focus on the state until the memory disappears from consciousness. By the way, this will almost always result in a permanent enhancement of the memory.

Recent research <sup>[20]</sup> has begun to show that memories are not so much stored in our heads as they are reconstructed. Antonio Damasio points out that the brain has no direct experience of the world. What we experience is our bodies' response to sensory stimulation. So, each experience that enters awareness is a sequence of physical, neuronal and hormonal adjustments and includes things like changes in posture, changes in eye focus, dilation or contraction of the pupils, variations in the tensions of the muscles in the inner ear, flaring of the nostrils, adjustment of facial muscles and remapping of percepts in the original sensory areas. Each memory experience is created new from this complex interaction of nerves, hormones, muscles and physical movements as they replicate the physiology of the original perception. <sup>[21]</sup>

The Brain uses multiple sensory systems to build up memories and present-time experiences, layer-by-layer. As the details from multiple sensory systems come together, a coherent, present-time experience of the object of attention arises into consciousness. Francisco Varela has estimated that only 10% of the neuronal information processed by the brain represents direct sensory input. The remainder is interpretative feedback from the rest of the brain. <sup>[22]</sup>

If we start with a remembered image, a map of the retinal image (at the back of the eye) is transmitted to the primary visual cortex (in the back of the head). After the image registers, feature detectors combine with inputs from short term memory (where we experience attention) to recognize the basic form of the pattern or thing seen. The brain now starts to amplify the pattern while the rest falls into the background. As the pattern gains clarity, it begins to awaken connections to other sensory systems. These feed back into the original perception, strengthen it, clarify it, and bring in connections to information from other sensory systems. This pattern of activity continues until enough information is added so that context, a function of the hippocampus, is added to the mix. This contextual information feeds back through the entire loop and fosters the addition of still more data until the whole is clear enough to awaken the emotions and feelings that originally accompanied the memory. So, the memory is reconstructed in present time as the brain weaves together multiple layers of sensory information into a recognizable experience.

Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) has taken this process and developed a way to systematically use sensory

information to create present time experiences of remembered events. By carefully mapping, organizing and adjusting the sensory information surrounding a memory and systematically going through each sense with its submodalities, NLP uses the brain's own rules to enhance and recreate remembered experience. In NLP, each sense is described as possessing several submodality features. These include things like location, intensity, distance, and dimension. We will discuss the individual submodalities in depth below. The roots of this exercise are to be found in the works of Richard Bandler. [\[23\]](#)

What makes submodality distinctions important is their ability to change present time experience. Submodalities represent the brain's control system for subjective experience. Just as the zoom button on a camera changes the size of the picture, and the volume knob controls the loudness of a sound recording, changes in the submodality structure of an experience change the meaning and intensity of an experience. By changing submodalities, you can start with the shadow of a memory – the memory that something happened – and end with a real-time felt experience of the memory. Further, submodality manipulations will allow you to separate the emotion from the memory and enhance it separately.

This means that, for the following exercises, it does not matter how well or how poorly you remember an event. We will be teaching you how to use the brain's own control system to create a full experience of several memories.

People differ as to which sense arises first when they access a memory. Some people remember pictures; some sounds; some begin with feelings. Most people in the West prefer vision. For this reason, we are starting with the visual part of the memory. If you find that sound or feeling comes up first for you, feel free to start there and return to the other senses in the way that works best for you.

Let's begin by choosing a state.

In general, when it comes to choosing a state for an exercise like this, I suggest that you choose one that is positive, it feels good, you enjoy it. You could choose a terrible state and make it worse, but people do that automatically anyway and I don't recommend it. One of the important insights from neuroscience is that people who were examined in the midst of spiritual practice nearly all had increased activity in the left frontal lobes. This is one of the primary sites for processing positive, pleasurable experiences.

I also prefer a state that is complete in itself. We start with a *memory*: the action is over and you can just enjoy the experience for what it was. It is best if the memory and all of its associations are in the past and not part of an ongoing activity or relationship.

Choose an example that has no guilt or regrets attached. We are going to magnify the feelings and we want to feel good. Go for something innocent, go for something that always has been positive and probably always will be.

All of this is easy. We do it unconsciously everyday. If you have no experience with NLP much of this will be new to you. This is because the techniques that we are using typically happen unconsciously, automatically, outside of your awareness. If you are practiced in the basic NLP toolset, you will find this all easy and familiar. However you come to this, remember two things, all of this is easy and all of it is gentle. The unconscious mind sometimes works slowly but it always works dependably. You may find that some things happen immediately while others take some time. Be patient, and just notice how these actions arise on their own. For some things, just considering the change will make it so. For others, you can just imagine that it will happen and it will. For still others, you might just ask your unconscious to make the change. Take your time and just enjoy the process.

The following text will guide you through some exercises. Read them carefully and do them. After each experience, come fully back to the present before doing the next phase. This will help you to experience the contrasts of state and will speed the process for you.

Over the years, many people have come to me and said, "I have trouble concentrating" or, "I have ADD." The answer is that no-one comes to these kinds of exercises with the kind of monolithic attention span that they think is necessary. The nice thing about this process is that it is gentle. If your attention wanders, notice the wandering, just as a natural part of what goes on, and gently, gently turn your attention back to the task. In the course of these exercises, there will be many wanderings and many returns. That's OK. One of the things that we are learning here is **how** to concentrate. Concentration, like every other skill requires practice. As you practice gently returning your attention to the memory, you will find your capacity for attending will increase dramatically and the exercises will become easier and easier. As you find yourself learning how to enjoy the states, the process will accelerate.

There is another piece here and that is motivation. Everything that we will do here feels great. Many people don't understand that one of the keys to motivation is pleasure. If concentrating on something makes you feel good, it becomes easy to focus on. Sex works like that, chocolate works like that. In this case we are going to approach spiritual tools from the perspective of learning how to feel good.

Now, using these guidelines, think of a time, one specific time, when you felt wonderful. Think of a time when you were in love, or perhaps you were loving a pet or other small creature. Perhaps there was a time when you felt particularly empowered or free. You might think of having fun as a child or an early crush. You might think of your first dog or cat, or an experience of special competence. For now, choose a positive memory. It does not have to be the best thing that ever happened, just something that you'd like to enjoy again.

From time to time, people have come to me with complaints that they have been unable to think of anything positive, or that as soon as they begin to get into a good state, negative thoughts arise. While this is relatively uncommon, here are a few suggestions. First of all, remember that this is about learning to control your internal processes, so, if something like this does happen, notice the place where the negativity starts, and stop the memory sequence at a point just before you get to starting point for the negative feeling. Just focus on that part of the memory that precedes the trigger point. To edit the memory effectively, make sure that you stop the practice, shake out the feeling completely (literally shake your body) and restart the sequence from the beginning. Doing this you'll discover that you will quickly build the skill of editing your memory resources so that just the right part is available.

It may also be as simple as choosing another state. In some cases, you may just want to start with something pleasant from today's activities or yesterday's. In other cases you may want to start by imagining what it would feel like to have this work safely, comfortably and easily. Some people might find it easiest to begin with a totally imaginary positive event. Remember, for the most part, your brain does not know the difference between imagined and real phenomena. That's why pornography works.

Once you have chosen a memory, there are some things that you should notice. First notice whether you are in the memory, experiencing it with your own senses, or separated from it, as if it were about someone else. If the memory seems to be more like you're watching someone in a movie, imagine how it would feel if you could step into that movie and feel and see, hear, taste and smell with your own senses. DO THAT. In your imagination, step right into the memory and experience it from within your own body. Just make believe and do it.

Take a minute, if you haven't done so already, find a memory and make these observations before proceeding.

As you step into the memory and begin to fully experience it with your own eyes, your own ears, your own body, you may notice that the quality of the memory changes dramatically. For most people, stepping all of the way into the memory moves it from a dissociated shadow of a memory into a much more vivid, associated experience. This is very important. Whenever you work with positive experiences and you want to enhance their effect, it is important to begin with an associated experience. If the original experience is not associated, just step into the memory and allow the feelings to arise.

You can also notice whether you experience the memory as something that you see, hear, feel or something that you taste and smell. These are the basic senses and it is through them that you will learn to fully retrieve the memory. Notice the intensity of the memory. Is it vivid or dull? Once you have accessed a memory and stepped into it (associated into it), just allow yourself to enjoy it for a few minutes.

As you enjoy the memory, you may want to notice whether the memory is a sequence of events or just one moment in time. For many people this could be a movie or a still picture. For others it might be a soundscape, or a series of felt impressions. Spend some time with the memory and notice what you like best about it. Notice especially the feelings that it evokes and take a little time to enjoy them.

Some people may have the felt sense of the experience immediately; others may know what the feeling is but have little present-time experience of it. Here again, step into the memory and allow the feelings to awaken in present time. Associate to the experience. Begin to breathe like you did. Notice the patterns of muscular tension and relaxation, notice your posture in the memory and adjust your body so that it matches the memory. As you do so, you will find that the felt experience grows stronger. Notice where the feeling starts and how it grows. Take some time to really enjoy the feeling. Take a minute to make these observations.

Now, having done just this much, you have accomplished two things. First, you have increased conscious access to the memory. That memory has just been enhanced and will be much more accessible to you. Just now, that memory is probably more real to you than it has been in years. The second thing is this: you have just changed your own neurochemistry in a way that will favor positive responses over negative. You have also set in motion a physiological process that will continue for at least 20 minutes as it moves towards peak and could last as long as three hours. Memory changes physiology. When you spend time with positive states, those states can continue even after you've returned to other tasks.

Here are some things to look for as we return again to the memory. This time it should be easier and faster. The memory should also be more vivid and, if you paid attention to where and how the feelings arose in your body, you will find that

they come more quickly and more powerfully.

