TIMOTHY GALLWEY, META-STATES AND THE INNER GAME

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In 1972 Timothy Gallwey wrote the book, *The Inner Game of Tennis,* which soon became a best seller. When I recently bought a copy of it, it was in the Sports section of the bookstore. And no wonder, the book is about tennis, playing tennis, and developing skills for learning to play better and become more masterful at the game of tennis.

Yet it is about much more than that. It is really about *The Inner Game* that we play in our mind *about* games. It is about the inner Frame Game that we play in the Matrix of our mind about anything and everything— relationships, business, health, learning, and even life itself. The book that is to this day in the sports section is really about human psychology, development, and learning. The book is about the *Frames of Mind* that enrich and support mastery and those that undermine and sabotage peak performance.

What Gallwey, as a sports coach, discovered in his work was *the Inner Game* that is so obviously a set of meta-states that provide the key frame of mind for performance and excellence. What I found in his work is a model that is so close to NLP and Neuro-Semantics that I'm really surprised that so few NLP people even know about it. The meta-state frames that he discovered are just a few basic ones: non-judgmental awareness, willingness to explore and experiment with feedback, trusting our natural self for accelerated learning, and a focused awareness that allows us to be in this moment.

After his first book Gallwey wrote, or co-authored, several other books, *Inner Skiing* (1997, with Bob Kriegel), *The Inner Game of Music* (1986, with Barry Green), and *The Inner Game of Work* (2000). All of these books highlight the ideas and model that he discovered in 1972 that make up what he now calls *the inner game*.

Ian McDermott pointed me to Gallwey's work. While talking about coaching, Ian shared some of his excitement about the inner game and how he had incorporated the focus on non-judgmental awareness in his book, *The NLP Coach*. Upon reading Gallway's works, I also found that they fit snugly inside of the Meta-States Model and our user-friendly version about meta-states, *Frame*

Games (retitled, *Winning the Inner Game*, 2006). They fit so snugly, in fact, that the connection between Gallwey's model of the *Inner Game* and the Neuro-Semantics model of *Frame Games* that it is uncanny. Given our focused adventure into Neuro-Semantic Meta-Coaching, questions have arisen recently regarding how the Inner Game fits with and corresponds with Frame Games. The following offers a partial answer to some of these questions.

- How does the Inner Game fit with or relate to NLP and Meta-States?
- Which is a meta-state, Self 1 or Self 2?
- Is Self 2 another way to talk about "Accessing Personal Genius?"
- What does the Inner Game add to NLP and Neuro-Semantics?
- What does NLP and Neuro-Semantics add to the Inner Game?
- How does the Inner Game fit or relate to Frame Games?

Gallwey's *the Inner Game*

To summarize the *Inner Game* I have heightened the key principles that stand out in Gallwey's books. While there are additional ideas and suggestions for improving performance, these are the primary ones. What follows also is a more extensive summary description that what you can find in Gallway's books.

1) There are two games that we all play, an Outer Game and an Inner Game.

The outside game is the one with outside opponents and is the game that most of us focus on and care about. The inner game is subtler, less easily noticed, and more quickly forgotten. "It is played out in the arena of your mind." (1986, p. 10).

> "The game ends up playing the person rather than the other way around. There are two reasons: Success in the Inner Game is very often the deciding factor between success in your outer game and failure. Second the Inner Game is a fascinating game in its own right—and the only game that can be 'applied' to all other games." (p. 11)

The inner game is about *attitude*. It is about being able to access the right attitude when we play so that we can be at our best. This is a positive attitude made up of focus, acceptance, fun, openness, learning, etc.

2) Learning is easy and incredible when we tap into our natural learning state. We interfere with natural learning by commands, demands, judgments, and criticism.

We are born fantastic avid learners. When we are curious, engaged, fascinated, and having fun, *learning* is easy, inevitable, and magical. Problems with learning arise when we *force* learning, frame learning with shoulds and should nots, and when the learning is full of content-driven instructions. Similarly, the biggest problem in performance is that we *interfere* with our learning. We interfere with it through judging ourselves, criticizing ourselves, distrusting ourselves (our natural self, potentials, abilities), becoming afraid of failing, losing control, messing up, etc.

