

# P R E S E N T I N G M A G I C A L L Y



## Transforming Your Stage Presence With NLP

**Tad James MS, PhD**  
**David Shephard BSc, DES**

*"A true breakthrough in the field of communications and training . . .  
Presenting Magically is the only training text you will ever need!"*

*Caroline Miller PhD, Co-author of Healing Yourself with Self-Hypnosis*

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Magically  
Transforming Your  
Stage Presence With NLP*

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## ***Introduction***

We both came into training after various other jobs, such as selling and management consultancy, and it seemed that we had something to offer to other people. At the same time, we had been on the receiving end of much training, mostly of indifferent quality. However some of them stood out because there were some engaging and inspiring presenters who made everything entertaining, and did it with seemingly little effort. During such presentations, it was easy to wonder, “What is it that they are doing that is different, that makes them excellent presenters?” And then: “I want to do this. I’m sure these people weren’t born doing it, so there must be a way of learning how to be this good. And I am willing to do whatever it takes to become an excellent trainer and presenter myself.”

That journey led us to discover the basics of *Presenting Magically*, and, for 15 years we have been training the top trainers in Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) in the world.

### *Overview*

In this book we are going to be explaining what NLP is and what it has to offer in presentation skills. We presuppose that you know little or nothing about NLP. Essentially, NLP is more an attitude of mind rather than a set of techniques. It presents new ways of doing things, and fosters willingness to explore what could be. In other words, it is a way of expanding your own world of possibilities.

As we share this information with you, we will often include essential ‘stage directions’ and descriptions of what we are doing.

In a live training, we continually vary the pace and voice tonality with what is being said. Some of the examples . . . and some of the instructions . . . will work . . . much better . . . for you . . . if you read them s-l-o-w-l-y. However, in the main body of the text, we will be indicating pauses only where they are absolutely essential, or to make a point about pausing. Otherwise, the text would be full of dots . . .

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For certain exercises, it would be better to listen to the words, either live or on tape. You could have someone read the text aloud to you, in the appropriate manner, or record it, and then listen to the tape so that you can do what is necessary with your body, or inside your head.

### *The secret*

In this book, we will share a number of the ‘trade secrets’ of professional presenters, as well as top NLP trainers. There is more to this book than is immediately obvious. We all take language for granted most of the time. But when you understand how it works on an unconscious level, you can begin to use it to help get your message across. You will learn to recognise some of the language patterns by getting curious about, “Why is he saying that in this way?” “What is this bit really about?” “How does this work?” “What if I were to use that myself?” Some things won’t be explained until we are well into the book, while others will not be explained at all. But they will have been happening.

Actually, the best way of hiding things is to . . . Are you familiar with Edgar Allan Poe’s story *The Purloined Letter*? The police detective is looking for a very important letter. He has made an exhaustive and meticulous search of the flat, looking in all places that he thinks someone is likely to hide something. This is his downfall, because in fact, the missing letter is stuck in full view in the letter rack on the wall. So as you read, look again, and you will find many examples of what is being taught.

### *How to get the most out of this book*

The structure of this book is similar to the training and follows the same sequence of exercises. The first six chapters establish the groundwork. Then we will start doing the exercises. We recommend that the first time through, you read each chapter and do the exercises in order, as each exercise builds on the ones before. To become an excellent presenter or trainer you do need to practise the skills. Then you will be getting direct evidence that what you are doing is making a difference.

The ideas in this book can be used immediately. Right from the first exercise you will have something to explore, and not just in formal settings. There will be many occasions when you can use these skills appropriately with anyone you are communicating with for whatever purpose. Presenting also includes talking one-on-one with family, friends and work colleagues.

In Chapter Fourteen we will be exploring four different learning styles. If you are the kind of person who immediately wants to get on and do the exercises – which is one of the learning styles – then please bear with us, because in order to accommodate other learning style preferences, we must first do the set-ups and framing for the book.

Having a structure is useful for achieving the best results. Therefore, we recommend that you:

- Allocate a regular amount of time for doing the reading, and for doing the exercises.
- Break the material into suitable-sized pieces according to the time available.
- Take breaks of five to ten minutes every hour or so, as this will aid your learning.
- Maintain your momentum by doing a number of exercises every day or every week, or by doing several during a weekend. By establishing a regular schedule for your learning, you will soon see changes in yourself and the results you are getting, and thus stay motivated.
- Find opportunities to use the material in your everyday life. If you can do some training or presenting, even better.

