

# **Out of the Box Coaching Newsletter**

**January – December 2007**



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# The Power of Metaphor

## A New Groove

by Mary Bast

Even if you don't have children or grandchildren, even if you've already seen it, start your New Year by renting "The Emperor's New Groove." In this movie, Emperor Kuzco wants to maintain his groove, his groove being all about him (in the language of the Sixties, no one else "grooves" on it).

This is akin to your idealized Enneagram self wanting what it wants (let's not label Kuzco's Enneagram style – he represents all of us at our most entranced). He's decided to give himself the birthday present of a water park on a beautiful mountain top, which happens to be occupied by one of the villages in his kingdom. No matter. Let the villagers find another home!

There's a slight wrinkle in Kuzco's plan, however. His recently fired administrator, Yzma, in a botched assassination attempt by her man Kronk, turns the Emperor into a llama. Watch the movie and let your right brain associate with the primal (llama) nature of change and learn how Kuzco gradually develops a new groove, one that returns him to his previous self but in a more fully human form. In Kuzco's association with the village chief and llama herder, Pacha, you'll see the evidence for what ancient yogis knew:

The very way we breathe holds our patterns in place, "a kind of habitual, automatic, mechanized process... these ruts in the road... can only be effectively disrupted by... direct physiological retraining. Insight is relatively ineffective in deconstructing habitual behavior... First, simply call attention to the process – without judgment of any kind... second, engage in activities that intentionally disrupt the pattern..." (Stephen Cope, *The Wisdom of Yoga*)

Those of you who've read our book and previous newsletters will recognize a familiar theme. Your clients change habitual behavior when you help them experience old patterns in new ways – not by ignoring or trying to overcome the ways they don't want to be, but by embracing, moving with, learning from, and modifying the patterns that have held them captive.

"The genius of the yogic strategy is the understanding that resistance and reactivity to patterns just create more problems: the Tar Baby Effect," writes Stephen Cope. Remember the Uncle Remus stories? The more Br'er Rabbit tried to get free of the doll made of tar and turpentine, the more stuck he got. Emperor Kuzco runs into the same problem – the more imperiously and selfishly he acts (even as a llama!) – the more stuck he gets.

One of my coach colleagues, Lynn Altizer, completed a thesis this year that included researching brain literature to understand the physiological and biochemical bases of emotion. She turned me on to James Zull's *The Art of Changing the Brain*. In Chapter 7, Zull offers a story so revealing about the power of right-brain learning I can only offer it as told:

"Science hadn't been Mary's thing up to then. My course was a venture in a new direction, and even though she was bright, she soon hit a roadblock. The topic was protein folding. Esoteric

as it sounds, it is almost impossible to understand biochemistry without a grasp of this subject, and Mary really struggled.

Then one day she came into class more agitated than usual. 'I figured it out,' she said, 'I finally found the right connection!'

I laughed out loud when she explained, 'Yesterday I saw a duck in the pond by my dorm. All at once, I remembered when I was a kid on our farm. My brothers would put a duck in a tub of water that had a cup of detergent dissolved in it. The duck would begin to swim around, and then it would sink to the bottom, quacking in terror! It was gross!'

'Don't you see, Dr. Zull?' she exclaimed. 'The duck sank because the detergent dissolved away the oil on its feathers. That's how a duck floats. The oil on its feathers keeps it on top of the water! That is exactly what happens with protein folding. The oily parts float away from the water!'

She was right. Exactly right! And from that time on, Mary began to excel in biochemistry. In fact it became her career. That connection between a duck and biochemistry changed her life!"

I hasten to add that no ducks were sacrificed for this story. So, fire up your neurons. Go watch a movie.

Groove!

## Where's the Leverage?

*by Clarence Thomson*

It used to be clear. If you had a psychological problem, you went to someone who talked, and hoped they'd talk you out of your problems. Mind problems were solved in the mind. If you had a physical problem, you went to a physical doctor, who did physical things to cure you.

That belief system is firmly in place, even though it's discredited from all sides. Psychologists don't give you exercise or diet or pills or potions. Doctors look at your blood, temperature and chemical ratios. They don't ask about your mother, spouse or those troublesome voices. The old discredited belief system is held together by money, tradition and academic disciplines.

But the recent advances in neuroscience, the use of psychotropic drugs and now evolutionary psychology have blurred the distinction. Evolutionary psychologists like Wilson and Pinker bristle at even a verbal distinction between mind and body.

All right, so the theory is that mind and body are one. Here's how that affects you as a coach. Take any problem: anger, procrastination, addictions of many stripes or simple (?) depression. Is ANY problem your client faces a problem in the body, in the neurology, in the chemistry? Do you recommend more carbs to increase serotonin if your style Six is procrastinating?

If your client's Enneagram problem creates a neurological pattern (and the latest research would affirm that), then is it even possible to change something that physical?

Right now in our culture, the leverage for change is assumed to be within the physical alterations. Many psychologists and school counselors are alarmed at how the institutions (school and insurance industry) prefer to change behavior by a physical intervention. Ritalin, anyone? And the hegemony of the physical is illustrated by the academic assignment of evolutionary psychology to the department of biology. They wouldn't dream of assuming the physical under the mental, but have no problem with thinking if it involves flesh, it's automatically biology.

But an Enneagram coach has an advantage. The newer scientific research is impressive. I study it avidly. However, long before electron microscopes and calipers of infinite precision, there were meditation, introspection and profound attention to conscious experience. This body of knowledge is as sophisticated, nuanced and intelligent as the papers delivered at Harvard on neuroscience. The Enneagram is as respectable a diagnostic tool as an MRI; it just diagnoses different aspects of the same reality.

The spiritual traditions within which the Enneagram developed helped people without drugs or chemical measurements. What did they use?

Given what I know about the spiritual traditions of both East and West, they seemed to have primarily used imagination. They told stories, they assigned symbolic actions, they enacted rituals and they paid close attention to their conscious experience. From the Koans of Zen and the Parables of Jesus to the rituals of Judaism and Hinduism these imaginative traditions informed and healed the whole person.

Because of cultural bias in the post-industrial West, we often fear our purely mental and imaginative interventions suffer by comparison with the dramatic results of chemical invasion. So allow me several coaching stories of imagination. Keep in mind, I mean imagination, not rational discourse. Al Gore is helplessly correct when he says our country is not being run reasonably. The underlying conviction that things would be better if we listened to reason is foundational. The hope that we will listen to reason is fragile.

A family I'd coached in other areas referred a 15 year old boy who had a phobia around ants. He wanted to mow lawns for the summer, but some of them harbored that dreaded insect. He told me his problem and as he did, he spoke in an image: "I'm a girl when it comes to ants." This was helpful. He'd transferred his fear of "being a girl" to being afraid of ants. So I told him "every ant hill has thousands of ants and they all look alike. Some of the ants are uncles and some of the ants are aunts. All of the ants have uncles and some of the ants have aunts." I went on in this confusing way for a while. He was grinning because he couldn't keep the aunt/ant narrative straight. So he trusted me to lead him through the ant hill. I concluded with several repetitions that no uncle ever thinks he's an aunt and no aunt ever thinks she's an uncle.

He now gets a silly grin on his face as he mows past ant hills. He deliberately stands near a hill, waiting for the physical reaction he used to get. Gets a bit cocky about it, but that's normal for a boy when you stop worrying you're a girl.

Sometimes a single metaphor, like a perfect drug dose, will solve a problem. Marshall was CEO of a young company. He was a Seven and like a lot of Sevens, he didn't handle conflict with women well. He was being bullied by the VP of marketing, Susan, a volatile Four who would abuse him verbally if he tried to correct or even make suggestions to her.

He was telling me of a deal he personally had made and confided he didn't want Susan involved because she'd make a mess of things. Normally Susan was supposed to make these deals, but this transaction was both large and his personal triumph.

I just said, "Well, if you don't trust her enough to let her get involved, you're a lot like a basketball coach who tells his players in the last minutes of the game, "Now, for Pete's sake, don't give the ball to the point guard, because he can't dribble." Apparently the game metaphor reached him. He was silent for some time (atypical of a Seven). Then he answered quietly, "I'm sending David an e-mail." David was the CFO and together they had the clout to fire Susan. And they did.

It's possible to change mental states and corresponding behavior just by the use of imagination, even if those states do include physical, chemical and brain structure components. Imagination has a leverage all its own.

## Coaching With Half a Brain

by Mary Bast

Clarence described coaching a 15-year-old boy who said “I’m a girl when it comes to ants,” and who was released from his ant phobia by Clarence’s compelling metaphor (“...every ant hill has thousands of ants and they all look alike. Some of the ants are uncles and some of the ants are aunts....”).

One of our readers asked, “Any suggestions on how to improve those skills? Clarence seems able to pull those metaphors out of the air. I’m just not that facile.” But notice Clarence didn’t pull the metaphor out of the air, he listened closely to the client, heard both the immediate problem and the underlying dynamic (fear of not being masculine enough). What he did do was dive into his right brain and trust his intuition.