Pay attention also to the scope of the memory. If it was a moment in time, see what happens if you make it into a short movie. If it was a long sequence of behavior, then just focus on the very best few seconds. In either case, step all of the way into the memory and keep replaying the best few seconds. Remember to step all of the way into the experience by adjusting your physiology. Find out how much you can enjoy the experience. Notice how much enjoyment is added by the speed with which the experience arises. Enjoy the rush and notice how the intensity of the experience changes. Step into the memory now, enjoy it for a few minutes and then come back out. Find out how fast you can do that.

Every memory has a structure. In NLP we talk about structure in terms of submodalities, these are the smaller parts of sensory experience, the dimensions of each sense. Vision, for example, has the dimension of action (is it a still or moving picture), the dimension of scope (is the picture framed or panoramic), the dimension of presence or absence of color (color or black and white), the dimension of hue (the frequency of the color), the dimension of saturation (the intensity of the color) and others. Hearing has similar dimensions: the dimension of volume (loud to soft), the dimension of pitch (the frequency of the sound), the dimension of timbre (the complexity of the sound), the dimension of movement (is the source moving or still), the dimension of location (where the sound is coming from.). Every sense has a similar set of dimensions or submodalities. By changing or tweaking these submodalities, you can change the impact of the memory. Submodalities represent the brain's coding system for intensity, importance and impact. By consciously manipulating them, you can change the intensity of a remembered experience.

Return to your memory and go through the following lists one item at a time. Some of these changes will enhance the experience, some will decrease it, and others will not do much at all. Note any change that intensifies your experience of the memory. Fiddle with some of the possibilities and see what feels best. When you find something that dramatically enhances the experience, keep the change. If the change doesn't make a difference, leave the experience the way you found it. Go through the memory several times using the submodality changes to enhance the felt experience of the memory. Get a good sense of which changes work best for you, put the rest aside and use the ones that work.

One more thing, the order of these lists is not terribly important. If you are more aware of the felt sense of the memory or the sound of the memory, please feel free to start there. Just be sure that you go through all three lists.

Visual submodalities. Most Westerners are highly attuned to visual cues and retrieve visual information first. Apply these variables to your memory and find out how it changes.

**Association:** Make sure that you're experiencing the memory from within. If you seem to be watching from outside, use your imagination and step all of the way into the experience. Notice what changes in your experience.

**Color:** Notice whether the memory is in color or black and white. If the Memory is black and white, use your imagination to turn on the color. If it is already in color, or if you've just turned the color on, turn up the intensity. Notice the difference.

**Brightness:** If the image is dim, turn up the brightness -- just enough to reveal more detail. Notice the difference in your experience. Experiment by turning the brightness up and down. Find a level of brightness that works best for you,

**Focus:** Where do you focus your attention in the image? Is everything in focus? Can you change the focus? What focus gives the most impact?

**Frame:** If it is framed, remove the frame and make it panoramic. What changes? Try putting the frame back. Keep the change that creates the best impact.

**Dimensions:** If the experience has two dimensions, imagine three dimensions. Extend them into the plane. Add a sense of time or eternity. What happens to the experience?

**Movement:** If the representation is a still picture, make it a movie. Note the change.

**Distance:** Bring the picture much closer. How does the impact change?

**Size:** Make the picture much larger. Double it and double it again. What happens?

Auditory submodalities can add significant depth to an experience. Return to your memory and go through this list of auditory submodalities. Again, pay attention to the changes that intensify your experience of the memory. Play with some of the options and see what feels best. When you find something that dramatically enhances the experience, keep

the change. If the change doesn't make a difference, put it back the way you found it. Go through the memory several times using these auditory submodality changes to enhance the memory.

**Volume:** Make the sound louder. Make the sound quieter. Turn the volume up and down. Adjust the volume for the maximum positive impact.

**Sources:** Notice where the sounds come from.

**Dimension:** If the sounds are monophonic add stereo or holophonic sound.

**Direction:** Notice the directions of the sound sources. Pay special attention to the ones that move with objects that you see.

**Type:** Notice whether the sounds are voices, music or just sound.

**Timbre:** Note the richness and complexity of the sound. Does it resonate in your body?

**Rhythm:** Notice any rhythms in the sounds. Do they resonate in your body or move with any seen objects?

By now, you should have noticed that the memory that you began with has grown much stronger, much more vivid and more real. Any emotion associated with it should already be growing strong. You may have also realized that when you stepped back into it to manipulate the sound dimension, it was already easier to get into. The more sensory data that is added to the original memory, the stronger and the more detailed it becomes in consciousness. By now, you have already noticed something of the feel of the memory.

Now, step back into the same memory. Enter quickly and enjoy the speed with which the experience arrives. Notice the rush of sensory information. As you step into it, make the picture much larger, turn up the volume and pay close attention to how the experience arises in your body. As you enjoy these sensations you may even notice that you remember more detail from within the experience. Play with the following submodality distinctions. Notice how they change your experience of the memory and note which has the most impact. Stay with it for a while and enjoy it.

**Depth:** Do you experience emotion, physical sensation or both? If you are only feeling one, add in the other.

**Location:** Notice where in your body you feel the sensations. Where do the emotions start?

**Movement:** Notice if the feelings move. If they do, note where they start and how they spread. Notice where they are strongest and how they leave the body.

**Dimension:** When you experience a feeling or emotion and you notice that it spreads, notice how it spreads. Does it spread in one dimension as a line, two dimensions like a plane or disk, three dimensions like a ball, or more dimensions than you can express?

**Intensity:** Notice the intensity of the feeling. Double it, and double it again. Adjust the level of intensity so that it becomes most pleasurable.

**Texture:** Just notice if the texture is smooth, wavy, rough, ragged or even. If one feels better, try it on.

**Temperature:** Is the feeling cold, warm or hot? Is it changing?

**Moisture:** Is the feeling moist or dry?

At this point, the intensity of the experience should be surprising. You have been working with the brain's own intensity controls and you may have noticed that you can do some amazing things with your own feelings.

Now, quickly, step back into the memory again. Notice the rush. Do it fast to maximize its intensity. As you enjoy the rush, turn up the sounds, enhance the colors, and make the picture bigger and closer. Use as many of the controlling submodality distinctions as you can. Notice where in your body the emotions begin and how they spread. As you become aware that the feelings are intensifying, notice where and how far they have spread. Imagine that you can grab all of that intensity and recycle it through the place where it started. Reach out with imaginary hands and draw that intensity back through its own center. Notice that as it flows out again, it is stronger, deeper, thicker and it spreads further through

your body. Catch it again and bring it back through the center so that it starts to spin through its own circuit and doubles with each loop. Keep it spinning until the memory disappears and the room disappears and you find yourself floating in bliss. <sup>[24]</sup>

When you come back – you might drift off or just return spontaneously -- come completely out of it and try it again. This time, though, you'll notice that all you have to do is turn your attention to the memory and the feeling should begin to arise. Turn your attention to the feeling. Let the feeling start to spin and notice how quickly you find yourself someplace very interesting.

At this point, you may notice that the memory itself just begins to fade away. Let it happen. As you spend more and more attention on the feeling and your favorite parts of the feeling; as you spend more and more attention on how many levels of depth and peace, enjoyment and glory are wrapped up inside of you; the memory will gently fade from consideration.

When I talk about spinning the feeling, you may want to notice that feelings move. Every emotional feeling or felt state will have a kind of pattern through the body. Sometimes the patterns are complex, sometimes they are simple. As you begin to pay attention to the pattern of movement you may want to notice whether it moves more like a bicycle wheel or more like a turntable. As the feeling turns, how is it oriented? Does it move clockwise or counter clockwise? Notice these things.

Recent neuroscience suggests that if you imagine grasping an imagined object with your hands, you will find it easier to manipulate mentally. So, imagine that you can take hold of the feeling and crank it, or stir it, or mix it up until you find yourself floating.

Now, I think it's important to note that I am not referring to chakras here. I think that chakras are idealized representations of these kinds of processes, but we are not looking to that system. Find the feeling, find the pattern and crank it up.

When the memory itself fades, but the feeling remains, you have crossed a subtle threshold. Emotion has begun to be something that you can do, not just something that happens to you. You have chosen to feel something and you now have subjective tools for doing it again. You can do it with any feeling that you have ever had.

Unfortunately, for humans, most of our practice with these tools has led us to enhance the wrong feelings. We have, in the past, used them to create anger, depression and shame. It is now time to use these tools to grow feelings of Love, Joy, Tranquility, Peace, Hope and Strength.

The following steps summarize the process we have just completed. You can use it as an easy way to repeat the experience with any memory that you would like.

1. Think of a time when you felt wonderful.
2. Notice whether, in your imagination, you are experiencing the memory from within, or experiencing it from outside like a movie.
3. If your memory seems to be just in your head, imagine that you can step all of the way into it. As you experience the memory, you may even notice flashes that feel like really being there, gently turn your attention to these. Take a few minutes to make sure that you are actually in the experience. When begin to have the sense of really being there, even if it was only for flashes, come fully back into the present context.
4. Now that you have a sense of what it's like to relive the memory from within, step all the way into it and get a feel for it. Notice that you can step right into one of those parts where it all came alive. Step right into it. Notice what you are seeing and feeling and hearing. Notice the patterns of tension in your muscles. Notice who else is there in the memory and how you feel emotionally. Take a few minutes to get really familiar with the feel of being there. Enjoy it. Come fully back into the present.
5. Step back into the memory. Again notice how you can zoom right into the best part. As you do so, make believe that the memory is huge, bigger than life. Become aware of the sound and the directions from which the sounds come. Notice how these enhance the experience. Come fully back into the present.
6. Now, return to the memory once more. As you do, notice that you can zoom right to point where you left off the last time; right to the very most intense part. Make it bigger and brighter and closer. Turn up the volume of the sound. Notice the rush of feelings and sensations. Pay attention to the feelings and notice where in your body the feeling starts and how it spreads through your body to peak intensity? Shake out the feeling and return to the present.
7. Return to the memory and zoom right back to the very best part. Turn up the brightness, bring it closer and turn up the volume on the sound. While you do these things, note the path of the energy through your body. As you notice the feeling getting stronger, loop the feeling back through the starting point so that it doubles up as it

moves through you. Notice that it moves further, faster and more powerfully.  
8. Continue to recycle the energy in this manner. Do it faster and faster until you lose any sense of the memory and find yourself floating, immersed in the feeling alone.

