Sarah Allison-Daly
NLP Master Practitioner Modelling Assignment

Receiving Feedback

"*There are nuggets of learning in all feedback, you just need to look closely, be curious and be open to the possibilities*"

daly coaching
DEVELOPING YOU

THERE IS NO FAILURE. ONLY FEEDBACK.

ROBERT ALLEN

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Contents

Chapter 1.

Setting the scene

Imagine if you could receive feedback without feeling defensive. Imagine how many arguments or altercations would be avoided if you were able to receive feedback openly and secure in the knowledge that there is no failure, only feedback. This assignment will provide the reader with a model to do just that!

I chose the subject of receiving feedback for my modelling assignment for very personal reasons. During my NLP training, I started to recognise patterns of behaviour when I was receiving feedback. I would feel afraid of being judged and criticised and because of these feelings I would withdraw from conversations, hold back from fully participating in group training and would shy away from volunteering for exercises or demonstrations.

My patterns of behaviour when receiving feedback from my partner in particular, were very challenging. Conversations would often result in heated arguments and then end up with me believing I was a failure, I wasn't enough, I was useless and so forth. These negative beliefs would impact on my physical and emotional state, and I would become quite depressed, tearful and withdrawn.

When reflecting on my behaviour and coding my submodalities I would see myself through the eyes of another who, I believed, was seeing a failure – **Ve**. I would remember myself as a young person feeling shame and humiliation - **Vir**. I would see myself as a hopeless mother and partner **Vic**. I would most certainly be running a very unpleasant internal dialog, berating myself and calling myself stupid and a failure - **Aid**. And there would be the physical and emotional feelings that would be overpowering at times. The state of my mind would impact negatively on my physical wellbeing - **Ke & Ki.**

The Master Practitioner, and this modelling assignment in particular, has been important to me because it has enabled me to address my patterns of behaviour and to recognise the filters I was applying to situations where feedback was given to me. Having tested the model on myself I know it works and as a result I have been able to re-evaluate my sub-modalities, which were previously from a problem state or 'away from' state. These days I code myself very differently and most certainly from my desired or 'towards' state.

I see myself as a confident, capable woman who has all the resources she will ever need – **Ve**
The images I now see are of the fun times, laughing and learning with my fellow students and my nearest and dearest – **Vir**
The image I now create in my mind is of the future me, successful in my coaching business, graduating from my MSc, proudly hanging up my NLP certificates. And most importantly I visualise the happy and contented faces of the people I will support in the future, these are the people that I have helped overcome their personal challenges - **Vic**

I now hear the praise for a job well done, my partner telling me I am loved, my son telling me I'm the best Mummy ever, my parents telling me how proud they are of me. I hear the many words of thanks shared by those I've helped overcome their limiting beliefs and it fills me with joy and happiness. I feel happy, grateful and blessed for this life I live - **Air**, **Ki & Ke**

If I was to construct sounds they would be applause after my public speaking / presentation, safe in the knowledge that my message resonated with the audience and they completely connected with me. I feel at exhilarated and at peace all at the same time, I know I have made a positive difference - **Aic** & **Ke**

And when I talk to myself nowadays I tell myself that I will, I can and I am anything I want to be. I am enough – **Aid**

Key: Coding Strategy

Visual External	An image we see externally	Ve
Visual Internal Remembered	An image we see in our mind that we remember	Vir
Visual Internal Constructed	An image we create in our mind	Vic
Auditory Internal Remembered	A sound we remember	Air
Auditory Internal Constructed	A sound we construct	Aic
Auditory Internal Dialog	Inner dialog (talking to ourselves in our head)	Aid
Kinaesthetic External	A feeling we physically experience	Ke
Kinaesthetic Internal	An emotion we feel	Ki

The key to learning is feedback. It is nearly impossible to learn anything without it.

Steven Levitt

Chapter 2.

The Outcome

And so, I have focussed on *receiving feedback* for this modelling assignment. Whilst it is important to me, I have also become aware of its importance to many of my fellow coaches, friends and other NLP students through conversations and interactions.

