

# What do teachers say?

Excerpts from seminar feedback sheets  
Pedagogical Institute (PI) Vienna, Austria:

Crystal clear!  
Specialized knowledge conveyed in an easily understood way. ”

“A wealth of professional competence and practical examples learned by  
working in school with real-life students!”

“The unconscious became conscious.  
Techniques which I had formerly used intuitively and at random  
are now dependable tools in my teacher’s toolbox.”

“What a shame the seminar lasted only three days.  
I wanted more!”

“I will be able to use what I learned every single day in the classroom!  
Absolutely the BEST seminar I have ever attended.”

“An enormous range of new and exciting possibilities.  
Thank you for making me aware of so many opportunities and choices in  
the classroom which I never knew existed.”

“I have never experienced a facilitator  
who was so enthusiastic and involved in her subject matter.  
Totally authentic. She lives and breathes what she teaches.”

“Her teaching skills kept me on the edge of my chair!”

“This seminar is an absolute MUST for every teacher!”



Pearl  
Nitsche

**TALK LESS. TEACH MORE!**  
**Nonverbal Classroom Management**

**Group Strategies that Work**

Illustrations by  
Derrick Nitsche

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1st printing September 2006

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Illustrations by Derrick Nitsche

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# The Author

Pearl Nitsche, an American who has lived for the past 30 years in Vienna, Austria, is an enthusiastic teacher, teacher trainer, foreign language teacher, and communication facilitator, as well as an international conference speaker.

She founded SLL Institute in 1984 and has trained thousands of teachers throughout Austria and the rest of Europe, from Russia to Istanbul, as well as in North and South America. In addition to foreign language courses, SLL Institute specializes in communication skills and teaching with brain friendly learning techniques such as Superlearning, Accelerated Learning, Suggestopedia, NLP (Neurolinguistic Programming), and other related techniques.

She has taught all age groups from kindergarten to university level, has worked as a facilitator in adult education for more than 25 years and, until recently, taught 10- to 14-year-olds at a bilingual middle school in Vienna, Austria.

One of her most popular seminars

## **Nonverbal Classroom Management**

is the topic of this book.

Further seminars that she offers for teachers and trainers as well as for the corporate world are:

- Nonverbal Communication Techniques
- Nonverbal Presentation Techniques
- Motivation for Teachers and Students
- Motivation & Empowerment
- Creative Teaching Techniques
- Internationally certified “Accelerated Learning / Suggestopedia / Superlearning Training Courses”
- “Perfect Customer Service!!”

**She loves her job!**



“Do what you love and love what you’re doing, and you’ll never work another day in your life.”

– Mark Twain





# A big thank you

## To **Michael Grinder**.

From the moment he introduced this topic to me, I was fascinated. His encouragement to pass on what he had taught me to others was the first “push” in this direction. Thank you, Michael. You changed my life.

## To **Ingrid Thalhammer**.

She gave me the (very essential!) second push by offering my seminar “Nonverbal Classroom Management” in the Pedagogical Institute of Tyrol’s in-service teacher training program. And together we mastered the seemingly never-ending waiting lists!

## To **Toni Fessler**,

Principal of the Bilingual Middle School, Kopp Street 110, 1160 Vienna. Thank you, Toni, for convincing me to take on the teaching job you offered. Your unfailing support made it possible for me to juggle both my teaching job and my teacher training seminars. You gave me the chance “to practice what I preach”!

**Antje Haussen Lewis** did the layout and **Heidi Breuer** the cover. **Deborah Hoover**, my lifelong friend, did the editing. Deborah earns especial thanks for the work she has done here. I have lived for such a long time in Austria. Yes, English is my mother tongue – but if you spend the greatest number of your waking hours speaking another language (in my case, German), your first language becomes rusty. So thank you, Debby, for removing the rust and polishing up my English!

I would also like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the many **co-ordinators of my seminars at the Pedagogical Institutes throughout Austria as well as abroad**. We are working together to help teachers and students experience success as well as making learning a joyful experience. A very valuable and worthy contribution.

And a **HUGE** thank you to **all the teachers** who took part in the seminars. Many of the ideas presented in this book are yours. You are doing your part to make the world a better place to live in. I wish you inspiration and success – so much that your students will be infected with it!

**You – and the children – are my inspiration!**



“Life begets life.  
Energy creates  
energy. It is by  
spending oneself that  
one becomes rich.”

– Sarah Bernhardt



To simplify reading and writing this book I have referred to teachers as “she” and students as “he.” It would, of course, be just as appropriate to do exactly the opposite!

I have done my best to give recognition in the appropriate places for the ideas, the quotes, and the stories that I have collected during the past two decades. In some cases, however, I have not been able to track down the sources. Therefore I welcome any further information and will be sure to include it in the next edition.

The knowledge which my two greatest teachers and mentors, Dr. Charles Schmid and Michael Grinder, have given me is the foundation upon which this book was written. Because their teachings have become such an integral part of me, I am not sure that I have always given them credit where credit is due. For this reason I would like to give them that acknowledgment here, and express my heartfelt thanks for the riches they have so generously shared with me.

# Foreword

*“The secret of life lies not in the discovery of new lands but in seeing the world with new eyes.”*

*– Marcel Proust*

Many of the techniques presented in this book will cause you, the reader, to exclaim, “Exactly! I do that too!” There is something quite comforting and encouraging in recognizing the familiar and in being able to pat yourself on the back and say, “I’ve been doing it right all along!”

Pearl has done something quite remarkable in this book.

She has made her reader aware of his strengths. In addition to many new and innovative techniques, she has identified much of the nonverbal behavior he is presently using and, most importantly, she has given him a label for these nonverbal classroom techniques. She has made the unconscious conscious. Successful classroom management is not left up to chance. The teaching techniques which up until this point the reader had used intuitively within the classroom, techniques which sometimes worked and sometimes didn’t, have been transformed into reliable tools. Tools which can be used systematically in the classroom to ensure that success need not be accidental but on purpose.