Recently I coached a semi-retired Three who works for a non-profit organization. She was impatient with her co-workers, who don’t put in the long hours she does. I said, “So you’re like a race horse that’s now corralled at a farm where the other horses weren’t trained to race.” What did I do? I quickly thought of the dynamics involved and pulled something out of the air. In this case it worked, but you can trust clients to let you know whether or not a metaphor works. If it doesn’t, they’ll most likely change it to suit them or offer one of their own.

I’ve also learned, even when a metaphor seems absolutely splendid, not to file it away for later use. Each situation, each client is different; moreover, having to access a file of metaphors would engage the left brain, whereas the whole purpose of metaphors is to engage the right brain, yours and the client’s.

OK, before I get into more left-brain speak, I want you to picture a Far Side Cartoon of a man listening to a doctor’s diagnosis. The left side of this person’s skull is quite indented, indicating a missing left brain hemisphere. The doctor is saying, “You’re a right-brained sort of person, Mr. Sommersby – very creative, artistic, etc. ... Unfortunately, I think I also see why you’re having trouble figuring out your gas mileage.”

Don’t try to analyze, just hold that image while I mention Roger W. Sperry’s Nobel Prize in 1981 for his contributions about right brain and left brain thinking. Subsequent research has shown our brains are not completely polarized into right/left functioning but, in general, we process information in two different ways. The left brain hemisphere involves analysis, math and language skills, organization, logic, reason. The right brain hemisphere involves intuition, creativity, emotions, spatial activities such as dance or athletics, and visualization:

Right Brain	Left Brain
Visual – focuses on images, patterns	Verbal – focuses on words, symbols, numbers
Intuitive – led by feelings	Analytical – led by logic
Processes ideas simultaneously	Processes ideas step by step
Mind photos retain information	Words retain information
Makes lateral, oblique connections	Makes logical deductions from information
Sees the whole first, then the details	Organizes the whole from details

More to the point in change work, left-brain processes also include defense mechanisms built on logic and reason. But this logic is not an absolute truth. It's the result of the same pattern-making that created the client's view of the world in the first place. We've said many times that left-brain explaining, analyzing, and interpreting don't work because this kind of information is received through the filters that programmed the worldview.

When you and your clients are more like Mr. Sommersby, you'll bypass the analytical mind's defense mechanisms. Clarence wouldn't have gotten very far by saying to the boy (as his parents probably had, to no effect) "That's silly. Ants can't hurt you." Or worse, "Don't be such a sissy" (thus reinforcing the underlying basis for the boy's phobia).

Here are three ways you can use metaphors to bring about change:

1. The first is a time-honored tradition from therapy, particularly hypnotherapy, where the therapist decides what metaphor will be healing. In *Therapeutic Metaphors*, David Gordon tells us those who listen to a good storyteller "actually live those adventures inside of themselves." A therapeutic metaphor helps clients gain the personal resources and enhanced world model they need to be able to handle problems they're grappling with. Two excellent books from this tradition are Lankton and Lankton's *Tales of Enchantment* and George W. Burns' *101 Healing Stories*. Both books provide a number of prepared stories organized according to specific client problems/resources/ outcomes.
2. Another approach is to listen for a client's metaphor and run with it the way Clarence told his ant/aunt story, which is more client-centered but also echoes the therapeutic model in that the coach decides where to take the metaphor (another example appears in my web article, *Stories that Change People*).

I used this method with a client who said she always felt "like the new kid on the block" when with her colleagues. I entered her metaphor by saying, "OK, I'm here with you. You've just moved in, and you're the new kid. What's that like? What are the other kids doing? How do they treat you?" Up to this point the client was leading the metaphor. Then I asked, "What are some ways you can get them to include you?"

Notice how, at this point, I decided where to take the client's metaphor. I was eager to find a useful outcome, and we did find one when she said, "they want to play with some of my cool toys!" She was then able to recognize "cool toys" in her current repertoire that helped her feel more comfortable with colleagues.

3. More recently, I've been intrigued with Symbolic Modeling (based on David Grove's "clean language"), which also helps clients work through issues at a symbolic level. But instead of the coach determining the metaphor's direction, open-ended questions preserve clients' terminology and facilitate their self-discovery and self-development: "And being like a butterfly is for you....?" "And when does (their words)....?" "And then....?" "And just before that....?"

To become more comfortable pulling metaphors from the air, here are some nets:

- Check off any of these metaphors you've used and add some of your own:

\_\_\_ I'm a bundle of nerves.

\_\_\_ I'm up to my eyeballs.

\_\_\_ I broke the ice.

\_\_\_

\_\_\_

- What was your favorite childhood story? Who is your favorite character in a novel? What's a movie you could see over and over? In what way do you identify with these? What or who speaks to you?
- The metaphors people use to describe themselves are often good clues to their Enneagram style. "I've often thought of myself as a chameleon," for example, suggests the speaker might be a Three or a Nine. What's a metaphor you've used to describe yourself? What does this metaphor say about you that you hadn't considered before? If you follow the metaphor, where does it take you?

## The Ball's in My Court

by Mary Bast

Imagine this: You have a new client who says, “Well, uh, I’m older than I was ten years ago (laughs) and I used to be a pretty – if not vigorous – regular exerciser. I’ve gained some weight in the past year and I’m looking at healthy eating, but also realizing it would be healthy for me to establish exercise as a regular part of my day. And, I find I’ve been kind of lazy. I don’t have a jump-start in the morning and even if I plan it on my calendar, somehow it’s more interesting to get on the computer and look up today’s poem or something. And I feel the difference. I tend to feel sluggish, like I’m carrying around too much weight – I don’t mean literally, whether I lose weight or not I just feel kind of heavy. But for some reason I haven’t been able to access that level of motivation I had up until five or ten years ago. And part of it is that my image is changing. I used to be very image-conscious physically and I’ve allowed myself to let go of that, which I think is healthy. I’m not, you know, dressing to please anybody else. But somehow, along with the healthy, psychological comfort with myself, I lost some of the drive that went with keeping up the physical image.”

Hearing this, you suspect she’s an Intimate Nine. Go back and re-read the first paragraph, considering her Enneagram style and subtype.

Now, what questions might you ask that would create a coaching opportunity to address her needs? What do you know about Nines? About intimate subtypes? About healthy exercise habits? What do you see as possibilities for action? How might you help her discover her own resources? What task assignments might you give her to help break her habitual patterns? What’s a good metaphor that would parallel her situation and carry an embedded solution? How many sessions do you think it might take for her to establish and maintain a regular routine? Given your Enneagram style, how can you make sure your style isn’t getting in the way? Do you have experience you can draw from, or do you need to do some research to make sure you’re being the best coach for her you can be?

Are you now solidly in your left brain? Feeling a little pinched? Thinking you’d rather be in Antigua?

Wouldn’t it be wonderful if you could be so present with clients, you wouldn’t – metaphorically – have to lift a finger; your cognitive knowledge about changing exercise patterns, or even about changing patterns in general, would no longer be necessary? And wouldn’t it be wonderful if the client experienced a transformational change, maybe in one session?

What if – instead of your usual probing after the client’s initial comments – you ask “And what would you like to have happen?” and, from this point on, insert nothing more of yourself into the dialogue? What if you listen deeply, responding with the client’s precise words and asking questions such as: “And that’s [detail] like what?” “And what kind of [detail] is that [detail]?” “And is there anything else about [detail]?” “And whereabouts is [detail]?” “And when [x], what happens to [y]?”

And wouldn’t it be wonderful if, in response, this client creates her own metaphorical landscape of a Tuscan village where her “house of life” is like a paint by number that’s not yet fully colored in, and there’s a good witch with a hooked nose and a wart on her chin who says “Damn! I’ve been waiting for you,” and the client wants the sky to be clear of noise and pollution and human-made mechanical things, and the only dark spot in the landscape is a pocket in the upper left corner that has toxic waste,

and a gardener appears who cleans the waste and gives her a cloth to wipe her hands, which then sparkle and allow her to sweep paint with her left hand across the landscape to complete the picture and pat away the pocket, and there's a light from beyond the upper left corner that's a source she can trust, and there's a dog that wakes up happily anticipating jumping out the doggy door to play and chase balls and bark, a dog that's cute but not a show dog, just a good old dog and more a dog energy, cocking her head up and thinking, "Oh wow! Another day I can go chase balls," a Wonder Woman feeling of sleekness, physical confidence, physical capability?

And the client reports the following week that she woke up the next morning and each succeeding morning happily anticipating riding her bicycle, or swimming, or taking a walk, or going to the gym, and happy to choose among many ways to be in her body, but mostly choosing the bike because it's Fall and the weather's so beautiful and she's found a nearby neighborhood with quiet streets. And on the third day she finds herself singing Woody Guthrie's Car Song but now with the words, "I'll take you ridin' on my bike, bike..." And on the fourth day she notices that whenever she starts doing anything in a driven way, pushing to do it because she should, or it's good for her, she lightens up, slows down, gets in her body and discovers that so-called work now feels like play.