Receiving feedback appears to be something that many people struggle with for a variety of reasons including but not exclusively; low self-esteem, limiting self-beliefs, lack of confidence, filters and problem stories (scripts in Transactional Analysis). Many of which were a direct result of difficulties or struggles from negative childhood experiences.

In an attempt to support others who struggle with receiving feedback and to further develop my own strategies I have modelled several exemplars whom I felt were excellent at receiving feedback, and were open and willing to being modelled.

From my modelling of these exemplars I have developed a model to share with others. This model will support you to not only receive feedback but to embrace it openly and identify any opportunities for personal growth and development. There are nuggets of learning in all feedback, you just need to look closely, be curious and be open to the possibilities.

Chapter 3.

The 'ALL RACE' Model

By applying this model the individual will be able to prepare for feedback conversations, to manage any feelings of anxiety, to listen and receive feedback without feeling the need to defend themselves, to acknowledge the feedback and recognise the intent in which it is shared. You will be able to clarify the feedback through curiosity and to evaluate and embed any learning opportunities.

Step 1.   **A**nchor & Prepare

Using a simple anchoring or mindfulness technique prior to a meeting or conversation where feedback is likely to be imparted:

Quick Anchor Technique
- Think of a time when you were happy and positive or achieved something great
- Visualise yourself in that moment
- Recall the feelings, the sounds, the emotions associated with that time
- Use a physical movement to anchor those positive physical and emotional responses to the happy and positive time i.e. touching thumb to forefinger, touch your ear or roll onto the balls of your feet.
- As you enter into the conversation where feedback is to be shared, use your anchor to recall positivity and happiness

Mindful Technique
- Sit or stand somewhere quiet
- Focus your attention on a point just above eye level, perhaps a picture or a light switch for example
- Continue to focus on the point and really look at it, discounting everything around the point
- Breathe deeply and evenly, be aware of your heart rate, heat, internal physical and emotional self for 1-2 minutes.
- Slowly bring into focus the peripheral – surrounding area.
- Now, when ready and in your own time, step into the present feeling relaxed and at ease.

Step 2. **L**ook and **L**isten – observe your reactions and observe the reactions of others, listen to what is being said.

This step is about recognising and being aware of your current or present state and being aware of and observing verbal and non-verbal communication.

- Observe how the feedback is being given to you, can you recognise any eye patterns for example?
- At this stage you are actively listening and observing, you are in the moment
- Can you recognise any body language, either yours or the feedback giver? How are you sitting or standing? Are you adopting a defensive position with arms folded for example?
- If you are aware of verbal and non-verbal communication, what have you recognised from your observations? In what way could you adapt your communication style to suit the feedback giver? If you aren't aware then don't worry, focus on your own body language making sure it doesn't appear to be defensive.
- How is the feedback for you? What are you feeling, thinking or hearing, what's that like?

Step 3. **R**eceive – openly without defence or judgement

At this step you are receiving feedback *only*, you are not accepting it.

- Be completely open to receiving feedback. To do this it may help to think of a time when you felt free and open, perhaps watching a child playing or laughing, taking a bite of a scrumptious cake and savouring the taste, maybe opening a book by your favourite author and reading the first page in anticipation of the story about to unfold. Freewheeling down a hillside with the wind in your hair!
- Consider the intent with which the feedback is given, revisit the belief of excellence: Behind every behaviour is a positive intention.
- Again, be aware any triggers you may have that could cause you to shift into a non-desirable state. Are you feeling uncomfortable with what is being said for example?
- If you are feeling triggers remember to use your anchoring technique, you have all the resources within you.
- Remember you are only receiving at this stage, you are not making a judgement or evaluating the feedback.
- Try this little mantra *'I am open, I am free, I am safe'*.

Step 4.   **A**cknowledge

This is the step where you acknowledge the feedback.

- Acknowledge the feedback by thanking the giver. To them, it is true.
- Acknowledge the feedback safe in the understanding that it is given with good intention, after all they have taken time to speak with you, and they have thought about, and prepared the feedback for you.
- Believe and respect that everyone has their own map of the world and it's likely to be different to yours.
- Recall the beliefs of excellence if you need to – The person with the most flexibility in thinking and behaviour has the greatest influence & what we recognise in other is true about ourselves
- You have all the resources you need within you.

