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Edited and published by Joel P. Bowman and
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The SCS *Beyond Mastery* Newsletter

Welcome ... and Happy New Year!

Here is your *Beyond Mastery Newsletter* for January 2009. The first thing you will have noticed is the new name of the newsletter. One of the things we discovered in the process of writing this issue of the newsletter is that someone has beaten us to trade marking the phrase, "TimeWarp Technologies." As is often the case, the timing is perfect for introducing the new name, *Beyond Mastery*. For those who track such things, we will maintain the same volume and numbering sequence to ensure correct sequencing of past issues.

We consider the change significant. The term, *TimeWarp*, focuses primarily on the discovery that it is never too late to have a happy childhood and the changes that can bring in the present and into the future. The phrase, *Beyond Mastery*, focuses on developing strategies that encourage greater freedom, awareness, and joy. Next month, the newsletter will arrive from a new address: beyondmastery@scs-matters.com. Be sure to make a note of it and add the *beyondmastery* address to your email "white list."

This newsletter may be duplicated and distributed to those who share an interest in Energy Medicine, neurolinguistics—especially Neurolinguistic Programming (NLP)—and spirituality.

This month the featured articles are "A Sign of the Times," by Debra; "Turn the Page," by Joel; "The Waiting Room," by Debra; and "Cultivating Sustainable Pleasure," by Joel.

A Sign of the Times

A mom of two young children totaled her vehicle very near her home. When the kids saw the vehicle, the older said passionately, "What are we going to do without a car?" The dad, seeing a teaching point, replied, "We can get another car, but we can't get

another mom." "We can get a step-mom!" was the quick reply, a sign of our current culture. A sign of the times....

Regardless of your political point of view on the legalization of gay marriage, you might want to read an article by Lisa Miller in the December 15, 2008, issue of Newsweek. Ms Miller says that "while opponents of gay marriage often cite Scripture, what the Bible teaches about love argues for the other side."

What really captivated me about the article was not its subject. It was the wisdom tucked within the words that caught flame in my heart and mind. Here is just one paragraph that will touch you, too:

The great Bible scholar, Walter Brueggemann, emeritus professor at Columbia Theological Seminary, quotes the apostle Paul when he looks for biblical support of gay marriage: "There is neither Greek nor Jew, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Jesus Christ." The religious argument for gay marriage, he adds, "is not generally made with reference to particular texts, but with the general conviction that the Bible is bent toward inclusiveness."

This is the thing that most affected me during my years in training to become an Ordained Minister of Reunion. For the first several years of our study, the question about our individual spiritual practices never even came up. We were busy with the workshops; learning how to listen, learning how to teach, learning how to heal, learning how to facilitate. We were in the process of learning to live the *Bible's bent toward inclusiveness*.

And by the time you have learned that, the recognition that someone worships in a religious tradition you have never even heard of (or even one that you have heard is evil), and that people have photos of

spiritual or religious leaders you have never seen sitting on their personal altars or tucked inside their purse or wallet, really does not mean anything because you already know that it is by the fruits of the spirit one will be seen for who you really are.

The Hebrew Scriptures, which are also the Christian Old Testament, provide a wonderful story about this wisdom in the story of King Solomon. Two women, sometimes reported to be prostitutes, are embroiled in a fight over a new born infant. The two women had given birth, and one child died in the night. Both women were claiming the living child to be her own. In a stroke of genius, Solomon's suggestion is that he will divide the child in two.

Of course, because you can think ahead, you know where true wisdom comes from. He did this to determine its real mother. Faced with the death of her child, the true mother is revealed to him when she is willing to give up her child to the other woman rather than have it harmed. Solomon then gave the child to the real mother. What a sign of the times. Solomon declared that the woman with compassion was the true mother.

Likewise, perhaps the God/Creator/Divine with compassion is the true origin of life. Have you thought what it must be like if there really is only one eternal source of life? To watch the arguing and the fighting and the hatred and the killing that is done in the name of the divine? Even an average Joe can see that this would not be a very pleasing thing to see.

