

'The must have self-help book'
Paul McKenna

The Ultimate
Introduction to
NLP

How to build a
successful life

CO-CREATOR OF NLP
RICHARD BANDLER

ALESSIO ROBERTI & OWEN FITZPATRICK

Richard Bandler

**The Ultimate Introduction to
NLP: How to build a successful life**

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Richard Bandler, co-creator of NLP and the man who inspired Paul McKenna to greatness, collaborates with Alessio Roberti and Owen Fitzpatrick to reveal how to unleash your true potential and transform your life. Richard Bandler – the world-renowned co-creator of NLP who has helped millions around the world change their lives for the better – has teamed up with Italian NLP Master Trainer Alessio and co-founder of the Irish Institute of NLP Owen, to craft a simple yet engaging story of one man’s personal change and discovery, to help readers understand the remarkable principles of NLP. Inspiring and easy-to-read, this fable recreates the experience of being at a workshop with Bandler. Rather than explaining the theories, An Introduction to NLP illustrates the principles and simple techniques that Bandler has developed over the past 35 years in action. This inspirational book gives you the tools to change your life, overcoming the things that are holding you back: your phobias, depression, habits, psychosomatic illnesses or learning disorders. Through the simple techniques of NLP, you too can become a strong, happy, successful person and achieve your goals. ‘The must have self-help book!’
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HarperCollins*Publishers*

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From Richard

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From Owen

I would like to thank my parents, Marjorie and Brian Fitzpatrick – quite simply the greatest parents one could wish to have and the people I look up to most in life.

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Lastly, thank you to Dr Richard Bandler. Meeting Richard as a teenager, I found his genius, advice and belief in me literally turned my world around. I'm blessed to have him as a teacher, mentor and friend in my life.

INTRODUCTION

A workshop between two covers, this is Richard Bandler's most accessible book to date. It's the story of a man named Joe who attends a one-day introductory course on NLP with Dr Richard Bandler, listens to Richard teaching, practises the techniques he teaches, meets other participants and learns as they all share their thoughts and insights on how to apply the content of the course in different areas of their personal and professional lives.

By reading this book, you too can become one of the participants of the course, hearing what they hear, seeing what they see, experiencing what they experience and learning what they learn!

We decided to write a story in which the participants of a course were the protagonists because it's the participants who are at the centre of our training, each with their own needs, ambitions, problems, and desires, each looking for new ideas, tools and solutions.

For many years we were ourselves participants on Richard's courses. We then both became trainers, working as assistants on Richard's international courses for more than a decade. Nowadays, we are lucky to have become international trainers, sharing what we have learned from Richard all over the world. So, it's a great pleasure and honour for us to co-author this book with him and share what we've learned from him and our students so far.

We have written this book because we believe there is a huge need for the core message of these pages to be shared globally. The world is changing rapidly and bringing with it the paradoxical realization that we have been given more and more resources than ever before and modern technology has allowed us to do amazing and wonderful things, yet depression, anxiety, fear, panic and stress are all still on the rise.

The core message of this book is that there are precise tools that can help you to take control of your life. In it, Richard is going to teach you how you can change your thinking and change your life – and how you can help others change their lives too.

We began writing this book in Rome, continued it in Dublin, worked on it in London and New York, and got feedback from people in Los Angeles, Tokyo and even Australia. It is the result of 20 years of interviewing thousands of people who have attended NLP workshops, the product of participants who shared their own experiences with us. It is an international project focused not on NLP but on how people can learn to use NLP to change their lives.

There is a huge need in the world today for a change in mentality. There is a huge need to inject hope for a better world. We stand at an important crossroads between letting ourselves be pushed along by the accelerating momentum of challenging circumstances or deciding to steer ourselves to where we want to go. We need a change of direction. We need a change of consciousness. We need to know that we can have a say in how the world turns out.

NLP is a movement. You can be part of it. Start now – it's your time!

Alessio and Owen

Chapter 1

A WORKSHOP WITH THE CO-CREATOR OF NLP

Joe put his phone back into his pocket, took a deep breath and composed himself. Having just had an argument with his girlfriend, he certainly wasn't in the best of moods. That said, he knew it was really important to get the most out of the day. He walked into the lobby of the hotel, where he immediately noticed a familiar face among the assistants taking care of registration.

