

FITTING THE MODELS OF NEURO-SEMANTICS TOGETHER

I decided to make explicit the system of Neuro-Semantics after getting questions in my Meta Master Practitioner training:

“How do the pieces of Neuro-Semantics fit together? How do the models interface with each other?”

The following sorts out the models of Neuro-Semantics in terms of: *Processes, Patterns and Models* and I end it with how it **all fits together within the larger context of Self-Actualization Psychology**.

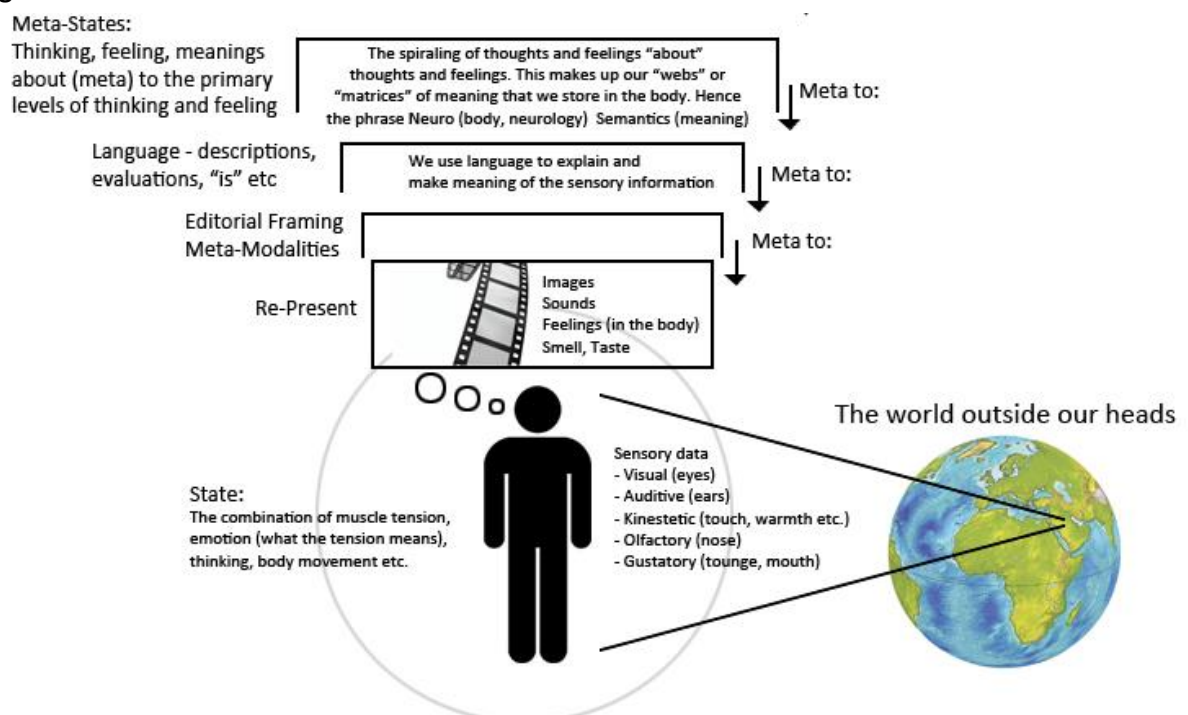
Processes:

First of all – **State**. A state is a general description of the combination of thinking, feeling, body movement, degree of muscle tension etc, We are always in a state and that state effects what we think, feel, and how we act and speak.

We get information about the world outside our head through our eyes, ears, nose, tongue and touch/sense. We **re-present** this information through mental imagery, sounds or voices, tension and other kinds of feelings in our body and we also store information in smell and taste.

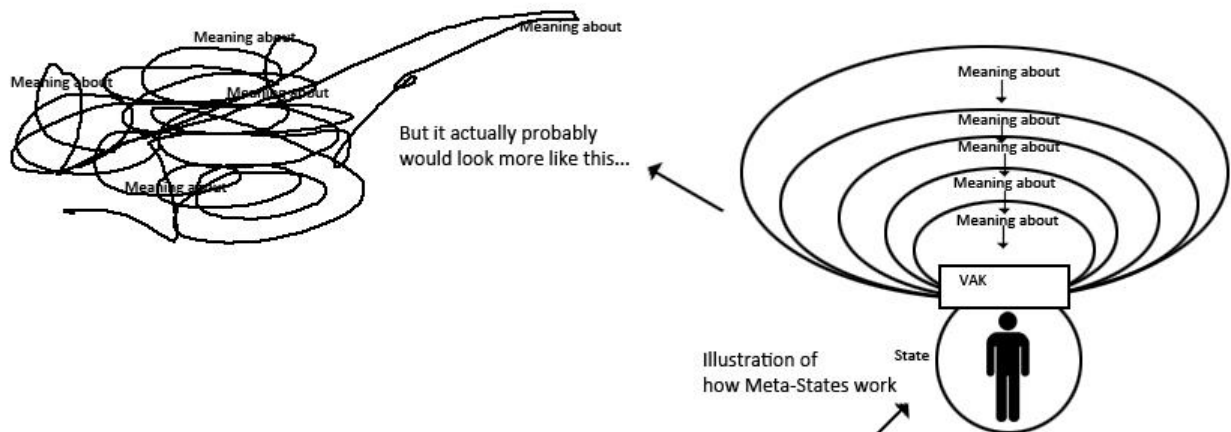
We **edit** the movies (a metaphorical description of the VAKOG-information) by how we relate to it in space (near/far, above/under/in front of/behind, inside our outside the images etc) and we give meaning to that relationship to the “movie”. In Neuro-Semantics this is called *Meta-modalities* or Sub-Modalities.

