

Rapport: Re-Modelling NLP Part Six: Understanding Change

“It would hardly be too much to say that modern science began when people became accustomed to the idea of changes changing, e.g. to the idea of acceleration as opposed to simple motion”.

Prior

Introduction

The main motivation for my "re-modelling NLP" was and continues to be to improve the effectiveness of change. As part of this it is important for me to understand how things work, especially where I am likely to be involved in usefully changing them.

In developing my work in this area I have been greatly influenced by the work of many people including Gregory Bateson (logical types and levels) and some of his students and co-workers, Haley, Watzlawick (first and second order change; problem formation and solving), and Keeney (first and second order cybernetics). I have not had the space to outline their major contributions in this area so I would enthusiastically recommend reading them in their own words. I have listed a few references to their work below. I hope that this article will encourage you to continue to explore this central process of change in all aspects of your life.

My desire to provide better, more effective, assistance to children and families 20 years ago, continued through my work with groups, communities, organisations, teams and businesses. In all of these areas change was the central feature. For over twenty years I have explored different types of change, different techniques, processes, theories, always returning to question three main areas related to the tool or skills; the tool, the explanation of the tool, and the user of the tool. In these areas I have been concerned with the best now but also how to further develop in the future. Some of the questions are listed below.

Question	Focus	Investigate - Know - Do	Further questions
Does it work?	Tool	Do	What does it do? How does it do it? Why does it work that way or any other way?
Can I work it properly?	User	Investigate	What do I do in working it? How do I work it? Why do I work it this way?
Does it work the way it is claimed?	Explanation	Know	What other alternatives are there? How else can it be done? Why specifically does it work this

			way?
Can I work it better?	User	Investigate	What can I do better? How can I do it better? Why will this be better?
Can it work better?	Tool	Do	What can be better? How can it be better? Why is this better?
Can it be explained better?	Explanation	Know	What can be explained better? How can it be explained better? Why can it be explained better?

These are developmental questions. They encourage openness to exploring a practical understanding of change.

Change

NLP emphasises the importance of change. It therefore can come as a surprise that change itself was not modelled within traditional NLP. If you take any NLP book and look at the index (if there is one!) or glossary for example the major contributions in “The Structure of Magic vol. II and “Roots of NLP”, “NLP volume I”, "Changing Beliefs", “Modelling with NLP” and check for anything on “change” you will find very little. An explanation of how change occurs and why it occurs is absent in all the core or key NLP books. If NLP is concerned with change why is there so little? Perhaps because it was taken for granted that we all know how and why change occurs. This assumption turns out to be very mistaken indeed. If on the other hand no one had modelled change then that is different. I decided that change is well worth modelling. The modelling of change contributed both to my re-modelling of NLP and to the formation and further development of Developmental Behavioural Modelling DBM.

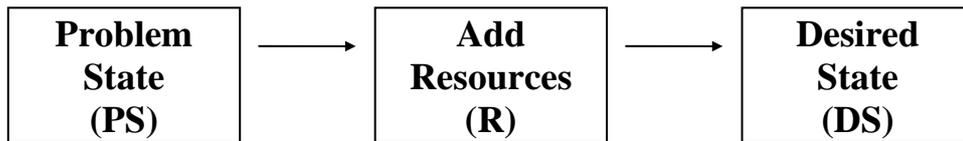
As I highlighted in previous articles NLP was designed to offer behavioural models, skills and techniques. This is change at the level of technology. It is based on changing products - the bad feelings that clients don't like or beliefs that limit their behaviour or again that they don't like.

DBM goes far beyond this as I outline in my last article. In this article I will outline some of the products of my modelling of change and in the next article how to facilitate change and to use modelling as the total approach.

Basic Model Of Change

Change means difference. We are constantly changing in a world that is constantly changing. We receive news of differences through our senses. In this part we will explore how change occurs and how we can be more influential in the direction and outcome of particular changes.

The following model was outlined by Robert Dilts as the NLP model of change.

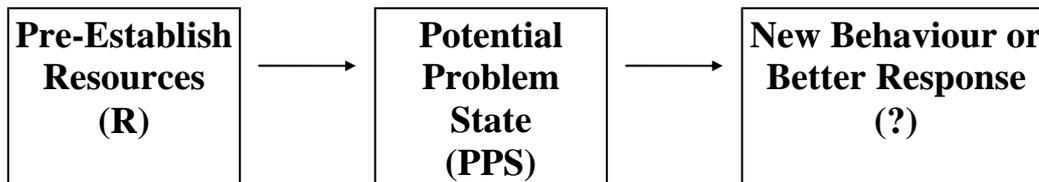


New Model of Change

This Basic Model of Change is REMEDIAL in structure, in that a 'problem state' has to first exist and then be remedied.