This is what I call “Nonverbal Intelligence.” (If we have “Emotional Intelligence” and “Multiple Intelligences,” why not add “Nonverbal Intelligence” to the list?) Nonverbal Intelligence is the ability to recognize nonverbal signals and then label them. Now why is it important to have a label? If, for example, you are teaching and you notice some nonverbal signals that a child is about to misbehave and you don’t have a name for it, it preoccupies your mind. So you’re not paying attention to what is happening next. It’s like when a computer has downtime. You miss out on reality. And therefore your timing is off. Labels are essential for good timing.

If I see some nonverbal behavior and I have a label for it, I can predict what is going to happen next. Pearl has shown you how to increase your nonverbal vocabulary in order to be able to predict. The ability to predict increases your timing. It increases your receptivity. The first two levels, recognition and labeling, are the science. And the next two, being able to predict and therefore responding quickly enough so that you can remain in the sphere of influence rather than moving into power, are the art of managing.

The purpose of nonverbal classroom management is to recognize nonverbal behavior patterns and thereby reduce the number of surprises in the classroom. The result is that you have choices. You can be pro-active.

When you have a hard day, something unexpected happens and you react. When you react, you are on the defensive and you will have the tendency to move from the sphere of influence to that of power.

When you have a good day, you see it coming before it comes – and you can choose how you will react. It is easier to remain objective. You remain flexible and can take pro-active measures to nip the student's behavior in the bud – it is possible to eliminate minor disturbances before they develop into full-blown problems.

This is a brilliant book for educators written by a dedicated and very knowledgeable teacher and teacher trainer. Its strengths are its clarity, its practical, down-to-earth application to daily life in the classroom and the enormous wealth of tips, techniques and ideas collected from teachers around the world. Pearl's vivid metaphors and stories help the reader picture his own classroom and realize how to implement her suggestions. Every line in this book radiates Pearl's involvement and love for her work. Her enthusiasm and humor are contagious. The reader can identify with her and with her message - and can hardly wait to go to school the next day to try out what he or she has read!

Our classrooms reflect and affect the world outside of school. As teachers we shape the world of the future. This book increases our consciousness that

**We are inadvertently in love with the influence of power.  
And we need to be in love with the power of influence.**

**Congratulations on a book  
full of Pearls of wisdom.**

**– Michael Grinder**

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# Introduction

Welcome to “Nonverbal Classroom Management” – a book for teachers, written by a (very enthusiastic!) teacher:

*Imagine that your lesson has just begun. When you entered the classroom, the students were excited and restless – they had had a test during the previous period. With the help of your aura of positive, natural authority and only a few words, you won their attention and then calmed them with a short centering exercise.*

*Now they are physically and mentally present and they are prepared to listen to you and your lesson. You hear interested and curious voices. You see students who are fully involved in the topic at hand. They are focused, leaning forward in their seats in anticipation, and raising their hands to take part. A feeling of cooperation and joyful learning fills the room. Look into the eyes of your students, hear their words and feel the positive attitude to learning which fills the room.*



“Happiness is not doing what you want but loving what you do.”

– Sartre

# Scene

*You are filled with a feeling of joy and you think to yourself, "What a wonderful and important profession I have chosen!"*

Perhaps this is a description of your classroom as it is now. Or perhaps it is a dream. A vision that will soon become reality.

Because no matter what the atmosphere in your classroom is like at the moment, you are holding this book in your hands and you are reading these words. That means being a good teacher is important to you, and that you are interested in discovering what you could do even better in the future.

The techniques that I will introduce to you in this book are the topics covered in my "Nonverbal Classroom Management" seminars. They are solutions based upon NLP that I have either used successfully while teaching 10- to 14-year-olds at a Bilingual Middle School or earlier at a Commercial Academy for 14- to 19-year-olds, or they are techniques that were introduced to me by teachers and trainers of all school levels and for all subjects – from kindergarten teachers to university lecturers and adult education trainers – who have attended my seminars. You will find some theory in this book, but most importantly you will find hundreds of practical classroom management tools that will give you more time to do what you actually became a teacher to do – to teach!

For the past 10 years, teachers in my seminars have been encouraging me to write a book. (It is amazing how long it is possible to procrastinate on a good idea!) And now I have done it!

This is not an "academic" treatise. I can (if it is absolutely necessary!) lose myself in theory. But in my heart of hearts I am a practitioner. This is a book for the practice. Consider it to be a conversation between colleagues. You can use the tips and techniques in your classroom tomorrow, usually exactly as they stand here in the book.

I have worked as a teacher trainer on several continents and I am constantly amazed at how much teachers, despite geographical borders, have in common. It makes no difference if I am working in Vienna or Buenos Aires or Moscow – the challenges that teachers face around the world are the same. After experiencing the enthusiastic welcome that this book has received in the German-speaking world (the first edition was sold out within 2 months!), I decided that it would be an important contribution to make it available to English-speaking teachers as well. Yes, there are a great number of similarities between these cultures. But there are also differences. And for this reason, I would like to thank several colleagues in Great Britain as well as Matt Depew, elementary school teacher in the U.S. for helping me to adapt the contents of this book to their respective teaching cultures.

Actually, looking back, it was easy! Now the fire of enthusiasm has been lit within my breast – and I give you my solemn promise: you won't have to wait so long for the next book!

## Why use nonverbal management techniques?

We talk and talk and talk ... and very often we are frustrated by the feeling that our students simply aren't listening or aren't taking our verbal instructions seriously. It has been proven that over 82% of a teacher's communication with his or her students in the classroom is NONVERBAL.

Why should we waste our breath on the teaching process rather than use it for our content? Especially when nonverbal management techniques are so much more effective.

The focus of this book will be placed upon the process level and the group dynamics in the classroom. In other words, we will be dealing with the foundation and with the structure upon which learning takes place. It is not of importance WHAT is being taught but rather HOW it is being taught. For this reason, the contents of this book are suitable for every subject and age group including adult education.

I considered it very important to include a great number of anchors, techniques, and rituals in this book. Different situations, different classes, different age groups and grades require different techniques. Some of them will be suitable for your present situation. Others won't.

