NLP and Coaching for Healthcare Professionals:

Developing Expert Practice

Authors

SUZANNE HENWOOD
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Contributor: Liz Holland
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Dedication

We dedicate this book to our next generation. Who knows, maybe they too will move into the healthcare professions, maybe not. We hope that whatever they do they will do it excellently, enjoying every minute of finding their full potential and living out their dreams:

Rebekah, Benjamin and Barney, and Rohanna

Suzanne Henwood

Jim Lister
About the authors and contributor

Authors

Suzanne Henwood

Suzanne is a Master Practitioner in both NLP and Time Line Therapy and holds a doctorate in CPD Effectiveness and an MSc in Applied Radiography. She runs her own business in coaching and training and works to develop services through people development, through a strong belief in the need to invest in and support people so that they can fulfil their potentials and improve services provided.

Suzanne is a radiographer by professional background and spent many years in education, finishing her university career as Director of Postgraduate Studies in Health at a London university. From there she moved to a large UK charity, where she managed a National Institute of Education, based in seven universities around the country, providing leading edge education and development initiatives to a range of professional disciplines in the field of cancer and palliative care.

In 2005 she set up her own company, with a number of associates, taking NLP into the healthcare community in order to influence and change practice, through individual professionals and the teams in which they work.

Suzanne holds an adjunct professorship in Auckland, New Zealand and sits on a Department of Health advisory group for strategy and policy in health and social care. She works at professional body level for the College and Society of Radiographers and continues to be passionate about improving services for patients and staff alike.

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Jim Lister

Jim Lister is a Master Practitioner in NLP and has worked as a trainer and coach within his own business, the C:Change Partnership, for the past nine years. Jim’s work is spread over the private, public and charitable sectors, and has developed a focus around designing work within healthcare settings.

Over the past three years, Jim has been employed extensively by Macmillan Cancer Support, and has delivered a lecture programme to postholders exploring many of the themes contained within this book. He also works with NHS Trusts in both South and North Wales to help build effective teams and develop individuals.

He works alongside Suzanne in delivering short programmes of change for the College and Society of Radiographers. He is also working for the National Association of Complementary Therapists supporting staff employed in hospices throughout the UK.

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Contributor

Liz Holland

Liz has more than 30 years’ experience in radiology having originally qualified as a Medical Radiation Technologist before moving into management of the radiology services at Dunedin Hospital, New Zealand. She left radiology to work in health-related change management projects where she experienced the impact of having her position made redundant. She left the health sector and developed a ‘portfolio’ career being employed part time as a career consultant with Career Services and establishing her private business as a professional supervisor and Life Coach. Liz qualified as a Life Coach through the virtual university, Coach U. She now works with a wide range of people of different ages, ethnicity, educational
and health backgrounds, assisting them to clarify how they want to live their lives.

Liz also offers custom-designed workshops to assist workplaces or groups with an issue or goal they wish to achieve.

She is a member of the International Coach Federation, Career Practitioners Association of New Zealand and the NZ Institute of Medical Radiation Technologists. She holds a Diploma of the College of Radiographers (London); NZOQ Certificate in Quality Assurance and is the recipient of an Honorary Masters degree in Health Science (Medical Radiation Technology) from Unitec New Zealand.

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Foreword

Jeremy Lazarus

It’s an honour to be asked to write the foreword for NLP and Coaching for Healthcare Professionals: Developing Expert Practice.

When I first met Suzanne in July 2005 on one of my Introduction to NLP courses, she was, shall we say, cynical about the usefulness to her and others of NLP. Here we are, a little over 18 months later, and Suzanne is co-authoring a book on the uses of NLP in the healthcare sector, a subject which is dear to my heart. What a turnaround! It was a privilege to train her and witness this change of heart and attitude.

In this book the authors cover the uses of NLP and related topics in the context of how to improve levels of effectiveness in dealings with other people, be they colleagues, staff, bosses or patients. The topics covered also have benefits for improving readers’ communication with friends and family, as well as benefits for readers’ own self-development.