Spend some time experimenting with various memories, just to see how strong you can make the feeling.

## CHAPTER THREE: Five Resource States

These exercises, and the direction that they take, come out of the idea that people need to become aware of who they are on a deep level. Abraham Maslow called this self actualization. Carl Jung called it individuation. In both cases this process of understanding who I am and what I am designed to be is a crucial part of spiritual life. It is often thought of as awakening.

Wherever people engage in spiritual practice, awakening a sense of personal calling or purpose is an important part of the process. In some contexts, once discovered, that sense of self is transcended, in others it is lived out to the fullest. In general, however, it is a foundational part of the enterprise.

Up to this point we have talked a little bit about states and have had some practice accessing and enhancing some positive states. For some of you this has already reached or passed the boundaries of spiritual experience. For others it was nice but nothing to write home about. Either way, that's OK because we are just beginning. Here we will begin to assemble a series of specific felt states that we can use to constellate, or awaken, a sense of what it means to be you in a very deep way.

Constellation is an interesting word. Jung used it to reflect the way we find the pattern of the deeper self as it is expressed in our everyday preferences, directions and capacities. This process of awakening to the larger pattern works in just the same way that people project the images of gods and animals onto patterns of stars in order to see the constellations. The pattern already exists in the unconscious mind; we only need hooks upon which to project it in the environment. It is the equivalent of the idea of an emergent property in General Systems Theory. An emergent property is a property of a complex system that cannot be predicted by the nature of its components alone: the whole is more than the sum of its parts. The emergent property of a complex system is 'constellated' as the subsystems come together and create new levels of meaning and relationship that could not be predicted from the individual elements. Just as no single star can predict our perception of a constellation, and even the entire constellation cannot be predicted without a person to perceive it, just so, the individual elements of a system cannot predict the properties of the whole. In this context we will be drawing together personal directions and experiences to constellate a sense of your Deep Self. In the next chapter we will be working with the process of anchoring. [\[25\]](#)

In this chapter we are going to begin by assembling a series of states that we will, once again, enhance and intensify until they are no longer about their source memories, but just feelings; powerful, positive feelings that you can use. The states that we will use are resources for focused attention, decision making, optimal learning, having fun and confidence.

As we noted in the last chapter, one of the important functions of memory is its capacity to make responses that we have already tried or experienced available in present time. Each memory awakens the personal experience of a situation and a present time experience of the feeling that accompanied it. Both the experience of the memory and the feeling that it produces are present time events.

Our store of remembered experiences represents a vast set of resources waiting to be tapped. Within that store we can find answers that can be used to solve many of life's problems. Resources can be thought of as any experience or any memory of an experience that you have ever had. It might even be an imagined experience or a role play. The idea that people possess these kinds of resources is one of the basic presuppositions of NLP.

We will be using remembered and imagined resources for several purposes. 1. As we did in the last exercise, we will be using memories to access a feeling. In this exercise we will continue to use the brain's control system—submodalities--to enhance the memory, recreate the felt emotion and then experience the feeling in a pure state. 2. We will begin by finding a set of five states that will serve as a set of feeling-tools in everyday life and as a foundation for other exercises. 3. An important purpose of this lesson is carried over from the previous exercise: we are learning to make feelings and emotions something that we can do on purpose – not things that just happen to us. 4. In every exercise, learning how to feel good is an important goal. We have all had far too much practice focusing on the other extreme.

We are not concerned about which of the following examples you find first. The order is unimportant. Feel free to try some of the easier or more attractive states first. Come back for the others later.

Once again, because we will be amplifying the feelings associated with them, use these rules for choosing the memories: 1. Each memory should be positive – their subject was positive at the time and they make you feel good now. 2. Each memory should represent a completed activity – not something that is still subject to change. 3. The memory should not be related to sad or negative experiences – even if the experience was otherwise very good and very important. 4. It is OK

to choose simple, unimpressive memories. Remember that we are going to take the feelings and magnify them. 5. Make sure to start with one specific example from a single time and a single place – even if it was something that you did often. Having a specific memory is more important than having a perfect one.

These are the basic states: <sup>[26]</sup>

**FOCUS:** This should be an example of focused attention. It might have been a time when you were watching an exciting movie or reading an interesting book. It might be a time when you were playing a game or doing something exciting. It might have been a time when you were having great sex. Whatever it was, it was a time when you were really THERE, time disappeared and you enjoyed it totally. It might be a time when you met someone who was very interesting. A time when you were able to spend hours with someone, but it only seemed like minutes. Make sure that it was something that you enjoyed. Choose a memory with no regrets or mixed feelings.

**SOLID:** A time when you made a good decision, one that continues to be satisfying into the present. Find an example that involved a real choosing process. Find one that began with many possibilities but ended with a single choice. For example, think of going to buy clothes. Think of the initial choice of a store; then, of a brand or price range; then, of a style. At some point, the choice narrows to just a few possibilities. As you make the final decision there is a feeling that tells you, “This is it.” That is the feeling we want.

**GOOD:** A time when you totally surprised yourself by being able to do something, and do it well, despite the fact that you didn't think that you would be able to do it. Think of an experience where, after some frustration, you discovered yourself actually doing it. I often think of learning to ride a bicycle or learning to drive a stick shift. There is that one minute when it all comes together. Find a moment like that, when something difficult suddenly comes together. I also like to think of learning a new chord or riff on the guitar. It begins as a complex set of individual movements. After practice, there comes a point where it all begins to flow together as a single motion. That is the feeling we want.

**FUN:** A time of playfulness, an experience where you were just having fun. That simple. It doesn't have to be the best time of your life, just a moment of enjoyment.

**YES:** Something that you can do competently, reliably and repeatedly; something that you know that you can do well without a doubt. I like to think of driving through New York City during rush hour, drinking a soda and having a conversation. There was a time when such a thing would have been impossible, just driving seemed too complex. Now, I do it automatically, almost without thinking. Think of something you do well and do easily; especially if it took some effort to learn. Be sure to add an appreciation of how well you do it now, compared to how hard it seemed at first. Focus on the feelings of appreciation and confidence that this skill gives you. This resource might actually be the memory or the present time experience of reflecting on a skill with a sense of appreciation or pride. When enhanced some people feel a little ‘cocky.’

By the way, the names of the states are just mnemonics; they are only peripherally related to the states themselves. If you need clarification about the state, look to the descriptive paragraph.

For each of these states you will need to spend a little time practicing with the tools from the last exercise. First, however, try on each one. Go back to the memory and step all of the way into it. Close your eyes and re-experience the whole thing and then, come all of the way back out.

Go back to the memory again and notice how quickly it comes on. Notice how much more detail is available this time. Notice something that you hadn't noticed before. What are you noticing now that makes the experience more intense? Enjoy your ability to enhance your own experience. Notice how much you've already learned about increasing your control over memory access. Come all of the way back.

As you go through these memories, you might wonder what these have to do with spirituality. These specific states were borrowed from the work of Carmine Baffa, who used to start his trainings by anchoring them to create a powerful, resourceful learning state. I began to use them as a set of tools to teach anchoring and state enhancement to prepare participants in one of my programs for what I believed to be a much more powerful set of experiences. What happened was that my participants began to understand these states (and the combined state that we will work with later) as spiritual states in themselves. The more intensely they practiced them, the more likely they were to find them useful in their spiritual life. On a more basic level, the states link up with spiritual realities as follows.

**Focus** creates the same basic physiology as most forms of meditation. Some scholars have actually described meditation as attentional training. <sup>[27]</sup> So, here, we are learning how to use the memory of a pleasant experience to develop a skill that has direct relevance to spiritual practice. Rather than working hard from the point of view of spiritual discipline, we can think of it as working smarter by taking advantage of the immediate positive experience that it brings. There is no rule against enjoying spiritual things. Many participants have used this state as an aid to prayer, meditation, studying and sex.

**Solid** is about being sure, about knowing. One of the important parts of spiritual experience is that it often is powerfully convincing. It also often requires or provokes a state of being totally committed. Here, we are amplifying your own choice process in a way that will work for you. Just as important is knowing the feel of your own choosing strategy-- knowing when something is right for you. The ability to commit to the process is also an important one. I knew an old preacher once who wanted to know that "You know, that you know, that you know." Now you know.

**Good** is the state of discovery. It is the time and place where new definitions are formed, where rote skills explode into fluid patterns. It is what psychologists call the 'Aha' moment. It is the experience of things coming together, of a clear understanding emerging from an intuited haze. It can also be an awakening to a deeper pattern or higher meaning.

**Fun.** What's fun got to do with spirituality? Lots. One of the problems with human kind is that we forget the joy of living. Joy is the essence of spirituality. Gautama's right hand man was named Ananda--Joy. According to Christians, Joy is a major source of spiritual strength. On a psychological level play is a central part of the most effective means of learning. Jean Piaget suggested that play was so crucial to human learning that we should be renamed Homo Ludens, playing man. Jesus said, "Except ye ... become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven (Mat. 8:13)."

**Yes** is a state of confident appreciation of your own abilities. It is knowing that you have a skill or have had an experience. It is a way of trusting yourself. Spirituality requires trust and confidence in the things that you believe, enough confidence so that you can continue to challenge them and grow.

As you choose examples for each state, be aware that, as you play with them, other examples, perhaps better examples, will come to mind. Feel free to switch to a better memory if the one you choose doesn't work out. Let this be easy and gentle. If something is difficult, go on to something different, something easier, something that works. Spend some time enjoying a state that works well before returning to one that used to be difficult. You'll find that success with any one state accelerates success with the others.

Use the methods from the last chapter to work through each state and make it much more enjoyable. By now, your capacity to use these tools will have grown considerably.