Gallwey calls the interference *Self 1*. When *Self 1* gets in the way, we stop seeing the tennis ball as a ball and begin seeing it as a threat or as a challenge. *Self 1* intentions also get in the way. They are in the way of *Self 2*'s natural ease, grace, and learning. Non-judgment awareness enables us to stop the inference and to see the ball as a ball. The paradox is that we typically over-teach. When

we overload the conscious mind with too many instructions, performance suffers.

3) The key to success and top-performance is to ACT (Awareness, Choice, Trust).
Success arises from three resourceful states: *awareness* (knowing the present situation with clarity), *choice* (moving in a desired direction in the future) *and trust* (of one's inner resources as the essential link). These three factors make for success in any field.

> *Awareness* is non-judgmental awareness; it is awareness of what *is*.
> *Choice* is the power to recognize where we want to go with clarity and precision and ownership of one's power to take charge.
> *Trust* is trusting the natural learning powers of one's true self, *Self 2*. This is the self that expresses our potential, "the vast reservoir of potential within each one of us" that contains our natural talents and abilities.

4) Trying fails; Awareness cures.
Gallwey quotes Fritz Perls for this paradoxical phrase. He makes the point that the harder we try, the more confused things become. His "power of awareness" is what we call sensory awareness or acuity. In NLP we quote another line of Perls that contributes to our success: "Lose your mind and come to your senses." More often than not, we do not need more instructions, we need more sensory awareness and more doing. When we fill our head with content instructions, this typically creates more pressure within us to "try harder."

Awareness at the primary state level is awareness of the engagement we're involved in. This sensory awareness keeps us involved, interested, curious, and absorbed. It is the meta-state of *awareness* of our awareness and *awareness* of our concepts and ideas that take us out of the moment, out of the experience, and send us into our heads.

Pure awareness is seeing reality for what it *is*, seeing the sensory dimension clearly. Gallwey discovered that if he asked the tennis player to watch the seams of the ball, that this awareness instruction would invite the player into the moment and simultaneously disengage the higher level judgments and evaluations. "To see things as they are, we must take off our judgmental glasses" (1974, p. 25). Such pure awareness allows us to then just observe and just report.

To simply *accept* reality for what it is, to accept the reality of our stroke, the return of the ball, our response *as it is* acknowledges the *is*.

> "Acknowledgment of one's own or another's strengths, efforts, accomplishments, etc., can facilitate natural learning, whereas judgments interfere. . . . Acknowledgment of and respect for one's capabilities support trust in Self 2." (1974, p. 30)

The same applies for changing old habits.

> "There is no need to fight old habits. Start new ones. It is the resisting of an old habit that puts you in that trench." (1974, p. 67)

Instead just freshly observe your responses now. Take interest in it, discover its range. Simply observe without interfering. Otherwise we get into the negative downward spiraling loops of the

dragon that we deal with in Meta-States. This occurs when we turn our thoughts and feelings *against* ourselves which we do with rejection, disowning, judgment, etc.

5) Permission to fail leads to success.

Here is another irony or paradox. If we do not allow ourselves to fail, failure becomes more and more semantically loaded with meaning. This prevents it from being part of the learning process, the trial and error learning that we used as infants when we first learn to walk. It prevents failing from being part of the feedback process which then helps us to refine our performance. Suddenly *failure* becomes so semantically loaded, our fear of it prevents us from succeeding.

> "Giving ourselves permission to fail sidesteps any concern we might otherwise feel about performance. It allows us to stop trying. When we allow this, we don't fail. It releases us from the fear of failure." (p. 31)

As we let go of the judging process, we regain permission to fail and to use such for feedback.