Step 5.   **C**larify through Curiosity – ask questions, be curious.

This step it about finding out as much as you can about the feedback given and being curious rather than judgemental or defensive.

- Ask questions (open and clean if possible) to clarify the feedback, what does it mean?
- Ask for examples of when you have done or said something. In essence, you are asking the feedback giver to help you understand their perspective.
- Remember to use this as an opportunity to find out as much as you can about the feedback in order to check your understanding.
- Take time to thank the feedback giver and let them know that you are grateful they have taken the time to share this feedback with you.
- You might want to let them know you will reflect on what they have shared.

Step 6.   Evaluate and Embed the Learning – reflect and embed the learning.

This is the step where you can choose whether to accept the feedback or not. It is where you can evaluate what you have been given and decide whether there are opportunities for learning.

- Reflect on what has been shared, is it true and is it fair, is it useful?
- You might feel uncomfortable and that's alright. It's OK not to be OK sometimes
- Identify the opportunities for learning, personal development and/or increased self-awareness?
- Ask yourself what learning can be taken from this feedback, where are those golden nuggets? Remember, feedback is a gift that someone has prepared for you.
- How can the learning be incorporated into your life and/or practice and how can you use it now and in the future?
- How can you share your learning with others?
- And if you choose not to accept the feedback...reflect on how this is for you, are you happy with your decision? If not, ask yourself why?

Top Tip!

A way to try out your new found skills for receiving feedback is to apply the TOTE model. This is a model whereby you can increase your awareness of what triggers you are susceptible to when receiving feedback, recognise your *present state* and to think about your *desired state* and do something different or introduce a change, before testing out when you next face the trigger!

 The trick is what *you* do to make a positive difference, try it out.
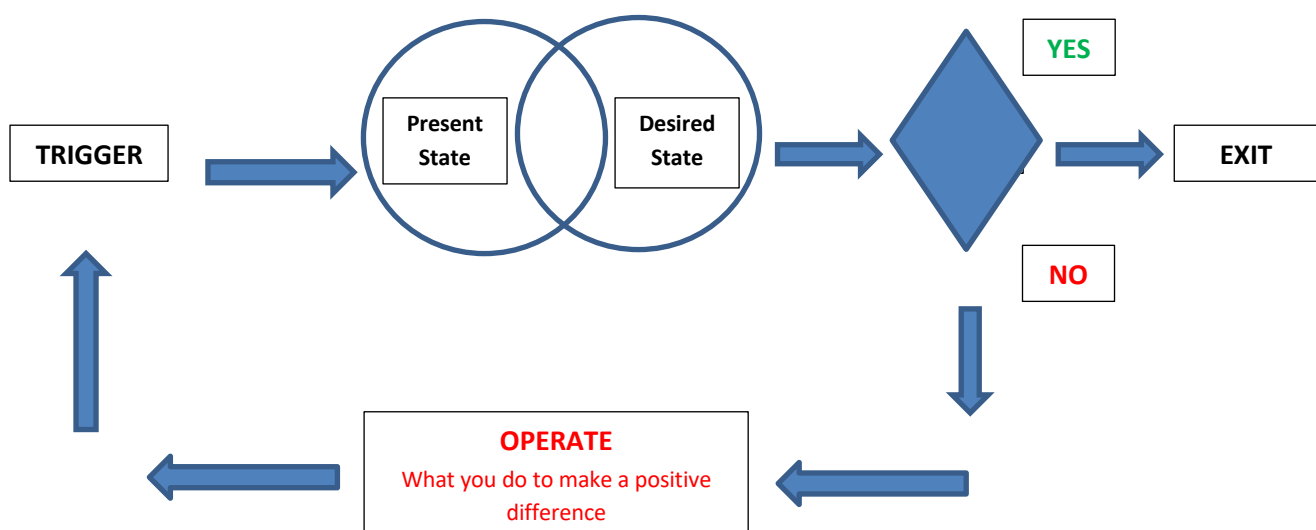
"FEEDBACK IS A GIFT. IDEAS ARE THE CURRENCY OF OUR NEXT SUCCESS. LET PEOPLE SEE YOU VALUE BOTH FEEDBACK AND IDEAS."