My work on modelling the change process and applying NLP to model NLP itself has resulted in many new developments, not least of which can be represented in another change pattern. This pattern is used extensively in our Perspective Patterns, Historical Layering process, and other forms of GENERATIVE change.

Most change processes involve a portion of REMEDIAL and GENERATIVE change. In general though generative change is the preference where possible. In Generative change there is a pattern of 'non-appearance' of 'would-have-been problems':



The symbol (?) in the new behaviour highlights that the generative model is not designed to create a specific response but a more resourceful responding. The potential increase in flexibility and creativity means that the actual response is not totally predictable.

Divergent and Convergent Change: Twelve Patterns

A further distinction that has proven to be useful is to model change in terms of DIVERGING from some stability and CONVERGING on some new stability.

I have listed below twelve patterns of change. Both types are important for growth and development. There may be a temptation to prioritise or favour the convergent types of change.

Patterns of Change	
Divergent	Convergent
Interruption	Stability / Continuity
Fractionation	Integration

Random	Sequence
Concurrence	Accumulation
Isolated	Perspective
Singular	Hierarchical

Over ten years ago I had identified only six of the twelve patterned above and had developed an exercise to explore them. The four were particularly evident in early NLP techniques and are 'interruption', 'accumulation', 'integration', and 'sequence'

Exercise: Patterns of Change

Do this exercise with a partner.

1. Have your subject identify a negative stuck state and fully connect into it, looking out through their eyes, remembering how it feels, doing what they were doing. Notice their physiology. Bring their attention back to here and now.
2. Have your subject identify a positive state from another time that would be a good appropriate alternative to the stuck state.
3. Fully connect them in this state. Notice their physiology. Bring their attention back to here and now.
4. Now connect them again with the negative state and when they are fully living it begin to gently change their physiology to match that of the positive. They should begin to feel different. If they don't then repeat step 2 and check for more subtle changes and apply them.
5. Leave a gap of time (during which time you can change roles and do the exercise again).
6. Test. Ask your partner to go back into the negative stuck state and the exact physiology of step 1. Ask them to check if it is different. If it is different how is it different?

Now one of the four patterns listed above will likely have occurred. Check with the table below to see what matches your experience.

Pattern of change	Experience in exercise
<p style="text-align: center;">Interruption</p>	<p>If you can get the original negative feeling back exactly as it was, even though you felt better at the end of the exercise, then the state you were in was temporarily interrupted. This is very useful if you want to leave the original state as it was as we do in ‘breaking state’.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Accumulation</p>	<p>If you experience distinct elements of each of the two states then the pattern you went through is likely to be an accumulation pattern. This is very useful for combinations where it is important that the different elements remain distinct such as in multiple sensory tracking.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Integration</p>	<p>If you have a new singular feeling, whether good, bad or neutral, then the pattern that you went through is likely to be an integration pattern. This is useful where a unity of experience is important such as in collapsing anchors or in establishing a purity of state.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Sequence</p>	<p>If you experienced a feeling of movement or a sense of being pushed away from the negative then it is likely that you have experience a sequence pattern where the two states are linked sequentially. This is very useful for things like chaining anchors or in creating strategies.</p>

This highlights a number of interesting points. Firstly if we consider that this exercise was a technique, and its not too crude to be used as a technique, then the possible variety of results is an indicator of why techniques might also get mixed results. When I have remodelled the NLP techniques using these patterns of change this is indeed what I discovered. Attempts to chain anchors can easily resulting them being integrated or accumulated or interrupted with a major reduction in effectiveness.

Knowing the different possibilities allows you to make sure that you get the one that is most useful for the client and if you don’t then you are in a position of choice, you can redo things to make sure that you get the result. This is an issue of precision and choice.

Perspective Patterns

Much of NLP was developed from accepting many statement clients make as actual literal descriptions, I SEE what you mean, that FEELS fine, etc. I developed perspective patterns after taking as literal comments statements from my clients such as “the family were at each others throats but when Uncle Tom died it really put things in perspective and we started treating each other better”. Very useful change was being reported so what was happening?

