

Trusting Yourself and Others

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with acknowledgements to Jenny Robinson, Melanie Lewis and Richard Bandler

This item is a mix of ideas drawn mainly from a workshop at the recent ITA/EATA Conference in Keele run by Melanie Lewin and Jenny Robinson, with some NLP added. Jenny and Melanie ran a workshop on trust and suggested several activities.

Activity No 1 was about fear of rejection. Think of your own fear of rejection - most of us have a strategy we use that actually leads to rejection even though we don't want to be rejected. Think about a strategy that you use to avoid rejection. What beliefs underpin your strategy? For example, we may reject others before they can reject us, or we may withdraw from contact so that overt rejection by them is not possible.

The underlying beliefs may be something like "I don't need them", "Other people can't be trusted" , or "They are secretly laughing at me".

You can sort the beliefs by whether you are adopting the role of:

- Persecutor e.g. "I can get more done on my own"
- Rescuer e.g. "I've got to help others" (leading to resentment about over-nurturing).
- Victim e.g. "If you really knew what I'm like you wouldn't want to be my friend"

Activity No 2 was about low self esteem. To counter this, prepare a list of 10 qualities you like about yourself. Do this quickly, without agonising!

Check these items against the beliefs you identified in Activity No 1. Is there any way that what you like about yourself are qualities that reinforce your unhelpful rejection strategies?

For example *intelligent* might reinforce a Persecutor belief; *caring* might fit with Rescuer; *sensitive* might reflect the Victim position.

To add an NLP dimension to this, pick one of the positive qualities from your list. Recall a specific time when you experienced yourself as having this quality. See again what you were seeing then; hear again what you were hearing then (externally plus any internal dialogue you were engaging in); feel again the way you felt then. Re-experience the event, and then make your experience even more intense. Practice this a few times and set up an anchor - a particular word, picture or sensation that you associate with the

experience so that use of this anchor later will automatically remind you to feel good again.

Repeat this process for other qualities. Remember to use a different anchor for each, unless you want to recapture several useful qualities at once. If you 'stack' them onto the same anchor, you will find they blend together so that you get a mixed reaction containing several useful aspects.

Activity No. 3 Visualise a situation in which you are scared of being rejected:

- what could normally pre-occupy you in that situation?
- what would you trust about yourself in that situation?

To add more of an NLP slant you might like to repeat the seeing, hearing, feeling and anchoring process for the qualities you trust about yourself.

You can also reword the question as follows:

- what will you trust about yourself in situations like that in the future?

Another option is to pick one of the unhelpful reactions and think of a situation in which such a response would be helpful. Imagine yourself in that new situation, which may be nothing to do with being rejected. Imagine seeing, hearing and feeling while you have that reaction in this other situation. Play it through a few times until you have established a mental/physical link between the behaviour and the new situation.

Then go back to the original, scary situation and play that through again but with a new, positive set of responses by you. You might want to link this to your list of what you will trust about yourself in future.