> "Letting go of the judging process is a basic key to the Inner Game. . . . When we *un*learn how to be judgmental, it is possible to achieve spontaneous, focused play." (1974, p. 19)

In Meta-States, we accomplish this by applying *acceptance* to what is, acceptance to the process of acting and getting feedback, and releasing the old taboos and prohibitions through giving ourselves permission to be human, to be fallible, and to accept reality on its terms.

6) We learn best via experiential learning.

Self 2 learns by discovery— by *doing* rather than *thinking about* doing. This exceeds the conceptual learning of *Self 1*. The problem is that when we over-value achievement above awareness, we lose control. Judging whether we are achieving or not, succeeding or not, winning over another or not —these are the concepts that get in the way.

> "*Awareness* is experiencing something directly; *thinking* is to conceptualize about what we are experiencing. The more we think about an experience, the less aware we become of the experience itself. As thinking increases, awareness decreases." (1977, p. 42)

In experiential learning, we still need instructions, but not those "cast in the bronze of dogma." We need "instructions" that are more like hints and guidelines. Then we can use them to guide our own personal discovery of how to apply the guideline to ourselves. In this, we are not so much *obeying* a rule as *discovering* a principle for how to play a particular Game.

7) Awareness is fed and nourished on sensory specific feedback.

Gallwey describes feedback as a mirror, as non-evaluative feedback that is grounded in fact. This is a coach's primary tool and because it is "vulnerable to becoming judgmental," it has to be handled with care.

> "The experiences which we call mistakes are actually valuable feedback which our bodies need in order to discriminate between what works for us and what doesn't and to make the appropriate corrections. What we need to eliminate is not the mistakes themselves, but our *fear* of making them and the consequent judgments, criticisms, and anger. Accepting errors we make less of them. Such self-judgment distorts perception, interferes with performance

and retards our abilities to learn and perform." (1977, p. 50)

NLP has long focused on the importance of feedback, that "there is no failure, only feedback," and in Neuro-Semantics we focus on avoiding the set up of a negative emotional state like fear about making a mistake. Recognizing that to fear or hate or reject a mistake creates a meta-state structure that turns our psychological energies against ourselves, we use the seeming "paradoxical" process of accepting mistakes and welcoming them.

8) Our focus of attention is the secret to mastery.

Attention is critical to all learning, understanding, and proficiency of action. It's only when we are giving our full attention to what we are doing that we can bring all of our resources to bear effectively.

> "Focus is the quintessential component of superior performance in every activity, no matter what the level of skill or the age of the performer. We do our best when we are focused." (2000, p. 43)

What is *focus*? Is it a skill that we can develop by learning a technique? No.

> "It is more a function of your motivations being lined up behind what you are doing. Interest, motivation, and choice all have a great deal to do with one's ability to focus deeply and to sustain that focus over long periods of time."

This describes what we call *the genius state* in Meta-States training (Accessing Personal Genius), the state of aligning all of our highest intentions so that we can step into an engagement that allows us to let go of time, self, and the world. In this focus state we are fully engaged in the moment, fully present. It is this engagement attention that creates a quietness to our mind inasmuch as we only have one thing on our mind. With all of our mind fully engaged, there is no noise interfering from other facets.

We have fully *entered into* the engagement. This is what *interest* means, to be *in* ("inter - est," *est*, to exist, *inter*, inside). This explains our focused con-*centration.* We are *centered* in and with something. It calls and pulls on us as an attractor in a self-organizing system. That's why focus is so easy. We experience *engagement attention* when we are there with interest, curiosity, and fascination. And, the more awareness we have, the less judgment.

9) Success involves getting the clearest possible picture of your outcomes.

This is what moves us toward our goals. In the context of kinesthetic learnings (like tennis, skiing, and golf) Gallwey says that we mostly need "imagery: sensory images. Movements are learned through visual and feeling images." (1974, p. 39). So that's what we need to provide for our Self 2 mind.

In designing goals, Gallwey also suggests that because three of the critical factors for success are performance, learning, and enjoyment, we enrich our goal-setting by setting not only performance goals, but also learning goals and enjoyment goals (2000, p. 89ff). In designing desired outcomes we therefore need to set goals about the performance and also learning goals and enjoyment goals.