### *Forming working groups*

Presenting is not a solitary activity. Ideally we would suggest that you work through this book with a group of like-minded people who also want to improve their presentation and training communication skills. The ideal group number is about five or six people, so that when you are doing an exercise in front of your group, the audience is large enough for you to observe that what you are doing is working for everyone. By learning together, you benefit from each other's experiences. You will also be developing your own skills in front of a real group, and you will be making this

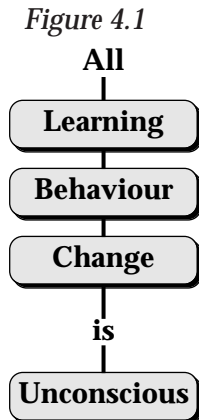
# Chapter Four

## Your Unconscious Mind

Let us introduce you to a very important part of yourself – your unconscious mind. Just go inside and say “Hello” to your unconscious mind. And notice what happens. Do you get a response? You know you have an unconscious mind, but you may not have been formally introduced before.

One way of thinking of your unconscious mind is that it is everything you are not consciously thinking of right now. As soon as you think of something, it becomes conscious. Before that it was in your unconscious mind. A quick demonstration:

Everyone has a conscious and an unconscious mind, so whenever you are with someone, you can communicate with both their conscious and unconscious minds, because we know that both parts are listening.



*Figure 4.1* summarises what your unconscious mind does for you. The first thing to appreciate is that your unconscious mind is the source of all learning, all behaviour and all change. Here are some reasons why it is important for you to get to know your unconscious mind, and to consciously decide to communicate with other people’s unconscious minds. We’ll examine each of these individually:



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### *Learning*

Learning is not the domain of your conscious mind. Your unconscious mind is the part of you that learns. Now, you may have thought that you learned consciously in the past, and although learning must first go through the conscious mind, it is your unconscious mind that remembers everything. Everything, once learned, resides in the unconscious mind.

Think about all the things you have ever learned. Until the subject was mentioned, how many of them did you remember consciously? Probably none!

Think of all the phone numbers you have learned, and which you now know. For example, you know your home phone number, do you not? If you'd like to do this with us, please say it to yourself. Now before you were thinking of your home phone number, where was it? Obviously it was stored somewhere, a place of which you were not conscious – that is your unconscious mind – the part of your mind of which you are not conscious, right now. What's important about that is that all your learning – everything you have ever learned – is stored in your unconscious mind.

### *Behaviour*

Students in the hypnosis seminars we teach often approach us and ask, "Can you make me move my arm unconsciously?" We ask the student if s/he had ever considered that s/he cannot move his/her hand consciously. Do you know how many muscles there are between the tip of your fingers and your shoulder blade? There are 159 muscles. So, it is impossible to move your hand *consciously*. You have to move it *unconsciously*. It's not just your hand, either – all behaviour is generated at the unconscious level. Think about walking. You just put one foot in front of the other, don't you? When you do, however, you don't think about it. You just do it. In fact if you think about walking, that thinking can be counter-productive. Thinking about walking is conscious thinking. The fact that it interferes with walking shows us that the behaviour is generated unconsciously.

How about this: The last time you drove to work, how conscious of it were you? Do you remember the whole trip? Or do you

remember none of it? If you want a real scare, the next time you drive somewhere, just look over at the person next to you on the freeway. They too are probably unconscious.

### *Change*

Think of a bad habit you wanted to change in the past. Was it easy? Probably not. Most people find it hard to change a bad habit. For them it's something that takes time. Tad remembers, "When my sideburns were long, I used to play with them all the time. One day I said, 'I'm not going to do that any more!' But, you know, five minutes later there I was again, playing with them".

If change was 'that' easy, you could walk up to a friend who was being a bit of a jerk and say, "Um, excuse me, but you're being a bit of a jerk! Would you please change?" And they would change. Right then – if change was conscious! In the real world, change isn't always that easy. Many people go on doing the same old things over and over, year after year, and they complain about it. If change isn't that easy for us, it is simply because we aren't fully in rapport with our unconscious mind. In the real world people are often not in rapport with the unconscious mind, and that is why change is sometimes difficult to accomplish.

So, all learning, behaviour, and change are unconscious. This makes the following idea vital to presenters.