The following two exercises were created in the late 80's as training exercises. They can also be used on their own although I have developed more sophisticated patterns for therapeutic applications.

Exercise: Basic Visual Pattern

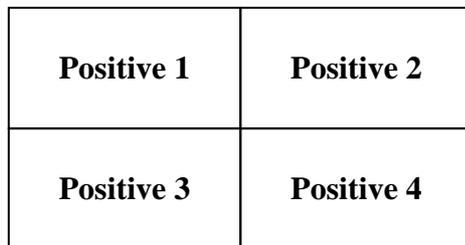
1. Picture something makes you feel bad when you look at it.



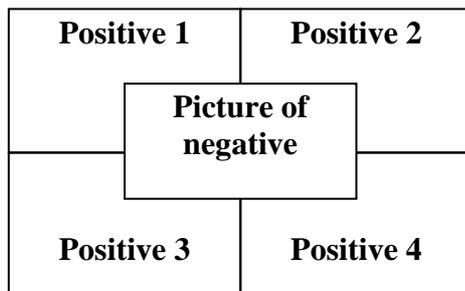
2. Move the picture away and bring your attention back to here and now. We will use the picture later.

3. Now identify four positive pictures.

4. Make these large and put them together in a collage.



5. Hold this composite positive and place the negative in the middle. Now notice the change in your immediate response to the negative.



6. What can you learn from it that you couldn't before?

Please note if you bring the negative up in front of the positives you will be creating a figure – ground pattern that will highlight the negative and may make you feel worse. Some people naturally do this. The solution is relatively simple. Either bring up the negative from behind the positives or make a small hole and look ‘through’ the perspective. The key thing is to establish seeing the negative ‘IN’ perspective.

When the perspective pattern is successfully established there is a balancing of the feeling. This allows step six to be usefully completed. Too often when we stop feeling bad we miss an opportunity to learn. This might be more obvious in the next exercise.

Exercise: Basic Auditory Perspective Pattern

1. Recall an example of someone being verbally critical and that it still makes you feel bad. We will use this later. Bring your attention back to here and now.
2. Recall at least four different people giving you positive feedback about things you know you did very well.
3. Place two of these positives behind you and one on either side. As with the pictures it will be difficult to isolate detail. It is the overall ‘perspective’ that we are aiming to establish so a general good feeling is appropriate.
4. Listen to all four positive voices, then as you continue to listen to the positive voices bring up the criticism in front of you and listen to it from this positive perspective. Notice the difference.
5. What can you now learn from the experience?

We have developed many more complex perspective patterns and identified others in common use but not understood in these terms; for example ‘Conversational Perspective Frames’, Life Perspective Patterns’, and Historical Layering.

Emotional Experiences and Changes in Life Direction

Traditionally psychotherapies prioritise “emotional experiences”. They either emphasise them as causes of problems or as necessary for successful therapy.

The main focus on information gathering will then be exploring bad feeling and life traumas. Indeed some therapies will not accept change as ‘real’ if it did not involve strong emotional experiences. This no gain without pain approach clearly dismisses any other way of changing as superficial or not real change.

It is usually easy to identify at least one example of this type of experience. An important question is ‘is this the only way change happens?’

Exercise: Major Change and Emotional Experience

1. Take each of the following combinations of Emotional Experience (EE) and Major Change (MC) and check through your life for at least one example of them.
2. Combinations:
 - i. Emotional Experience Causes Major Change
 - ii. Emotional Experience without Change
 - iii. Major Change causes Emotional Experience
 - iv. Major Change without Emotional Experience
 - v. Emotional Experience and Major change occur together

Did you find at least one example of each of these situations? Most people can, especially if they search widely.

There are a number of interesting issues that arise from this. I want to highlight a couple of them. Firstly if we have a no gain without pain approach in our therapy, or life in general, then we could run the risk of pain and no gain! This would be an example of ii. Secondly we would be missing emotionally easier ways of changing as with iii. and iv. Thirdly if we could only change when we were reacting emotionally we would be unable to make planned changes and do things before we were in some sort of crisis. Much of my work between ten and twenty years ago was with individuals and families who needed to learn other ways of changing than only through crisis.

Even after exploring these issues we still do not know how the change takes place with or without an emotional experience. This is what I began to model over ten years ago. The result was the creation of the Three Sets Model.