As we represent the world in sequences of images/sounds/feeling/smell/taste we called that **strategies**.



We use **Language** as a way to code the world symbolically and metaphorically (all language is metaphorical). Language is correlating with our representations - “internal senses”, the meta-modalities, and we use language to give meaning and even though we use the same words they mean different things depending to how we make meaning of the symbols through what we see, hear/say and feel about them. The Language patterns or language models are all different applications of the same process, **Language**.

Then we give **Meaning** to things through language. We make sense of the world by explaining it to ourselves linguistically by what something “is” or adapt our “map” (which of course is a metaphoric description of how we connect things) to what we learn from parents, family, friends, school (which has the purpose of making us productive citizens), work, media etc. We can give meaning that explain, that give us freedom... and toxic meaning that limit us and can make us sick both physically and mentally. We embody meaning and when we tell ourselves that the meanings we have given to things is real and true we form beliefs.



We think/emote about our thinking and emoting in endless processes. As this means that we go meta (experience it from outside, above) we have states about states called **Meta-States**.

When we give meanings to what’s important that makes it valuable and we value it... our values.

When we value things, people, behaviors, concepts, communities etc. we feel about it, and explain it to ourselves as important. If someone “violate” our values (that is, do something different than) we feel strong emotions about it and act in some way.

The next process is **Intention**. We want stuff, we want to learn, we want to do and achieve, we want to be a part of, change etc. This is the process of asking and answering **Why?** We learn to ask why as very small children and most of us never stop asking why. We have small whys and really big whys. It is the driving force of human evolution, science, technology and society.

Pre-supposition: Every behavior has a positive intention for the person doing it.

The above are the basic psychological processes going on inside us. There are also chemical, biological, neurological processes that interact with the psychological processes, and that is what

adds the complexity to the human experience. Therefore our states and how we experience the world and make “sense” or meaning of it is affected by hormones, chemicals, environment and more and that will in turn affect the meanings etc. That’s why one of the key pre-suppositions in NLP and Neuro-Semantics is that *Mind and Body is one system...* because it is.

Patterns: Our brains make lots and lots of patterns of stuff because they are lazy and want to take shortcuts to save “time”. That’s why we develop habits and habituate responses to different stimuli (things happening outside our heads). We have given the sequence of physical behaviors, inner reactions, feelings, images, self-talk and meaning-making a meaning that it is effective and useful, otherwise we wouldn’t do it.

Many times the habits were formed at a young age when we actually didn’t know everything or even that much and therefore the habits are less than useful at an older age. Sometimes we learn habits like being afraid, or thinking in a childish way, or over-reacting to a small stimuli and getting really pissed off etc. A phobia is a habituated sequence of responses to a very specific stimuli or set of stimulus.

This is why we use patterns in NLP and Neuro-Semantics. It is ways of thinking that is effective and functional in doing something different and achieving some kind of desired state.

One example is the NLP “phobia cure” or the more descriptive name of “Movie rewind pattern” as it is called in Neuro-Semantics, the pattern is teaching the brain how to react in a different way to the same stimuli, by first changing the meaning of the stimuli by running the “old movie” backwards and giving it new meaning through circus music etc. and thus giving the brain more possible response pathways and more flexibility.

Patterns are basically more effective *strategies* that we **train our brains** with by going through the process by ourselves or with a guide. In NLP the patterns are more linear (at least in how they are usually taught at trainings) and utilize physiology and VAK in different ways and in Neuro-Semantics the patterns are more non-linear as the “change” happens at meta-levels when we meta-state, which means that we ascribe new meanings, states and ways of looking at whatever we are doing at the primary level of state and VAK.

We teach the brain to ascribe new meaning, to update the thinking to that of an adult and to make new choices and most of all, becoming more flexible in to what and how the meanings are ascribed. That is why NLP can be described as learning to “Run your own brain”.

We use the patterns train (or teach) our brains how to create effective states of flow, of learning, of being present, of listening, for training, for coaching, accelerate learning, develop self-esteem,

patterns for self-leadership, flow-states, patterns for resilience and much more. The patterns all train the brain to develop new habituated responses and more flexibility and to “actualize excellence” in ourselves and others.