As you step into the memory, rush right to the best part. As you do, make the picture huge and bright and bring it close. Turn up the volume on the sound and notice where the sounds are coming from. Adjust the driving submodalities to intensify the experience. As all of this is going on, notice the feelings that you have in your body. Use imaginary hands to take hold of the feelings and double them back through their source. Spin them faster and faster until the feeling becomes very intense. Spin the feeling faster and notice how the details of the memory increase just before those details fade away and you find yourself floating in pure feeling. Let the feeling increase and the memory fade, and spend some time floating in the felt sense of each state. Just float. Let go of every thought, easily and gently, focus on the texture of the feeling, the flavor of the feeling, the sound it would make if it made sound, the color of the feeling. Allow yourself to explore the feeling and its patterns.

Go through this with each of the states until you find that you can just turn your attention to the feeling and it begins to arise. Find out how much you can enjoy each one.

As you take some time to explore these states, you would do well to consider that each one constitutes a felt landscape. Since we have structured these experiences as positive resources, what qualities of joy, peace and wonder can you find by exploring them? Freed from the defining contexts that the original memories provided, each state has heights and depths, lengths and breadths that will allow you to discover something of the unimagined potential of feeling.

Access one of the states and begin to explore it as a landscape. Can you travel up into heights of ecstasy, or down into clear focus? Can you broaden the experience spatially or feel what it would be like extended in time? Imagine that the state as you've experienced it is a room and in every direction there are new doors and passageways to explore.

As you explore the states, you will find that from time to time you seem to hit a plateau, or that you have a feeling in mind, but can't seem to get there. For plateaus, the important thing is to let go. If the state seems to get stuck, do not strain against it. Turn your attention to the broader landscape and notice that the state has other dimensions to explore. Allow your attention to rest on another dimension. What you will notice is that as you allow your attention to rest on some facet of the experience, that element will tend to become the center. Find some part of the experience that is especially intriguing or particularly inviting. Gently turn your attention to it and allow it to become the center of the state. If you notice that the feeling pattern changes, flow with it, take hold of it and spin it further to intensify it. Spin it up. <sup>[28]</sup>

Another way to enhance the state makes use of the NLP swish technique. <sup>[29]</sup> As you find yourself floating in the state, enjoying the multi-dimensioned ecstasy, imagine that a small dot appears at edge of your consciousness. As you watch, the dot grows very quickly into a huge representation of your own self, in the same physical position, experiencing the state many times more intensely. Allow this picture to expand explosively into your consciousness, noticing as it does so,

the glow and facial cues that tell you how good the state really is. As the picture explodes into your imagination, allow the feelings to wash over you and enjoy the rush of new sensations. [\[30\]](#)

In my own explorations I have noticed that Focus moves up into ecstasies of bliss and down into clear focus. Solid seems to move downward into a firm and solid base. Rising up into higher planes it reveals, for me, a sense for which I have no words but "Ahhhhh." Good moves into an opening to new discoveries and perceptions, the possibility of perceiving worlds and concepts that were never before available. Moving down, it creates a concrete sense of modular, chunk-wise learning, susceptible to plan and strategy. Fun, for me, explodes upwards into an ecstasy of delight and downwards into wonder at the smallest detail. Yes grounds me in the confident capacity of knowing that I can learn to do anything. Ascending, it awakens a sure faith in the reality of who I am and that I am growing.

Explore each of the states. Spend enough time with them so they become landscapes and places, worlds and universes of exploration. By doing this, you will transform each state from an artifact of memory to a present-time experience of a continuing path of discovery. When each state becomes a path, we find ourselves opening to another dimension of spiritual experience. One of the ideas that we regularly associate with spirituality is the idea of self control. Spiritual people are often known for their emotional control, their self denial and their capacity to control bodily functions that most of us find nearly miraculous. Most such disciplines are rooted in denial. Here we have a set of positive states that can begin to move us in the same directions not, however, through denial, but through enhanced choice, enhanced personal investment in things that really work, and better strategies for growth.

There is, here in the West, a certain suspicion that spirituality needs to be very serious. We would do well to heed Henry Corbin who reminds us that Angels are only manifested in ecstasy. They are its cause and it is their essence. [\[31\]](#)

## CHAPTER FOUR: Anchoring

If there were ever a tool that seems, at first flush, to be at odds with spiritual practice, it would have to be anchoring. Spirituality is often understood as breaking free of conditioning and awakening from the robot state in which we all wander. Zen is often understood as becoming fully present and fully conscious of the present without conditioned awareness. In some sense, the conscious practice of Hasidism would produce the same kinds of results. Gurdjieff wrote extensively of the intense effort necessary to awaken from sleep. <sup>[32]</sup> Christian mystics have often struggled to retain full conscious intentionality as they pray and sing. Colin Wilson records the impact of intense concentration as opening conscious experience to new modes of perception and that further, active recall of that state could reinstate it. <sup>[33]</sup>

While it is true that we all have been bound by habit and conditioning, habit and conditioning can be tools that we can use in a conscious manner to awaken to new possibilities. Most spiritual traditions, like it or not, make use of conditioning practices. The repeated practice of a yoga breathing pattern or body posture anchors a certain frame of being. Home altars and roadside shrines are anchors. The smell of incense, the ringing of bells, the intoning of prayers chants and mantras, whether Christian, Buddhist or Taoist, all anchor very specific states. If these states are consciously cultivated, we can use the anchor to awaken deeper levels of access. If they become no more than part of the background stimulus environment, they only tighten the grip of false consciousness. <sup>[34]</sup>

Anchoring is another tool from the basic NLP toolset. Fundamentally, it is just associative learning or classical conditioning. It is the most basic way in which we attach meaning to our world. Because we are humans, we can choose whether or not we will respond to conditioning. As a result, it doesn't work exactly like it does in animals. Nevertheless, it is the same process and works wonderfully well. <sup>[35]</sup>

We will be using anchoring, or conditioning, for several things: First, anchoring makes accessing states automatic and virtually immediate. Imagine getting to the states from the last chapter with a simple gesture... Anchors are efficient ways to store experience for easy access. Second, anchoring allows us to move the states and make them available anywhere or any when. This means that when you develop a positive state, you can access it and use it whenever you want to or need to. It is a wonderful tool for changing behaviour and creating choice. Third, as anchoring is a convenient way of storing experience, we will be able to use it to create entirely new ways of feeling and being by firing off several anchors simultaneously. This will simplify the work of constellating new and deeper states.

As we said earlier, anchoring is a simple conditioning process. The process will allow us to store the experiences that get us into state by attaching them to a word or gesture. Then, by saying the word or making the gesture, the state will appear, almost automatically. It means that the next time you're in a bad mood a well practiced anchor can help you out, quickly. Anchors also provide us with another way to enhance and modify the states we've been working with.

One of the important values of a spiritual lifestyle is its capacity to suffuse the rest of our life with meaning and positive feelings. Spiritual experiences tend to change the meaning of everything; the more accessible they are, the more pervasive the change. Anchoring allows you to bring positive influences into every part of your life.

However far you may have gotten to this point, take a few minutes to anchor the states that are already working well. It will serve as a worthwhile distraction and will help you to work more efficiently.

To begin with, pick one or two of the states above (focus, solid, good, fun, yes). Pick one that comes on quickly and easily. Pick one that comes on with a physical or emotional rush.

We are going to break the anchoring into a few steps to make it easier. First, practice one of the states so that you can get to it very quickly. This will prime the process.

Second, we will add the gesture, the anchor stimulus. Here we will be associating the feeling to the gesture itself. This part of the process may take five to seven repetitions. The first couple of times, nothing will happen, but keep going. You will know that you've succeeded when you clearly sense that the gesture magnifies or positively changes the experience.

Third, after we've made the connection between the feeling and the gesture, we will begin to use the gesture to magnify and control the feeling.

Finally, we will test our work and spend some time just enjoying it.

We have picked a gesture for each state. In this context the gestures are meaningless. THESE ARE NOT MAGICAL GESTURES. They are arbitrary signs that we will be using as conditioned stimuli to evoke specific states of mind. The gestures were chosen because they are easy to do and easy to remember. <sup>[36]</sup>

Use the following gestures to anchor the associated states. For convenience sake we have chosen five simple gestures that run, in order, down the first three fingers of the hand. Use one hand consistently. I usually recommend that you use your non-dominant hand.

**Focus** -- tip of thumb to tip of index finger.

**Solid** -- tip of thumb to first joint of index finger.

**Good** -- tip of thumb to tip of middle finger.

**Fun** -- tip of thumb to first joint of middle finger.

**Yes** -- tip of thumb to tip of ring finger.

We start by accessing the state several times so that the state arises quickly and you are conscious of a rush of positive feeling. We do this before we do the anchoring to ensure that the state is strong and that it is increasing through the exercise. Do each repetition as fast as you can, and find out what pace allows you the most enjoyment.

Work with the states until each is content free, so that you can go pretty much right to the feeling. Step all the way into the feeling and immediately focus on the movement and the temperature and the texture of the feelings. By now you know where they start and how they move. Feel the rush. Enjoy it, spin it up, then shake out the state, and come fully back into the present.

Return to the state. As you do, notice that you can zoom right to point where you left off the last time; right to the very most intense part. Notice the rush of feelings and sensations. Enjoy them for a moment and then, return fully to the present.

Now that you have a real sense of how quickly and powerfully the state can come on, we will begin the anchoring procedure. Use the gestures noted for the appropriate state. Be forewarned, the first couple of times that you use the anchor, NOTHING will happen. Just doing the anchor will seem to get in the way. After the third or fourth repetition, you will begin to notice that something is happening, and this can be very dramatic. Read through the next several paragraphs before you continue, then just do it.

**To anchor the state**, find the gesture for the state you've chosen to work with (use the ones listed above).

1. Close your eyes and zoom right back to the most intense experience of the state.
2. As you experience rushing into the state, make the gesture.
3. Hold the gesture for about two seconds while the feelings increase.
4. Release your fingers, but keep your attention on the state.
5. Enjoy the state for another second or so.
6. Shake out the state (shake your body) and return to the present.
7. Repeat this sequence five to seven times or until you really begin to notice a change in the experience whenever you make the gesture.