I have thought about that as I listened following the current election here in the U.S. and I was reminded of a story I heard about Les Brown, in a lecture titled, "We Are Going To Eulogize But!" Les shared how a friend came to him for advice. Everything that Les suggested, the person had a good reason why it would not work. Finally, Les said to him, "You seem to want to win this argument, but you better well know that you want to lose this one. You want me to be right. You want what I am saying to make sense, and you want things to work out. If you win this argument, you will be the biggest loser."

Whether you voted for the president elect, whether you voted for his opponent, or even those who voted against the president elect—we are essentially all in the same boat as that friend of Les Brown. There is not a "no peeing" section in the pool. We want the 44th President of the United States to have a great presidency, because if he does, we all win.

But this is not really about that. This is about your ability to open your heart so wide that your life is governed not by a democrat or a republican, but by the source of the wisdom of Solomon, and the compassion of Jesus. What is it that lets this be true for you now? Whatever that is, a sign of our times is that we are the ones we have been waiting for. If not us, then who? If not now, then when? And if every one of us can just experience a bit more of that truth with a capital "T," this may just be a fantastic year.

Turn the Page

In "Turn the Page," Bob Seger laments the difficulty of being on the road and needing to "turn the page" to be able to deliver a good show when he's "up on the stage." Some people might use the metaphor of "shifting gears" for changes of that variety. Others might say, "Turn a new leaf." The idea is that changing your state will lead to your being able to achieve a desired outcome. For obvious reasons, New Year's Day has become the ultimate symbol for turning pages, turning leaves, and shifting gears.

New Year's resolutions are virtually universal. People often write lists about their goals for the year, stating how they are going to stop smoking, lose weight, get into better physical condition, read more books, or whatever they would like to achieve in their personal and/or professional lives. Most people, like Bob Seger, find it easier to turn the page when they have opportunity to change contexts. Seger moved from being on the road to being on the stage, and the stage and audience were anchors for the new state. The challenge is to be able to turn the page when the context doesn't seem to change.

New Year's simply does not provide much in the way of change in context. The end of December and the beginning of January look and feel much the same. While most ancient peoples had some kind of midwinter festival, the concept of using the New Year as a time to "turn the page" seems to have originated in ancient Babylonia some 4000 years ago. The custom was adopted by the Romans, who placed Janus at the head of the annual calendar. Janus, the god of beginnings and the guardian of doors and entrances, had two faces and could look back at past events and forward to the future.

When we enter a new year, we are metaphorically stepping through a doorway leading from the past into the future. In terms of keeping New Year's resolutions, however, the future seems to be essentially the same as the past. Most New Year's resolutions are quickly forgotten at least in part because of what Virginia Satir called "the lure of the familiar." Once a behavior becomes habitual, it operates below the level of conscious awareness. Without a specific change in context, it is easy for habitual patterns of behavior to reassert themselves.

Because the most common New Year's resolutions are about changes in what's usually called "lifestyle," creative changes in context help serve as reminders that you have turned the page. In NLP terminology, turning the page is a pattern interrupt. The habitual behavior or state is interrupted, allowing the new behavior or state to take its place. Bob Seger changed both state and behavior when he moved from the bus to the stage.

This is an example of what is often called "state-dependent learning." A well-known study of medical students showed that if they learned material in one location (a lecture hall) and were tested in a different location (a cafeteria), they performed poorly. If they

were tested in the location where they had learned the material, they did well. The cues (visual, auditory, and kinesthetic) from the environment exerted a powerful influence on behavior.

As you look back at last year and forward to the year that lies ahead, in addition to resolving to eliminate behavioral patterns that no longer serve your purpose and establish new ones, think about the context in which the behaviors occur. When had you typically engaged in the behaviors? Where had you typically engaged in the behaviors? Now ... do something to change the context of the where and the when.

Changing the context will do two things for you. First, it will provide a signal to your unconscious mind that you are serious about changing the behavior, and, second, it will provide you with cues (visual, auditory, and kinesthetic) that the old behavior no longer applies. Both of those will facilitate your changing in the ways you most desire.

The changes don't have to be major, but they do need to be observable—visible; audible; or perceivable by smell, taste, or touch. Rearrange your furniture. Give your old stuff (furniture, clothing, TV/stereo, books) to charity and buy something new. If smoking cessation is your goal, get rid of your ashtrays and everything else that allows you to smoke in your house and/or car. If losing weight is your goal, put your dinner plates in storage and start using salad plates for everything. If getting in better physical condition is your goal, find ways to make exercise enjoyable, whether it's a new pair of running shoes, a gym membership, bicycle, treadmill, or stair-stepper. Put what you decide will best serve your purpose in an obvious location. It would be hard, for example, to forget about a stair-stepper if it is in the middle of your living room.