Therefore I would like to invite all of my readers to a nonverbal management techniques "Buffet." Help yourself and fill up your plate with the delicacies that you fancy and need at this moment. Enjoy them and use them to achieve a more efficient and effective classroom atmosphere! And, hopefully, you will pack up the leftovers and put them in the freezer for another day and another situation:

I wish you

*Bon Appetit! Enjoy your meal!*

In closing this introduction, I would like to add these words:  
I believe in you.

As a teacher and as your colleague, I understand the challenges you are facing today: crowded classrooms, more students each year with behavioral problems, plus economic measures designed to save the



"Let the beauty of what you love be what you do."

– Rumi



"Men stumble over the truth from time to time but most pick themselves up and hurry off as if nothing happened."

– Winston Churchill

government money but which hinder us in doing top-quality teaching.

Ours is a noble profession. Our children are our future. The work which we do today will determine the state of tomorrow's world. I have written this book to accompany you on your professional journey, to enhance the joy that your work brings you, and to enable you to more easily realize the tremendous potential that rests within you and your students. Let us work together – that each of us can do his or her small part to make our world a better and a happier place to live in.



a living  
get, but  
life by  
ve.”

*Winston  
Churchill*

**Pearl Nitsche**

**And now –  
On to new adventures!**

# **Part I**

# **THE BASICS**



# 1

## NLP: A Short Overview

The theory and the techniques introduced in this book are based upon the tenets of NLP – Neurolinguistic Programming. NLP is a collection of techniques, patterns, and strategies that assist us in effective communication, personal growth, and learning. NLP enables us to better understand our own thinking processes and our interaction with others.

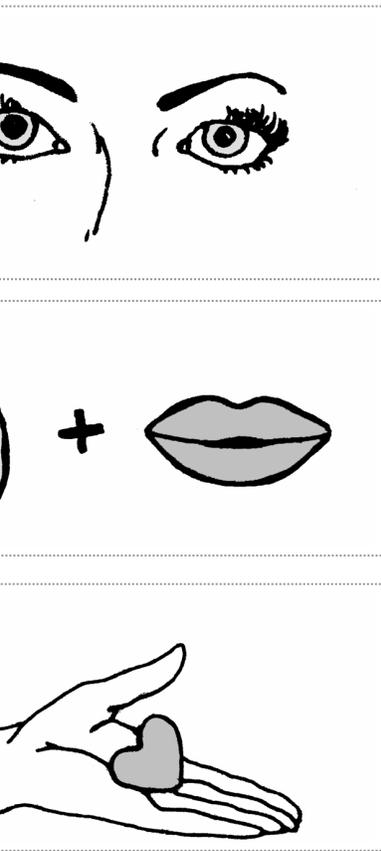
The “N”, Neuro, stands for our five senses, which are also called modalities. They are our doors to reality, and the strength of each individual modality varies from one person to the next. The way we perceive what is happening around us and the way we interpret this in our minds determine our own very personal picture of “reality.” This modality preference, as well as the age of a child, determine his learning or communication style.

- There are, for example, pupils who exhibit a visual learning style. They hold their bodies straight and motionless and they learn with their eyes. Their motivation to attend school is to learn. (At times we may wonder why there are so few of them 😊.) They like to philosophize and they are often perfectionists. The visual



“I paint things the way they are in my mind, not in the way I see them.”

– Pablo Picasso



development phase in a child’s development, according to Michael Grinder, begins around the age of 14.

- Students who exhibit a strong auditory learning or communication style learn through speaking and listening. Their body movement is rhythmical and symmetrical. They are very sociable and they love to talk! Their main motivation for going to school is relationships – relationships with other students and with you. The auditory developmental stage takes place between the ages of 10 and 14.
- Students who are kinesthetic learners are little bundles of energy. They are constantly in motion and they touch everything. Their movements are asymmetrical and away from the torso. They have strong physical and emotional reactions and are easily distracted from the task at hand. They go to school because of relationships. They are lovely people – but strenuous!! The kinesthetic developmental stage, according to Michael Grinder, takes place from birth to around the age of 10.\*

The “L” of Linguistic stands for the words with which we choose to represent our own personal reality in our speech as well as in our thoughts. The words we choose give an indication of our preferred modality, our beliefs, and our picture of the world. Change and personal growth take place when we alter our thought and speech patterns.

The “P” stands for Programming. These are our strategies, our programmed ways of thinking with which – if we choose- we can change ourselves in order to fulfill our dreams, our goals, and our potential.

---

*A Note from Michael Grinder:*

*“My latest findings are that most students enter school being kinesthetic-oriented. Most students develop auditory and then finally their visual abilities. The sooner one is visual the easier school is. That is why a precocious visual-oriented student who is placed in a ‘gifted and talented’ program (because he seems ‘above average’) may end up being ‘average’ and removed from the program as his classmates mature into their visual ability.*

*Statistically, females will reach their visual capacity by 6<sup>th</sup> grade; males by 9<sup>th</sup> grade. According to Dr. Rita Dunn, a person’s modality preference is set sometime between 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade.”*

– M.G., February 13, 2006

## The common thread

One of the most important techniques which NLP and nonverbal classroom management share is the principle of

**Mirroring ⇒ RAPPORT ⇒ Pacing ⇒ Leading**

After having determined the preferred modality –visual, auditory, or kinesthetic- of a student, we can then mirror this modality and establish rapport. Rapport means that we are on the same wavelength as another person. We dip, shortly, into his or her world. Each of us feels at one or in rapport with others who are similar to us. When two people are in rapport, good communication can take place. Rapport gives us the permission to accompany our students on their learning journey. With it we can build bridges that enable the student to cross over into our world. Because the student's world expands and encompasses new situations, these bridges enable him to transport and apply what he has learned in new situations. Developing rapport and relationships with our students is the key to learning success. In addition, it often is the solution to disciplinary problems in the classroom.