Here is the basic sequence: close your eyes, access the feeling, make the gesture, release the gesture, shake out the feeling, and open your eyes.

Remember to come fully back into the present before each repetition.

**Once you have the clear sense that the gesture is adding to the power or depth of the experience**, make the following change:

1. As you notice the change in feeling when you make the gesture,
2. Quickly break and remake the gesture.
3. Hold the gesture again until you become aware of a new rush of experience.

4. Break and remake the gesture again.
5. Repeat this pumping action until the experience becomes pleasurable intense.
6. Shake out the state (shake your body) and return to the present.

The first few times, it can be useful to actually separate your fingers, afterwards, pumping the gesture might mean gently rubbing the fingers together or it may mean gently pulsing the muscles while holding the gesture. I generally find that once the anchor has been created, pulsing the gesture works best. Find a method that works for you.

Notice that as you focus your attention on the very first sensations that enter your body, the feeling grows more quickly. Make a game of pulsing or pumping the gesture just as the first hint of feeling arises in your body.

Take a little time and play with this anchor. Find out how you can intensify the feeling. Find out how you can change the timing of the gesture to make it work better. Find out how good you can feel. After a few minutes, come all the way out, and start over by accessing the state, making the gesture and pumping it.

After you've spent some time playing with this and the anchors, it's time to test your work. Up to now, we've depended largely on accessing the state directly, now we are going to try the anchor alone.

### **Test the anchor**

1. Clear your mind.
2. Sit or lie comfortably and make the gesture.
3. Notice any feeling that comes as you make the gesture
4. Begin to pump the gesture repeatedly.
5. Do your best to make the gesture at the first hint of a bodily feeling.
6. Repeat the pumping action as you focus on the best parts of the experience.
7. Enjoy the growing intensity of feeling.

With each pump, allow your attention to discover something better or deeper in the feelings. As you do this, enjoy more and more aspects of the feeling itself. Let your attention move into the feeling. Keep pumping until you have an intense experience of pure feeling. Shake out the state (shake your body) and return to the present.

Now, you will want to repeat this pattern with each of the five states. Take your time and find out how much you can enjoy each one. As you begin the anchoring process, practice accessing each state very quickly so that you can leave behind any pictures, sounds or other contextual information from the original memory. If any of that lingers, time the pumping of the anchor so that it catches the first hint of feeling, before the pictures or sounds have any chance of appearing. You will find that the anchor will take care of it automatically.

Here is some practical advice about anchoring. The gestures should be simple and easy. The reason that they go in order down the fingers is so that you can learn them and do them quickly and easily.

The anchor should not be distracting. If you design or choose a gesture, choose one that takes minimal effort. As you make the gesture, relax your hand comfortably and make the gesture gently. Concentrate on the state not the gesture. Getting the state right is more important than getting the gesture. The important quality of the gesture is its consistency. Whatever gesture you use, do it the same way each time; do it quickly and easily.

If you have been following along in these exercises, you will have noticed by now, that once you've created an anchor, you've really created a control button for the state. Here are some things to try. 1. Vary the intensity of the state by speeding up or slowing down your gestures—pump faster or slower. 2. Explore the feeling landscape that you have created and when you find a part that is particularly interesting begin to pump the gesture a little faster. 3. If you find yourself at a plateau, try stopping the gesture until you float back into a new and more accessible pathway, or simply turn your attention to another part of the landscape and pump faster.

Anchoring has now provided you with a tool that, combined with simply turning your attention to some facet of the experience, will allow you to fully control the depth, scope and intensity of the state.

Take some time over the period of a week or so and practice creating and firing off the anchors in various places. It is important to realize that when you create an anchored association, the feeling tends to connect to everything in the immediate environment. So, if you always use the anchor in one place, that place will tend to become an important part of the anchor. This is part of the logic of sacred space. If you evoke the same experiences repeatedly in a certain context, that context becomes an important part of the anchor. Robert Dilts makes significant use of this idea when he models Walt Disney's use of creative, critical and practical spaces. [\[37\]](#)

For our purposes, for spiritual purposes, we would like these responses to be as robust as possible. If you only use them in one place or context, you will limit their utility. At first they will be easier to use in the place where you originally learned them but after you've worked with them in a few contexts they will appear easily and immediately anywhere. By practicing the anchors in multiple contexts, the anchor is refined. It is no longer connected to a place or a context; it is connected to your intent and the gesture itself. By practicing the anchor in all kinds of places, your capacity to choose how you will feel and respond will become much more evident.

We have made the recommended gestures as unobtrusive as possible. You can fire them off anywhere and no-one will notice. You can put your hand in your pocket, under the table, behind your back and use the anchor. This makes it easy. Part of the goal of spiritual life is having real choices about how you feel and how you respond. When you can control how you feel, you control the meaning of the situation.

Once the anchors are working reliably (it will take a little practice), begin using them with your eyes open, in the midst of a walk, at work, while talking to someone. I often recommend using the fun anchor in a boring meeting. One client returned to a group to report that every week she had this boring bank meeting. She had nothing to say and wanted nothing more than to just get out of there. After learning how to anchor these states, she began to fire off the fun anchor whenever she went to the meeting. What she found was that fun translated into curiosity and real interest in what was going on. She began to look forward to the meetings.

Another client was an aspiring professional bowler. He needed to get his score up to a certain level to qualify. We spent some time using the yes and good anchors to give him access to his very best frames. He quickly was able to analyze and create new ways to approach his bowling and his scores began a steady rise.

In his book, *Meetings with Remarkable Men*, the 19<sup>th</sup> Century mystic, G. I. Gurdjieff talked about the incredible intensity with which he created plans for the support of his followers in France. States like focus and Solid allow one to focus on a task and commit to it so that it produces the results you want. Firing off focus and fun in the context of a learning task has helped many of my students do well in school.

In one of my groups, I had an Islamic man, who was concerned about the propriety of these states. I suggested that he use focus the next time he made Shallat. His prayer life was transformed.

Spirituality is often about awakening to choice and responsibility. These basic anchors can be used to empower your choices about the ways that you interact with people, the world and the realm of the spirit. Each one represents a practical tool which, with every use, awakens a sense of who you are and what is really important to you. When feelings are a choice and not just a response, we begin to develop a sense of how we would want to feel more of the time, we develop a sensitivity to the kinds of choices that will lead us more in that direction.

One of the ways that you can practice using the anchors effectively is to choose one each day and make it the focus of the following journal exercise. Feel free to use the other anchors, as well, but for the exercise focus on one anchor each day and keep notes in a journal.

1. Begin the day by choosing one of the anchors, fire it off and spend some time exploring and enjoying it. After finding out how good you can feel for now, gently return to the present, holding the state in mind and body.
2. As you consider and continue to enjoy the state, think of three places during the day where feeling this way will have a significant impact on the way your day will go. Where can you use this state to make a difference in your life and in the lives around you? Take some notes and fire off the anchor as you consider each context.
3. Before going on, make at least three appointments with yourself when you will stop what you are doing, fire off the anchor and use it to re-center. If you can't actually stop, be sure to access the state at that time anyway. After accessing the state, take a minute to appreciate how well you are doing today.

4. Finally, at the end of the day, fire off the anchor again. Take some time to enjoy it and explore it. Rest down into the very best part. After spending some time with it, again gently return to present, keeping the state in mind and body. Take a little time to appreciate how using the anchor impacted your day. Enjoy the new choices that you have made and anticipate how many more ways you can use and explore the potential of these states in the following days.

This exercise accomplishes several things. The first and most obvious is just getting practice exploring the states. Spiritual exercise is called 'exercise' for a reason. It needs practice. Rather than focusing on a rule or maxim, we are practicing a state of being the more you practice, the more you explore it, the more ways you can find to enjoy it, the more useful it will be.

The exercise also makes use of an idea that spiritual and religious people have known for a long time. If you start your day with a time of meditation, prayer or other centering process, the whole day works better. One of the striking things that continually comes out of the research is that the small amount of time that this kind of practice costs, is more than redeemed by the changes in efficiency and lowered stress that it confers.

The exercise makes use of the NLP technique of future pacing to connect the feeling into the places where you are most likely to need it. In general, by anticipating the need, you will be more likely to use the resource at that time. Moreover, by linking the felt state to the situation in advance, you have already made a choice to do something different—even if you forget to use the anchor.

When you stop in the midst of your activities to access the state, you are not only associating that state with that context, but you are strengthening your level of control and choice regarding the state. The more places that you use them, the more these states are just things that you can do—anywhere. Stopping to remember who you are and what you want; stopping to remember to take control is an important skill.

The exercise also cycles through the states so that you spend at least one day with each. In general, I recommend that people practice the exercise for several weeks or until using the anchors becomes second nature.

Chapters six through nine omitted

## CHAPTER TEN: Making Connections

Spirituality, for me always implies positive virtues, love, compassion, moral strength courage and others. It seems to me that these flow from a place within that is not moved by the vagaries of the current circumstance. They are foundational virtues that seem to arise when humans come into contact with their deepest core. Connirae Andreas suggests that just such kinds of states and virtues end up as the ultimate aim, the positive intent, for virtually anything we do. It's just that we humans get caught up in our attachments to the externals and lost in the maze of wanting and desiring, of seeking and never finding.

Christian mystics and saints as well as Buddhist and Hindu holy men have often emphasized non-attachment to worldly things. It is reported that one of the first things that St Francis did after his conversion was to steal a load of his fathers goods, sell them, and distribute the proceeds to the poor. From then on he was radically committed to resisting any attempt to be drawn into his own sense of complacency.<sup>[38]</sup> Whenever he suspected that his carnal nature was moving him back into habit or he suspected that he was surrendering to unthinking responsive action, he would press forward and make a conscious effort to do the difficult task.