Of course, before you put a stair-stepper in your living room, you would do well to make sure that it is a form of exercise you will enjoy sufficiently to make using it your new habit. After establishing using the stair-stepper as your new habit, you will be able to move it to a new location while retaining the habit. The idea is to make the desired behavior both obvious and also easy, while making the habit you are putting behind you less obvious and more difficult.

The Waiting Room

Conversation around the idea of what a helpful attitude is while you are in the process of some sort of change has taken me to thoughts of the waiting room. I know fathers are allowed to be with mothers during labor and delivery now, but that has not always been the case. Even before hospital births, women were attended by women (and later by male doctors), and fathers were not present. In the days of hospital labor and birth that I am intimately familiar with, the mothers were in labor in a communal "labor room," and then at the point of transition (what fun), moved to the "delivery room." I will not even go into the

horrors of the use of gas during this process, but suffice it to say, the dad was relegated to the waiting room.

Family and friends are relegated to the waiting room when a loved one is having surgery, too, whether that is inpatient or outpatient. Often the situations vary—ranging from minor (minor surgery is what someone else is having) to life-or-death. Everyone waits in the same room, usually with television blaring, and chairs that no one else would purchase because they are more like ancient torture devices than something you really want to sit in.

Most professional offices have some sort of waiting room, and some are downright comfortable, including lovely furnishings, piped-in music, nice amenities, and appropriate refreshments. I have been in hotel or resort lobbies that you would want to give up home for.

Life seems to present us with stages or phases that resemble the gamut. What is helpful if something you want is somehow out of your reach right now but seems to be a possibility? How do you manage your emotions and your thoughts in the meantime? I saw a book by that title once, and I think there is some real significance of paying attention, especially given what the current recognition of what is often called the law of attraction. Whether you are a follower of that teaching, or just have some common sense, what you are saying to yourself, what images you are making, and if you are staying cool, calm, and collected, you will have a very different experience of life.

Think about a couple who really wants a child. If their lovemaking becomes mechanical and every day without a pregnancy is felt as a failure, they would not be having very much fun. If, on the other hand, their lovemaking was about making love, enjoying one another, reveling in the mystery of conception, the waiting can be very pleasant.

An event like building a house has phases and stages, too. From finding the land and pouring the foundation, to framing the wall and putting on the shingles, every step of the building process is important. No decent builder would jump the gun and try to do the finish work before it was time. Farmers, too, seem to have a wonderful sense of what-to-do-when, trusting the planting, the growing, and the harvesting to unfold with from Nature's innate wisdom. Potters watch the clay, and bakers watch the bread, as though they are participating in a *something* beyond their own meager efforts.

In many ways, you can relax into the witness position, too, and the sense of trusting the process is key. Joel likes to remind me that the Shakers say, "When you pray, move your feet." He often goes on to say if he is hungry and prays for something to eat while continuing to sit in his living room watching TV, he can get pretty hungry. The old saying is *Shit in one hand and wish in the other and just see which one fills up faster*. Not very classy, but it does make a point.

What you want to notice, though, is how do you stay in a state that allows you to enjoy each step of the process, including that step we might call the waiting room? What do you need to be thinking for that to be true for you? How do you know that you are moving your feet and praying? Can you begin to truly recognize that so much is happening on your behalf at any given moment that you are in perpetual peace of mind? When you really let yourself experience ease, what are the thoughts and beliefs you are supported by?

Recently I met a woman who realized she was in the waiting room. The words that helped her find peace came from her religion and included phrases from the Christian scriptures, as found in the Old (Hebrew) and New Testament. Just hearing the words, "I know the plans I have for you, plans for good and not for ill," or "I will not leave you nor forsake you," and "You are a beloved Child of God," and "You are not alone," can be part of what enables you to slip into a good space. Other traditions, including philosophy might call this having your focus on the ontological mystery. I like that. I also enjoy thinking about it as being held in the loving arms of the divine. Maybe even though it has not all been revealed, yet, we have seen and heard enough to know that it is not over and just perhaps the best is yet to be....