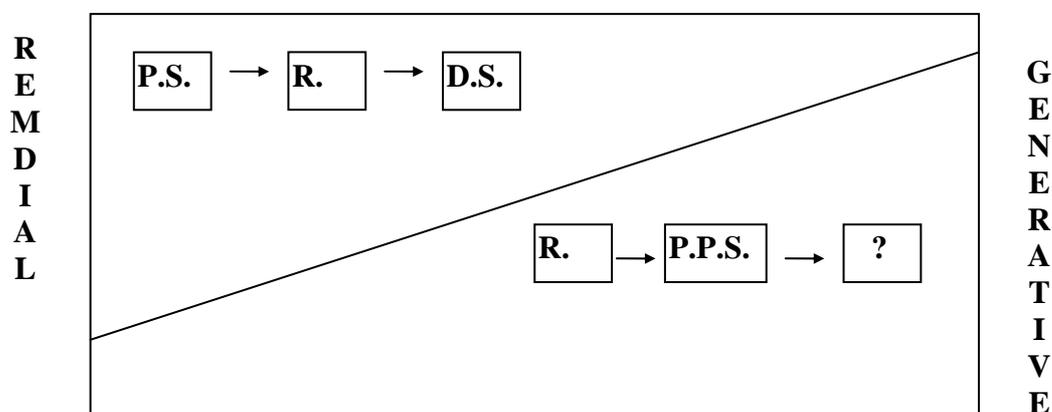
Three Sets Model: Set-Up, Upset, And Set-Down Model

We are not 'blank slates' when we experience. The sum total of our previous experience and the resulting 'model of the world' set us up for the experience. The consequences of our individual or group 'Set-Up' can be limiting and/or enhancing. If an experience is not to our liking or is not what we expected (even pleasantly) our expectation and orientation to some degree is 'Upset'. Examples of limiting upsets are traumas, phobias, shocks, etc. Examples of positive upsets would be surprise parties, winning the pools, an unexpected complement, etc.

Experiences change our behaviour by changing our model of the world. We may do this while we are experiencing and any time afterwards. The changes can be considered to be what we 'Set-down' because of the experience. What we set-down in turn sets us up for the next experience and so on. We will now apply these processes and explore the two models of change.

Comparison Of Models Of Change

These two models of change can both produce remedial and generative change.



This diagram is drawn to emphasise the balance of remedial and generative change. When we use a remedial model we will be 'set-up' better afterward which will have some generative effect. When we optimise ourselves through generative change then some current difficulties will be resolved, which is remedial change.

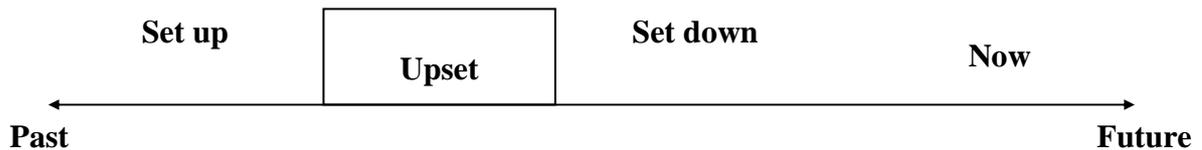
If you want to get an experiential sense of this please complete the following exercise.

Exercise: Exploring The Two Models Of Change with Set-up – Upset – Set-down Model

- A. Identifying and exploring a negative experience, the 'upset'.
 1. Using an externalised, kinesthetic timeline, identify an upset in your life. Stop at a point before the event occurred. This is the 'set up' stage.
 2. Move forward in time and identify what you 'set-down' as a consequence of that upset.
- B. Apply Remedial Model.
 1. Identify what resources would be useful in the experience..
 2. Use the 'Change History' process to add them.
 3. What changes happen in the 'upset'?
 4. Move forward to the 'Set-down' stage and check if anything changes there.
- C. Apply the Generative Model.
 1. Move back before the upset.
 2. How were you Set-Up for the experience?
 3. Build a generative perspective frame, wonder, curiosity with a desire to learn from all experiences (life learning frame).
 4. Maintain this frame and walk into the 'upset' experience.
 5. What changes?
 6. Go forward in time once more. What do you 'set-down' now?