Sometimes we are automatically in rapport with the person we are speaking to. If not, we can establish rapport by mirroring, i.e. by matching that person's posture, word choice, voice, or breathing.

The next step is pacing, or moving along with the student for a while at the same speed, before you begin leading. By doing this the teacher can lead the student to a point or state where he can learn better and more easily.

The following story, told to me by Ursula, a participant in an Accelerated Learning training course, is an excellent illustration of this process. One day Ursula, who worked as a corporate trainer in banks and companies along with her husband, came to me and said,

*"I want you to know, Pearl, that I have told my husband everything I have learned in this course. But there is one thing I will NEVER tell him!"*

*This statement made me quite curious!  
"What do you mean?" I asked.*

*"This rapport technique!"*



"I have no doubt whatever that most people live ... in a very restricted circle of their potential being. They make use of a very small portion of their possible consciousness ... much like a person who, out of the whole body organism, should get into the habit of using and moving only the little finger. We all have reservoirs of life to draw upon of which we do not dream."

– William James



"Man is troubled not by events themselves, but by the view he takes of them."

– Epictetus

*It's like this: I love to go hiking. And my husband loves to hike too. BUT I hate it when we hike together – because he walks so fast! We have been discussing this for 25 years! Every Sunday when we are at home, we drive to the mountains near Vienna. And every Sunday we have the same discussion in the car. Despite these lengthy conversations, as soon as we get out of the car I have to run along behind him, trying to keep up!*

*Last week you told us about rapport and I thought to myself, "I'm going to try that out next Sunday! So I did. And it worked!*

*We got into the car, and on our way to the mountains I didn't even mention our usual topic. Instead of discussing it, I concentrated on conserving my strength!*

*When we arrived, we were both in a good mood. We got out of the car and started our hike. At the beginning I did my best to walk at his speed. But as I felt myself getting tired, I very gradually started to slow down. And what a surprise! He did too!*

*It was the nicest walk we had been on for 25 years!*

*And the reason I won't tell him about it is because I want to enjoy more of these lovely hikes in the future!"*

I could never have found a better description of rapport and leading!  
Thank you, Ursula!

Its pays off if you establish rapport with your classes and with your students – especially the liveliest and most difficult ones!

Rapport opens the doors to their world. And in classrooms where there

is an atmosphere of rapport, the time and the effort expended on classroom management are greatly reduced. Students and teachers set a tone and work in an atmosphere that is respectful as well as more efficient. Power struggles disappear and are replaced with productive communication. Teachers employ influence rather than power, and their aura of positive, natural authority results in the entire group working harmoniously toward common goals. The "I" has been replaced with "we".



## My suggestion to you:

Take the time during the first week of a new school year to establish rapport and atmosphere with your class. Teach them the principles of teamwork, of treating one another with respect, and establish a feeling of safety in the classroom right from the start. Show your students: Learning new material is important, but treating others with respect is even more important.

I can guarantee that the time you “sacrifice” during this week will bring you a multitude of advantages during the school year. You will easily make up that “lost” time by disciplining, warning, and reviewing less the rest of the year. Simply because you set the tone during the first week.



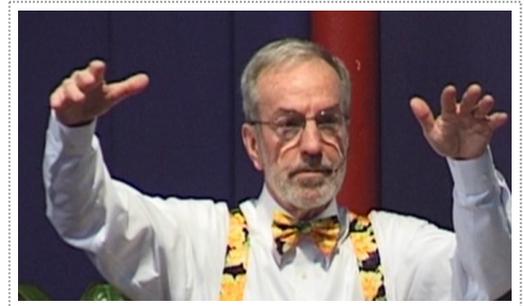
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## How did it begin?

The NLP approach was developed by John Grinder and Richard Bandler during the 70s and, in the meantime, has established itself throughout the world. Michael Grinder, John's brother and an excellent teacher and trainer, expanded and further developed the approach within the fields of education and business. During the early 90s I attended several of Michael's seminars. I was fascinated by the clarity and, in my opinion, the genius of the teaching techniques and theories he presented. Basic truths and knowledge, which every teacher has intuitively experienced, have been placed within a clear and transparent structure. The unconscious becomes conscious. What had been intuition becomes a tool. And teachers' daily lives are not only simplified but become a (even greater) source of joy and pleasure! Michael encouraged me to pass this knowledge on to other teachers. I did exactly that for many years in my seminars. And now I would like to present this material to you in book form.





# 2

## The Principles of Nonverbal Communication

Professor Albert Mehrabian, a pioneer since the 60s in communication research, determined during a communications project for the University of California that there are 3 factors that influence the effect a conversation has. These are:

7% verbal	=	the words which are spoken
38% vocal	=	how these words sound, and
55% visual	=	how you look when you say them.

That comes to 7% verbal and 93% nonverbal!

Other more conservative studies estimate that the nonverbal part of communication comes to about 82%. An impressive percentage - one

which teachers, who want to have success while teaching, should definitely take into account!

In other words:

**More than 82% of your communication is NONVERBAL**

**therefore:**

**It's not as important WHAT you say,  
but rather HOW you say it!**

Not only that, but it stands to reason then that, if over 82% of communication is nonverbal, we are constantly communicating – whether we are speaking or not. It is simply impossible NOT to communicate.

Very often though we are not aware of the nonverbal signals we send. We are sending messages that do not conform to our own expectations or that result in incorrect expectations in our students. Then we are surprised or disappointed when our students do not follow our directions or react in expected ways.

How often we overhear statements in the teachers' room such as, "I've told him so many times. He just doesn't listen!" Nonverbal messages are much stronger than verbal ones. Our students tend to "listen" and to react to our nonverbal "statements" and not to hear our words. These nonverbal messages, which are being expressed on an unconscious level, are much "louder" than words. If a verbal and a nonverbal message are in conflict, the student will ALWAYS react to the nonverbal message – and then we are angry because he has not listened to our words.

The goal of this book is to:

**MAKE THE UNCONSCIOUS CONSCIOUS!**

**This means making what we now do right intuitively  
into an effective tool!**

Many of the techniques that I present in this book will be familiar to you. You will often catch yourself thinking, "Yes! Exactly! I do that all the time!"