Cultivating Sustainable Pleasure

Of all the rhetorical questions I have heard Richard Bandler ask over the years, the one that has had the most profound effect on me is, "How much pleasure can you stand?" When I first heard the question, I thought his reference was only to physical pleasure. In that context, I thought that I could stand a lot. His actual meaning, however, was much broader and included concepts associated with happiness and joy. In the broader context, my answer at the time would had to have been, "Not very much." At that point in my life, I had not developed the habit of cultivating sustainable pleasure.

For much of my life, I thought that how I felt was the result of the particular circumstances I was in. When I was in a "happy place," I was happy. When my circumstances weren't so rosy, I was unhappy. I was reacting to my environment and blaming it (or praising it) for how I felt. Debra and I have written about this subject in a variety of ways and places over the years. Debra likes to use the metaphor of the difference between a *thermometer* and a *thermostat*. Thermometers merely reflect the temperature, whereas thermostats determine the temperature.

We are all, of course, influenced by the ambient temperature wherever we are, but those of us who function like thermostats have cultivated the ability to change not only our own temperature, but also the ambient temperature around us. A thermometer has no choice but to register the ambient temperature, while a thermostat can actually set the temperature

based on what's appropriate. If we want more heat, we set the thermostat higher. When being cooler is appropriate, we turn the thermostat down.

The recognition of choice is the first step in cultivating sustainable pleasure. Most of us were brought up with the false idea that our environment was responsible for how we felt. Don Miguel Ruiz, author of *The Four Agreements* and other books about mastering one's emotions, refers to this process as "domestication." Domestication is the result of our being taught not only how to behave, but also how to feel. By using rewards and punishments, our parents and other adults in our early environments conditioned us to give external factors the power to determine how we feel. When we did well in school, our teachers praised us and perhaps our parents did the same. When we didn't do so well, we were punished in one way or another. Eventually, we learned to reward and punish ourselves based on our interactions with others and the external environment.

When we recognize that how we feel is a choice, we gain the ability to choose more pleasure. We also gain the responsibility. Abraham Lincoln is credited for having said, "Most people are about as happy as they make up their minds to be." Many people, however, avoid making up their minds to be happy by attributing their feelings to things outside their control. As long as you blame others and our external circumstances for how you feel, you avoid having to assume that responsibility yourself. Choice becomes possible when you recognize that you have the right and the power to choose for yourself.

This is not to say that being exuberantly happy is always an appropriate choice. At some point, most of us have experienced significant loss and felt appropriately sad. There's a difference, however, between feeling sad knowing that it is an appropriate choice, and feeling as though sadness has been thrust upon you for no good reason. When you know that you are choosing sadness at a particular time for a specific reason, you become increasingly aware of your ability to choose joy more of the time.

"Cultivating sustainable pleasure" is an agricultural metaphor that implies the planting of seeds, watering, weeding, and fertilizing to encourage growth and continuing production. An apple orchard, for example, will produce fruit year after year as well as the seeds required for growing new trees. The metaphor implies that individuals are responsible for planting, tending, and harvesting their crops. This concept is often called being "at cause."

Presupposing that you are "at cause" for your life, including your circumstances and your feelings, is a useful belief regardless of the degree to which it might be true. When you assume that your choices determine your circumstances, you are more likely to look at a wide range of possibilities than you would if you believed that your circumstances determined your choices. When you assume that your choices determine your feelings, you are more likely to choose

more joyful feelings. Presupposing that you are “at cause” also leads to actions that automatically create new opportunities for even more choices, which also amplifies your sense of joy.

If this is a new idea for you, it may seem strange. You may be thinking of a light switch that you choose to turn from “sad” to “happy,” but that’s not quite how it works. The switch is more like a rheostat or dimmer that has a range of emotions controlled by a dial. In one direction, you get more sadness. In the other, you have more joy. At first, you may wish to explore why you have chosen a particular setting at a particular time so that you can determine whether your choice is appropriate.