For some, the main interest in reading this book will be on making work communication and results even better than they currently are. At the other end of the spectrum, some readers will be starting from a rather dissatisfied position at work and be looking for ways to make more significant and urgent changes in their role and with their teams. Wherever you are on the spectrum, the techniques and tips provided in NLP and Coaching for Healthcare Professionals will help guide you, and help you guide others, to make some of the changes that you require.

In terms of NLP itself, the book outlines its meaning and underlying concepts. The reason for my particular interest and passion for NLP is quite simple – it works! As a former accountant, finance director and management consultant, I am only interested in tools and techniques for use in a business and work environment if they produce results. NLP fits the bill perfectly. In addition, having trained several medical professionals in NLP, including neurosurgeons, GPs, nurses, radiographers and administrative staff, they are as enthusiastic as I am about its usefulness and applicability to the medical world.

So, whatever your particular role within the healthcare sector, and wherever you are in terms of your satisfaction with your current situation within it, take as much as you can from this book for yourself and those who you believe and feel would benefit from it.

Enjoy!

Jeremy Lazarus
Director, The Lazarus Consultancy Ltd
Certified Trainer of NLP
Preface

Lisa Wake

I seem to have spent most of my adult life in some form of relationship with the NHS. My early childhood had a strong influence on my chosen career as a nurse, and full of enthusiasm to be a modern Florence Nightingale I entered nursing at the tender age of 18. This enthusiasm for the caring profession stayed with me for about 10 years, but I became increasingly frustrated with the ‘stickness’ of the system in which I worked and eventually I decided to swap sides. I became a manager, again enthusiastic about how I could make a difference to the system, this time by managing it, rather than just working within it. After another five years, during which time I met NLP as a methodology of performance excellence, I decided to use this newfound skill base to pursue a career supporting the NHS and other systems from the outside. I remain attached to the NHS through both my clinical role as a psychotherapist and my training and consultancy work.

I can clearly recall the first time I met this ‘thing’ called NLP. A colleague was supporting me to find new ways to manage my manager. I had developed a strategy of listening to the footsteps of my manager as they came down the corridor and would then decide to pick up the phone and pretend to be busy, so that I could avoid the ire that would inevitably follow. Although a tactic that created delay, it did not address the underlying relationship difficulty that I was having. My colleague helped me to identify more useful ways of handling this relationship; even something as simple as standing up when my manager was about to march into my office seemed to diffuse the situation somewhat.

Suzanne, Jim and Liz have brought together some of the very simple tools and techniques that exist within NLP to enable you to make a difference to your own effectiveness and the effectiveness of others. Fired by their enthusiasm for their subject and passion for the NHS, all three of them offer a clear understanding of NLP and its direct application to your work. This book provides very concrete examples of how major differences can be made to working lives through some very small interventions.

I am delighted to recommend this book to you and hope that you will find within it some useful advice, ideas or tools that will enable you to continue and extend your work with patients, clients and service users.

Lisa Wake
UKCP Registered Neurolinguistic Psychotherapist
INLPTA Certified Trainer of NLP
Acknowledgements

We have so many people to thank it is difficult to know who to include here. We have to start by thanking our partners, who have encouraged, supported, helped, inspired and generally kept the family going while we have dedicated our time to this book. So thank you to Phil and Katherine.

We also want to say thank you to those people who introduced us to NLP, to Sheila Young and Nicci Evans. To those who trained us so superbly: Jeremy Lazarus, John Seymour and Lisa Wake; their passion for NLP was infectious and not only did they train us, they have also helped deepen our understanding of NLP and how to use it ethically and to a very high standard. We will always be indebted to them for that. Through these great people we found a new way of living, and they also continue to support and inspire us as we carry on our journey of learning and discovery and as we grow ourselves.

Thank you too to Liz Holland for contributing her wider coaching knowledge and expertise. Her enthusiasm and attention to detail hugely enhanced this book.