Models in Neuro-Semantics:

The Meta-States Model:

This is the modeling of the Self-reflexive consciousness, which basically means that we think and feel about our thoughts and feelings, in endless loops. Have you ever begun your day by waking up in a bad mood, grumbling? And then thought about what a bad mood you are in, and maybe stub your toe or burnt your toast, and then that set the tone for the rest of the day, and everybody you met was an asshole, because of the mood you were in and the looping of your thoughts about that day? Have you ever awakened in a good mood, and everything went your way, and people smiled at you and you said to yourself, “what a great day”, and that mood got bigger and brighter? That is the looping of your thoughts and the thinking about your thinking in layer upon layer.

“The Meta-States Model in Neuro-Semantics is the model that enable you to appreciate, understand and work with your reflexivity. This dynamic, systemic process is what distinguishes you from all the animals and makes our kind of consciousness so special, so incredibly powerful, so sacred and so dangerous. Without the ability to recognize and manage the reflexivity, you can get yourself in a spin that can diminish you as a human being and even make you a candidate for suicide. The way you respond to your responses can become so toxic, so perditious, and so morbid that you become your own worst enemy as you just sit and “think”.”

Dr L. Michael Hall – Neuro-Semantics – Actualizing Meaning & Performance.

The Meta-Programs Model:

Meta-Programs are our habituated response and thinking patterns in a certain context. When we go “meta” to our thoughts and feelings, we create frames of mind. When we repeat the same kind of meta-stating often enough they habituate (as our brains like patterns) and they become “programs” (a metaphor for habits). Suddenly we just respond without having to think because of these contextual “programs”.

“Meta-Programs” are those programs in our eyes or minds by which we filter what we see in the world. As perceptual filters, our meta-programs identify what we sort for, pay attention to, look for, “see,” etc.”

L. Michael Hall – Perceptual Genius

Dr L. Michael Hall and Bob Bodenhamer identified 60 Meta-Programs in the book “Figuring Out People” and sorted them in four categories: Cognitive, Emotive, Choosing and Conceptual/Semantic (Meta Meta-Programs).

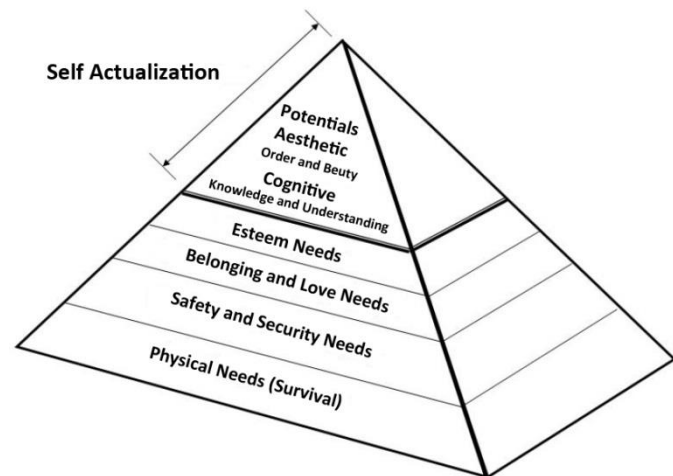
Meta-Programs are **not** personality traits, they are **behaviors and responses**.

“Because meta-programs describe one of the hidden processes or dynamic structures in how we attend things, focus our perceptions, and filter the lenses of our mental sight—detecting, recognizing, and using meta-programs offers a yellow-brick road into human reality. Otherwise, people seem mysterious, strange, weird, unfathomable, and stubborn. Knowing how to work with meta-programs enables us to create rapport at a higher or meta level, and to gain trust and credibility with more elegance and speed.” **Dr L. Michael Hall** – Perceptual Genius Training Manual (2005)

Self-Actualization Psychology is the higher framework around Neuro-Semantics based on the work of Abraham Maslow.

The basic (animal) needs: We all have *survival needs* (food, drink, warmth, sleep etc.), we all have *safety needs* (Self-confidence, stability, predictability etc.), we all have *social needs* (family, work, groups, acceptance etc.), and we all have *self needs* (having a voice, honor, respect, dignity, self-worth etc.).

These needs are all affected by the meanings and intentions we ascribe to them. If those meanings are toxic or distorted (too much meaning or too little meaning to function effectively) the need can be distorted and neurotic and we become stressed and sick. When we gratify the basic needs effectively they go away until the next time the need arise, like food or sleep. If the basic needs are not gratified they fill our senses and “scream” until they are met and that is what keeps us from the self-actualizing needs.



The Self-Actualizing (fully human) needs / Meta needs: These needs become more available when the basic needs are met. In order to fully live as self-actualizing humans the basic needs have to be gratified every day in different degrees.