I'm that client. The facilitator (and trainer of the symbolic modeling workshop I recently attended) is Gina Campbell. You'll see how the whole process unfolds by reading the complete transcript of my "doggie" session (see Appendix). Gina will offer more workshops in the near future ([www.symbolicmodeling.com](http://www.symbolicmodeling.com)). You can also find fascinating articles about Symbolic Modeling at the Clean Language Collection ([www.cleanlanguage.co.uk/articles](http://www.cleanlanguage.co.uk/articles)).

But don't rely on your left-brain understanding of how you might use symbolic modeling in your own life or work. For only \$65 you can learn first-hand by scheduling a session with Gina. You'll never forget it. I promise.

Now I'm going out to play. Arf!

## Metaphors I've Known and Been

by Clarence Thomson

One of my favorite students is a soccer mom given to psychic readings and web design. With that kind of range, I wasn't surprised when she said metaphors are like a compressed computer file. She was much taken with Mary's article on symbolic modeling so she had to explain to herself why it worked. She found the metaphor within her own experience.

Artist Joyce Carry said symbols aren't invented. They're discovered, staring at us out of the ordinary. For her, the "ordinary" was the computer. And thereby hangs a tale. Actually, not only a tale, but a coherent narrative consisting of a series of metaphorical self-understandings. I love it when a client says, usually with coherent exasperation, "That's the story of my life." I follow that story. Most of the time, however, they don't tell you the story, but they reveal it symbolically.

When Mary wrote so eloquently of her experience with symbolic modeling, she recounted how she was enabled to become freer because she explored the metaphorical understanding that was blocking her a bit.

I read the complete explanation of how to do symbolic modeling (*Metaphors in Mind*, Lawley and Tompkins) and if I may summarize in 25 words or less, they explain what words in what sequence to use to find out people's metaphors without imposing your own.

One reason Mary was fertile soil for such an approach is that we already use metaphors to coach. The underlying premise of symbolic modeling is that we're inwardly organized metaphorically. When academia talks of "self-concept," we understand that concept to be a metaphor. I'm aware of some of mine. I have seven younger sisters. No matter how I coach, I just know on some level I'm your big brother. I enjoy a sacred obligation to help (especially damsels in distress). This has good and bad sides so I try not to give too much advice and try not to rescue, but I feel the pull to do exactly that.

How do you use metaphors in coaching? Lots of ways. The first is to become aware of your metaphor. Watch little kids. They "are" Sharkman or Spiderman or Michael Jordan (jerseys confer symbolic identity – you are aware of that, aren't you?). If we don't outgrow this metaphor we do "inappropriate" things and people say "Who do you think you are?" Which means, "What metaphor are you operating out of now?"

When coaching clients, watch for what they say doesn't work. Or simply ask them what's working and what isn't. You don't have to slip into Dr. Phil's attack mode, "How's that working for you?" but always ask for what they want from the coaching. That will tell you what metaphor isn't working. "I procrastinate," is rooted in some metaphorical conviction. They're helpless, they're incompetent, they're whatever. That's where the Enneagram comes in. The accumulation and organization of their metaphorical beliefs create their Enneagram style. When style Ones procrastinate, it may be out of a conviction they can't do a perfect job, but it also may be a rule their mother taught them about this kind of work. "Never work for someone who doesn't appreciate you." Please notice the maybe. Their Enneagram style is the conclusion or result of their metaphors, but a wide variety of metaphors may have created it, and those are what you have to surface.

I tell my clients to do lots of things, but never resolutions and almost never anything negative. You can't dismantle or transform a metaphor directly. Mary and I assign small symbolic actions that don't fit with their Enneagram strategy. A strategy is the actions they take to carry out the belief system of their metaphors, so we pick metaphorical roads that conflict with their metaphorical Enneagram destination. For example, Ones are often polarized against sensual pleasure, so I wax eloquent on the health benefits of massage and assign them to get one. They do the right thing for the wrong reason, but the pleasure asserts new information. I also assign vacations, at least mini-vacations. On vacation it's their duty to have fun. They have some trouble with fun, but now they're in a double bind. They have to integrate pleasure into their life or have a less than perfect vacation.

The assignments have to be metaphorical because of what my student said to start this reflection. A metaphor is highly compressed information. When we say a picture is worth a thousand words, we mean a metaphor or image contains more information than linear literal language. But we can go one step further. Most of our metaphors are unconscious, at least partially so. So when we assign a metaphorical behavior, we insert a lot of powerful, directed information on an unconscious level.

Our Enneagram style is a trance. In a trance, we operate unconsciously, so when we feed new information into our unconscious organization, we install a powerful change agent. To speak metaphorically, we throw a monkey wrench into the unconscious gears that are driving us in directions we no longer want to go.

Mary has taught me one more way to metaphorically intervene: poetry. I've always used stories, but now I can use either. Here's how I'll convince you of what I have written above. If you understand "heaven" in a secular way, as "my life working well," in the following poem, you can see how a gifted poet, Mary Oliver, understands that a shift in consciousness is what we all need. This is from "The Swan:"

Said Mrs. Blake of the poet: I miss my husband's company—  
He is so often in paradise.  
Of course! The path to heaven doesn't lie down in flat miles.  
It's in the imagination with which you perceive this world.

# Coaching With Style

## A Perfect Match

by Mary Bast

Clarence and I teach coaches how to listen for Enneagram style in people's language and how to match their language. This is especially important early in the relationship, when you want to meet people where they are, not where they will be when not boxed in by their Enneagram style.

My apocryphal story is of a client who called me about "teaching people how to stand up to me." I thought, Eight, but didn't pour it in concrete until he met me at the airport for a day of interviews with his staff. We'd been in his truck for about three minutes when he said, "After you talk to my people, just lay it on me. I don't want you giving me any bullshit." So at the end of the day, as he was driving me back to the airport and asked me how bad it was, I said, "People shrivel up like raisins in your presence."

I would NEVER have spoken to another Enneagram style that way, particularly not a One, for example, with whom a coach needs to be very thoughtful and descriptive in giving feedback. But the Eight loved it! He knew I had a sense of humor and could stand up to him without attack, would be blunt and straight and not wishy-washy.

The Enneagram is a splendid tool for making good guesses that provide quick access to someone's worldview (and – not incidentally – provide the level of rapport that encourages them to hire you). We address developing rapport in the last chapter of our book; and there's more in the Field Guide. The highlights that follow draw from what you can hear, and should be helpful whether you coach in person or by phone:

1. From Ones you'll hear evidence of hard work, black and white language (right/wrong, good/bad), self-criticism. They may sound over-controlled and, as you develop trust, will often describe how their comments have hurt others. Heard from Ones: *I know I'm right, why should I have to compromise? I'm my own worst critic. My whole career, I've been brought in to fix things.* You'll match Ones when you are prompt and considerate, follow the rules, use humor, give very descriptive feedback and avoid labels, latch onto and encourage their ideals.
2. Twos will use "helpful" words and relationship language with fairly high decibels of emotion and vivid descriptions, and an excellent understanding of people, especially if healthy. They'll show a focus on others' needs, including yours. Heard from Twos: *I think it's important to always focus on what we need to do to serve others. Was that helpful? Of all the people the CEO could have called, he called me!* You'll match Twos when you're personal and emotionally present, genuinely appreciative, and avoid intellectualizing, especially early in the relationship.
3. You'll hear Threes talk about what they've accomplished in results-oriented language: checking off to-do lists, talking about "success." They may also use sports metaphors, "game" words, competitive language, self-promotion, with less attention to team work unless very healthy. Their speech will be fast-paced and they may show impatience with pauses. Heard from Threes: *I like seeing success breed upon success. I have to be the lead dog in the pack. I*

- have a shelf full of trophies.* You'll match Threes when you're prepared, stress action and results, move the meeting along fairly briskly, and show approval.
4. Fours will emphasize their difference from others, either feeling out of it or frustrated that others are so stuck in the status quo. You'll hear innovative ideas, emotionality, and some holding on to old history. Heard from Fours: *People call me because they know I'll come at things from a different angle. I seem to feel things more deeply than others. I've always felt like an outsider.* You'll match Fours when you pay attention to process, ask how they feel, use symbols and metaphors, honor their unique way of seeing things.
  5. With Fives there will be a desire to understand, admiration for insights, intellectual jousting, a somewhat formal style, less emotional content, a quiet pace with pauses, words like "curious," "interesting," "thought-provoking." They may expound at length on a topic of expertise and/or engage in debate. Heard from Fives: *I have a really deep knowledge of this industry. I think meetings are a waste of time. I'd like to read every book that was ever written.* You'll match Fives when you prepare them in advance with relevant data, bolster their knowledge, ask what they think, give them time to mull things over.
  6. Sixes will use group-oriented language, search for hidden agendas, focus on what could go wrong, and criticize higher ups. With trust, they'll admit to self-doubt and/or fear. Heard from Sixes: *I've been loyal to this organization for 25 years. I don't think we have very competent management. I wish we could work better as a team.* You'll match Sixes when you're open and concrete, justify their concerns instead of reassuring them, and emphasize your role as partner, not authority.
  7. Sevens will be charming, funny, and upbeat, tell stories and anecdotes, keep an energetic pace, and show a lack of attention to and/or interest in details. Heard from Sevens: *I always see the bright side of things. If you understand a few basic principles, you can run just about anything. I'm always the one to figure out what we'll do for fun.* You'll match Sevens when you're playful, inventive, animated, ask questions to get them to talk, and sign onto their vision.
  8. The language and manner of Eights will be blunt, direct (what you see is what you get), and often loud, with evidence of taking charge and emphasis on imperatives. Heard from Eights: *I've always been responsible. I have a hard time asking for help – I'll just charge ahead and do it myself. I can't think of a time when I was afraid.* You'll match Eights when you're succinct, say what you mean, show respect but hold boundaries, help them feel they're in charge.
  9. Their quiet voices and laid-back style identify Nines, who will hold a variety of viewpoints, wander in conversation, and rarely offer strongly stated positions. Heard from Nines: *I'm pretty easy-going. My career just kind of fell together. I try to pick the right moment to speak up in meetings.* You'll match Nines when you collaborate, confirm their value, help them focus, offer alternatives, clarify possibilities, find the no behind the yes, summarize and follow up.