To the Lister family and especially Rob Lister for his patience and attention to detail.

To all those who have helped contribute to the development of the C:Change Partnership, especially Kay Douglas, Sonja Martin and all colleagues and staff at CRL especially Mark Leonard, Kevin Lee and David Large.

To Pawel Abbott, Rob Edwards and especially to Danny Schofield for being open to new ideas and making them work, despite the doubters.

To the team at Wiley for believing in our vision and for supporting us through to publication.

Finally to all our clients, who allow us to walk with them on their journeys, and especially those who allowed us to share their stories through this book. You have our lasting gratitude.
Introduction
Suzanne Henwood

Don’t be frightened to dream dreams – it is by dreaming that you start to become what you want to become

As busy healthcare practitioners, I imagine you are already over-committed with work, CPD and other responsibilities, so why should you take valuable time out to read this book? Well, we believe this is probably one of the most important books you will ever read on developing excellence in healthcare practice, through developing yourself. This is a book to inspire and motivate you, to increase your self-awareness and to empower you so that you can be whatever it is you want to be. It is about recognising the potential within you and empowering you so that you may thrive and be a respected expert practitioner and leader in your field. It is our belief that by focusing on you and your internal development, you will achieve far more than in many other CPD activities, which are focused on a specific ability or competence to practise in a particular clinical area. This book is different; it will change you at your very core – if you want it to. It will help you to find out who you are and where you are going. This book is an investment in you.

Whether you are currently thriving in your career, getting by, or struggling to go to work every day, whether you work in a supportive and learning environment, or whether you are working in a more negative environment where there is little regard for your own development and where you do not feel valued, this book can take you to the next level on your own personal and career pathway. Whether you have just qualified, or whether you are close to retirement, this book is equally relevant to you.
Walt Disney is famously quoted as saying ‘If you can dream it, you can do it’. What do you dream? What is it you want to achieve? What in the past has been holding you back? If you read this book dreaming your dreams and openly and honestly engaging with the tools and techniques we outline, you will change, you will grow, and our hope is that you will find renewed passion in your profession, compassion for your patients and you will hugely increase your ability to achieve and be successful.

Are you ready to start a journey that could change the way you think? This book will give you the tools to help you thrive within change. It will give you the ability to recharge your batteries as and when they need recharging, and it will give you renewed focus and energy. You will learn more about yourself so that you can give even more of yourself at work (and at home). We have been so impressed with the impact of the tools in our own work and lives that we had to share them with you. When you have your own stories of change to tell, get in touch – we would love to hear how this book helped you.

Why are we so passionate about sharing this material with you? As a healthcare practitioner myself, I know how stressful the healthcare environment can be. I understand the pressures that have to be faced by individual practitioners and health service departments. I have seen and worked in some of the difficult cultures that exist within healthcare, as well as being privileged to have worked in wonderfully supportive and inspiring departments, where I knew exactly why I had become a healthcare professional. Now I want to do what I can to help practitioners realise their full potential and be the very best they can be, regardless of where they are working. The tools in this book can be an enormous help both to those who are struggling and those who are thriving. I hope that in helping individuals we can, little by little, work together to continually improve the services we provide. By reading this book, I hope you too become inspired afresh; and that through your own journey you will also get excited again about the power you have as an individual to make a difference and to influence change. Through a philosophy of respect and a deep desire to care for patients, I hope that together, in small stages, we can model professional pride in being a healthcare practitioner. I hope that you take the things you learn from this book and share them. I hope that you find renewed enthusiasm for caring and providing for patients in new and innovative ways by finding your own power within. This is the vision that I share with you. Even now I hope you are feeling excited, that you are already thinking of all the things you want to do to make a difference, all the things you want to achieve: even now let yourself feel how good that is going to feel – feel and imagine what it is going to be like to do the job you love, in the way that you want, where you know you are making a real difference. Maybe you are lucky enough to be in that position already. If this is not yet reality for you and this is a vision that you have for yourself, then read on and I, along with my co-
authors, will show you how to move things forward so that your vision becomes your reality. It would be a privilege to share some of that journey with you through the pages of this book.