D. Comparison.

1. Compare the changes experienced from the two models of change.
2. In particular pay attention to the differences between the three lots of 'upset' and the three lots of 'set-down'.
3. What do you think would have happened if you had been 'set up' optimally the first time?
4. What are the possible effects of each of the patterns through time? How will each 'set you up' for future challenges?



These "upsets" can be both positive and negative experiences. When we experience them we can either ignore them or we can create a new set-down. I will now list some of the types of things that people want to change and how these can be understood in terms of life alignment. This material connects particularly to my last article and my second article on language.

Change: Upsets and Getting Better

Using the fractal language model we can investigate any situation in great detail. Below are a variety of types of things that clients often report when questioned about what they want. These are what they think they want or need as part of their getting better or 'things' getting better.

- 1 Getting more - of what (happiness, time, etc.) / than who /than when?
- 2 Getting less - of what (pain, hassles, etc.) / than who / than when?
- 3 Getting better - in what way / than what / than who / than when?
- 4 Getting different – who / what / when?
- 5 Getting over – what / who?
- 6 Getting even - with what / who?
- 7 Getting on top of – what / who?
- 8 Getting clear - of what / who / when?
- 9 Getting something e.g. companionship/friendship
Getting support – by self / from other, thing (money, information, etc.)
In order to plan, decide, do, etc.
- 10 Getting understanding - by self / from other
Getting 'absence' – what / who / when?
Getting peace - of mind/conscience
Getting harmony, quietness
Getting balance - "not good as should be!"
- 11 Getting 'rid-of' - feeling/memory
- 12 Giving up - habit/commitment
- 13 Getting back - on what (revenge) / who /when?
- 14 Getting new - relationship/good feeling
- 15 Getting connected, linked to what / who / when?
- 16 Getting use of what / who / when?
For a sounding board, check, information, etc.

In order to hold on to reality, relationship, joy, feeling, self, balance, etc.

In terms of transition these can be classified as different types of alignment.

Alignment

- 1. Additions**
- 2. Extensions**
- 3. Fill-in's**
- 4. Balance**
- 5. Growth and Development**
- 6. Links and Connection**

Alignment will be in relation to the process involved and the type and level of change.

Types and Levels of Change

The work of Bateson is very relevant here. Of particular relevance is his work on logical types, logical levels and levels of learning.

Also of direct relevance in the work of members of Bateson's former research group, Watzlawick, Weakland and Fisch, on first and second order change. In their book "Change" they outlined two types of change. The first is change within a system. The second is change in the system itself.

If we explore our experiences of change we can identify different types or levels of change. In DBM we identify the basic following types of developmental changes:

1. Vary
2. Alter
3. Grow
4. Develop
5. Evolve

Change and Invariance

Once we have an understanding of change the complementary issue of invariance is highlighted. How do things stay the same? Ancient Greek philosophers held that "nothing comes into being or is destroyed. Rather, a thing is mixed with or separated from already existing things." (Anaxagoras (Quoted by Watzlawick, et al p.10)). An exception to this was Heraclitus who famously asserted that "no man can step into the same river twice. Invariance

in identity is a common experience; most people have a sense of self that is invariant through time. So there seems to be a more complicated relationship involved.

Clearly if it is not the same man stepping in then it is also not the same river he is stepping into! But our sense of identifying continuity in life makes it clear that this is the same man and the same river. There is an old joke that another Greek went up to Heraclitus and slapped him. When Heraclitus objected the other Greek protested saying that clearly by his own philosophy he was not the same man that slapped him.

A possible solution to this results from a combination of the Immanence – Emergence – Transcendence model outlined in my last article together with the differences between Being and Becoming.

I have made great use of Becoming as a higher-level stability to make it easier for clients to change how they are Being. Some clients get scared that they will no longer BE themselves if they change. This understandably results in a reluctance to change (why would they want to die in therapy!). My solution is to emphasise the continuity that is “them”. They are the same becoming as they were as a two year old, a ten year old, a twenty year old, etc. and they will continue to be the same becoming even after they are being different. This (with various wordings to suit the individual client) has disappeared a potentially serious block to major changes in many clients.

So we can now say that the SAME man (becoming) can step as a DIFFERENT from previously man (being) into the SAME river (becoming) that is also DIFFERENT from how and what it was previously (being).

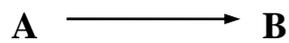
This though still leaves unanswered the question “How do changes actually occur?” In western science the understanding of change is through the idea of cause and effect. I will now outline different patterns of cause and effect and then an additional or alternative model.