JIM TRINKA AND LES WALLACE

JN

Chapter 4.

Learning from Exemplars

As I have already mentioned, the outcome of this assignment is to share a model for receiving feedback. To assist in the development of my model I interviewed, observed and modelled 3 different exemplars who had either knowingly developed strategies to deal with feedback or had, by their own admission, subconsciously adopted or developed methods. I was interested in modelling exemplars from different backgrounds (personal and work related) to provide, what I hoped would be, a variety of approaches.

Exemplar 1.
I chose JR as an exemplar because I admired his calmness in situations where he was receiving feedback from our trainer and fellow students. He always appeared to be grateful for feedback and appeared to give it careful consideration, the latter being a presupposition of course.

JR is a management trainer and coach, and has developed, albeit subconsciously and by his own admission, an approach to deal with feedback over many years.

JR explained that when he is in a position where feedback is being shared with him he will enter into the conversation feeling open and hopeful of learning. He explained that if the feedback conversation starts to take a negative steer he uses a shield or filter to protect himself. This 'shield' allows him to listen to the feedback in real time and to process its meaning and validity, and he is able to do so without commenting of being judgemental. JR explained that by applying this approach he is able to assess the usefulness, truth and learning in the moment. He is able to deflect, with his shield, anything that he feels is untrue or unfair so that he is not adversely effected by it.

During the interview I was able to listen JR recounting a memory of when he had received some negative feedback in a work context. JR was looking up towards the left, which suggests he was indeed recalling a memory and he was being animated and using his body language to describe how the feedback couldn't penetrate his body with his shield in place. JR described how he felt at the time both physically and emotionally.
In terms of coding - Vir, Air, Ke & Ki

Exemplar 2.

CM is a project manager in a highly regulated industry and has over 35 years of experience of dealing with challenging situations and people. CM is NLP trained and uses NLP is most aspects of his life.

When I asked him how he receives feedback and in particular what's like if/when he receives negative feedback or criticism he was initially unable to tell me. *'I don't really think about it anymore'* was his response. CM wasn't able to recall a specific situation in which he had received negative feedback, which made me curious to know why this was. CM explained that since he had embarked on his NLP journey (spanning many years) he felt he had sub/unconsciously developed a strategy that he described as rapid-basis perceptual positions and used this strategy *'without overthinking it'*.

CM explained that when he is involved in conversations which are of a challenging nature and during which he may receive negative feedback, he first considers what is being said in the first person/position i.e. himself. He then takes the second position, the person giving the feedback, and then takes the 3rd position of the observer/bystander.

By doing this he is able to quickly assess and evaluate all perspectives and give thought to the meaning and intention of the feedback, and how he chooses to receive and accept it or not. If the feedback warrants exploration then he will seek clarification and again, either accept or discard.

Coding - Vic, Aid, Ke & Ki

Exemplar 3.

RL is an academic/lecturer (PhD) and owns a coaching & training company. RL is an NLP Master Practitioner used NLP in his coaching and mentoring lecturing. RL is my coach supervisor and someone I admire for his experience and knowledge of coaching and NLP practice.

I shared the subject of my modelling assignment with RL and asked him to share his experience of a time when he received feedback either in his role as an academic or in his business. RL shared his experience of when he had recently received some disappointing feedback relating to a new development in his field of academic teaching. RL explained that although he was able to draw on his Knowledge and experience of NLP practice he still felt triggered by the feedback and was aware of a shift in his ego state. Because he was able to draw on his beliefs of excellence he was able to quickly recover his state and receive and accept the feedback with 'good grace'. This was interesting because it demonstrated that although we can be trained and experienced in a particular practice there will be times when our 'buttons are pushed' and we feel a trigger being

pulled. The key, as RL highlighted, is to recognise when this happens and to employ a strategy to recover and move forward positively.