*Examples of Self-Actualizing needs are: **Meaningfulness** – a sense of significance, **Wisdom needs** – multiple and rich perspectives, **Justice needs** – to make things right, **Cognitive needs** – to know, understand and learn, **Contribution needs** – to make a difference, the need to **choose your own unique way of life**, **Aesthetic needs** – to see, enjoy and create beauty, etc.*

In Neuro-Semantics we have four different trainings in Self-Actualization: *Unleashing Vitality* (the basic needs, the meta-needs and peaking skills), ***Unleashing Potentials*** (meaning making, the Crucible, and the Flow of Self-Actualization), ***Unleashing Creativity*** (creative thinking, problem defining and solving, solutions and innovations), ***Unleashing Leadership*** (self-actualizing leaders and companies).

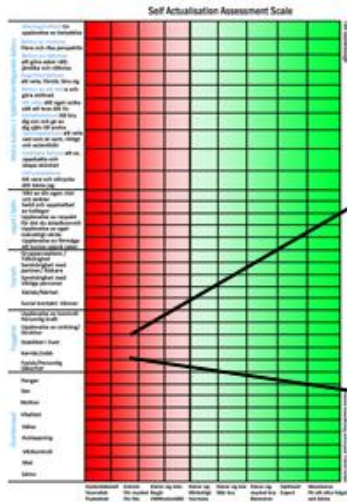
Purpose: An overarching psychological framework describing the processes and theory in Self-Actualization and Human development. It explores the “bright side” of human psychology rather than the “sick side”.

Application: It’s applicable in many areas such as Leadership, Business, Coaching, Training, Personal Development, Health and much more.

Tools and Models for Self-Actualization

Self-Actualisation Assessment Scale:

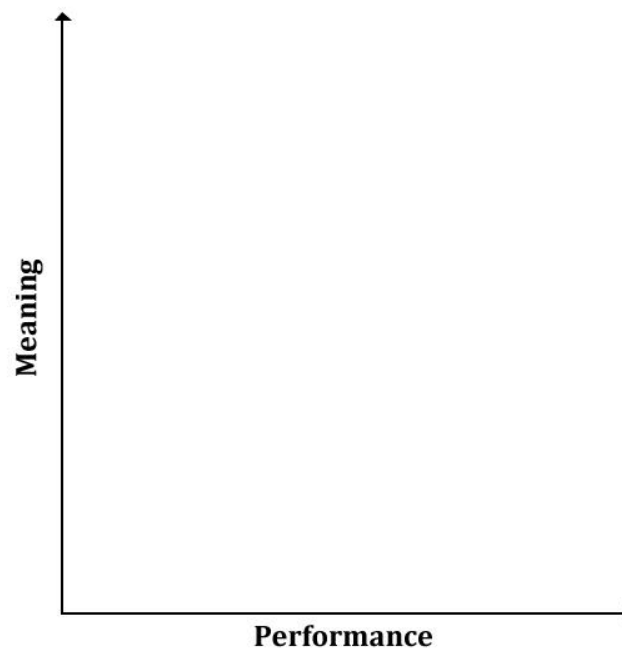
We use this tool to explore how we cope with our basic physical, emotional and psychological needs. When we find out that we are not coping or handling a need, we can explore why that is so.



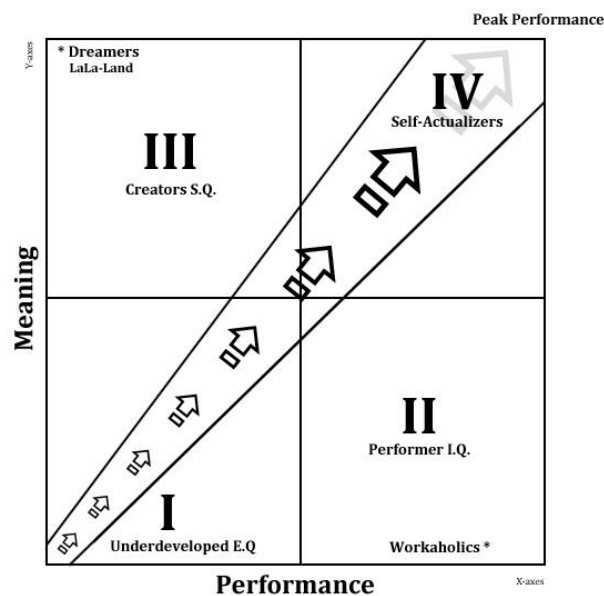
We use the Self-Actualisation Assessment Scale to find out how we cope with our basic needs. If we find that we are less effective in handling one or several needs we use patterns, Meta Questions, Matrix Modeling and more to find out if the imbalance is because overloading of meaning about the need.

We make our needs neurotic when we attribute too much or too little meaning to them. Doing so make the need more psychological than physical. We psycho-eat, psycho-sex, need psycho-weight management etc.

Meaning – Performance Model: A simple model that becomes complex when we fill it with content. It brings the four power zones into two axes. **The Meaning axel** of thinking (meaning making) and emoting and the **Performance axel** of saying and doing. Depending on how much and what kind of meaning we perform at lower or higher levels.



The Self-Actualization Quadrants: This model use the meaning-performance axes applied to coaching and self-actualization. When you actualize your highest and best (self-actualization) you synergize meaning and performance.