I often get feedback from the participants in my courses such as, “One of the nicest realizations that I had was that many of the techniques I am using intuitively were acknowledged. Now I have a label for what I am doing. And I know that I am on the right track.”

“Intuitively” is the key word here.

Each of us knows intuitively how to teach effectively. And we generally do that, too. But because we are teaching according to the way it “feels right,” we often do not use this intuitive knowledge systematically. The result: Sometimes it works. Sometimes it doesn’t. We leave our success up to chance.

It is only when we understand WHY it works – when our unconscious behavior becomes conscious – that we have gained a dependable tool that we can use consciously and systematically in the classroom.

## Congruency versus Incongruency

*Just imagine that I am standing before you.  
My posture is tense.  
My arms are crossed in front of my chest.  
I have a grim frown upon my face.  
My voice is dripping with sarcasm  
as I say the following words:*

*"I'm glad that you are reading this book."*

Do you believe my words?  
Probably not!

*And now imagine that I am standing in front of you  
and my posture is relaxed and open. My hands are  
stretched out in front of me. They are held parallel to  
the floor and the palms are facing upward.*

*I am smiling at you and I say in a warm and friendly  
voice,*

*"I'm glad that you are reading this book."*

That was better, wasn't it?



The first time I was **incongruent**.

My nonverbal message contradicted my verbal one. Therefore, my words, although well-meant, were not credible. The communication – for which I, as the sender, am responsible- was not successful. The result: the exact opposite of what I actually wanted to express!

The second time I was **congruent**.

My verbal and my nonverbal messages corresponded. Therefore I got my message across and you believed my words.

*Imagine that I want my students to write an essay. We have discussed all the details and I have listed them on the board. All of the important questions have been answered and I would like my students to start writing.*

**SCENE**

*My verbal message:*

*"Now we will begin.*

*No more questions, please."*

Quite clear, isn't it? Or perhaps it isn't?

The words are unambiguous.

But whether my directions are followed or not is a question of my nonverbal messages and whether my words and my nonverbals correspond. It is a question of congruency.

How is my posture? My facial expression? What does my voice sound like? Those are important factors that determine whether my directions will be followed or not, how others react or interpret my intentions. A major source of misunderstandings at school (and elsewhere!) can be explained as follows:

**Nonverbal messages are  
ALWAYS stronger than verbal ones.  
If the two messages conflict,  
the verbal message will be ignored  
and the nonverbal one followed.**

## Credible or inviting?

In the previous examples there are two voices that I can choose between: the **CREDIBLE VOICE** and the **INVITING VOICE**.

Both of them are very useful – in the correct situation. What is important is choosing the right voice for the right situation.

The first voice is called the **CREDIBLE VOICE**.

This is the voice I use in the classroom when I discipline, when I have a serious conversation with my students, or when I want to get their attention. This voice carries the message, “Do what I say. And no contradictions!”

The second voice is known as the **INVITING VOICE**.

This is the voice I use when I want to talk about something with my students, when a discussion, suggestions, and ideas are welcome. This voice encourages conversation and an exchange of ideas.

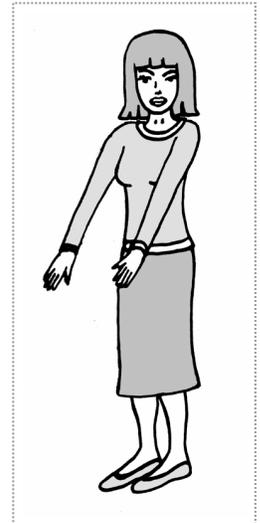
My posture and my body movement determine which voice I produce.

When I speak with a **CREDIBLE VOICE** I hold my body straight and still. My feet are in a parallel position with the toes pointing forward. My chin is tilted down slightly. Because my body is still, my head is also still. The way I hold my head has direct influence on my voice. When my head is still, my voice is monotone and it often goes down at the end of a sentence or statement.

Those who naturally have a credible voice tend to be assertive and get their own way. When they talk, others listen. And then go into action. The disadvantage of this voice lies in the quality as well as the quantity of communication. Although these people often want to communicate, they very often have problems starting and conducting productive conversations.

Those who speak with an **INVITING VOICE** tend to move their bodies while speaking. The movement is rhythmical and symmetrical. They generally move their arms and hands slightly in the same rhythm. The arms are held close to the body. These speakers occasionally show the palms of their hands while speaking. The head and therefore the voice move up and down in rhythm with the body movement. And the voice tends to go up at the end of a statement – as it does at the end of a question.

People who have an inviting voice are sociable masters of communication. They can talk on almost any topic and bring out the



best in those to whom they are speaking. The disadvantage of using this voice is that it is difficult to be assertive. Statements made with an inviting voice are regularly challenged and discussed. The discussions are lengthy – and in the end nothing actually happens.

**You need to choose the right voice for the right situation.  
We need BOTH voices:  
the “credible” voice  
AND  
the “inviting” voice**

Upon hearing this, some teachers respond,  
“But then I won’t be authentic. I won’t be myself.”

Possibly that is true. But as a teacher you cannot always allow yourself to be totally authentic. We have a job to do. This job is to lead a class. And if for a moment you take a step back to better observe yourself and your class’s behavior, you will notice that the class is a mirror in which you can observe yourself.

**The class reflects the teacher’s behavior.**

That means that when you are lively, your class is lively.  
When you are calm, they are calm.  
When you talk a lot, you will have a talkative group.

If you notice that a class behaves differently when you are teaching it than when your colleagues are, ask yourself the question, “Is the class mirroring me?”

As long as the class’s behavior is congruent with your goals in the classroom, this is fine. But if this is not the case, you need to change your own behavior to match the results you would like to achieve. You set the tone. The class mirrors you. In order to be yourself in the classroom, it is first necessary to create an environment in which this is possible.