## A Hitchhiker's Guide

by Mary Bast

In the second chapter of our book, Clarence and I give examples of how coaching for behavioral results alone might provide only a temporary solution. If you coach Ones to stop lecturing others by using more active listening, for example, you may both feel you've succeeded but could actually reinforce their existing framework if they try to be more perfect, to 'fix' themselves.

Last Fall I had a two-hour feedback session by phone with a manager who – like many Ones – can tap into a deep vein of humor. I said I don't think change work has to be work. In particular, using metaphors to stimulate change can be a very playful process. We talked about how he tended to go into a teaching/ preaching mode with his team, and explored together how to play with that pattern in a way that would loosen it without focusing on "fixing." I asked him to think of situations where he didn't take the teacher role. He recalled how he used to hitchhike in the Sixties and how much he learned from those conversations. He now thinks of himself as "hitching a ride" in meetings, conversing with people who work for him as if they're traveling companions. It's made a world of difference.

He was also curious about how he could coach his people according to personality style, so I gave him a set of business-friendly descriptions, drawn primarily from our book and our coaching experience; also from Michael Goldberg's *The 9 Ways of Working*.

The goal is to help employees break free of their automatic patterns, but managers can start with first-order interventions until they develop sufficient rapport. Continuing with the example of Ones, you'll recognize from last month's newsletter these guidelines to develop rapport: honor proper channels, be prompt and considerate, use gentle humor, give behaviorally specific feedback vs. negative labels, and latch onto and encourage their ideals.

I also suggest to managers that Ones learn best in the beginning by paying close attention, making checklists, knowing the "rules." I give them this checklist as an example of how they might approach the early phases of Enneagram coaching:

- Be especially clear with expectations, guidelines.
- Be precise and descriptive with feedback; Ones have a severe inner critic, so criticism from others can invoke defensiveness.
- Provide them with resources to manage their "tirades" better.

Once rapport is developed, managers can encourage examination of underlying Enneagram patterns and open the possibility of second-order change. I ask them to envision self-aware Ones as idealistic employees, open to imaginative possibilities and alternative frameworks, serene and at ease with themselves, patient and relaxed with others, and responding only where intervention is absolutely necessary.

The gift of Ones is to see and work toward perfection. This can narrow their focus of attention so they see only what's wrong, what needs fixing, and they may rigidly demand one right way of doing things. The manager's overarching goal, then, is to coach Ones to observe how their perfectionistic patterns

operate and to experiment with playful ways to interrupt those patterns. This is the checklist I offer to help spot the key dynamics of Ones:

- Coach them to observe their “shoulds” (for self and others); see how black/white, either/or, right/wrong thinking shows up in their language; reframe the meaning of being “right” – sometimes mistakes are necessary for learning.
- Help them become aware of their self-critic and how it drives them and others to undue perfectionism; teach them to use appreciative feedback (focusing on progress toward a goal vs. what’s not happening) and to be specific and nonjudgmental.
- Show how their rigid views of someone or something keep them from seeing positive aspects; ask “What rule has that person broken?” “Under what conditions might that be acceptable?”
- Help them prioritize rules; distinguish between essential and auxiliary rules (all rules are not of equal value); this helps with their black and white thinking.
- Encourage creative thinking and breaking the “rules” in creative ways; help expand their judgment criteria in complex situations; when they insist there’s “one right way,” brainstorm at least three options and distill positive portions of each.
- Coach them to encourage creativity and initiative with people who work for them; explore the distinction between giving “assignments” and truly “delegating.”
- Help them see the bigger picture beyond the details - not all details are of equal importance.
- Use humor and encourage their humor; even comically exaggerate.

Of course it helps to give and elicit examples. On the note of humor, I asked a client last week what her self-critical voice looked like. She said the voice looked like her but sounded like her mother. I’d introduced the notion of doing something playful to mess with her automatic self-criticism, so when I asked, “How is she dressed?” the client burst out laughing: “She’s dressed like Minnie Pearl from the Grand Ole Opry.”

You know she’ll never again respond to that critical voice in the same way. How could she? She’ll be picturing the words coming from a sassy comedian wearing a big straw hat with a \$1.98 price tag hanging from the side!

## Medieval Insight

by Clarence Thomson

Erwin Panovsky, art historian from Freiburg, argued in his *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism* that the cathedrals reflected the structure of medieval thought. He argued that the great theological work of St. Thomas, his *Summa Theologica*, was based on something they called the “reconciliation of opposites,” as was the structure of the cathedrals. Opinions and concepts, along with flying buttresses and awe-inspiring arches, were carefully balanced weights and counter-weights, directions and counter-directions. The style and structure of the architecture made visible the structure of thought.

I find this a helpful way to think about Enneagram styles.. People rightly recoil from being typed because they fear being put in a box, quite a static concept.

When I coach, however, Enneagram style is the starting point for ferreting out and dealing with opposing tendencies within each of us. Perhaps some examples will help.

Take style One. All “type One” descriptions describe a person striving mightily to be perfect, having an inner critic who tries to make things perfect according to the rules internalized or external ones followed tightly. Martha Stewart not only knows exactly what is correct -- “It is a good thing” is her mantra – but she instills her principles in millions of listeners.

But within Martha, and all Ones, there lies an opposite energetic tendency (perhaps several) Ones must integrate. Failure to integrate these will leave Ones rigid, righteous, tunnel visioned, and in the case of Donald Rumsfeld, unemployed.

The place to look for salvific opposites, or in more contemporary prose, psychological resources, is in the stress and security points. Don’t go to “arrows of integration,” but look at both the stress and security points for energies of integration and assimilation. To borrow a term from scholastic architecture, this is where you find the contrasting energy with which one is to balance.

Ones are coolly, even coldly objective. They know exactly what the one right thing is or needs to become. But at point Four dwell energies of subjectivity. Taste is the thing, beauty is its own excuse for being, and celebration of uniqueness is equally as important as rigorous rectitude. Beware, it is possible to acquire the energy of subjectivity and call it objective truth. “There is only one right way and I happen to know it and will share it with and shove it onto you.” For an abject lesson in moral vision with almost no insight into individual difference or emotional preferences, listen to Dr. Laura on talk radio. She boils down all emotional and relational issues to a single cold moral vision. Just do the right thing and all will be well. She doesn’t balance her moral vision with compassion for the emotional burdens of her callers. On the other hand, a One like Emma Thompson must have terrific emotional range. The scene with Edward near the end of the movie *Sense and Sensibility* has an emotional charge any Four would applaud. Let’s hope Ones Obama and Clinton have that inner richness if one is chosen to preside over the United States.

The connection to Seven is rich in resources and robbers. When a One, in a fit of relaxation, begins to create many options (so dear to Sevens) instead of One perfect way, balance emerges. When a style One develops a sense of humor, the bonds of duty are less chafing. Look what critical One Bill Maher

can do with the leaven of laughter. However, Enneagram authors talk of the trap-door Ones – those whose bonds of righteousness are so tight they snap, and they sin with sybaritic Sevenish excess like the fictional Mr. Hyde in Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. There is Jimmy Swaggert -- virtuous on TV, lascivious in the motel, or Clarence Thomas -- stiff necked, righteous conservative on the bench, salacious with Anita Hill.

Bringing the energies of balance and reconciliation to life is the work of a good coach. The Enneagram tells you where to look. That's helpful, because if you search you can usually find contexts in which those energies are operative. When a client One sees she has an aesthetic energy at her disposal, you can have her explore how she uses it. Then, when she has a feel and an intuitive understanding of how she cultivates her rich emotional responses in one area, you can suggest ways to do it in areas in which she is currently stuck. There is not one best flower; the best flower is the one that most pleases an individual. Perhaps some rules, customs or expectations can be thought of in a similar way.

Or when trying to help someOne (sic) become less rigid (where was I when Gore needed help so badly?), assign them to consider three ways of doing something where they would usually have only one. I have them give me three options and then see if there are elements of the options they can combine. I reframe having options as being better than just knowing the one best way. Then they can reconcile “best” with “many good.”

“Type” can be a limiting word. Perhaps net or bundle would be more appropriate. Enneagram style is a swirling mix of energies that, when properly harnessed, can lead to balance. A kind of reconciliation of opposites within.