This accords with the NLP Well-Formed Outcome pattern that provides a coaching model for setting realistic and compelling goals.

10) Success depends on mobility and flexibility.
Mobility refers to the ability to move in any desired direction without self-constraint. Driven by our deepest urgings, it is the quest for movement. This allow change to take place in an organic way, that is, through awareness and choice. We can then move toward our vision by having a clear picture of our goal, keep adapting and changing as we go, keeping our purposes clear and keep synchronizing our movement and direction. This enables us to invent it as we go, or as Gallwey put it,

> "If I can have the courage to acknowledge my desire as it exists, without necessarily knowing how to fulfill it, mobility can start." (2000, p. 129)

We speak about such "mobility" in terms of *flexibility* in NLP. "The person with the most flexibility in a system will be the one who will have the most influence in that system."

11) When we create 'think space' we can step back and make clear decisions.
Gallwey describes this using the acronym STOP: Step back, Think, Organize your thinking, Proceed. Using the metaphor of going up a mountain to get a larger perspective of the whole situation, he speaks about thinking about our thinking, about "putting distance between self and whatever you're involved in at the moment" (2000, p. 145, 150). This puts us back in the driver's seat to "run our own brain" as we say in NLP. It enables us to make the meta-move to a higher frame of mind thereby gaining a larger perspective. We do this through adopting different perceptual positions or stepping into a higher executive state of mind using Meta-States.

12) We coach best through getting into the head of our client.
The primary coaching tool for facilitating change is *transposing*, that is, taking second perceptual position to another person. The state of empathy is created by transposing ourselves into another's position. Timothy describes this as his way of first figuring out what people were doing as they played tennis that was interfering with their game. He said he learned to coach without judgments by seeking to discover how another person thinks and feels and keeping himself to feedback. This accords with the focus on rapport, matching and mirroring, taking second position, etc. in NLP.

Coaching for Transformative Change
If our primary difficulty is that we get in our own way and interfere in unnecessary and problematic ways with our own success, how do we change that?

- How do we get out of our own way?
- What is the pathway to change?
- How can we learn better?
- How can we transform these old habits?
- What can we specifically do to get out of our way?

Gallwey describes *change* as both learning and coaching. *Learning* for him is what we all do naturally. "Natural learning" is our birthright. And it is easy, graceful, and inevitable *if we can just*

get out of our way, stop the self-judgment, and stop our *Self 1* from interfering with our *Self 2*. This is where *awareness* (non-judgmental awareness) becomes so critical in the *Inner Game*. Frequently, he speaks about awareness as magical and curative *per se*. Frequently, that's all one needs.

When more is needed, this is where *coaching* becomes important. Is it any surprise that, as a tennis coach, Gallwey then moved into Business Coaching or that he uses the metaphor of a coach for describing growth, development, and change?

> "Coaching is an art that must be learned mostly from experience. In the Inner Game approach, coaching is 'the facilitation of mobility.' It is the art of creating an environment through conversation, and a way of being, that facilitates the process by which a person can move toward desired goals in a fulfilling manner. It requires one essential ingredient that cannot be taught: Caring not only for the external results but for the person being coached." (2000, p. 177)

In NLP we believe that people have all the resources they need, and only need to sequence and order their resources to create the very best maps and strategies for succeeding. Doing so means using experiential learning so that each individual finds his or her way of doing precisely that. Working with another person is mostly a matter of creating the right physical and inter-personal environment.

> "Coaching is eavesdropping in on someone's thinking process. The most important part of the job of a coach is to listen well. Effective coaching in the workplace holds a mirror up for clients, so they can see their own *thinking process.* As a coach, I am not listening for *the content* of what is being said as much as I am listening to the *way* they are thinking, including how their attention is focused and how they define the key elements of the situation." (182)

In NLP and Neuro-Semantics we constantly highlight the difference between structure (process) and content. The process structure of an experience operates at a meta-level to the content of the details of a person's story. And it is the structure that makes the biggest difference for transformation. The way a person thinks, sorts, codes, and perceives are summarized and encoded in the Meta-Model, the Meta-Programs, and the Meta-States models.