A more general conversation continued after the initial modelling with RL explaining that, in his experience, it is difficult to know how a conversation is likely to unfold in the early stages and because of this he keeps an open and curious mind.

RL went on to explain that as a conversation develops and feedback is shared he becomes aware of his physical and emotional responses. When he becomes alert to impending negative conversation or feedback he uses a quick anchoring or mindful technique to ensure he is able to distance himself or dissociate from the issue. This allows him time to listen, process, discard unnecessary negativity and retain to the opportunities for learning through future reflection.

When the occasion requires, RL also uses anchoring/mindfulness prior to meetings or situations where he may feel anxious. He described the following as a way to anchor:
- Raise your eyes just above your normal line of vision
- Choose something to focus on, a spot on the wall/a photo/a window etc.
- Focus on that spot and really explore it, closing out everything else around the spot. Focus for a couple of minutes and really look at the spot, notice what you see.
- Slowly bring into focus the surrounding area, notice what you see, hear and feel.
- When you are completely aware of the present, then bring your eyes into *real time focus* and relax in the present.

During my interview with RL I observed the following coding:
Vir, Vic, Aid, Aic, Ke & Ki

After the modelling interview had ended the exemplars shared their experience of the process. In all cases the exemplars said that the interview and questioning had made them reflect on how they receive, accept and use feedback. In most cases they were recalling experiences, both in terms of their physical response (raised heart rate, flushing etc.) and their emotional response i.e. feeling embarrassed, angry, indifferent and so forth.

In most cases the exemplars had changed the way in which they received and accepted feedback following an earlier negative experience. All exemplars were NLP trained and were living with beliefs of excellence/presuppositions including:

- ✓ No failure, only feedback
- ✓ Behind every behaviour is a positive intention
- ✓ The meaning of the communication is the effect
- ✓ We have within us all the resources we will ever need
- ✓ The person with the most flexibility in thinking and behaviour has the greatest influence
- ✓ Mind and body are part of the same system
- ✓ What we recognise in others is true about ourselves

and perhaps
what made her beautiful
was not her appearance
or what she achieved,
but in her love
and in her courage,
and her audacity
to believe:
no matter
the darkness
around her,
Light ran wild
within her,
and that was the way
she came alive,
and it showed up
in everything.

morgan
harper
nichols

Chapter 5.

A Journey of Self-discovery

As I mentioned in chapter one, the reason I chose to model receiving feedback was because it was something that I struggled to do without being defensive and judgemental.

I was curious to find out more about why I struggled with receiving and accepting feedback and so I decided to do some self-coaching using Neurological Levels. This was an interesting process and by working through the different levels I was and was able to identify where I became stuck and was able to address those sticking points.
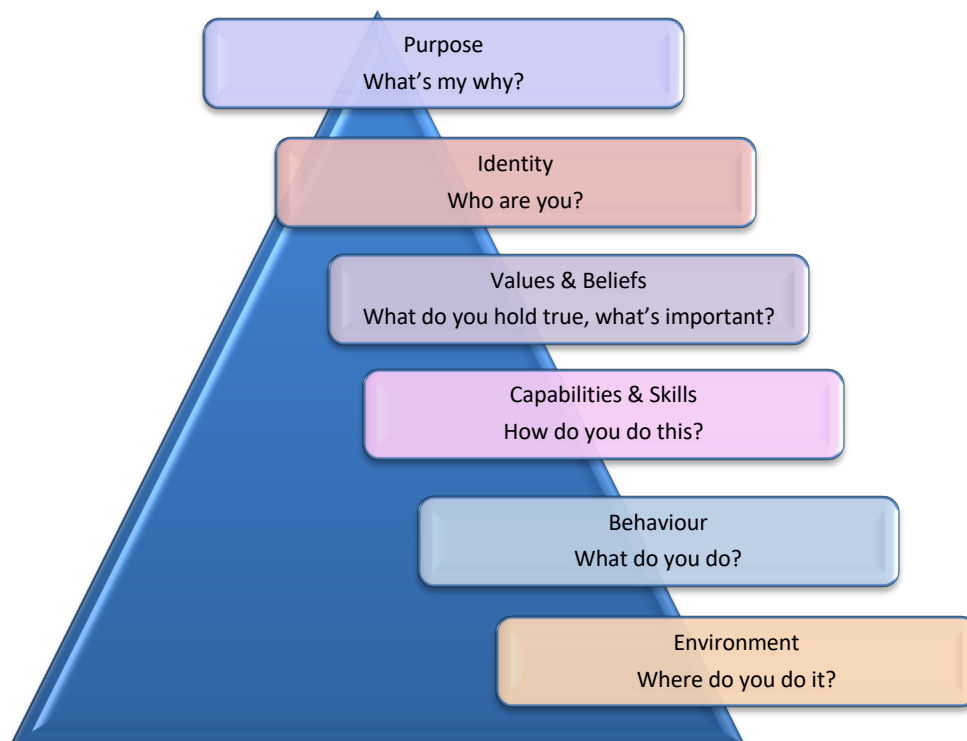
I had recognised some patterns of behaviour that were causing me self-doubt resulting in me becoming upset and depressed following feedback. I was stuck at the **Behaviour** level and became aware of my patters when dealing with feedback. By exploring the next level **Capabilities and Skills** I came to the realisation that in fact I am an intelligent woman with many skills and qualities! As I moved up the ladder I re-examined my beliefs, in particular the limiting self-beliefs and reminded myself of the beliefs of excellence; no failure, only feedback amongst others that I hold true. I recognised some of my old beliefs still lurking and was able to let them go.