Joe smiled. Seeing Alan cheered him up a bit.

'Joe!' Alan called out. 'Fantastic to see you again.'

'Likewise,' Joe replied. 'Yeah, I've been really looking forward to today. Finally I decided to find out more about this NLP stuff.'

NLP stood for 'Neuro-Linguistic Programming'. Having seen many books on the topic, Joe had a sense of how popular it was. He'd understood it was an attitude and methodology that allowed people to think and communicate more effectively, and he needed to do both. Up until a year before, he had resigned himself to the idea that he was the way he was and his life was what it was and there was nothing he could do about it. But then he had learned that things could change, and now he really wanted to work on himself and make some improvements.

'Just to give you the heads up on what's in store,' Alan began, 'you've already seen Richard in action. Today, you'll learn about the field of NLP itself.'

Alan was referring to Dr Richard Bandler, the co-founder of NLP. Joe had met Richard at a course he had attended a year previously. At the time, he had been alone and depressed. To help out, his sister, Maria, had given him a flyer for a three-day course entitled 'Choose Freedom', which had involved a workshop with Dr Bandler. That was where he had met Alan, who had been an assistant at the course.

Now Alan was saying, 'And as ever, I'll be around to help in any way I can.'

'Great,' Joe replied. 'It's much appreciated.'

Over the three days of the previous course, Joe had gradually come to the realization that it was possible to change things even when challenges seemed insurmountable. Now he was keen to learn more.

'So, what are the highlights of today?'

'Well, you'll learn some remarkable strategies for accessing powerful emotional states, getting better at communicating with others and really improving the different areas of your life. Probably the best way to describe this stuff is that it's the difference that makes the difference. It's how to build a successful life.'

Joe really needed to succeed at this moment in time. He was facing two important issues. You see, after the first course, things had really changed for him. He had a good job now and a good relationship with a girl he was crazy about. He had everything he could wish for. But that meant he had a lot to lose. In fact he was feeling more nervous now than he had 12 months before! When he hadn't really had much of a life, it hadn't mattered much what happened to him or what he did. But now he knew that he needed to do something, and soon, if he wanted to hold on to the things that mattered to him.

Alan took him to one side. 'So, how's everything going? How's that beautiful girlfriend of yours?'

'She's fine. I mean, we were getting on great ... but nothing's perfect, I suppose. It's just that now – well, we're considering moving in together.'

'Moving in together? Wow! That's fantastic news, Joe. I expect an invite to the big day!'

'Hold your horses, Alan. Marriage is a whole other story! It is great, though.'

Joe paused. He knew he wasn't sounding convincing.

'Obviously, we're getting to know each other a lot more now ... and we have our differences. So that's taking some getting used to.'

Joe looked down, thinking about the argument he'd just had with his girlfriend.

'Joe,' Alan said seriously, 'if you feel she's the one, you need to make sure you hold on to her. You'll regret it for the rest of your life if you don't.'

As Joe looked up, he noticed a certain intensity in Alan's eyes. What was all that about? He knew Alan was right, but even talking about his relationship made him feel worse. He decided to change the subject.

'Work is a lot better,' he said confidently. 'I got a promotion, so I'm obviously delighted with that. Although,' he went on more slowly, 'I have found myself struggling with the new role at times. I have a lot more interaction with customers now and it's just ... I don't think I'm a very good people person.'

Suddenly aware that Alan was studying him, he felt embarrassed.

'Anyway, I make it sound worse than it actually is. I just think there are a few things NLP could help me with. You asked!'

He smiled sheepishly.

'Just remember,' Alan said, smiling back, 'there's no such thing as a *people person*. What can help is to learn to feel comfortable around others and become better at communicating with them.'

Joe nodded.

'The seminar should help,' Alan said reassuringly. 'That's it, you're registered now, Joe. Best of luck!'

'Thanks!'

No sooner had Joe turned around and started to walk towards the seminar room than he saw another familiar face.