Types Of Causation

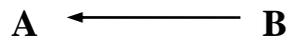
In cybernetics various types of causality are used. Throughout there is a confusion of rigid recursion and purposeful systems of feedback.

In Developmental Behavioural Modelling we utilise the following types of causation:

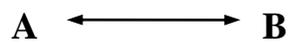
1. LINEAR:



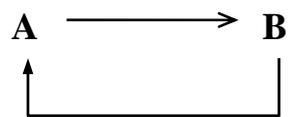
2. TELEOLOGICAL:



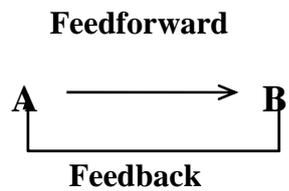
3. MUTUAL INFLUENCE:



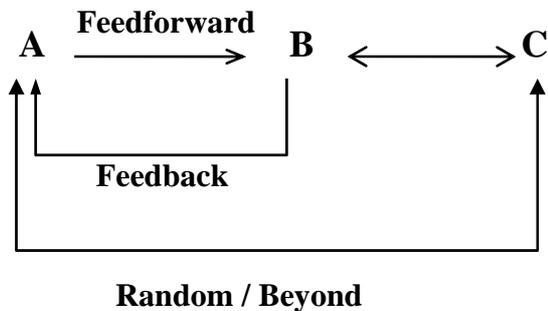
4. CIRCULAR CAUSALITY: Recursion within a bias. Bias set externally.



5. PURPOSEFUL RECURSION: Bias set from within.



6. OPEN SYSTEMIC RECURSION: Bias set from within.



Transitions: Transit – Transfer – Transform

Causation works well for the material world but does not work so well for the world of mind. Causation focuses on separate states disconnected in time, a before and an after. The symbolic way of representing it reveals an interesting option.

$$\mathbf{A} \rightarrow \mathbf{B}$$

What happens in the arrow between A and B? The A and B are states of being; the arrow represents becoming, and a process of transition.

I created the following model initially as an addition for working with mind. It was only afterward that I realised it could also be used for matter.

Transitions		
Detail	Transit	Transit: Movement
		Transfer: Movement
		Transform: Movement
Scope	Transfer	Transit: Entrance: Partition
		Transfer: Entrance: Room
		Transform: Entrance: Building
Connection	Transform	Transit: Grow
		Transfer: Develop
		Transform: Evolve

Levels of Understanding Change: Cleverness, Intelligence & Wisdom Model

The level of understanding change will greatly influence how we identify and respond.

We can identify three levels of using understanding and skill in dealing with life's difficulties, problems and limitations. We can be clever, intelligent and wise. We may have a preference for one of them and use it when a response is required through each of them.

Level	Fractal Level	Description
<p><u>Clever</u></p> <p>What to do</p>	Clever	A response that is effective and efficient for the immediate detail. A good response compared with others.
	Intelligent	A response that is effective for more than the detail. A response that uses more than one level or area of detail.
	Wise	A response that deals with the whole. A response that makes use of the whole in responding.
<p><u>Intelligent</u></p> <p>How to do it</p>	Clever	A response that is effective and efficient for the immediate detail. A good response compared with others.
	Intelligent	A response that is effective for more than the detail. A response that uses more than one level or area of detail.
	Wise	A response that deals with the whole. A response that makes use of the whole in responding.
<p><u>Wise</u></p> <p>Why do it</p>	Clever	A response that is effective and efficient for the immediate detail. A good response compared with others.
	Intelligent	A response that is effective for more than the detail. A response that uses more than one level or area of detail.
	Wise	A response that deals with the whole. A response that makes use of the whole in responding.

Concluding comments

While change is certainly a major life issue we need to be wise in our commitment to it. We require the skills and wisdom to know what is worth changing as well as how to make the changes

<p><i>“Not only progress but mere change, mere movement has had its countless martyrs”.</i></p> <p>Nietzsche</p>
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The above models and understanding of change are by no means the whole model and certainly not the whole story. They do extend very far beyond the traditional model of change in NLP. Being motivated by practical concerns I have always developed the models above in

conjunction with material of my next article “Facilitation Change” where I will outline some re-modelling of NLP in the application of change and once again a number of new DBM models that extend the effectiveness of facilitated change.

DBM is a registered trademark.

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