

# **NLP and Memorization**

## **Neuro Linguistic Programming and its Application to Excellence in Memorization on the Harp**

**World Harp Congress, Vancouver, Canada**

**Dr. Carrol McLaughlin**

**Distinguished Professor of Harp, University of Arizona**

Email: [cmclaugh@u.arizona.edu](mailto:cmclaugh@u.arizona.edu) or [drcarrol@aol.com](mailto:drcarrol@aol.com)

### **Neuro Linguistic Programming**

- **Neuro** = nerves
- **Linguistic** = language and communication systems
- **Programming** = organizing the components of the system to achieve specific outcomes.

### **Representational Systems :**

Visual (V)

Auditory (A)

Kinesthetic (K)

### **The Words We Use:**

#### **Visual:**

- looks like
- I can see your point
- a bright idea
- That clears it up!
- I get the picture
- Now I see where this phrase is going
- She has a sparkling technique

Additional words: *perspective, see, look; observe, image, clear, vivid, hues, horizon, appear, focus, flashy, colorful, visualize, hazy, dark.*

#### **Aural**

- It sounds like she is ready for the performance.
- I hear what you are saying.
- He just “tunes out” when I speak to him.
- I question if she is ready for the performance.
- His music really speaks to me.

Additional auditory-based words: *tone, tell, talk, say, tune in, volume, give an ear to, harmonious, shrill, amplify, dialogue, cacophony of sound.*

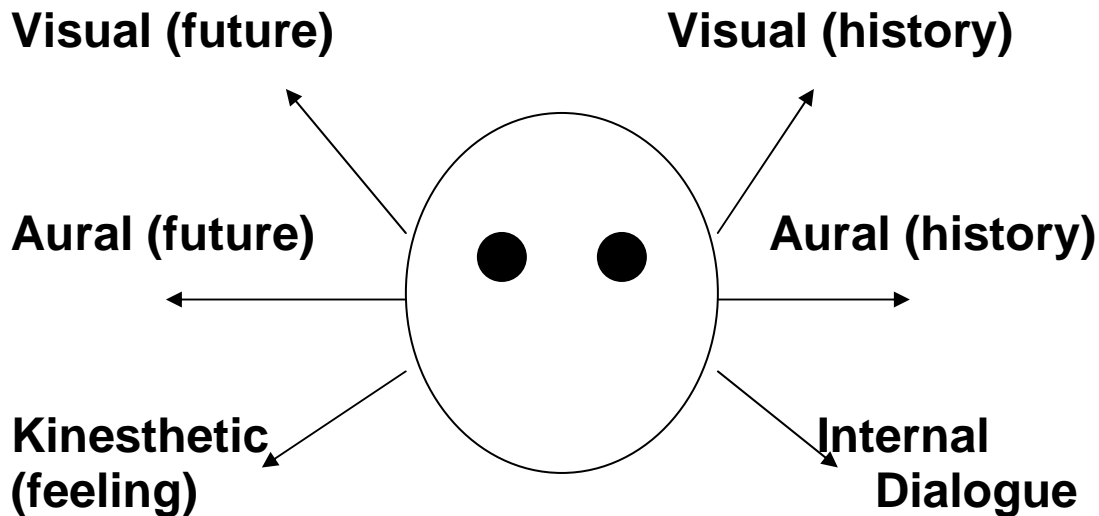
#### **Kinesthetic:**

- Try and feel the phrase this way
- I sense you are concerned about something
- That passage tripped me up in performance
- She has a warm personality

Additional words: *made contact with, have a handle on, toughened, softened, shook me up, geared up for, tight, tense, bond, excited, smooth.*

# The Eyes Have It!

Where our eyes look is actually a “clue” to how we are processing information.



Everyone has a “leading representational system” that they favor over the other systems for speaking, internal dialogue *and learning music!!* If you can discover what is your “leading system” it will help you to concentrate on developing new learning strategies in the other systems.

**Ideal learning is TRIPLE CHANNEL LEARNING!**

## In Practice or Preparation - - - -

To implant a strong **VISUAL** memory, try the following:

- Hold your book or music *up and to the left* and study it .Look carefully at everything that is on the page.
- highlight in a bright color the Repair Points (pedal diagrams at the start of each phrase, where you can start from memory), Pedal markings and dynamics.
- Photocopy your material and highlight important sections and concepts in different colors. Coordinate similar colors to integrate ideas.
- **Visualize** yourself performing the task you are preparing for. *See yourself playing the piece, giving the lecture, or taking the exam...and doing it well!*
- Try writing the material out from memory ,especially difficult passages. Do this once a day (especially before going to bed). Only refer to the written material if you cannot remember something or want to confirm your memory.