## Changing the Speed Limit

by Mary Bast

I've described how managers can coach Ones for both first- and second-order change. Since then I've adapted that guide for coaches, and decided our readers might benefit from continuing the series. Because I had a recent conversation that nicely illustrates a Seven's patterns, I'll address that Enneagram style. (Don't worry about the sequence; eventually we'll get to all nine.)

We understand Sevens want to avoid pain. But the picture is more complex. For one thing, the pain threshold of Sevens seems to be lower than that of others, perhaps because Sevens have had too much experience with pain, or maybe they've felt it more deeply (let's don't give Fours all the credit). One Seven described her family growing up as "like Woody Allen's film *Manhattan*," where almost everyone has "a flat affect." With this background, you might also be drawn to a more cheerful strategy.

The gift of Sevens is positive, energetic, upbeat energy and the ability to generate ideas. This narrow focus can cause them to be easily frustrated when things slow down; they may become scattered and unreliable, tending to create and discard whatever conflicts with their positive, upbeat focus.

Your coaching goal is to help clients break free of such automatic patterns with second-order interventions (creating new patterns of thought/new learned experience). To develop early rapport, however, you may need to match their style and start with first-order interventions (temporary fixes that don't examine the worldview from which the problem arose). You'll recognize some guidelines for how to develop initial rapport with Sevens (drawn primarily from our book and coaching experience; also from Michael Goldberg's *The 9 Ways of Working*):

- Be playful, inventive, and animated; Sevens learn best from an interactive approach and they like insight and stories. You'll match their style when you:
  - give analogies and pictures, engage in rapid give and take, ask questions (Sevens love hypothesizing);
  - align with their vision, show how their dreams can work;
  - help them see developmental change as an exciting opportunity; make their task assignments fun;
  - coach them to do the most unpleasant tasks first;
  - confirm agreements and make sure they really want to do it (if they shift responsibility for change to you, you become the jailer);
  - describe an end-point and the steps along the way (they'll commit more readily to the coaching process if the task and confinement are temporary).
  
- Once you have deep rapport, you can focus on second-order change. Reinforce your Seven clients when they:
  - remain visionary but become more realistic,
  - maintain a sense of proportion,
  - expend only as much energy as is called for,
  - live and work in the present,
  - learn to value small real triumphs instead of veering off to a grandiose vision.

- Also help Sevens notice how their patterns still operate, and experiment with ways to interrupt those patterns when they:
  - lose their early enthusiasm for change (follow-through requires tenacity),
  - spin toward something new without finishing what they've started,
  - speed up and/or escape into fantasy,
  - skate over the surface (point out that they're on thin ice), :-)
  - use positive reframing to avoid the truth,
  - express cheerfulness in denial of reality,
  - delegate in ways that don't provide others with sufficient detail,
  - follow their appetite – food, alcohol, caffeine, or fun of any kind such as computer games (a signal they may be running away from something),
  - respond to criticism defensively,
  - refuse to admit fears and/or feelings of inferiority,
  - avoid conflict.

A Seven I'll call Gail said she wanted to lose ten pounds, but ate too fast, often while standing up. She'd been trying to stop herself by saying "SLOOOOW down!" That hadn't worked. Logic often doesn't. Most of your clients will come to you having tried to ignore or overcome the patterns they want to change. To break them out of their habitual patterns of response, you'll get more mileage if you help them find a way to go with an apparent problem. As Bill O'Hanlon suggests, *Do One Thing Different* – add an element, change the sequence, exaggerate the problem, decide what they want to keep, and many other possibilities.

I asked Gail to gauge how fast she ate in miles per hour, where 20 mph is a healthy rate of speed. She estimated she typically ate at a rate between 40-60 mph. So I suggested she consciously increase her speed to 45 or 50 mph, and then experiment with decreasing it by a few miles per hour.

The next week Gail said she'd tried to eat a little faster but her mind kept racing on to other thoughts. That's OK. We don't look for instant success. Our goal is to loosen the client's frame of reference, to institute a new way of thinking about change, to introduce a small difference into habitual patterns. Gail's experience of her mind racing away from the task is an opportunity to help her see another aspect of her pattern.

We'll keep the speed signs posted.

# The Art of Coaching

## When Piety's the Problem

*by Clarence Thomson*

Mary and I specialize in helping people who are stuck.

There's one category of "stuck" people I'd like to explore a bit. I live in Kansas so I get a few of them. These are the far right fundamentalists. Fundamentalists are often awfully nice people, but they have certain beliefs that get them into trouble in relationships and in the workplace.

So far, they're no different from any other client. All have certain beliefs that get them into trouble. But these fundamentalist Christians (we don't have the other fundamentalists here in Kansas) not only have their beliefs, they can prove their troubling and troublesome notions from scripture. With God on their side, they insist they're right. "I believe with my heart, not my head," a young client informed me. A few cherry picked sentences plucked from scripture and they are secure.

I take my cue from Socrates, not Jesus, here. The reason the Socratic Method worked for the great philosopher was that when the young men (and they were all men) discussed with Socrates, they held their opinions based on memorized poems, hymns and sayings. Socrates' life coincided with the cultural upheaval of the clash between literate and pre-literate societies. He dealt with young men fed on a diet of Homer, mythology, poets and minstrels. He was dealing with what anthropologists call an oral-aural society. The thought processes are different. They only know what they've memorized: stories, poems, hymns etc., and what they have experienced.

The young men were sure of their positions because those positions were based memorizing popular cultural texts (not written, oral texts like songs and poems). Now these texts, especially if set to music, effectively induce a trance. You can see traces of this phenomenon when politicians quote short, bumper-sticker phrases. They assume uncritically what the sticker says. (Under stress to explain failure, Defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld snapped, "Stuff happens" – straight off the bumper, sanitized for TV). The most frightening thing to me about the Islamic nations is their habit of memorizing the Koran. As a Catholic, I saw the power of memorized catechism answers. Allegiance is often inversely proportional to insight. Memorized phrases fly under the radar of conscious scrutiny.

Until you ask questions.

Socrates was killed because he asked questions. You have to read Socrates carefully and between the lines to infer what he believed himself; the bulk of his effective work was in questioning.

I don't like Dr. Phil's approach to counseling (he's such an Eight and his approach suffers from it) but his blunt, "How's that working for you?" has a primitive charm about it. I try to be a bit gentler but I keep asking for the consequences. "What happens when you do this?" Religious convictions that are destructive are held to get people into heaven. If these convictions will get them salvation, why should they let them go? If these convictions, effective as celestial currency, have earthly consequences, then what? No coach can convince clients the belief is wrong because you have no data, no evidence. Who

can say what's salvific, empirically? The trick is to link religious beliefs with this world data – like consequences of collateral benefits and damage.

So ask whether their conviction is true in all situations. And what criteria they use to decide if it is true. For example, I recently dealt with something called Domestic Discipline (you can Google the phrase). It insists on the man being the head of the house. So how does that relate to servant leadership? And is the head of the house different in relation to the children than to the wife? Excellent questions can be posed by asking for distinctions. If you don't want to read Socrates, perhaps you could watch some old reruns of Colombo. He brilliantly didn't understand anything with high effectiveness.

Regardless of their Enneagram style, all fundamentalists are black and white in their thinking. So the kind of questions you would use to destabilize the rigidity of thinking of Eights and Ones are effective. Ask for emotional information, for feeling opinions, for options, for nuances, for long as opposed to short term (or vice versa) consequences and for changed contexts (age, gender, socio economic class, health/sickness, anything).

Questions are also important because religious fundamentalists are simplistically convinced that sincerity is all one needs. "How can I be wrong when I'm so sincere?" Listen to Jewish fundamentalist, Dr. Laura, on talk radio. All complex questions are simplified, usually into a black/white moral choice. What gets lost in the simplification are emotional, financial, political, social, and esthetic consequences. She loves the word *stupid* and you'll notice she focuses almost exclusively on what we might call moral stupidity. If one is morally upright, then one is right. How do you know you're being morally good? Why, by feeling sincere.

So your questions won't challenge the morality of fundamentalist positions. They will ask about consequences in the areas above: emotional, financial, social, esthetic and political. All forms of egotism shrink our world. Fundamentalism shrinks it to a set of moral imperatives, convictions and authorities. What a coach can do is bring to a client's fixed vision the rest of reality.

# Conquering the World

by Clarence Thomson

Thousands of chomping-at-the-bit high school and college graduates are urged to go out and conquer the world. The standard advice is to follow your bliss, keep your integrity, work hard and make the world a better place.

Coaches should pass out their business cards then and there, offering to help in case this proves difficult.

A lot of coaches' websites and newsletters seem to reflect this line of admonition and then a best seller like *The Secret* comes along and suggests perhaps the best way to conquer the world is by thinking, "You create your own reality."

The only problem with this is that in America, our radical individualism tends to reinforce ego styles. An ego style is a set of coping strategies (among other things) and if those strategies are expected to accomplish the culturally assigned daily heroism, you set your clients and yourself up for disappointment.