I am told that Mother Theresa was of a similar mind. Once, while visiting a posh hotel in New York City, she is reported to have stripped her room of all of its expensive amenities and taken them into the street where she distributed them to the poor.

That such virtues transcend religion is brought out in the stories of Buddha, Po Ti and various other Eastern luminaries. It is also underscored by the Christian Apologist, C. S. Lewis, who identified what he called a "Tao of Righteousness."<sup>[39]</sup> This, he noted, was a set of values that universally arose from the deepest part of the human soul and characterized what is best in all cultures. It represents the root of what Western Philosophers have called Natural Law.

One of the important places where spiritual practice has significant effects is in works of healing and compassion. Since we have taken a somewhat empirical stance on the ultimate meaning of these phenomena, no special claims will be made for their ultimate efficacy but I will say that, more often than not, they have had results for me.

Being able to access states like these has often been one of the central parts of prayer, intercession and healing. Stanley Krippner and Stephen Kierulff<sup>[40]</sup> discuss the prospect of healing in terms of entering a deep, peaceful trance state, experiencing the connection with the person to be healed and imagining a metaphorical healing process. A similar state is suggested by Russell Targ and Jane Katra.

Kathleen Brennan's Hands of Light has been adopted as a standard text on alternative techniques in many nursing programs.<sup>[41]</sup> Reiki makes use of similar practices but claims to be a revealed technique that models the healing techniques used by Jesus. Many people in Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches report physical experiences that are nearly identical to those reported by other healers without formal training or special ritual. They lay hands on the sick and they appear to get better.

In every group there are reports of a warming sensation in the hands. Sometimes tingling in the hands or altered visual perceptions are reported. I knew a healer who told me that when he prayed for people it seemed as though he could see into their bodies and there, he would see a symbolic representation of the problem.

Another informant described altered visual perceptions as he prayed for healing.

There would come a time when I would have the sense of seeing with my physical eyes, the place in the body where the problem was. Sometimes it was colors, sometimes, just a pull of the visual sense towards an area. Other times I would see scenes from the person's life which, when described to them, never failed to have a dramatic impact. In every case I had the distinct sense that I was seeing with my physical eyes but the place where I was seeing was deep inside my head.

That many of us have had these kinds of experiences suggests to me that they can become resources. Any experience that you have had becomes a template for other possible experiences. What would happen if, for instance, you have had the experience of participating in a healing and you have felt that warming in your hands or that certain tingling, or you have seen things that felt like seeing but you knew that what you saw was not 'normally' visible? And if you have had such an experience, would it be unreasonable for you to enhance the memory and anchor the state and begin to use it experimentally?

In this context, there is a cautionary note. Here, perhaps more than with other states, our initial impulse might be to strive for an absolute recreation of the original state. Be careful not to fall for that temptation. Evoke the sense of it and explore the options it provides. Allow yourself to enjoy the state and find out where it can take you. Forcing never works.

There is another, important consideration. Where ever you turn in spiritual life there seems to be a differentiation between the gifts and powers and the path itself. It is often emphasized that it is not so much about the powers as it is about the path. The gifts—whether healing, or visions, or synchronicities—are not the main thing. The deeper more central results are the development of character, love, joy, compassion, peace and personal stability. All the rest is secondary.

My own experience with healing has included many incidents, one of the most striking involved my daughter Rachel. Rachel was born by caesarian section on a cold day in late February. She was born early in the morning but as the day wore on, the doctors and nurses grew more and more concerned about the fact that when she ate she could not breathe. It appeared that there was an obstruction of some kind that prevented her from taking nourishment and the food was either rejected or it ended up in her lungs. By three o'clock in the afternoon, they had decided that she had to be transferred from Riverview Hospital in Red Bank to the Neonatal intensive care unit at Monmouth Medical Center in Long Branch. It appeared that she was facing a life or death operation. Before the team took her from us, we asked to see her. My wife and I held her and prayed, simultaneously asking for healing and releasing her into God's will; trusting that whether she lived or died, He would still be God. Needless to say, we called the church for back-up prayer and I spent the night with her, taking time regularly to lay hands on her and pray.

When the morning came, I was confronted with some very confused doctors and Nurses. Where there had clearly been a problem the night before, by morning the problem had resolved.

There is a pattern associated with healing and prayer and spiritual things more generally that is most easily described as releasing. Years ago while deeply involved with the Pentecostal church, I discovered that more often than not prayers were not answered until I had given God permission to not answer the pray. As much as I may have wanted the thing for which I was praying, it always seemed that it was important to back off and follow the pattern that Jesus established in the garden, "Nevertheless Father, not my will, but Thine be done."

This seemed to apply to prayer, releasing the intent from my own control, and healing, again letting go of the hoped for change and allowing God's will to become the active agent. I had often heard of releasing healings and blessing, but in most contexts, the people using the language seemed to think that they were involved in releasing—unbinding—something that was held back. In retrospect, wherever the language came from, it represented a linguistic cue to the functioning of the mind as it intersects with the eternal.

Another hint appeared in a ritual that I observed in a few places. This consisted of writing your desires or intents on a piece of paper, and then burning the paper to signify that you had released the request totally into God's hands. How surprised do you think I was to discover that Sigil magic often uses exactly the same method.

Sigil magic is one of the mainstays of Chaos magic and the basic technique derives from the work of A. O Spare [\[42\]](#). A sigil is a symbolic representation of a wish or desire. It is often a design made of some or all of the letters of the wish, stated as a positive outcome. "It is my will to become more manifestly attuned to conscious participation in the mind of the Eternal," might be a positive outcome that one would subject to the sigil working. The next step in the process as commonly represented, might be to eliminate all of the vowels and all of the repeated letters. The resulting string of letters, "tsmywlbcrnfdp" would then be made into a design and the resulting design burnt, thus releasing the intent into the Kosmos.

The similarities in the syntax of behavior are remarkable and seem to point to an underlying pattern of action that allows us to access a level of spiritual efficacy that otherwise seems to pass us by. The pattern seems to begin with intense focus and ends with an as-complete-as-possible release of conscious involvement.

Continuing my researches in recent years, I came across discussing of remote viewing by Russell Targ and others. Here they report a similar pattern. It is important, he says for the remote viewer to release conscious control and ego interpretations lest they interfere with the process of reception. Targ reports that the process is governed by the symbolic, feeling-oriented right-brain and too much conscious involvement, too many words, too much content analysis, just gets in the way.

There is a further parallel with this pattern and the general pattern of meditation and eastern practice where one of the central aims is to silence the "monkey mind." Stopping the inner voice is an important part of mystical practice from Zen and Tao classics to the works of Carlos Casteneda. In general, it seems to refer to the kind of absorbtive states that we have been working with here. Meditation, prayer, healing and communion with the Eternal may all be linked to our

capacity to turn from talk to more direct felt apprehension of the universe.

Whenever my clients get to the level where they can reliably access the states and stay there comfortably I suggest that they use the following technique with someone who is ill. I would always preface it with this caveat: I can't tell you how or why this works. I cannot promise you that there is anything supernatural going on, but I do know that people respond to the kind of loving attention that this meditation gives them. If nothing else, it lets that person know, whether they are conscious or unconscious, on a deep and personal level, that someone loves them and is taking the time to do what they can to participate in their healing. If that's all it does, it is well worth the time and effort.

If the person you're working with is conscious, get their permission first, and tell them that you would like to spend a few minutes in silent prayer or meditation. If they are not conscious or asleep, just sit down next to them. Fire off an anchor that represents a healing or spiritual state. Fire off the state and begin to enhance it. As you experience the state starting to grow and expand within, pay close attention to where it starts and how it moves and begin to imagine that as it increases in intensity, it is actually a bright light that is expanding from that source point within. As it intensifies, allow it to fill more and more of your being. As you pump it and pump it, notice that it begins to shine beyond the normal boundaries of your body. Imagine that its brightness fills the room around you. Enjoy that. Allow that light to lift you up to a place above the room, from which you can see yourself and your friend below. As you look down, imagine that light covering and energizing your friend. Imagine that that light as blessing and healing and good things flowing down from an eternal source, blessing you, your friend and everyone around. Imagine that that light moves through you as a conduit, from another, Greater Source, and as it does so, you can feel the same positive energy and blessing that you wish for your friend. Imagine these as positive gifts, increasing, growing and positive healing-as-adding, completing or strengthening. Continue, until you feel a sense of completeness and imagine yourself, returning to your own body feeling refreshed and blessed.

As I said, I cannot guarantee results beyond those produced by positive intent. But recent research shows that prayer, meditation and positive intent are powerful aids to healing.

There are also those times when it becomes necessary to attend to someone that you love as they are dying. Often this is a place and time when you and they know that there is nothing to be done except to wait and pray. This is often the most awkward of times. Here, as in a time of non-terminal illness the meditation that we just reviewed can be very useful. But there is much more that can be done, especially if you already have some training in hypnotic technique or the NLP language patterns.

Most people in the West have very little idea of death as a process and less idea of the fact that getting through the dying is often the hardest part for the person in the bed. In the old days and in other cultures, there has been the idea of a good death, helping the dying person through with the kinds of thoughts and experiences that might be useful to the passage. NLP provides extraordinary tools that can be used to comfort the dying.

One of the first things that comes to my mind is how we can make this easier. If they're in pain, can we use our tools to alleviate that pain? The answer, of course is yes. People who are dying are often either heavily drugged or at least semi-comatose. In these states they are highly suggestible and you can use that to turn their attention to the eternal and away from their present discomfort. Now, this is not the place for evangelization or manipulation. It is not the place to impose your beliefs on them. These kinds of things should be limited either to universals of human experience, the beauty of a flower, the sun at dawn and other powerfully evocative scenes or religious images that they are fully committed to. If you don't know what they believe, stay with neutral images of beauty.