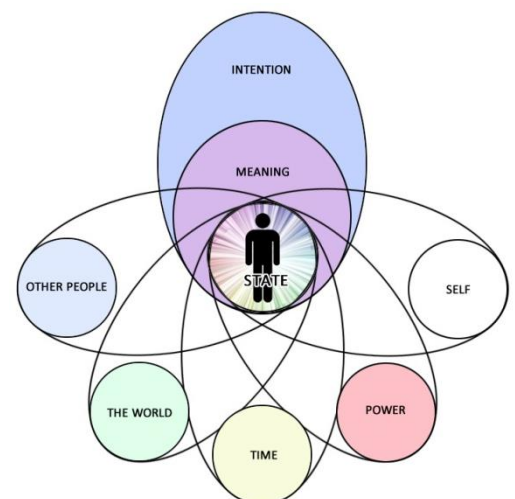


The Matrix Model combines Cognitive Psychology and Developmental Psychology. We have three process matrices, **State** (the grounding matrix), **Meaning** and **Intention**. Each one of the content matrices are filled with states (we are always in a state), meaning (we always make meaning about what something means to us) and intention (we always have a reason for performing our internal and external behaviors).

The content matrices are: **Self** (who you are and the meanings you give about yourself, worth etc.), **Power** (skills, behaviors, coping, learning, problem solving etc.), **Others** (what you think and emote about other people), **Time** (how you relate to time), and the **World** (meanings about the world, the context, etc.).

Purpose: A systemic model for exploring how a person has ascribed meaning and intention in specific contexts.

Application: This model is used as a systemic modeling tool, as a coaching tool, a tool for working with groups and teams and much more.



Meta Questions: We use Meta Questions to explore and “flush out” or elicit how a person has attributed meanings about meanings about something (the matrix of meanings). Meta-States, as *higher* states, govern, modify, modulate, control, drive, and organize our everyday primary states. We call this 80 “logical levels” (104 is presented in the book “Neuro-Semantics”) and use the metaphor of a diamond of consciousness where each facet is an opening into the matrix. The Meta questions come in categories like *Meaning, Beliefs, Frame/Reference, Permission, Taboo, Feelings, Thoughts, Appreciation, Value, Decision, Intention, Outcome, Expectation, Rules, Categories.*



Purpose: Since meaning is “coded” linguistically, we use meta-questions to explore how a person has attributed meanings in combination with emotional charge and muscle tensions in the body.

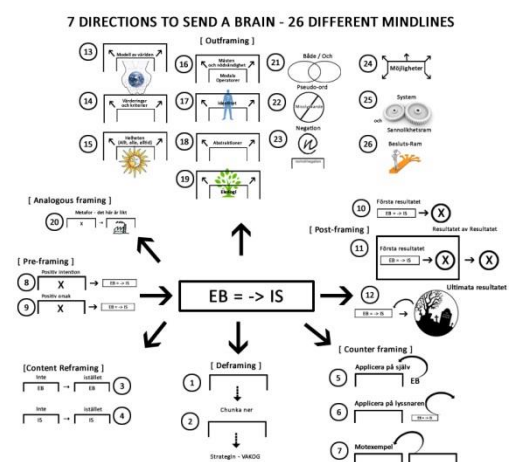
Application: We use Meta Questions in coaching, trainings, when running patterns etc. It’s a simple tool to flush out, explore and find “frames of meaning” about something. Through the process of self-reflexive consciousness we have meanings about meanings, frames about frames and that creates the “matrix” or the “map”. We use Meta Questions both as a tool to explore meaning and as a tool to “build a new matrix” as we do in several patterns on the APG-training.

Language Models

“Meaning is coded in language. While you can construct meaning in the simplest way through the senses – VAKOG representations for coding meaning, most meaning is coded linguistically. So we use language to detect meaning. Use the distinctions and features of language to notice the words, sentences and linguistic patterns used to construct a linkage between an event out in the world and words that classify, categorize and define.”

L. Michael Hall – **Neuro-Semantics – Actualizing Meaning & Performance 2011**

The **MindLines Model** is a model for doing linguistic conversational changework on the meaning or belief level. MindLines work on meanings (what something *is*) and cause-effect statements (this *leads to* or *causes* that). We start with De-Framing the statement into what we can see and hear about the **EB** (External Behavior, or Stimuli) and the **IS** (Internal State, Meanings, Emotions) and how they are related = (means, or is) or -> (leads to, causes). When we have the formula clear we can play with the different patterns and directions to find out how that affects the “frame”.



If we find toxic meaning in the matrix, meaning that makes us feel “bad”, act un-ecologically, thinking that is limiting our potentials we can use MindLines to expand or break apart the “frame” of the meaning to make it more flexible. We do the same with effective frames or beliefs that we want to be even more flexible and expanded to make it more

powerful. To do that we have 26 language patterns or rather frames for asking questions and 7 directions to send a brain. So first we explore the meaning matrix with Meta Questions and then we can play with the frame to make it more flexible with MindLines.