**About the book**

This book is designed as a tool kit to enable you to increase your own self-awareness in order to allow you to achieve self-empowerment – skills that are fundamental to leadership at any level, but also we believe essential to all healthcare practitioners. The book is designed to give you tools that you can use to increase your flexibility in an ever-changing environment, to allow you to thrive within periods of change. It is a book which focuses on you, your needs and your values, as it is our belief that change has to start within. It is through personal change that we will have the maximum impact on the environment we work in.

You can read the book from front to back, and that might be a useful start to give yourself an initial overview of what it can offer, to begin to inspire you and excite you about the possibilities for further development. Each tool can then be used and applied to your own needs and can be used at your own pace. You can select which tool you want to use to reflect where you are on your own journey or to respond to a particular issue of concern you are currently facing. Each tool is flexible and can be used time and time again in different contexts, so you can refer back to it regularly and re-use it, each time moving further on and revealing deeper and deeper layers about yourself. Many of the tools are available on the website referred to later in this chapter.

The chapters are written by three very different people, with very different backgrounds, professionally and geographically, though we all now work as coaches and/or trainers offering services to healthcare practitioners, many of whom have contributed their stories to this book to give you a real sense of where the tools have already been successfully used in healthcare practice. While we have aimed to bring the style of the book into one cohesive whole, we have allowed the individuality of each author to remain, giving you even greater access to a variety of approaches and perspectives on this important subject. We have all contributed to all of the chapters, the name on any one chapter represents the person who led that chapter; the material within has been developed and refined by each of us to give it even greater potential impact.

The key to this book, as we have already said, is a focus on self. Change starts internally. It is through internal change that we see external changes in behaviour and in our impact on others. If we get that focus wrong, we will not be as successful and nothing will really change.
There is a wonderful story I have often heard told and which I have re-written here in the context of modern day healthcare. It is the story of two nurses from the same ward both of whom have been qualified for two years and are looking to move to new jobs. They hear about an excellent coach and decide to approach this person to obtain advice on changing jobs:

Nurse 1: ‘So, as I said, I am thinking of moving to the hospital in the neighbouring Trust. Do you know of it?’
Coach: ‘I do.’
Nurse 1: ‘Can you tell me what it is like?’
Coach: ‘What is the hospital like that you are thinking of leaving?’
Nurse 1: ‘It isn’t very nice. The staff are not friendly, I am not well supported and I never seem to fit in.’
Coach: ‘You will find the hospital in the neighbouring Trust very similar.’
The first nurse left the session confused. She had been looking for direction. The second nurse booked an appointment with the same coach.

Nurse 2: ‘So, as I said, I am thinking of moving to the hospital in the neighbouring Trust. Do you know of it?’
Coach: ‘I do.’
Nurse 2: ‘Can you tell me what it is like?’
Coach: ‘What is the hospital like that you are thinking of leaving?’
Nurse 2: ‘It’s great. I get on really well with the staff, I am challenged and have learnt a great deal.’
Coach: ‘You will find the hospital in the neighbouring Trust very similar.’

If there is one key lesson to learn in this book it is get to know yourself completely and then change aspects in you that are not producing the results you want. You will be surprised how quickly things around you change once you have made that sincere change within yourself. You will see things differently and people will see you differently, and consequently everything changes. How great will you feel when you have made the changes you want and start to get the results you want?

So, we urge you to go on. Give yourself the time and scope you need to make this work for you. Treat yourself to some real devotional time and get to know who you are. We guarantee that it will be time well spent and you will benefit both personally and professionally.

It is worth saying what the book is not. It is not a theoretical text and does not spend a great deal of time looking at either the history or development of the tools we describe, or indeed at the evidence for their effectiveness. Texts to establish the history and credibility of NLP already exist. We do, however, offer at the