Several years ago, an old friend was dying of a brain tumor. She was in a great deal of discomfort and moved in and out of consciousness. During the week of her dying, I spent as many hours as I could at her bedside. As she was a devout Christian there was a wealth of images that could be used to draw her attention away from the pain and towards the wonders of eternity that she expected. She knew that she was dying and there was no need to tiptoe around the issue.

Since she was a Christian, there are things that every Christian wonders about that create a perfect context for using the power of multi sensory evocation to ease their discomfort in a time of pain.

I wonder, I would say, if you can begin to see, off in the distance, the rainbow hues of angel's wings. I've been told that they shine and glisten and sparkle like diamonds. Someone once told me that they shine so bright it almost hurts to look. Have you seen the sparkles and flashes of their presence? I sometimes imagine that the sound of their wings is like fractal choruses of unimaginable complexity, singing walls of joy, breaking out into a thousand rainbow-hued harmonies of light, and every voice vibrates with blessing and transcendent joy. HAVE YOU HEARD THEM? Or have you felt the stirring of their wings, like a wind that cools, and blesses, and refreshes with whispers of their song, and reflections of their rainbow glories? Listen now, there, ... and there, just the hints, ... the slightest echo sparkling with wonder... sparkling and shimmering, moving in dances of light and blessing, moving in choruses of pure delight. Did you see that? Just there. And there. And all the while their love is warming, wondrous heart-felt blessing, songs, deeper down, further up, more and

more.

You can weave cadenced suggestions based on the simple theme of the fractal sparkles and choirs of holophonic counterpoint for a long time. You don't have to be a particularly good poet or hypnotist. All you need to know is what kinds of images and sounds would they find most comforting. How can you weave a set of sensory images that will awaken them to their best hopes and draw them away from their pain? It might be something as simple as describing children playing with clear descriptions of their joy and laughter, repeating their words and adding the details of the sky and place.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN: Religion, Permissions and Context.

One of the important things to emerge from these studies, at least in my own life, is the observation that so many people are doing the same things and calling it by different names.

For many years I was deeply involved in the Pentecostal church. I spoke in tongues (still do), laid hands on people for healing, called upon God for direction and blessing. Because of the doctrinaire context, I worked very hard to define away similarities between what WE were doing and what those other people (the heathens) were doing. As time went on and I began to mature in faith beyond the black and white us and them of fundamentalist Christianity, a few things began to occur to me. One of the first was the idea that God is bigger than any of us.

Pentecostalism is an evangelical faith. It holds that it is the duty of every believer to 'win souls for Christ.' Usually this means getting people to recite the sinner's prayer and to invite Jesus into their lives. On this level it is relatively benign. Taken in its simplest form, it asks people to believe that God loves them so much that he would offer His own Son to pay the price of their redemption. As it stands, it's not a bad message. Typically, however, the practice includes such things as confessing that you are a sinner and impressing upon the prospect that they are doomed to an eternity of torment in a literal Hell. The practice, however, is usually not limited to simple faith in God's love. It often includes a set of necessary doctrines that have to be accepted in order for you to **really** be saved. These doctrines are typically summarized in the Nicene Creed.

Some years ago, doing my duty as a member of the faithful, I found myself faced with a Jehovah's Witness at work. She was a nice enough person, a hard worker but, according to my understanding, she had **The Faith** wrong, and it was my duty to set her straight. I'm sure that she felt the same way about me. Over a period of several years she and I would go to it, each respectfully casting anathemas back and forth, doing our best to threaten the other into the proper view of the Kingdom on pain of eternal damnation.

One day, I found myself thinking about the essence of the Gospel—God loves you and you should love Him in return. He proved it in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Trust in that love and you're in. It occurred to me that defining the Gospel in that way left me with no argument with the Jehovah's Witness. It was not a matter of doctrine, it was a matter of God's love, and for all I could tell, she believed in that love as much as I did. I stopped fighting and began to treat her like a sister.

From early in my childhood, I have had an interest in psychic phenomena. One of the first books I recall reading as a young child was a book about ESP and psychic phenomena.<sup>[43]</sup> As early as the sixth grade I was trying yoga and trying to enhance psychic abilities with hypnosis<sup>[44]</sup>. When I became a Christian, however, all of these pursuits were put aside. If we had precognitive events they were not ESP, they were gifts of knowledge. If there was a healing, even if your hands warmed, just like the Reiki masters describe, even if you could feel the energetic field around a person, just like energy healers do, we defined the similarities away. When Buddhists or Hindus meditated, they were under demonic influence, when we did many of the exact same things, we were serving God.

As time went on, I began to realize that the differences in practical reality were very small. I realized that all people everywhere had a hunger for spiritual experience; that wherever you went this experience entailed a turning inward and a surrender into the deepest center of reality. As a Christian, much of my effort in prayer was directed at learning how to surrender completely to the life of Christ that dwelt in my heart of hearts. Now, years later, I can see that whatever the name may be, the direction and intent of all spiritual practice is essentially the same; resting down into the pure consciousness of the eternal.

As I have considered this proposition from various perspectives, I have come to understand the essential unity of all faiths and how each functions to provide a set of contexts, permissions and definitions that make spiritual attainment possible. Each group, whatever its defining creed, provides a set of definitions that allows its faithful to conceptualize and move towards the ability to take hold of and to grasp the unnamable and unspeakable reality that lies beyond all words. Whether it is the Love of Christ, the clear light of Buddha consciousness, the overwhelming complexity of Kabbalistic meditations, the dance of the Sufi mystic or the flow of Tao in realization of the moment, each is only a conceptual tool and a set of permissions for approaching the Eternal.

Permissions are important. As little children we are all taught that there are things that we may and may not do. There are other things that we must not do. As we mature, we discover that some of these prohibitions were for our own good in all circumstances while others were only meant to guide us while we were still children. My father and mother always insisted on strict table etiquette. The fork had to be used with one hand for eating and the other hand when used with a

knife for cutting. The table was set with the fork to the left and the knife and spoon to the right. One never ate with one's fingers. But there were times when my father seemed to egregiously disobey those rules. In response to our complaints he would reply, "When you know the rules, then you can break them."

In general, each religious culture prescribes certain modes of spiritual access that guarantee a certain mastery of the symbols and ideas by which it is framed. These ideas are the conceptual tools that we use to reach the first levels of revelation. For me, in Christian practice, it was a clear belief in and personal experience of the love of God. This became both the key to understanding the meaning of Christianity and also the key that freed me from some of its lesser manifestations—anger, self-righteousness, judgmental spirit, legalism.

Every set of beliefs and techniques that we come upon, provides us with slightly different tools for grasping and comprehending the possibility of the eternal. Each one provides significant tools.

Recently, I have been looking carefully at a paper by Henry Corbin regarding the realm of the *imaginal* <sup>[45]</sup>. Corbin posits that in Shiite mystical literature there appears a third realm that is neither flesh nor spirit but is, nevertheless, perfectly real. He calls this realm the *imaginal*. He spends some time discussing its attributes and then produces a wonderful metaphor. Entering this kingdom works like this: imagine what it would be like if you placed a drop of oil in your hand, and no sooner does it touch the palm of your hand but it emerges on the other side of the hand. This image intrigued me. What would it be like to step up to a mirror and find that as you touch the mirror, you are transported into the reverse mirror world? In many ways this is a variant of the swish pattern. As you become aware of the desired state imagine that you can reach out and touch it and as you touch it, you become it.

The logic of trance and meditative states is somewhat different from the logic of waking consciousness. Moving from one place to another or from one state to another is accomplished by reaching out with the heart, the imagination, with desire. It is reflected in reports of the spiritual realm where thinking of a place transports the individual there instantly. This is, at very least a description of unconscious process.

In order to imagine a thing, we must create it within us, having created it within, we can become it, because it is already part of us. In NLP we use the same process when we act as if something were true or imagine what it would be like to take on a certain attribute. Imagination invokes the same physiology as the real experience. This is the root of value in role-playing; it is also the root of empathy, putting yourself in another's situation. Whenever you remember something or imagine something you actually create and awaken that physiology.

In spiritual practice it appears in Buddhist deity meditation, where the practitioner carefully creates the *imaginal* image of the deity and his or her attributes. It is reflected in the spiritual exercises of Ignatius Loyola and is also reflected in Christian literature at II Corinthians 3:18, where Paul describes Christian transformation "from glory to glory" as one focuses on the revealed nature of Jesus.

In NLP the same process appears and is enhanced in the swish process. In its most basic form, the desired feeling state is visualized first as a small dot in the midst of a representation of one's current state. Although small, dark and indistinct, the dot is understood to contain a representation of your own being, experiencing the desired state, or the current positive state multiplied many times. Suddenly, almost without warning, imagine that the spot quickly brightens, becomes filled with color, energy and movement and expands to fill you, wash over you and engulf you in the expanded experience.

In spiritual life, distance is measured by similarity. <sup>[46]</sup> This is the root idea of sympathetic magic. There is a vast spiritual literature that tells us how there is no separation, that we are all one. Part of the aim of these exercises is to awaken the possibility of that perception as a reality. It is not reaching out to grasp something new or foreign; it is opening within to find that it is all there.

To see a World in a Grain of Sand

And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,

Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand

And Eternity in an hour. <sup>[47]</sup>

One day, some years ago, it may have been Easter Sunday or Palm Sunday; I was on my way to have an infection on my heel treated at an emergency medical center. As I drove down a rural road, past an abandoned orchard, I had a vision of Jesus. In the vision, he was walking through the fields and orchards. Before him the fields were gray and barren, but as he passed through everything came to life. Birds sprang into song, the fruit trees blossomed, and flowers sprang forth. The

living fecundity of spring and new life emerged where-ever he passed. Like a living ship, he left a wake of new life where-ever he stepped. Implicit in the vision was the sense that He is in us and in that knowledge, every day is spring and every day is Easter. We carry within the seeds of resurrection life and daily have the capacity to awaken it in others.

Several years passed, until one January, when Florie and I went to Sedona, Arizona. We spent the whole time walking through the mountains and the vortices, soaking up the beauty and taking, literally, thousands of pictures.