Purpose: To make a persons' thinking about some meaning or belief more flexible and open for more information.

Application: MindLines can be used in Training, Coaching, Sales, Therapy, and Rhetoric etc. It is implicit in the Meta-Coaching framework and is a powerful tool for conversational changework.

The **Meta-Model** is a linguistic toolset for asking questions and exploring the logic in a persons' map, how things are connected, how they are framed, what kind of information is missing or can be expanded upon. It's a tool to explore the "psycho-logics" of a persons' map of the world and usually the "change"(or rather the enriching of the "map") happens when we explore what is **outside** (missing information, according to who, in refrence to what etc.) and **inside** (the meanings, mind reads etc. that are stated) a persons' map or model. The Meta-Model is often referenced as being a tool for specificity even though that is the most basic application of it.

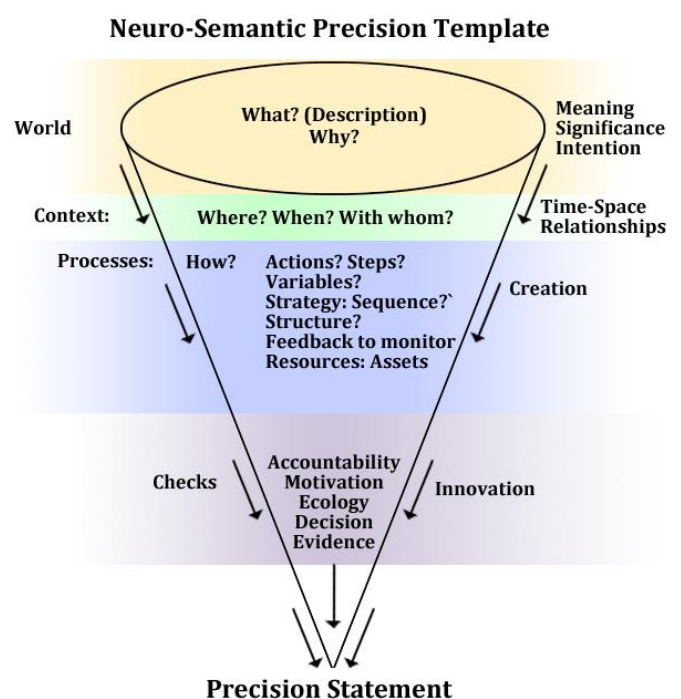
The **Milton Model** is a linguistic toolset often used in hypnosis, sales, marketing, political speeches etc. The Milton Model use the process of vagueness and lack of specificity to create a frame that the other person can fill with its' own content: images, meanings etc. Example: President Obama is famous for the phrase "Change we can believe in" that doesn't reference anything on the outside so the people filled it with their own content. The backside is that his popularity plummeted when the change *he* talked about mis-matched the content the people had projected onto the phrase.

The **Neuro-Semantic Precision Template.**

This model evolved from the Well Formed Outcome questions and Michaels' choice to put it in a funnel to illustrate the process. The intention is to funnel or drill down to specifics and then we can fill it with different kinds of questions for different applications.

In the Unleashing Creativity training it is applied to a Well Formed Problem, a Well Formed Solution, a Well Formed Innovation with different questions for different purposes. All of them include the basic structure of **Subject** (What?), **Context** (Where?), **Processes** (How?) and **Checks** (Ecology, Evidence and more).

This model can be applied as the framework for a Business Model, a Change Model and much more.



We have two change Models in Neuro-Semantics.

The Axes of Change Model:

Developed by Michelle Duval and Dr. Michael Hall this model utilizes four mechanisms of change for self-actualizing people and companies. The Axes of change uses four meta-programs to offer a *generative* model of change. Excluded from the model is the therapeutic change characteristics of resistance and relapse.

First is the direction and motivation meta-program: Toward / Away from.

What are you motivated to move toward and what do you want to move away from?

The response meta-program: Reflective, Inactive, Active.

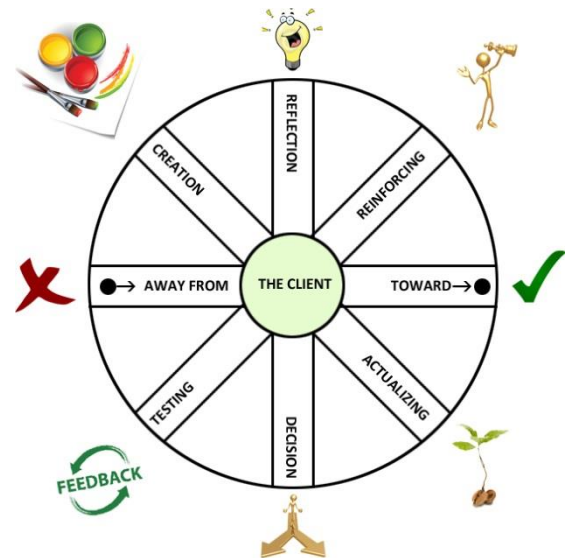
Reflective is about thinking things through, planning. Active is the decision based on the information in the plan.