To learn in **AURAL** mode, try the following:

- **Solfège.** Say the names of the notes out loud as you are learning. This installs an, “aural track” into your memory and in concert, you will hear your own voice telling you the notes.

- Say the pedals out loud as you practice tricky parts.
- Count the rhythm out loud. This sets up a solid foundation for all your practice and performing (and it is AWESOME for your students to learn!)
- At a quiet moment, present your whole presentation in your mind perhaps looking to your right at ear level (aural construct). Hear the beauty of your music and be impressed at how confident you sound. If one area gives you any discomfort, review that area first in your next day's practice. .
- In all preparation for a performance, *daily repetition is imperative!!* In order to have information passed from "short term memory" to "long term memory" (where it is most beneficial to us), we must have many repetitions of the same material, time after time. It is far better to work short amounts every day for a week or month than to "cram" for many hours before a concert.
- Learn in *small sections*. Much time is wasted trying to learn too much information at one time. Less is better, with a minimum of 10 repetitions of each idea, (preferably in all three learning modes: Triple Channel it!)

To learn in **KINESTHETIC** mode, try the following:

- For every phrase and piece, think about what mood or feeling you want to communicate. Is it happy? Irreverent? Brooding? Full of suspense? Elegant and inspiring?
- *Feel* how you will be, in front of your audience. Imagine how the floor will feel under your feet, if you will feel the heat of lights, if you will be in a small room or on a large stage.
- Be aware of your posture. Raise your chin, straighten the backbone and push back the shoulders. This puts you into **visual** mode which is the "safest" for a flawless presentation.
- To "feel the rhythm"; practice your music in your head as you are walking along.
- Press your fingers into the strings, and "press out" the tone. Be aware of the distance between each of your fingers.

## **In Performance.....**

- Backstage, or before beginning your presentation, **LOOK UP!!!!** Stage fright is a *feeling*; therefore it is stored in *kinesthetic*, **accessed by looking down. DON'T GO THERE!**
- **Internal dialogue** is helpful in practice but *not* in performance. Here are suggestions for "conquering" internal dialogue:
  1. Make a deal. In performance you will put the suggestions for improvement (*self criticism*) into an imaginary box in your head. After each performance you promise to "open the box" and learn from the suggestions. Warning: don't break your part of the bargain.

2. DO NOT ENGAGE IN CONVERSATION WITH YOURSELF WHILE IN PERFORMANCE! If left alone, an extraneous thought will pass.....like a cloud in the sky. If you engage it, you have a thundershower.
  3. Practice giving “pre-performances” where you learn to not be the victim of your own internal dialogue. I recommend 10 pre-performances before every concert.
  4. In practice, do not always allow yourself to go back and correct any mistakes you make. In front of the public, you can’t go back and correct something you don’t like, so why practice how to do it? Instead, make a list of problem areas and work them separately after you finish running the piece.
- Practice your presentation in the clothes you will be wearing...especially the shoes. If something *feels tight* as you speak, for example, it will force you into kinesthetic whether you want to be there or not!
  - In performance, do not try and mind read what the audience thinks. It is really not your business...you certainly have no control over it and it will divide your energy.
  - Try and **focus** as much as possible. This is a tool often used in meditation. You can concentrate on something like a green dot, a member of your family (even take them on stage in your imagination, and speak or perform for them alone!), or anything that you have established as a focusing tool. This is stronger if used consistently.
  - “**NEXT**” or “**DELETE**”. If you have made an error...played a wrong note, whatever - FORGET IT!! Press the “delete” key in your memory computer and put all your attention to what is coming up, to making the next thought extraordinarily convincing and worthwhile.
  - **P = p – i**                      Performance = Preparation – Interference

***Remember above all that we are COMMUNICATORS on stage. If we are playing or speaking or dancing with joy and passion and love for what we believe in, that is what the audience will experience, and they will respond with joy and passion.... And appreciation for the beauty you have brought into their lives.***

Carrol McLaughlin’s book on Neuro Linguistic Performance, entitled “**Power Performance**” includes “Sure-fire, simple techniques to change your life and free you from stress and fear, especially in performance”.Order your copy online please visit [www.integrityink.US](http://www.integrityink.US) or through **Amazon.com**.