> "It is essential to the Inner Game of Coaching that the coach try to see from the point of view of the person being coached. By learning to listen to the client non-judgmentally, the coach learns the most important elements of the craft. Learning to ask questions that help clients reveal more and more to themselves is a natural outcome of such listening. The coach's questions are geared to finding out information not for the purpose of recommending solutions, but for the purpose of helping clients think for themselves and find their own solutions. Ideally, the end of every coaching conversation is that the client leaves feeling more capable of mobility." (188)

Again, this highlights how much we believe in each person's natural ability to find and nurture the resources that are within. By working at the meta-level of structure and process, we can best coach the person to find and customize their own strategies for success.

Coaching as a Meta-Conversation

What does a coach ultimately do with his players and his team? He *talks* to them. He uses words to encourage, to focus attention, to build trust, to fuel desire. It is the kind of *conversations* that makes the difference.

Noting that the coach is not "on the team" operationally, he says that it is often easier to establish a stepped-back perspective (a meta-state of a meta-perspective). And by standing outside the assumptions and demands of the performance momentum, "the coach can help the client to STOP: Step back, think, and organize before proceeding." (2000, p. 195). This is meta-coaching at its best, is it not? Gallwey even says that "Coaching doesn't require expertise in the subject matter." In fact, content expertise can actually interfere with meta-coaching.

> "When you know a lot, it's all too easy to start teaching. But coaching is about helping him discover what he already knows, or can find out for himself. Teaching takes a long time and is about imparting knowledge. Coaching can be viewed not so much as a process of *adding* as it is a process of *subtracting*, or *unlearning* whatever is getting in the way of movement toward the client's desired goal." (p. 210)

The Meta-States Inner Game

Without any theoretical foundation for the levels of the mind, the logical and psycho-logical levels of awareness, Gallwey came up with *Self 1* and *Self 2*.

> "A major breakthrough in my attempts to understand the art of relaxed concentration came when, while teaching, I again began to notice what was taking place before my eyes. Listen to the way players talk to themselves on the court: 'Come on, Tom, meet the ball in front of you.' . . . Who is telling whom what? Most players are talking to themselves on the court all the time. 'Get up for the ball.' 'Keep it to his backhand.' 'Keep your eyes on the ball.' 'Bend your knees.' . . . It's like hearing a tape recording of the last lesson playing inside their head . . . One day I asked myself, Who was talking to whom? Who was scolding and who being scolded. 'I'm talking to myself,' say most people. But just who is this 'I' and who the 'myself'?
>
> "Obviously, the 'I" and the 'myself' are separate entities or there would be no conversation, so one could say that within each player there are two 'selves.' One, the 'I,' seems to give instructions; the other, 'myself' seems to perform the action. Then 'I' returns with an evaluation of the action. For clarity let's call the 'teller' Self 1 and the 'doer' Self 2."

While all of this is very clumsy and awkward both conceptually and linguistically, it enabled him to separate two dimensions of or levels "self." Later he would identify *Self 1* as our interference containing our concepts about how things should be, our judgments and associations (several meta-states). He would then define *Self 2* as the vast reservoir of potential within each one of us.

> "If it interferes with your potential — it is *Self 1*.
> If it expresses your potential — it is *Self 2*." (1986, p. 17)

In terms of meta-states, *Self 2* is a primary state— it is our primary self, free and unencumbered with meta-level concepts, ideas, demands, commands, taboos, prohibitions, rules, etc. We are born as this *being-self* (Self 2) and then we get lots of interfering rules, ideas, limiting beliefs, toxic ideas, and un-useful maps in our heads at a meta-level, at a level *about* our *Natural Being-Self*. This makes

up an unnatural and *Self-Sabotaging* or *Self-Interfering* meta-state (Self 1). This is the dragon state that turns on oneself with rules, demands, judgments, rejection, anger, fear, dread, guilt, etc. This is what gets in the way.