I personally consider this to be an extension of the term “congruency”:

**Congruency in the classroom is  
when my verbal and my nonverbal messages match  
and ALSO  
when my behavior matches my goals in the classroom.**

An example:

I personally have a quite lively personality and this is often reflected in my teaching. Under normal circumstances this could be called my authentic behavior, which is reflected in my lesson design and in my students. But there are situations at school where this behavior is not beneficial.

The most boring times during the school year for me are the days on which the students have exams. They are all sitting there, as they should be, working diligently and silently. And I get bored. There is no action! But of course I do not allow myself to act “authentically” because the result of my behavior would be bad grades for the students.

Or I assign an essay that the students should write during the lesson. They are all quiet and busy writing. And suddenly I remember something that I absolutely need to tell the class IMMEDIATELY. Or I begin to speak quietly with one pupil. And what happens? Within minutes the entire class is talking with me or with each other. And then I have to quiet them down again so that they can complete their work.

And whose fault was it that the class wasn't quiet? It is not the pupils' fault but mine! Because I did not demonstrate the behavior which I wanted the students to display – and they mirrored mine.

Does that mean that we can never be ourselves in the classroom?

No, it doesn't. We can be authentic – but at the right time.

If I come into the classroom and I want the students to be quiet, I have to be quiet myself. Before I can move on to my own authentic behavior, I need to set the scene and create the necessary atmosphere.

That means

**A good teacher is an actor or an actress!**

Every teacher needs a rich palette of techniques to deal with all of the challenges that a typical school day presents. Some of these techniques will automatically feel natural and “right.” Others won't – and they must be practiced until they become a part of you and your repertoire.

We are living in a society today that often says, “If it feels good, then it must be right.” I personally do not agree with this statement.

I grew up in Pennsylvania. When I was 16, I took my driver's exam. It was deepest winter and one afternoon, shortly after passing the exam, I was driving slowly down an icy, narrow road and had to step on the

brakes. The car started to slide. In driving school I had learned that the correct technique in such a case was to steer in the direction of the skid. But I did the opposite – because it felt right. So I did what felt “right” and promptly slid into a car.

Luckily, because I was driving slowly there was very little damage. But my uncle took the incident seriously and took it upon himself to teach me how to drive on ice.

It was an icy cold winter and a lake in our town was frozen solid. We drove the car out onto the lake. My uncle kept calling out, “Brake!” I would brake the car and then, automatically, steer in the opposite direction to our slide. Simply because it felt right, I did it wrong. Again. And again. Until I finally did it right. Brake – and steer in the direction of the skid. Brake – and steer in the direction of the skid. We continued this way until it became automatic behavior and a part of me.

The same principle applies to the techniques in this book. They work best when they have become spontaneous and automatic responses. They need to be executed precisely. Don’t try to use all of them immediately. Choose one or two techniques. And practice, practice, practice! Practice until you don’t need time to think about what you are doing. And then begin with the next technique.

## Too many words result in resistance!!

*Imagine:  
You are a student.*

*Two minutes ago the bell rang. The class period has – theoretically – begun. But the teacher is not in the room. You and your friends are taking advantage of these few extra minutes to finish playing a game that you started during the break.*

*I, the teacher, rush into the room and begin to shout loudly and with a sharp voice,*

**SCENE**

*"It's always the same!  
How many times do I have to tell you?! At the beginning of the lesson I expect you to be sitting in your seats and quiet! And where are the things you need for the math lesson? Why aren't they on your*

*SCENE*

*desks? Now we will lose even more time while you go out to your lockers to get them. I talk and talk and talk and nobody listens ..."*  
*... and so on and so forth!*

How easy it is for us – despite our best intentions – to slip into these patterns of speech!

And what good do they do?

None whatsoever!

As you were imagining this scene and hearing my nagging, complaining voice, what did you feel inside? Anger? Indifference? Fear? Were you perhaps thinking, "Why me?" Or perhaps you simply closed your ears?

All of these reactions, as well as innumerable others, belong to the category of "resistance".

Inner resistance builds a barrier that must be overcome before learning can take place.

Our students already have so many learning barriers. Sentences and beliefs such as, "*I can't do that.*" or "*I'll never be able to learn that!*" are our daily bread at school. Our students can only learn if these barriers are removed. That's hard work! If we speak to our students with the nagging words in the example above, we are simply creating new barriers. And we are unnecessarily making our own job more difficult.

The same principle applies in the classroom as in physics:

**For every action there is an opposite reaction.  
Force calls forth force.  
(and words are force!)**

Yes, words are force. And they can also hurt others. On the unconscious level they are often experienced as a form of power. And very often, especially in the age groups with which we as teachers are dealing, the use of power automatically calls forth resistance in our students. The pupil rebels. And we are faced with a new challenge.



President Dwight D. Eisenhower used to demonstrate the art of leadership with a simple piece of string. He would put it on the table and say, "Pull it, and it will follow anywhere you wish. Push it and it will go nowhere at all."



"Personally I am always ready to learn, although I do not always like being taught."

– Winston Churchill

Nonverbal messages, which are perceived on the unconscious level, are influence. They are more gentle. They do not embarrass the student and therefore they are more respectful. They give us time – which offers us the opportunity to “cool down”, to gain perspective, and to deal with the problem more effectively. They are “secret signals” that students can experience as a common class ritual or even not notice if they are perceived on the unconscious level.

We all know it is not always possible to stay on the level of influence. Sometimes we have no choice but to use power.

It is our job to manage our classroom efficiently and to achieve the learning goals we have determined for our class. We need to set limits, to insure that the classroom is a safe place, and to create a positive atmosphere for learning. If gentle influence is not enough to achieve these goals, then we have no choice but to move into power and to use disciplinary measures.

The best way – for our students as well as for us – is to nip the problem in the bud. This is influence. When I use influence in the classroom, I have the class under control. I work pro-actively. I solve small problems before they escalate into full-scale problems. And if I do it in an ingenious and subtle enough way, the student(s) won't even notice. This contributes in turn to my aura of positive, natural authority.