### *Use positive language*

Your unconscious mind cannot directly process a negative in consciousness. It's true. In fact, it's also true for the conscious mind. Think about this: You cannot think about what you wish to not think about without thinking about it. Think about that. For example, if we said, "Don't think about a blue tree," what are you thinking about? Unless you were semantically trained, you are probably thinking about a blue tree. Even though you were asked not to do that!!

Most of us go through our lives telling ourselves, "I don't want to think about a blue tree." When you go in to see the boss, do you say, "I hope he doesn't get angry like the last time"? When

# Chapter Nine

## *Being Yourself*

When first presenting, many presenters think, “It is not OK to be myself!” The more presenting we did, the more we realised that we got the best results when we were spontaneously being who we are, rather than doing any pretending. In any kind of training or presentation, being truly yourself is more than enough. In fact:

- *Being you is all you’ll ever need.*

Most people need to let out more of who they really are. The more of you that is available to the audience, the more they will be able to connect and bond with you, and feel comfortable with you. Some relevant self-disclosure lets the audience get to know you as a person, rather than as a disembodied source of information. But this does not mean you have to reveal all of your private life to the audience. It means that you have to remove the barriers, so that the true you can emerge – the lively, spontaneous, playful, energetic self that you really are.

Remember in the previous chapter what happened in Exercise 5 where you silently matched the other person. When you have rapport with an audience, they will be in the same state as you. If you are agitated, or stressed, your audience will also start feeling that, but they won’t know why. If you are balanced, calm, and OK about being yourself, they will feel balanced, calm, and OK about being themselves. Everything is then going to be much easier.

### *Fearful or comfortable?*

If you have any fears about presenting, then the next thing is for you to let them go. First, you need to find out where you are right now on that score.

Of course, you may have no fear at all. Not everyone experiences fear about training or presenting. They never learned how to be

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fearful, so they calmly carry on presenting, totally balanced and comfortable.

You need to differentiate between feeling fearful and feeling excited. It is quite normal for even the most seasoned presenter to feel the rush of adrenalin just before they go on stage. And this helps them put more fire into their presentation or training. If you were totally relaxed or laid back, it might be difficult to impart any enthusiasm for your message and motivate anyone else.

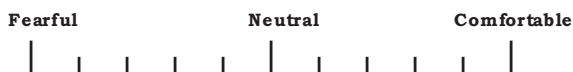
### *Exercise 9: Self Assessment*

How do you feel about being yourself in front of an audience? Be honest with yourself:

- Do you feel nervous, afraid, fearful, terrified, or petrified?
- Or do you take it in your stride, and enjoy the contact you have?

This could be true for any audience, or for only specific types of audiences.

Mark your current feeling on the grid:



### *Letting go of fear*

Have you ever had any kind of *inappropriate emotional responses* such as standing in front of an audience in a state of panic, or feeling petrified? You are definitely afraid, your hands are shaking, but this doesn't really make sense. Consider:

- What is the worst thing that could happen?
- What is the audience going to do to you?

They really want you to give of your best, so why would they want to be there otherwise?

## Acclaim for *Presenting Magically*

"If you want to be an excellent presenter, buy this book. Read it, and try out the exercises. It is well worth the price. There is so much in it that you will have ideas for improving your performance for the rest of your training career."

– Peter Young, author of *Understanding NLP*

"Written in an accessible manner, the chapters cover a wide range of topics and processes that are useful to anyone who presents to others. There are many examples, exercises, reflections and models presented. It should appeal to both the inexperienced and the seasoned presenter – both should find either new ways of approaching their role or a new angle on processes they already use."

– Carol Harris, author of *Consult Yourself*

"Strongly recommended ★★★★★"

– Andy Bradbury, *Honest Abe's NLP Book Reviews*

"The authors provide incredibly powerful techniques for anyone who presents to any size of audience."

– Stuart Harragan, *Harragan Hypnotherapy*

## Acclaim for *Presenting Magically* training

"Abandoning NLP techniques when presenting is like abandoning technology in business."

– Torsten Stephan

"Excellent three days. I am transformed as a teacher, trainer and presenter."

– Irene Simon

"Every trainer should do this course, to remind them that there is always so much more to learn. An excellent course."

– Sue Gerryts

"If you want to easily learn how to Present Magically, then you must take this training. David truly is a Master Trainer. And by training with him your skill will expand beyond your wildest dreams."

– Barry Neale



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