The frame of reference meta-program: Internal / External.

Where is your attention focusing – on your internal frames or on external frames?

The relationship meta-program: Sameness / Difference.

When a change begins to occur, what does your attention go to – the things that are similar to the change you had designed or what's different from your ideal?



The Crucible – A place of Creation Fires for Testing, Melting and Transforming.

“Merely creating meaning is not enough. It’s the quality of the meanings that counts. If we make sick, toxic, and dis-empowering meanings, we will be the worse. Or if we create trivial, bland, or conventional meanings, we will experience no inner drive for adventure. We need to create the kind of meanings that empower us to thrive, enjoy, and love. This demands a crucible.”

From *Unleashing Potentials*, Dr L. Michael Hall

The Crucible is a hypnotic pattern for building a place of safety within where you can have an encounter with your thoughts, needs, emotions, biology etc. A Well-Formed Crucible consists of six elements:

* **A metaphorical place for a person to just be** with thoughts, emotions, needs and biology or an experience.

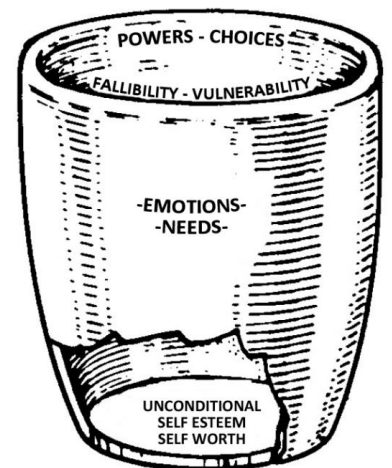
* **Self- Esteem** – Unconditional Positive Regards.

* **Ruthless Honesty** – Getting to the heart of things, expressing what is without judgment, telling the truth.

* **Witnessing** – just observing, noticing, neutral, non-judgmental awareness.

* **Acceptance** – Welcoming, embracing, holding the space.

* **Appreciation** – Discovering / creating enriched meanings and value. Compassion.



Self-Actualization Psychology is the larger framework around Neuro-Semantics.

First of all, what is Self-Actualization and why is it important?

Taken from the Training manual for “Unleashing Vitality” is Dr. Michael Halls’ definition of Self-Actualization:

“What is Self-Actualization? What do we mean when we use this term in Neuro-Semantics?”

- * *Making* your potentials real or actual.
- * *Becoming* all you can become.
- * *Developing* as a human being so that you become a “fully functioning person.”
- * *Hearing* your inner voice of authenticity and living true to the higher *being* values.
- * *Experiencing* your full humanness and full individuality.
- * *Psychological health* and wholeness.
- * Learning to be the best version of you.
- * Living at the top level of the hierarchy of needs.
- * The synergy between meaning and performance.
- * Doing what you *must do*.

Self-Actualization is a function of two mechanisms—meaning and performance.

Self-actualizing people *perform* more competently at higher levels and do so because it they find it meaningfully significant. The richness of meaning empowers their ability to take effective action and become masterful.”

It’s all about coping with your basic needs! The main reason that the majority of people on this planet are not self-actualizing is because they are stuck on some need and are busy taking care of themselves, to cope, to survive instead of thrive. So one of the purpose with all the different trainings in NS, like the APG, is to give people the tools to be more of their own true selves.