For example, I've coached a number of people who are trying to lose weight. My simple premise, accurate and limited, is that when people eat for non-hunger reasons, they eat because of and according to their Enneagram patterns. (Twos eat to reward themselves for good deeds; Eights overeat as an expression of power and out of a lust for intensity etc.). So far so good.

But I have to be careful. Many of these people are caught in a networked system of which they're unaware. You have to go back at least as far as the farm bills and the subsidies to understand the systemic aspects of obesity in the U.S. Here's how it works: the government heavily subsidizes corn and soybeans. Corn and soybeans (along with wheat, rice and cotton) consequently become cheap to buy and so are used in thousands of processed foods. Soybean oil is fattening and unhealthy. Corn is turned into high fructose corn syrup (HFCS), which is sweeter than sugar so is used in place of sugar. But HFCS, unlike sugar, does not trigger an insulin response; it goes right to fat storage.

So when you eat that virtuous salad, you put dressing on. The first two ingredients are usually soybean oil and HFCS. You're getting fat. You're practicing self-denial, you're eating the right foods, but you don't understand the system that delivers your food. You usually have two or three choices of soy beans and HFCS.

The problem is that to get the calories you need, you move toward the cheaper subsidized foods. That's why every survey shows obesity increases as you move down the socioeconomic ladder. HFCS and soybean oil are the main ingredients. And fast foods are the most prevalent. They taste good, they're convenient, filling, and cheap. Even the meat is cheaper because cattle are fed cheap corn.

But the American pattern is to blame individuals for systemic problems and to try to solve systemic problems by appealing to the individual. Watch the TV ads. The TV ad creators know there is an epidemic, but all the solutions are individual: get more exercise, eat this pill, drink this potion, and buy this package. It's all up to you, the individual.

The pattern of solving systemic problems with individual solutions puts enormous and unfair pressure on coach and client. If you buy into the American commencement dream, both coach and client will expect to succeed if they try hard enough and are smart enough. We do not think systemically.

Classical psychology describes two forms of attributing motivation: internal and external. In a well-known experiment, professors showed different cultural groups a picture of a school of fish with one fish out ahead of the others. Americans saw the picture displaying a fish leading the others. Asian viewers interpreted the picture as a group of fish chasing the one in front. The Americans saw the individual triumphant, the Asians saw the group as dominant. In our fair land, if you fail, it's your fault and if you're on top, it's because of your individual merit. That's why we revere our president, congress and multimillionaire CEOs. And, that's why 75 million people (one-fourth of America) voted to help select an American Idol. The best person was going to win.

We love that fantasy. We have the rugged individualist belief that the individual can do anything. We pride ourselves, especially at commencement time, on a level playing field where all have an equal opportunity. When you coach someone with this belief, it is up to you to point out how to play on a field that is different from the one in his imagination and in the collective fantasy of America.

When I use the Enneagram to coach someone who doesn't seem to be aware of the context or can't or doesn't do systemic thinking, I try to clarify the Enneagram style of the context (job, family, country). That gives the client a tool for context criticism. It also gives me clues about how the individual unconsciously deals with the group. Can I motivate Eights to fight the system? Can I ask Fours to be different from the eating habits of America? Can I have Ones criticize the system that's fattening them?

Your client has an Enneagram style and each style relates to systems in a different way. To the extent you're aware of the system, you can channel the energy to cope with the system.

## Watch Your Language! And Theirs!

by Clarence Thomson

Al Gore has written a bright, and in some senses, a hopeless, book called *The Assault on Reason*. In it he laments the loss and misuse of simple logic with things like facts, consequences and in extreme cases, reality. He argues logically that the current political debate is carried on in an unreasonable and unreasoning way. He observes that the language of syllogism, of cause and effect, has been replaced with the language of the marketplace: association, innuendo, slogans and simple mendacity. He is, I think, correct, astute, and profound.

But while Gore describes the triumph of marketing manipulation over sweet reason in the political realm, the shift is much larger. The prevalence and power of the media are changing the way we communicate. If you can learn this language, you increase your power to persuade, change and even heal people.

I call Gore's book hopeless because logic and reason, no matter how honed, are no match for image, metaphor, association and framing. The current political discussion employs the standard language of change and persuasion that coaches must use. I received a request from a reader to help her learn to use metaphoric language. A good place to start is with the evening news, especially the Fox network. (Watch for the images: "cut and run" instead of "withdraw" from Iraq, for example.)

When a client has a problem, notice carefully how it is "framed." Framing refers to what part of the problem you look at and from what angle. The term is borrowed from photography and is highly accurate. A camera doesn't "see" the whole picture, just like an ego style doesn't. Every frame is a selection that forces us to look at this and not that, in a specific light and from a specific direction. If you need the whole panorama, the frame is, without malice, a distortion. As I write this, last night Our Glorious Leader discussed the "surge." Not the whole war, not the mission, (whatever that is) not the reasons (lies) we are there. No, he and the obedient corporate media "framed" the discussion as whether the surge worked. Watch your clients, they will (by virtue of their Enneagram style) try to do the same thing. "My boss does not appreciate me." That statement is her frame. Is it the whole picture? Never. Mary is brilliant at widening frames. She asks questions like "Who else doesn't appreciate you?" "When?" "Under what circumstances?" "What are your criteria for discerning appreciation?" "What would happen if you changed a time, a place, a sequence, etc.?" If you don't know how to do that, get her coaching field guide. She walks you through the process.

Good reporters pick frames apart. They challenge the assumptions. The current media is a startling example of how a Fox is like a sheep. They just repeat the pronouncements, but do not challenge the way the story is framed. Rove talks openly about how he frames the discussion. On the other hand, Sixes are especially good at not trusting frames. Jon Stewart and Chris Rock are excellent examples of making people laugh when they challenge frames. Many comedians and comedy writers are Sevens, because Sevens reframe compulsively. Reframing is an effective substitute for lying. For example, I wrote promotion copy for years. I had to advertise a brilliant lecturer who was a boring as a mashed potato sandwich. So I wrote, "You'll feel like you're back in college again." I let them frame that however they wanted and some of them had really boring teachers.

One fine way to expose and alter a frame is with metaphoric language. When a client says “The Boss doesn’t appreciate me” and I can see traces of childish need for approval, I might ask about whether s/he expects gold stars on the budget report or whether they have brought any apples to the boss. I will not say “You are being childish expecting the boss to praise you all the time.” The metaphors I use will change with each Enneagram style. Sevens often don’t look for or even value praise from the authority. Fours may have such a selective bandwidth to receive praise that they miss appreciation.

Images are probably the most powerful way to reframe or illuminate a situation. An image compresses both logic and emotion and often breaks frames. I used this image last month. The mother was offended by her teen age son’s disrespectful language. I told her to get a slender hatpin and prick him every time he did it, telling him he’s acting like a prick. “Prick” means a lot of things and to teenage boys is connotes masculinity, aggression, adulthood, and self-esteem, especially among peers. So when that’s reframed by experience as embarrassment and pain, he involuntarily reframes what he is doing. This reframe actually illuminates his behavior (like a prick) and reframes it as pain and embarrassment. Not bad for one move. That’s compression.

How do you learn to do this? First of all it’s a gift – like singing on key or finding your way home after you visit a new location. But it can be developed, regardless of the degree of your gift. Here are some suggestions:

Become aware that all advertising follows these principles. (Is it logical to wear Nike shoes because an NBA player does? Why does L’Oreal say you’re worth it?) Become a student of advertising. Alas, advertising and poetry know the same principles. So read poetry and analyze advertising.

Here’s an exercise that may be helpful. Write a piece, any kind. Then go through it and take out all forms of the verb “to be.” This force-feeds vivid writing. It’s surprisingly difficult and effective. Try it. Instead of saying “The girl is pretty,” make us see her beauty. “She lit up the room.” Or a reaction shot: “Three guys dropped their popcorn when she entered the theatre.”

Churches and schools write and talk in abstract and passive voices. “It was decided to improve academic performance by periodic intrusive procedures.” Which means “We are going to torture them”? To push this principle, practice substituting concrete and vivid images for whatever idea you have. “The current administration is given to reframing political decisions as patriotic implementation. Translate as “Bush communicates vividly. He lies in three colors: red, white and blue.”

Even if you think you can’t use this language, listen closely as your clients do use it. When people have strong feelings, they always talk in images. “I’d kill for a chance like that.” Pay close attention to the assumptions built into the images they provide you. The compressed information within an image will give an attentive coach a great deal of information the client may not have even intended.

# Appendix

## Symbolic Modeling Session, October 2007

(“F” = Facilitator, “C” = Client):

F: Before we start, let me just remind you of two things that are a bit different with a phone conference. And one is, without making yourself hypervigilant or anything, is if you notice gestures, or where you're looking, or body movements of some kind, let me know about them so we can explore those.

C: OK.

F: And the second thing again is to use your intuition to guide where we're going and if I direct you to one object or one aspect and you're pulled toward something else, something else seems to be important or whatever, by all means let me know.

C: Oh, OK.

F: As you well know now, there's no way the facilitator can know.

C: So, I'll follow my intuition, and I will share as comfortable what's happening with my body language.