In Gallwey's *Inner Game,* he seeks to create a better relationship between "conscious teller Self 1 and the natural capabilities of Self 2." We speak about this in meta-states as the relationship that arises whenever we bring one state of mind-emotion-body to another. In creating a meta-relationship between states, what is the quality of the interface? If we bring judgment or negative emotions to any previous state, we put ourselves at odds with ourselves, create a dragon state, that attacks ourselves. As a result, our mind, emotions, and body will pay the price.

How does Meta-States address some of the key *Inner Game skills*? Mostly in the meta-state pattern of *Acceptance, Appreciation, and Awe*. We begin with this is the pattern in *(Accessing Personal Genius* because *acceptance* builds up a non-judgmental mind of acknowledgment of what *is* and the willingness to welcome it into our world even if we are not delighted or thrilled about it. We do this to consciously build up ego-strength. *Appreciation* is accessed next and applied to self, talents, and life to build up self-appreciation so we can play to our strengths, focus on solutions, and counter-act the negative states of judgment or discounting. *Awe* is then access to let one's very perception shift from boredom and disinterest to seeing the sacred and preciousness in everyday life, in oneself, in others.

How Judgment Puts the Matrix into a Spin

If judgment means "the act of assigning a negative or positive value to an event" (1974, p. 20), then judgment is what prevents us from seeing what *is* and imposing our evaluations on things. In the Matrix Model, we identified this as lying at the heart of the Meaning matrix. It's how we give meaning to things. Of course, when we are evaluating things in terms of good or bad, right or wrong, for me or against me, we are seeing the world and the events of the world in terms of these ideas and concepts rather than what they *are* in themselves.

This activates the Intention matrix. If the ball coming at us *is* not longer a ball, but success or failure, being a hero or a goat, a reflection of our identity, etc., then our intention will shift from the primary level of *awareness intention* to a meta-level. Now we will be *trying hard* to succeed, to win, to shine, to not make a fool of ourselves, to prove ourselves, etc. Yet it is in this very *trying* that our muscles become tight and rigid, that we over-strive, and that we interfere with our best performance. It happens when playing tennis, making music, making a public speech, typing, asking questions, learning, etc.

As the judgments of the Meaning matrix frames things with these over-valued meanings, and the Intention matrix *tries* to perform, we become highly self-conscious in our performances which then interferes with learning, fun, and the quality of the performance. This begins the negative spiraling. We begin going round and round the judgment. The harder we try, the more self-conscious we feel. The more self-conscious we feel the more our ego gets involved and feels threatened. The more we feel threatened, the more we bring yet more judgments or fear of judgments against ourselves.

We then begin questioning and judging our Self. This activates the Self matrix. "What's wrong with me?" "I know better than that!" "I'm just no good at this; I always freeze up when I'm on the spot!" These self-judgments undermine one's sense of power and resourcefulness, thereby activating the Power matrix and becoming self-fulfilling prophecies. The more this continues, the more we fear that it will always be this way. And as we go more into a negative self-judgment state, the more remember other times like this. This activates the Time matrix. And then the Other matrix, "What will others think of me?" Then the World matrix, "Everybody will see this my failure and this will have consequences at home, at work, with friends, etc."

This vividly describes how judgment frames can set a whole Matrix into a spin. It initiates a hypnotic process where we set expectations frames and belief frames based on the judgment.

> "Once our judgmental mind establishes a self-identity based on its negative judgments, the role-playing continues to hide the true potential of Self 2 until the hypnotic spell is broken. In short, you start to become what you think." (1974, p. 21)

So what if we just stop? What if we just cut out the judgment? What if we raise our hand and swear that from this day forward we will stop judging ourselves? We will stop bringing negative emotions and thoughts against ourselves? This is precisely what we do in Meta-States training. And inevitably whenever I initiate that little ritual, the dragon within many people complains bitterly. Every time I bring this up on our international egroup– there are always people to challenge me on this. Gallway has noticed the same:

> "When asked to give up making judgments about one's game, the judgmental mind usually protests, 'But if I can't hit a backhand inside the court to save my life, do you expect me to ignore my faults and pretend my game is fine?' Be clear of this: letting go of judgments does not mean ignoring errors. It simply means seeing events as they are and not adding anything to them." (1974, p. 21)

Meta-States cues us about the factor of levels in our mind and in our experience. There are levels of awareness. Primary state awareness is awareness about some see, hear, feel, smell, or taste *experience* in the world. We call this awareness, *sensory-based awareness.* It is an awareness *engaged* with some event in the world and that demands we be present, and no where else, and that we be in this moment, and at no other time.

Meta-state awareness is awareness of our awareness. This moves us up into our head, into awareness about our memories and imaginations, about our ideas and understandings and beliefs, and expectations, and principles and all of the other meta-phenomena. In this awareness, we are not present or here. We are somewhere else. It's another kind of engagement and very useful at times, but not when we are seeking to be engaged in the world with someone or some thing.

The Art of Giving Instructions

To be a coach is to give instructions. But it is not to give *content* instructions as much as *process* instructions. And there is a big difference between such. Content instructions are generally all of the rules and regulations about how to play, the shoulds and shouldn'ts. Content instructions typically arise by watching the experts or someone performing at a high level of performance, and

then using the content information of that person's style as the model for how everybody else ought to do it. Yet it is this very premise that then undermines each learner from finding his or her best style and way. Content information is what Gallwey calls the interference of Self 1.

When a sports coach provides instructions about how to do something, these are usually the technical instructions that govern a given field whether it is tennis, skiing, gymnastics, etc. These typically come from the best practices and experts that have been modeled. This raises the question about how to "give these instructions" without it filling up the mind (i.e., Self 1) and causing interference with finding one's natural style? The answer lies in giving more awareness instructions than content. This allows the learner to find his or her own way.

The same applies for life coaches, executive coaches, organizational coaches, and business coaches. If we learn best through trusting our *Being Self* to learn, to use experience to make the best kind of learnings, then how do we handle the giving of instructions? If filling a person's mind with lots of *dos and don'ts, shalls and shall nots, shoulds and should nots* actually interfere with natural learning, then how do we provide instructions effectively?

> "The short answer is that a valid instruction derived from experience can help me if it *guides* me to my own experiential discovery . . . I believe the best use of technical knowledge is to communicate a hint toward a desired destination. The hint can be delivered verbally or demonstrated in action, but it is best seen as an approximation of a desired *goal* to be discovered by paying attention . . . and feelings one's way toward what works for that individual." (1974, pp. 50-51)

This means offering instructions as relative guidelines, to be experimentally tested, and adjusted to one's own self for usefulness and validity. Instructions are not absolute commands to be obeyed. The locus of control about it's validity should remain internal to the person and not posited on some external expert. The coach best coaches by asking questions that evoke exploration, awareness, discovery, and experimentation.

Gallway uses the *As If Frame* (although he doesn't call it that) as a technique for coaching. He calls "Asking for Qualities" and describes it as a form of role-playing. Using the *As if Frame*, he says imagine that he is a movie director and you are an actor who plays tennis and you take on and adopt various qualities as I call for as the director. So when you are called to adopt "supreme self-assurance" you just step into the role and play that part.

> "When a player succeeds in forgetting himself and really acts out his assumed role, remarkable changes in his game often takes place." (1974, p. 43)

Did Gallwey Know NLP?

In all of his books there is no indication that he does. Yet he writes as if he knows much of the NLP model. He uses the sensory systems of the visual, auditory, kinesthetic throughout his books and he even details out the visual, auditory, and kinesthetic features (and even using these terms). He even writes, "The map is not the territory; the concept is not the experience." (1977, p. 111) and yet gives no references for that quote from Korzybski. In fact, this is a major weakness in all of his books, he provides no bibliography or references in any of them. And while providing no references

or bibliography obviously undermines the credibility of the books, there is still much value in them.

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