On the second day, after a morning at the Airport Vortex, we found ourselves at the chapel of the Holy Cross; one of the power spots there. As we sat in the chapel, the spirit broke over me, overwhelmed me and as I sat there sobbing, I realized deeply, personally and on a fundamental level, that all of this beauty, all of the healing that it implies, all of the life that it manifests, lives within each and every one of us. The beauty of those mountains was part and parcel of what it means to be truly human. The healing that that beauty heralds is the eternal resurrection of an eternal Easter which each of us brings and can communicate to one another. Beyond sects, beyond religion, it is the unifying principle of life that strains to Be Awakened in every life. It is the fallow field springing to life. It is the broken limb finding new kinds of strength and the old soul discovering new capacities for understanding and growth. It is not a technique or a system of practice, but the gentle call of spirit to spirit through love and kindness and the appreciation of beauty on a deep level that awakens life, and healing, and grace.

It is in you, it is in me. It lies dormant in everyone and only needs a little coaxing to awaken.

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## ENDNOTES

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[1] Addiction Spectrum Disorder is the term I choose to use to describe the continuum of compulsion related difficulties that include such problems as gambling, shoplifting substance abuse, dependence and addiction.

[2] Jean Piaget suggested that human kind should be named *homo ludens* because it is through play that we learn to fully manifest our potential as humans.

[3] A nominalization is a word without a physical referent. In NLP it is typically described as a verb that has been turned into a noun. To understand it properly, you must turn it back into a verb and describe the action to which it points. In general, they represent a category that can be filled with almost any content.

[4] The Tao Te Ching a translation by Stan Rosenthal. <http://www.clas.ufl.edu/users/gthursby/taoism/ttctan3.htm> Section 1. The Embodiment of Tao.

[5] Ibid., Section 11. The Utility of Non-Existence.

[6] Areyeh Kaplan. *Sepher Yetzirah*.

[7] Haule, John Ryan (1990). *Divine Madness: Archetypes of Romantic Love*. Boston: Shambhala

[8] Ibid., the quote is from Rumi, *The Longing: Teaching Stories and Sacred Letters*, Versions by C. Barks and J. Moyne. Putney, VT: Threshold Books, 1988, p.58. And is found on Haule's website: <http://www.jrhaule.net/dmRumi.html>

[9] Reps, Paul and Senzaki, Nyogen. (1998) *Zen Flesh, Zen Bones*. North Clarendon, VT: Tuttle Publishing. Excerpted at <http://www.101zenstories.com> No.29. No Water, No Moon.

[10] 101 Zen Stories, No. 21. The Sound of One Hand.

[11] The original research is found in two articles: Newberg, A. B.; Alavi, A.; Baime, M. and d' Aquili, E. G. (1997). Cerebral Blood Flow during Intense Meditation Measured by HMPAO-SPECT: A Preliminary Study. *Clinical Nuclear Medicine*. 23(58). Newberg, A. B.; Alavi, A.; Baime, M.; Mozley, P. D. and d' Aquili E. G. (1997a). The Measurement of Cerebral Blood Flow during the Complex Cognitive Task of Meditation Using HMPAO-SPECT Imaging. *Journal of Nuclear Medicine*. 38(95). Further discussions of the material can be found in the Newberg and D' Aquili entries in the References.

[12] Both this quote and the next are from *The Varieties of Religious Experience*.

[13] References to the basic NLP tool set refer implicitly to the works of Richard Bandler and John Grinder, Robert Dilts, Leslie Lebeau, Judith Delozier, Steve and Conniera Andreas and other pioneers in the field. The Submodality distinctions are exhaustively reviewed in Bandler and MacDonald's *Insiders Guide to Submodalities*.

[14] The overloading of conscious memory depends on the magic number,  $7 \pm 2$ , as originally described by George Miller in 1956.

[15] This appears in Erickson's report of an extended exploration of hypnotic phenomena with Huxley. The paper is reproduced in its entirety in *Patterns I*.

[16] This presupposition is in part an interpolation from recent work on the midbrain dopamine system and its relationship to motivational states. Relevant research comes from Austin and Vancouver, 1996; and Antoine Bechara, 2005. Marghanita Laski's work on Ecstasy has also been important in framing these criteria.

[17] See Robert Dilts' *Strategies of Genius*, or *Changing Belief Structures with NLP*.

[18] See Gray, Richard M. (2001). Addictions and the Self: A Self-Enhancement Model for Drug Treatment in the Criminal Justice System. *The Journal of Social Work Practice in the Addictions*, 2(1); and Gray, Richard M. (2002). The Brooklyn Program: Innovative Approaches to Substance Abuse Treatment. *Federal Probation Quarterly*, 66(3), December 2002.

[19] This idea comes out of the classical experiments by Stanley Schacter and Dutton and Aron. Both sets of researchers discovered that the meaning of a feeling was determined by the context in which it appeared. C.S. Lewis made the same point elegantly in a discussion of glossolalia in his radio lectures published in The Weight of Glory and Other Essays.

[20] See, for example Bechara, Antoine; Damasio, Hanna and Damasio, Antonio R. (2000). Emotion, Decision Making and the Orbitofrontal Cortex. Cerebral Cortex, Vol. 10, No. 3, 295-307; Damasio, A. R. (1999). The Feeling of What Happens: Body and Emotion in the Making of Consciousness. New York: Harcourt; and Freeman, Walter J. (1998). The Neurobiology of Multimodal Sensory Integration. Integrative Physiological & Behavioral Science. Vol. 33, Issue 2.

[21] For a particularly clear explanation—as clear as such things can be—see: Walter J. Freeman, Consciousness, Intentionality, and Causality. Journal of Consciousness Studies 6 Nov/Dec: 143-172, 1999

[22] Varela, F.; Thompson, E. and Rosch, E. (1991). The Embodied Mind: Cognitive Science and Human Experience. Cambridge: MIT Press.

[23] See especially, Bandler, Richard and MacDonald, Will. (1987). An Insider's Guide To Submodalities. Moab, UT : Real People Press.

[24] The idea of spinning the feeling comes directly from the work of Richard Bandler who uses the technique in his DHE materials.

[25] For a discussion of the archetypal self and the Jungian and Maslowian aspects of the program see the entries under the author's name in the references.

[26] As noted, this initial list of states is taken almost directly from Carmine Baffa's work at <http://Carmine.net/geni/geni0001.htm>. Although I have changed the descriptions and shifted some of the criteria, the original list is his.

[27] See, for example: Boals, G. (1978). Towards a Cognitive Reconceptualization of Meditation. Journal of Transpersonal Psychology, 10(2), 143-82; Bogart, Greg. (1991). The Use of Meditation in Psychotherapy: A Review of the literature. American Journal of Psychotherapy, XLV(3), 383-412; Goleman, D. (1976). Meditation and consciousness: An Asian approach to mental health. American Journal of Psychotherapy, 30(1),

41-54.

[28] Connirae Andreas uses a similar set of outcome sequiturs in her Core Transformations process. Her guiding question is: "If I have this experience fully and completely, what do I really want." This is another way to approach moving your attention to another dimension of the experience.

[29] The swish technique can be found in the Andreas' Heart of the Mind and Change Your Mind And Keep The Change; Bandler's Using your Brain for a Change and Bandler and Grinder's Transformations.

[30] The swish technique as applied here comes directly from the work of Richard Bandler, especially as presented in the various DHE recordings.

[31] Henry Corbin, "Mundus Imaginalis or the Imaginary and the Imāginal" Spring (1972), 6-7, citing Villiers de L'Isle-Adam, *L'Annonciateur* (epilogue).

[32] See his Meetings with Remarkable Men.

[33] Colin Wilson, Beyond the Iceberg, Magical Blend Magazine, No 58. October 1997.

[34] False consciousness is a term originally used by Karl Marx to describe misplaced class identifications. I use it here in an expanded sense that is consistent with its use in the Sociology of Knowledge and many spiritual traditions.

[35] There have been arguments as to whether or not anchoring is classical conditioning. In general the arguments get stuck on the fact that humans who are conscious of a conditioning process have the choice to assist or resist. For our purposes, the argument is unimportant.

[36] Many of the gestures are similar in form to classical Hindu mudras, or the gestures used in Islam while reciting the names of God. Experience has taught me that, unless these ideas are specifically invoked, the present context renders them irrelevant. The chance association typically has no impact on the quality of the state. If you have persistent problems with a gesture, create one of your own. Just make sure that it is simple, something that takes little or no thought to perform.

[37] Strategies of Genius, Meta Publications, 1995.

[38] For an excellent discussion of Saint Francis' life as a path of spiritual growth and discovery See John Haule's The Ecstasies of St. Francis. Great Barrington, MA: Lindisfarne, 2004.

[39] C.S. Lewis, The Abolition of Man. New York: Touchstone/Simon & Schuster, 1996.

[40] Stanley Krippner and Stephen Kierulff Becoming Psychic: Spiritual Lessons for Focusing Your Hidden Abilities, New Page Books, Sept. 2005.

[41] Barbara Brennan. Hands of Light. New York: Bantam, 1987.

[42] Spare's formulation as currently practiced by Chaos magicians can be found in Bruce Metzger's Book of Lies. While his and other formulations also include a sexual element, I have chosen to leave this dimension out as unnecessary. There is, in any event, a strong metaphorical link to the pattern of sexual arousal that should not go unmentioned.

[43] Dingwall, Eric J. & Langdon-Davies, John. (1956). The Unknown - Is It Nearer? The Truth About Extra - Sensory Perception. New York: Signet Key.

[44] As a matter of fact, in the seventh and eighth grades I was helping a High School student with an ESP project by hypnotizing his subjects.

[45] Henry Corbin, "Mundus Imaginalis or the Imaginary and the Imaginal" Spring (1972).

[46] This idea is attributed to Immanuel Swedenborg by Gary Lackman in ...

[47] William Blake, 'Auguries of Innocence'