F: And then the other thing is, when I'm with you I can judge the timing of my questions based on your body language and watching you process and so forth. And of course on the phone I don't have those cues. So if I do ask you a question, and you need more time to be looking at something or figuring out something, or I'm sitting here quietly waiting and you're ready to go on, give me those kinds of cues.

C: OK.

F: Great. OK. And so what would you *like* to have happen?

C: Well, um, I'm older than I was ten years ago (laughs), and I used to be a pretty – if not vigorous – *regular* exerciser. I've gained some weight in the past year and I'm looking at healthy eating, but also realizing it would be healthy for me to establish exercise as a regular part of my day. And, I find I've been kind of lazy. I don't have a jump-start in the morning and even if I plan it on my calendar, somehow it's more interesting to get on the computer and look up today's poem or something. And I *feel* the difference. I tend to feel sluggish, like I'm carrying around too much weight – I don't mean literally, whether I lose weight or not I just feel kind of heavy, But for some reason I haven't been able to access that level of motivation I had up until five or ten years ago. And part of it is that my image is changing. I used to be very image-conscious physically and I've allowed myself to let go of that, which I think is healthy. I'm not, you know, dressing to please anybody else. But somehow, along with the healthy, psychological comfort with myself, I lost some of the drive that went with keeping up the physical image.

F: And you lost the drive.

C: I don't want to be driven to look a certain way for other people.

F: And when you've lost the drive to keep up the physical image, but you don't want to be *driven* by that, what *would* you like to have happen?

C: An inner want or desire, looking forward to, an expectation, in the same way I happily anticipate a good movie. I'd like to happily anticipate good exercise. Because it can be fun, you know; bicycling can be fun, swimming can be fun.

F: And like to happily anticipate a good exercise like happily anticipating a good movie. And is there anything else about anticipating?

C: It's completely free from any shoulds. It's a free choice to do something I like doing.

F: And a free choice, and when a free choice, is there anything else about free?

C: Yes. It comes from within me as opposed to being imposed by someone else, some ideal.

F: And comes from within, and when free, and free choice comes from within, whereabouts is that within?

C: (long pause) I'm searching. It's almost like I have to scan because that's an unfamiliar place. It's not one I've looked at before.

F: And free from any shoulds, (pause) and free choice.

C: It's that new place where image is no longer important, but it's so new I'm really looking. *Where* is it? It's not in my mind. It's not in my heart. It really feels like it's down in the first chakra, the root chakra, where there is – in a positive way – a self-preservation place. A place that leads me to really smell and touch and sense the world around me, and I'm with it and part of it. A very basic, loving-to-breathe kind of a feeling. Right down in my tailbone.

F: And in your tailbone, and first chakra, and a positive self-preservation place and loving to breathe. And is there anything else about self-preservation when you're in a positive, self-preservation place?

C: There's a part of it, a corner of it, a small corner of it, and to the left top of the space. And it's a little narrow corner that juts out, that feels negative, like "Who cares?" It's a place where depression resides. "Why not do what feels good in the moment, because who cares?"

F: And a narrow, small corner, in the top left of the space, and depression resides there. And when the top left corner of the space, is there anything else about the *rest* of that space?

C: The rest of the space is ... (laughs), fascinating, the rest of this self-preservation space... is like a paint-by-number village ... and it's not just on a canvas, it's actually a picture – I mean a living picture – of a village. And it's like a paint by number because it's a fairly new way to be, I'm gradually filling in the colors. So some of the village has color and some of the village has yet to be painted in. And the part

that has yet to be painted in is the left side, top, kind of leading up to that little weird, poking-out, dark pocket.

F: And the part that *is* colored, that you're gradually filling in, what color or colors might there be now?

C: Bright colors. Lots of green things growing. Some yellows. I don't usually like yellow, but it's sort of a soft, happy yellow. Red. The roof is red. It's almost like an Italian, a Tuscan village, earthy, bright. There aren't people there yet. I can see the flowers growing and the grass growing and the light changing, and so forth, but it's not inhabited yet. It's a place I'm preparing.

F: And you're preparing. And you're preparing for it to be inhabited?

C: Yes, by me, I think, and by others, and by animals. Oh, now, when I say that I can see a few butterflies and rabbits. So, it's getting habitable but the house isn't quite finished. I've painted the door and part of the right lower side, and that's where the color stops. And that upper left part of the picture is not painted yet.

F: And so when the left side, the top, is not painted yet, what would you like to have happen now?

C: Oh! Interestingly, because it's a funny picture and even looks like an Italian village house, I'm wanting to have the chimney painted and I can see a little smoke coming out of the chimney, and that's always a sign of life. Warmth, and cooking, and pleasant smells.

F: And when you want the chimney painted, what color painted?

C: It's a kind of a natural stone. It's not at all sooty-looking yet because it's pretty much new. Very natural, pretty stones, like you might see sometimes when people put stone-work around their inside fireplace. It's practical but beautiful.

F: And natural stone. And the chimney painted, and smoke coming out of the chimney, and a sign of life. And is there anything else you'd like to have happen?

C: I'm picturing a kind of... I just saw an airplane trying to fly over the space, and I thought, "No, even if it takes magic, I want some way of having even the sky be clean and blue and only full of natural things: birds, and bees, and butterflies, and rain – anything that would be natural in the sky. As I'm saying that, it's coloring in a little bit. I'm seeing more blue. The colors are being placed upon each other. There's a definite energy there. Yeah, the feeling I'm experiencing is, if I could find a way to keep those noisy, droning airplanes and the sound of cars, and all those mechanical, human-made machinery out of this place, then I could color it in.

F: And then you could color it in. What needs to happen for you to find a way to keep the noisy, droning airplanes and sounds of cars and mechanical, human-made machinery noises out, so you can color it in?

C: (laughs) There's a witch coming out the door. She's a good witch, even though she's wearing black and has a big pointed hat, she's got a nice face. She has a big, hooked nose and a wart on her chin, but she's definitely not scary. And she's looking at me and almost saying, "Damn! I've been waiting for

you!” Because really, I need her to cast a spell over all that mechanical stuff, anything that’s human-made. And she can do that. What she’s saying to me is, “When you’re really ready, and when you’re sure that’s what you want, just for this place I can cast a spell, so that all that mechanical, human-made stuff stays away from this particular sphere, where you can come to rest and recoup and feel free and have fun. And there’s lots of work to be done here: hoeing in the garden, and sweeping the floors, and that’s all healthy exercise for you.” She’s calling this “Your house of life.” She’s saying, “This house is you, in some way. The garden is you, in some way. And when you’re ready, I can cast a spell so you’re hoeing your own garden and sweeping your own floors, and that’s what the exercise will do for you.”

F: And when you’re ready, and when sure that’s what you want, how will you know when you’re ready, and that’s what you want?

C: I’ll be free of ambivalence. That’s how I know when I’m ready. When I feel ambivalence, there’s something yet to be looked at or dealt with before I can freely choose. And I think what has to happen is I need to get into that dark corner, because it’s hovering there. And because it’s there, I’m not ready to move into the house of me, the house of life.

F: And so you need to get into that dark corner. And can you get into that dark corner?

C: Yeah, I can become big and really reach up into that corner of the sky, and I can ... yucky... reach my hand in and pull it out, and it’s like oil, dirty oil that comes when you change the oil in your car. So, again, it’s like the residue of something mechanical, something imposed. It isn’t natural.

F: And then you reach in and pull out this residue. And then what happens?

C: It drips down and singes the grass. It’s gooky on my hands, and the part that drips is really toxic; it drops on the grass and burns it. It doesn’t hurt my hands to hold it, except that it’s icky. And I don’t get a smell from it, but I can see that the grass doesn’t like it at all.

F: And it drips down, and the grass doesn’t like it, and it’s toxic. And is there anything else that needs to happen?

C: Yeah. I need to find some way to detoxify it, to find some sort of chemist who knows how to do that, because this isn’t a place where I can, you know, call up a garbage service. This is a very natural place.

F: And a chemist who knows how to do that. And where might that chemist come from?

C: It’s interesting, because even though this isn’t really peopled yet, I’m now seeing a gardener-type looking guy. He’s tall and lean and kind of quiet. But he’s coming with a bucket and he’s got a cloth with something on it that I can wipe my hands with, and he’s sort of floating. His feet aren’t on the ground, so I know he’s some sort of magical symbol and he’s collecting it. There isn’t that much of it, really; it’s just makes an inch layer at the bottom of the bucket, but he’s helping me wipe off my hands, and then he’s putting the cloth in the bucket. And my hands sort of sparkle now. There’s something else happening, not just wiping off that yucky stuff, that toxic stuff.

F: And sparkles. And is there anything else about that sparkles?

C: It's a kind of energy, and it's the part of me that paints the picture. I don't even need a brush. Those hands can kind of sweep across an area. I've been sitting quietly with my hands on the desk but I'm now, with my left arm, sweeping right to left with my hand. I can sweep color into that upper left-hand portion of the picture, and the place where the black was is still like a little pocket, but it's empty now, so I can pat it with that left hand until it comes down into the rest of the picture, so it's no longer this dirty pocket sticking out. Yeah. So that kind of energy and sparkle from my *left* hand, for some reason. My right hand is holding my eyes shut. I have no idea why, but my right hand is over my eyes, holding them shut, as if to free me from any expectation, a trust that my left hand knows what it's doing. And I can see the village fine. I don't see that village with my regular vision. It's an inner vision.