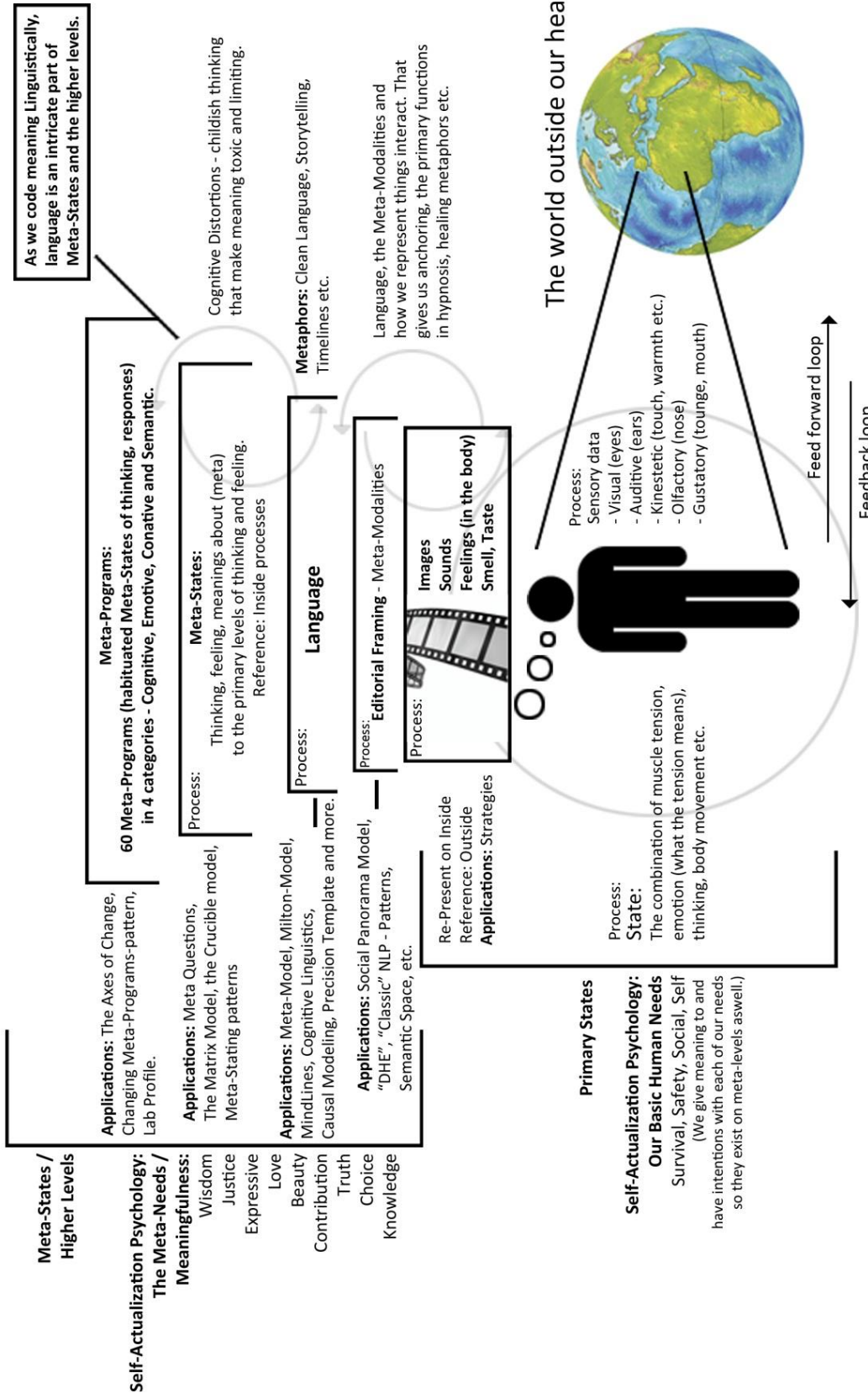
The APG for example can be framed as a developmental training to “correct” the things that you should or could have learned while growing up, to clear the psychological path in your meaning matrix and make you more ready to be fully present and *experience flow*.

The Self-Actualizing human have “gotten over themselves”, have taken care of the basic needs and have freed up all that energy and tension to do other things, to do what they want to do, what they must do! It’s beyond survival, that is taken care of, it’s a path to explore, to be, to give of themselves to a cause or higher purpose.

The Meta-Coach training is training coaches to become self-actualization coaches, to facilitate the process of self-actualization in their clients through the coaching relationship, so that they can find their own path to greatness.

The overall system and how the “parts” fit together:

Illustration by Patrik Fordell 2013 - www.self-actualisation.se



Recommended books on the processes, patterns and models:

Processes:

VAKOG: **MovieMind** by L. Michael Hall

Meta-Modalities:

Sub-Modalities going Meta by L. Michael Hall and Bob Bodenhamer

Get the life you want – Richard Bandler

Language:

Communication Magic by L. Michael Hall

MindLines by L. Michael Hall and Bob Bodenhamer

Hypnosis – a comprehensive guide by Tad James

Richard Bandler's guide to Trance-Formation by Richard Bandler

Cognitive Linguistics – An introduction by Vyvyan Evans and Melanie Green

Hypnotic Realities by Erickson, Rossi & Rossi

Training Trances by Overdurf & Silverthorn

Precision – A new approach to Communication by Grinder & McMaster

Sleight of Mouth by Robert Dilts

Meaning & Meta-States:

Meta-States by L. Michael Hall

Neuro-Semantics – actualizing Meaning & Performance by L. Michael Hall

States of Equilibrium by John Burton

Beliefs by Dilts, Hallway & Smith (not explicitly on Meta-States but if read with “Meta-State eyes” it’s all about Meta-States)

Patterns:

The Sourcebook of Magic by L. Michael Hall

The Sourcebook of Magic Volume II (Meta-Stating patterns) by L. Michael Hall

Change your Mind and Keep the change by Steve Andreas and Connirae Andreas

Heart of the Mind by Steve Andreas and Connirae Andreas

Models:

The Matrix Model by L. Michael Hall

The Crucible by L. Michael Hall

Meta-Coaching vol I by L. Michael Hall and Michelle Duval

Meta-Coaching vol II – Coaching Conversations by L. Michael Hall and Michelle Duval

Self-Actualization Psychology by L. Michael Hall

Unleashed by L. Michael Hall

Unleashing Leadership by L. Michael Hall

Benchmarking by L. Michael Hall

Group and Team Coaching by L. Michael Hall

Systemic Coaching by L. Michael Hall