The moment, however, I must discipline and therefore move into the sphere of power, I am endangering my position of authority. It could be that taking this position will work. But perhaps it won't. If I say to a student, “*And now change seats!*” it could be the case that he will do as I have commanded. But it could be that he will answer with a rebellious “*No!*” And then I need to do some quick thinking about what I will do next!

For this reason, the following is a very basic principle in every area of classroom management:

**Influence is always  
- as long as it is possible -  
preferable to power!**

## What is meant by “nonverbal”?

It is important at this point to more clearly define the term “nonverbal” so that you, dear Reader, and I know that we are talking about the same thing in the following chapters.

It is quite common to limit the term “nonverbal” to the areas of facial expressions and gesture. But in this case, in classroom management, when I use the term “nonverbal” I will be referring to one or more of the following:

- **Facial Expressions and Gestures**
- **Posture**
- the form of **Movement**
- the **Voice**
- the **Location**. For example, where you are standing or sitting in the classroom.
- **Peripheral Information** within the room. This information can be visual, auditory, kinesthetic, olfactory (smell) or gustatory (taste). For example, when a student enters your classroom for the very first time, he is receiving a multitude of information – before a single word has been spoken – about your attitude to learning and to school.

If you utilize these elements in a systematic and well-considered way, they can provide your students with information and signals that symbolize for them what they should do and how they should react to your input. They give the students a feeling of safety and create a productive atmosphere for learning. They are also the basis of your aura of positive, natural authority, which is the key ingredient required for successful classroom management.



**Part II –  
ANCHORS  
IN THE CLASSROOM**

# 3

## What is an Anchor?

“Anchor” is a term that stems from NLP. It can be so defined:

**An ANCHOR is a stimulus  
that always calls forth the same reaction.**

An anchor can function on the conscious as well as on the unconscious level. The reaction can be either an action, which can be observed, or it can take the form of a change of inner state.

In his work, *Swann’s World*, Marcel Proust wrote about the memories from his childhood that he suddenly and vividly recalled the moment he bit into a little cake called a Madeleine. This is the perfect example of an anchor:

*“And suddenly the memory returns. And with it an almost indescribable feeling of happiness filled my being. The taste was that of the little crumb of Madeleine, the same little cake that we had eaten on Sunday mornings at Combray ... and immediately the old gray house upon the street rose up like the scenery of a theater ... and with the house the town ... the Square ..., the streets along which I used to run errands, the flowers in our garden ... the good folk of the village ... the parish church ... They all sprang from my cup of tea.”*

Other well-known examples of anchoring are the conditioning experiments that Pavlov conducted on his dogs. Whenever Pavlov rang the bell – the stimulus – the dogs began to salivate – the reaction.

Within Behavioral Psychology the stimulus is always an external one that can be found in the immediate environment. Employing this stimulus always results in the same behavioral reaction. The association between the stimulus and the reaction has become a reflex.

In NLP the concept of conditioning has been extended and expanded upon. Connections are created to other areas of experience. For example, the stimulus can be a memory, a voice or a touch. It is also possible to establish one's own anchors, to re-create certain moods or states within oneself.

Rather than limiting an anchor to being a reflexive reaction, NLP expands upon this principle to create tools for motivating oneself, encouraging creativity, creating a state of concentration, etc. It is also possible, by means of an anchor, to transfer resources that are present in one area of your life to another part of your life where they are needed at this moment. Therefore, anchors are an invaluable tool, giving us access to our resources and assisting us in realizing our full potential.

The difference:

In NLP the effect is conscious and can be controlled.

In Behavioral Psychology it is a reflex.

## Anchors in the classroom

If a teacher repeatedly and systematically gives the same nonverbal signal in connection with an event, a concept, or an idea in the classroom, the signal and the concept will become connected or anchored with one another – and words become unnecessary and superfluous.

These nonverbal signals can take many forms: for example, they can be movements, sounds, rules, symbols, pictures, traditions, ceremonies, contracts between teacher and student(s), or rituals which take place on a daily, weekly, monthly, etc. basis. These anchors result in a change of inner state within our students that supports learning as well as creates a state of positive expectation (for example, "It's time for math!") in our students. It is an automatic reaction – created without the use of words.

Think about some typical phrases that you often use, maybe even many times a day, while managing your classroom. Here are a few examples:

- Be quiet!
- The homework for Monday is ...
- Let's clean up now!
- Turn off your mobile phone!

"What the mind of man can conceive and believe, the mind of a man can achieve."

– Napoleon Hill

- Please put these worksheets in your folders!
- Today's date is ...
- Spit out that chewing gum!

Nonverbal anchors – be they visual, auditory, or kinesthetic – can replace and thereby erase these phrases from your vocabulary forever.

## “Now let’s clean up!”

Eva, a teacher who attended my seminar, had been teaching art for 25 years. The point of time came in every lesson where she said, “And now let’s clean up.” She decided that she wanted to eliminate this sentence from her repertoire and never use it again!

She decided to replace it with an anchor. She chose a piece of music and told her students, “Every time you hear this music you will know that it is time to clean up.” The second time she used the anchor she repeated the explanation. And then she was very careful NOT to explain it again. (We teachers have the tendency to talk much too much! An anchor, however, only makes sense if its use results in my using FEWER words. If, when using the anchor for the 100<sup>th</sup> time, I’m still saying, “And remember, kids, whenever you hear this music you should clean up!” my words are defeating the purpose of the anchor!!) She simply played the music. And the students began cleaning.

The anchor worked beautifully for a few months. But when Eva came to my seminar, she told me that the anchor wasn’t working anymore. We took a closer look at recent events in her classroom and discovered what had gone wrong. Eva had been ill for two weeks and another teacher had substituted for her. One day the substitute teacher saw the music CD on Eva’s desk and played it for the students at a time when they were not going to clean up. The students immediately said, “*That’s the wrong music!*” She didn’t understand what the students meant and played the music several times in a different context in the classroom. The anchor was broken. When Eva returned again to school, she was surprised because her pupils no longer reacted to the anchor she had set.

As soon as we realized what had happened, Eva set a new anchor with different music. And that anchor is still working today!