Teresa, an Irish doctor he had met at his first seminar with Richard Bandler, threw her arms around him.

'Joe, what a lovely surprise! Allow me to introduce my beautiful daughter, Emily.'

Emily looked to be in her mid to late teens. She had long red hair and was dressed in jeans and a Minnie Mouse t-shirt. She smiled politely as she shook hands with Joe.

'So,' Joe said, hoping to break the ice, 'are you also new to all this, or am I the only one?'

'I'm a first-timer,' Emily replied. 'I've just read a couple of books we have at home, that's all. *She's* the NLP expert of the family.' She gestured towards her mother with her thumb. 'You know what they say: "An old broom knows the dirty corners best."'

'Very funny, dear, but the only dirty corners I know are in your room!' Teresa said in her warm, maternal voice. 'Sure, I've been studying NLP for a couple of years, and I use it in my daily practice as well as in my personal life, but I'm no expert. In fact, the best lesson I learned from NLP is that "you're never done learning", as they say, so if you have the feeling that you know everything there is to know, you're obviously missing out on something! And the worst thing is that you're so blinded by your own certainty that you don't even realize that you're missing it.'

'Wow,' Joe said to Emily with a cheeky smile, 'your mum's cool!'

'The best,' Emily confirmed. 'Sometimes I wonder if she's for real!'

'Oh, come on, you two!' And with that, Teresa playfully slapped Joe's shoulder.

As the three of them made their way towards the seminar room, Joe and Teresa began to catch up on what had been happening since they had last met. At one point, they stopped talking for a moment as they noticed a lady rummaging through her handbag. She was red-faced and looked extremely worried. Then, just as Joe and Teresa were about to ask if she was OK, she heaved a deep sigh of relief as she pulled a small mirror out of her bag.

Joe and Teresa exchanged glances, and he shook his head. *All that stress over a makeup mirror, he thought. If this seminar is anything like the last, she's really going to benefit from it.*

Joe, Teresa and Emily went into the seminar room and found three seats together halfway up the centre aisle. Joe found himself placed between Teresa and a man in his fifties wearing a sharp suit and a pair of red designer glasses.

'Hi, I'm Joe.'

'Edgar Martin's the name, changing lives is the game,' said the man with a laugh. 'Nice to meet you, Joe. What brings you here today?'

Joe grinned. 'Long story short? A year ago I was in a bad place in my life and struggling with things. My sister convinced me to go to a seminar and, well, that turned some things around for me. I know NLP was involved, so I'm here to learn about it. How about you?'

'That's an interesting path you took, Joe,' Edgar said. 'I'm here to add a few tools to my toolbox, so to speak. I'm not a plumber, though. Well, maybe a plumber of the mind!' Once again he laughed at his own joke. 'I'm a psychiatrist and a psychotherapist.'

Joe smiled politely. 'Cool,' he said as he took out his personal journal.

'Nice journal there, Joe,' Edgar commented. 'Do you take it everywhere you go?'

Joe nodded. 'Well, not *everywhere*.' He winked as he tried to match Edgar's sense of humour, but all he got was a blank stare in response. Slightly red-faced, he continued, 'I know from the last time that Richard Bandler teaches through stories, so you absorb a lot of ideas unconsciously, yet I also wanted to consciously capture some of his most memorable insights and observations throughout the workshop. I find taking notes to be a great way to review the key concepts and techniques.'

Edgar looked impressed. 'It didn't occur to me to bring along a journal, but I might look for one at the first break. Although really I should have brought my iPad – so I could have synchronized my database up here with my external memory!'

Pointing to his head, Edgar laughed again, while Joe nodded, this time failing to smile.

'This is my first time learning from Richard,' Edgar continued. 'It's just ... I got so much from Alan, my first NLP trainer, that I figured it was time I learned from his mentor. Actually, Alan's here today too, as an assistant.'

'Oh, yes, I know Alan,' Joe replied, suddenly intrigued. 'What's he like as a trainer?'

Before Edgar could answer, music began and Richard Bandler appeared at the back of the room. With a glance and a nod of the head, Edgar and Joe silently agreed to postpone their conversation. The seminar was about to begin.

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