If you are feeling what is often called a “negative” emotion—such as fear, anger, or sorrow—discover the source of those feelings. Perhaps someone said something unkind, or perhaps you slid off the highway on a snowy day. Once you are aware of the external circumstance, look for and focus on counterexamples, external reasons that help you learn to reset your thermostat. The more you practice, the more control you will have over your degree of happiness. Before you know it, when asked the question, “How much pleasure can you stand,” your answer will increasingly be, “More all the time.”

Worth Reading

Bandler, R. (2008). *Get the Life You Want: The Secrets to Quick and Lasting Life Change with Neuro-Linguistic Programming*. Deerfield Beach, FL: Health Communications. Covers strategies for understanding how brains work, getting over problems, getting through difficulties, and getting to desirable outcomes. For a full review, see: scs-matters.com/books-NLP.shtml

Bandler, R. (2008). *Richard Bandler’s Guide to Trance-formation: How to Harness the Power of Hypnosis to Ignite Effortless and Lasting Change*. Deerfield Beach, FL: Health Communications. Covers inductions, applications, cautions, and sample scripts. For a full review, see: <http://www.scs-matters.com/books-NLP.shtml>

Beck, M. (2008). *Steering by Starlight: Find Your Bright Life No Matter What*. New York: Rodale. Stories and exercises to help readers bring out the best in themselves and others.

Covey, S. R. (2008). *The Leader in Me: How Schools and Parents Around the World are Inspiring Greatness, One Child at a Time*. New York: Free Press. Focuses on ways to develop communication, cooperation, initiative and individual talents.

Gladwell, M. (2008). *Outliers: The Story of Success*. New York: Little, Brown, and Company. Covers little recognized factors, such as birth dates and locations and cultural heritage, that contribute to success.

Wilson, T. D. (2002). *Strangers to Ourselves: Discovering the Adaptive Unconscious*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Covers the variety of ways we are

influenced by factors that lie below or outside of our conscious awareness.

New for 2009

Debra will be offering *Touch for Tots*, a two-hour workshop that is designed for parents or caregivers to learn basic energy techniques that provide something to do when nothing can be done to soothe a fussy infant or toddler, or the parent of the same!

Also on the horizon is *Wise Beyond Your Years*, open to those teens from a mature 12 to 17. This new program will include basic NLP skills for understanding yourself and others, energy awareness and self-balancing, chakra-based communication, sensory systems, eye accessing cues, and common metaprograms. If you are interested in either of these and you want to know more, including when and where they will be held, send email to debra@scs-matters.com.

What’s Coming Up?

For those with tight schedules and a desire to have this powerful tool kit, you can now earn certification as Practitioner or Master Practitioner of NLP in the most convenient way! This program is for you when you are highly motivated and committed to doing your reading and independent study. Register now for \$250 and receive your training manual. You can start now by joining us on the 4th Sunday of the month in January and most months in 2009 for ongoing study of NLP. The times are from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

The next date is 25 January. With the exception of February and May, the fourth Sunday of the month is reserved to ensure your ability to complete NLP certification in the most convenient way. NLP certification requires 10 days of training and the completion of a variety of “Home-fun” exercises. Begin the training now, and you’ll be well on your way to certification by next spring.

Each day will focus on experiential learning for you because you will already be familiar with the NLP terminology before each training day through having read the appropriate materials in the NLP training manual. Your progress can be tracked easily either by your participating in the NLP forum or by your submitting simple written process reports, whichever you prefer. The focus for the training days will include:

- Anchoring
- Submodalities
- Timelines
- Metaprograms
- Metamodel
- Milton Model
- Hypnosis, Trance, and Altered States

As part of our *Perpetual Tuition*, if you are already trained in NLP or SCS Healing with Language, you can attend to improve and update your skills at just \$25 a day. Space for these special days will be limited, so be sure to reserve your place early. Call/write now: (269) 921-2217 or debra@scs-matters.com

The real question is where you want to go next.... When you sponsor an SCS workshop, you have the advantage of bringing the workshop to you instead of going to the workshop, and your commission for sponsoring the event will undoubtedly cover the cost of your tuition—and perhaps even more.

To learn more about sponsoring “The Power of Presence: Seeing the Divine in Everyday Life (7 Keys to Joyful Living)” or any of the workshops in the SCS list of offerings, call Debra at (269) 921-2217, or send her a quick email message: debra@scs-matters.com