## Keep your anchors “clean”

If you set anchors in your classroom, it is important that they are kept “clean.” The way to prevent your anchors from being contaminated is to use them systematically. If, for example, you set a location anchor for assigning homework, then you must ALWAYS assign the homework there. If you have a beautiful felt hat which you put on to signal that you are going to tell a story, you may not wear the hat for any other purpose. If you use a certain hand signal to achieve silence in the classroom, it is essential that you take the time not only to use the signal but also to wait, after employing it, until there is total silence in the classroom. Used correctly –

systematically and kept “clean” – anchors will remain a wonderful and almost magical tool in your teacher’s toolbox!

## A classroom full of anchors!

Renée is an inspiring teacher. She successfully and joyfully taught elementary school for 16 years. Then she got a new first-grade class, which she would be teaching –as it is usual in Austria- for the next 4 years. Within a few weeks she realized that she could not get this class under control. She had tried all the techniques that had worked in the past – and nothing worked. She had a talk with the director of her school and told her that she was considering giving up the teaching profession. The children were quite intelligent, but their behavior was wild, loud and they appeared to be “untamable.” And then she came to my seminar, “Nonverbal Classroom Management.” Suddenly she saw a light at the end of the tunnel!

Renée returned to school with her head full of plans, nonverbal techniques, and anchors. She used them –systematically-and within a short period of time she had “tamed her little lions.” Renée’s techniques became automatic for her, and the children also responded automatically. By the end of 4<sup>th</sup> grade, when they moved on to a new school, they were the living example of the “perfect class.” The children had learned a lot. School was a pleasant experience for them. And Renée was a happy teacher.

The following amusing story, which demonstrates the strength of anchors, took place in Renée’s classroom. One of the anchors she introduced was a music anchor that signaled the end of school and indicated that the children should get ready to go home for the afternoon. Every day Renée played some lively, South American music that alerted the students to clear off their desks, pack their schoolbags, lift and place their chairs quietly onto their desks and line up in a double line next to the door.

One Tuesday, around 9 a.m., the art teacher took over the class for one hour. He knew that Renée usually had relaxing music in the CD player and, without checking, he turned on the music – which happened to be the music to signal that it was time to go home.

Without saying a word, all the children started packing their schoolbags and within minutes were standing lined up next to the classroom door ready to go home for the afternoon – at 9 a.m. The art teacher was speechless! It was only after Renée explained the effectiveness of anchors that he understood what had happened – and began considering a few that he could use himself in the classroom!

Renée sent me an e-mail listing the following anchors, which she uses regularly in her classroom. In the center front of the room she has placed a chair, and she has set most of her anchors around it:

*“I begin each lesson standing very still next to my CHAIR. I freeze my posture. This is my QUIET ANCHOR and it also signals a CLEAR DIVISION between the break or independent work and the group beginning something completely new!”*

*I then walk to my desk and ring a SMALL BELL. This is the first signal for the children, and it means, “We are about to begin something new!”*

*Then I walk toward my chair. Often the children are still doing something else at this time – they’re chatting with one another, eating the last bites of their snacks, etc. WALKING TOWARD THE CHAIR is their second signal. They quickly put things away, finish eating or drinking.*

*I have reached the chair now and am standing behind it. I FREEZE my posture, STARE into space, and WAIT. This is the third signal: “It’s time to get started!”*

*If I have to wait too long, i.e. longer than 15 seconds, I PLACE MY HAND ON THE BACK OF THE CHAIR and LOOK DIRECTLY at the child who is not yet quiet. This is like an alarm signal and the other children begin saying “SHHH!” to make the child aware of the fact that he should get on task.*

*If a child is still not quiet, I begin to TAP WITH MY RING ON THE BACK OF THE CHAIR. I have sometimes heard the other children mumble at this point, “She’s been waiting FOREVER!” In reality this “forever” took*

**... from the ringing of the BELL  
to COMPLETE SILENCE  
at the most 30 seconds.**

*When I sit down on my chair, this is the signal for the children to SIT DOWN too.*

*If I want the children to FORM A CIRCLE with their chairs, I move back with my chair toward the board and indicate with my hands that we should make a circle.*

*After having used this anchor for some time, its effect has carried over to the chair itself – independent of whomever is sitting or standing there! If the children give a book report or a speech, I let the child who is presenting sit on MY CHAIR. All of the children listen then to the presentation closely.*

*Last winter I had flu and missed school for a while. During this time our director substituted for me. She said that several times she had caught herself unconsciously moving towards my chair whenever she noticed that the children were getting a bit louder. Moving closer to the chair was something they all reacted to!*

*One of the corners of my desk is my SCOLDING SPACE. I call it this even though I never scold anyone while I am there – I simply freeze my posture. It’s just like you said, Pearl. All I need to do is to walk there, stand stiffly, possibly clear my throat, and then look at the offender without saying a single word. Complete silence! You can literally hear a pin drop!*

*But even this usually comes over too strong for my taste. I tend to go first to my chair in front of the room and just stand there. That's usually enough and I seldom need to go to my SCOLDING SPACE or DISCIPLINE ANCHOR.*

*And if the pupils are a bit louder and more excited than usual, I pick them up with the "Musical Wave" – which you described to us during the seminar – and bring them to a calmer, quieter state using music and slowly turning down the volume! It works like a dream!*

*Now they're in 4<sup>th</sup> grade and are quite good at working independently. In 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade I always used the same PIECE OF MUSIC to encourage them to silently write essays and WORK WITHOUT THE TEACHER'S HELP.*

*Otherwise I tend to work with my VOICE – loud, soft, or with NO VOICE AT ALL. Sometimes I work with FACIAL EXPRESSIONS. Are those anchors too!*

*All the best,  
Renée*

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*My Note:*

*Renée is using this anchor at the ELEMENTARY LEVEL.*

*I have successfully used a slight variation of this anchor to begin class at the SECONDARY LEVEL as well as in ADULT EDUCATION.*

*It is a dream!! And – with slight variations - it works for every age group.*