I revisited my values after reminding myself of the beliefs of excellence and this was a pivotal moment for me. I value honesty, trust and integrity. I value openness and kindness and to truly hold these values I realised that I had to be open and honest with myself and with others. I had to be open to feedback in whatever shape or form it took, safe in the knowledge that it is given with good intention and there would always opportunities to learn and grow.

I realised that in my identity as a coach, mentor and facilitator (amongst other things) I needed to be true whilst giving feedback and open to receiving it. If I couldn't do either then my identity would be called into question and as a result my purpose would be unfulfilled.

"

LIFE IS NOT TESTING YOU. LIFE IS ONLY DELIVERING TO YOU THE OUTCOMES THAT YOUR BELIEFS ATTRACT.

"

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Chapter 6.

Putting it to the Test!

I have tested out the All Race model several times now with great results. I am able to enter into feedback conversations with my partner feeling calm and open to whatever the conversation presents.

I ensure that I am in a 'healthy' ego state i.e. adult, rather than parent or child and this helps me to communicate more effectively without being defensive. If I feel the need then I will anchor myself or do a little mindfulness exercise to help me step into my desired state.

I now listen carefully to what is being said, I ask clean questions to learn more about my partner's perspective and I am always curious to know more about his perspective.

There have been times when the conversation was less positive and when this happened I was able to dissociate and put a little '*hypothetical*' distance between myself and my partner, which has helped me stay in my desired state and receive the feedback, and to reflect on it before evaluating the opportunities for learning.

I have come to realise that we all have different maps of the world and different styles of communication. I have also realised that I need to be the change I want to see in others and the world around me and this realisation is incredibly empowering.

And what's the difference that makes the difference? Well, in my opinion it's the awareness that there is always a choice to be made. I can choose to receive and accept feedback for the possible learning opportunities or I can choose to defend, judge and feel failure.

So I choose feedback *not* failure.

KEEP YOUR THOUGHTS POSITIVE
BECAUSE YOUR THOUGHTS BECOME
YOUR WORDS.

KEEP YOUR WORDS POSITIVE
BECAUSE YOUR WORDS BECOME
YOUR BEHAVIOR.

KEEP YOUR BEHAVIOR POSITIVE
BECAUSE YOUR BEHAVIOR BECOMES
YOUR HABITS.

KEEP YOUR HABITS POSITIVE
BECAUSE YOUR HABITS BECOME
YOUR VALUES.

KEEP YOUR VALUES POSITIVE
BECAUSE YOUR VALUES BECOME
YOUR DESTINY.

~ MAHATMA GANDHI