F: And you can trust your left hand, and sweeping color into the upper left corner. And what kind of color is that color in the left corner now?

C: It's a kind of whitish, yellowish, bluish color – it's a light, radiant, as if there's a sun beyond the upper left corner, but it's not a sun. It's a different kind of light. I think of it as the source. The light that's the source.

F: The light that's the source. And is there anything else about that light that's the source?

C: (pause) There's a sense, as with my left hand, I can trust that source that shines in from the upper left, and holding my hand over my eyes helps me remember that source is always there. And I'm not uncomfortable, I'm not clutching my head or anything. A gentle reminder: "Close your real eyes because they see planes and cars and smoke and soot and toxic stuff. It's that inner picture, that inner village with the house of life that you need to trust."

F: And can you trust that house of life and that inner village now?

C: Yes. Yes. Absolutely! It's all colored in and there's ambient light from the source that's outside that picture. I'm going to try taking my right hand down. It's a little bit harder, because there's some light that comes through my eyelids that keeps me in this other world. I can still picture the village and trust it, but it's not quite as easy to see. Then when I put my hand over my eyes I can see the village and its colors quite clearly.

F: And when you can see the village and the colors quite clearly, and you can trust the house of life, and the inner village, and you can trust that source, what happens to ambivalence?

C: Ah. Oh. When I have my hand over my real eyes, my right hand, there is no ambivalence because the village is so clear. When I take my right hand away, I see both pictures. I see "the real world" and I see my village and my house of life. And it's not that I feel torn; it's just that the pull of the village is not as strong because the everyday picture is so present. So, how would I describe the ambivalence? I feel a pull toward the village but it's not quite as strong a pull as the pull of everyday life, which is more on the right.

F: And when the pull is not so strong, when your hands are away from your eyes, what would you like to have happen?

C: When I feel the pull of everyday life on the right hand, I would like to allow the pull of the inner village to be brighter, to see the light from the source shining down, illuminating the village so I see it in all its color. So that I feel drawn to it, instead of the demands of everyday life. And as I say that, I can see that happening. I can appeal to the source to illuminate the village. Then I can see it and I can feel myself being drawn toward it.

F: And you can appeal to the source. And when you appeal to the source you can feel yourself drawn to it. And when you're drawn to it, and the inner village is clear, what happens to free choice?

C: Oh! It's very much there. I feel a deep emotion, a kind of a joy; that the drawing-toward is not at all a *should*. It's a pleasure. It's that joyful anticipation of something I love, or am really eager to be in or see or be part of.

F: And when that free choice is very much there, and the deep emotion that's a kind of joy, and it's that joyful anticipation, what happens to exercise?

C: (laughs) Well! That's not even the right name for it anymore. It's moving and using my body in a natural way. In the village I can picture myself riding my bicycle down to the next farm, or hoeing in the garden, and moving my body in healthful ways. Yeah. I want to find a different word. I want to find a word that's not *exercise*. It's tainted, it's toxic, it has all those shoulds attached to it.

F: And what kind of word would that word be?

C: It would be a word that has a quality to it like "dance." Pirouette, or some aspect of dance. I'm thinking of the Ballet Russes. And the end product – their bodies are so functional and so capable. And in a way they would have extraordinarily hard work to be able to dance that way, but it doesn't feel like work because it's such a joyful thing to dance. So they're able to hold a vision of the joy of the dance while they're doing the work, and it doesn't feel hard. So, what is that quality...? I don't quite have the word yet, but it's definitely not exercise, or hard work.

F: And when you hold the joy of the dance, is there anything else about that hold?

C: It's a vision of movement. A vision of freedom and movement and capability, being able to use one's body. It's more than a picture; it's a sensation, a physical sensation of really being *in* my body. Yeah. That would be OK for me. Instead of exercise, I want to be *in* my body.

F: And you want to be *in* your body. And how do you know when you're in your body?

C: It's really a sensation through all my bones and sinews and molecules. I can feel the oxygenating of my blood, and the blood flowing through, and it's a functioning thing, almost like being part of a living tree. It has a strength to it and it enjoys the movement. This body I'm *in* *wants* to move. That's how I know.

F: And part of a living tree, and your body wanting to move. And is there anything else about a body that's wanting to move?

C: (pause) No. Because the wanting doesn't have any restrictions. It can. It wants to and it can. (laughs) You know how when you have a dog that's just looking at you and waiting at the door: "Can we go walk? Can we go play? Can we go take a drive?"

F: Like a dog at the door. And waiting.

C: Yeah. Friendly, and anticipating, like a dog at the door. Exactly.

F: And so a dog at the door, and anticipating, and that kind of joyful anticipation. And when all that, what happens with image changing?

C: (chuckles) Oh, well. You know, when I'm a dog at the door I don't care. If I'm happy my tongue's sort of lolling out, and I'm drooling and panting, and I don't care. I just want to go and prance around and leap for balls and bark.

F: What kind of dog is the dog?

C: I'm not a show dog. I'm *not* a show dog. I honestly don't know much about dogs, but I'm kind of a medium-sized dog, not real long hair, nothing approaching a show dog. You know, I don't need a lot of grooming, and I'm sort of cute but nothing special, just a good old dog.

F: And do you have a color?

C: Kind of a golden color. It sort of changes, though. You know, it's not any one dog. I'll see spots and they'll go away, and I'll see a golden retriever and then, no the hair's too long – it's more a dog energy, a dog shape, a dog's simple happiness.

F: And when a dog energy, and like a dog at the door, and joyful anticipation, what happens to accessing a level of motivation that you had?

C: Oh, man. There's no need. It's just there. It wakes up and says, "Let's go play!" And eagerly awaits it, and, let's see, now, dog is not dependent on owner. Dog will look and say, "Are you ready?" but there's a little doggy door, and dog can push out and go play anytime.

F: And a doggy door. And when a doggy door, whereabouts is that door?

C: Oh, it's right in front of me.

F: And in front.

C: And I just made it big enough for me.

F: And big enough for you, and a doggy door.

C: All I have to do is ... I picture myself a little bit like Wonder Woman, leaping through it, but it's not a difficult door. You just push through it and it closes behind you, and you can get back in the same way,

quite easily. It's more a Wonder Woman feeling, like when a dog leaps into play. It's that sleekness, that confidence. It's not mental at all; it's a physical confidence, a physical capability.

F: And a physical confidence, and leap into play, and a Wonder Woman feeling, and easy to get out, and get in, and right in front of you. And when a dog, and a doggy door, and an inner village, and a source you can trust, what happened to healthy eating?

C: Um, the eating isn't really an issue. It's nowhere in the landscape. Part of the sureness of the dog, I don't even know, I'm trying to see; I guess the dog can be part of that inner landscape, but it doesn't have to be. The dog can be day-to-day. And when in that state, that kind of joyful, physical, jumping, there's this trust that I'll eat when I'm hungry and stop when I'm full, and enjoy it.

F: And when the dog can be day-to-day, what happens to jump-start in the morning?

C: Not needed. This isn't a puppy, but it's not on its dying legs either. This is a mature dog that still loves to jump up. I can see it. It wakes up, it cocks an ear, it looks around. I'm kind of doing that with my body. Cocking my head up, and the energy's there. It's like, "Oh, wow! Another day I can go chase balls..."

F: And the energy's there. And when that energy's there, and wakes up, what happens to establishing exercise as a regular part of your day?

C: That's from the should place. And it's no longer relevant.

F: Ah, OK. Because this is holding.

C: Yes, because this is natural and it's that joyful anticipation. It's "Oh my gosh, it's morning" and it's not like, "Oh, it's time that you should go play." It's "Oh goody, it's time that I can go play."

F: Well, we're just about out of time for today. Is there anything else about a dog, and up in the morning, and the energy is there, and a source you can trust, and a source you can appeal to, and the inner village is clear, and is there anything else about all that for today?

C: No, I don't think so. I have a feeling of just let it simmer, be with it. I'm glad to have the recording because I have a real clear picture of the dog, and the village, and the source; maybe they're the most important. I don't seem to need the witch anymore, or the gardener. So yes.

F: I encourage you to make a metaphor map.

C: Yeah, I will, definitely. Because these are all powerful images. Great.

F: OK. How was that for you?

C: Oh, as always, it was just wonderful. There's such a freedom in not having to analyze.

F: Yes. Yes.

C: A happy freedom, kind of like being with a dream, walking through a dream as if you're having it now, and not getting to the interpretation part, but trusting that my dream world, my metaphor world is there for me. It's got my back. And I don't have to understand or interpret.

F: Yeah. And that's a lovely thing to realize that the healing that's going on happens regardless of the interpretation.

C: Right.

F: That it *is* what your mind needs, and body needs to heal.

C: Isn't that wonderful?

F: And you don't have to work at it.

C: What a concept!