**Collapsing Anchors - Overcoming Fear**

(Thank you Tag Powell, Silva Mind trainer extraordinaire, for teaching me his “fast phobia cure” using a collapse of kinesthetic anchors, sometime between 1988 and 1994.)

**The goal of this program is to learn and practice collapsing anchors.**

Fear is a reaction to a real event from the environment that triggers us to have a specific meaning in our imaginations. It is a natural process designed to protect us. Fears are learned through:

* a single intense experience / trauma,
* repetitive experience / trauma,
* observation / bearing witness to trauma,
* examples and information given to educate or frighten.

Fears and phobias can often be resolved rapidly through the setting and collapse of anchors.

**Senses = modalities**.

Enculturated humans tend to respond to our perceptions and interpretations of our senses more immediately than we tend to respond to the actual events of the real / external world.

Authentic living requires the use of biological wisdom, and biological human perceives the world through the senses.

Humans in Western culture use five senses or modalities to understand the world:

**Sight, Sound, Touch, Taste, and Smell**

Within the senses are **submodalities**.

**Sight:**

What we see can be associated or dissociated, black and white or color, framed or unframed, near or far, still or moving, jumpy or smooth shifts, big or small, up or down, left or right, single or multiple, located in different areas or centralized, foggy or clear, well defined or poorly defined, skewed or balanced, tilted or straight, depth of 3d or 2d, muted / pastel or vibrant colorful.

**Sound:**

Things we hear can be clear and sharp or fuzzy and muffled, close or far, loud or quiet, fast or slow, intermittent or steady, high or low, soothing or grating, inside or outside the head, one side or the other of the head, full or thin, stereo or mono, sounds and words.

**Feelings:**

Feelings can be about oneself, within the body, where in the body, or about someone or something else, intense or gentle, shapely or formless, warm or cool, long or short, ongoing or temporary, starting or finishing, heavy or light, hard or soft, large or small, pressing down or uplifting, moving here or there, fast or slow, being here or there, balanced or unbalanced (vestibular), body aware or body unaware (proprioceptive), touching or rejecting of touch (tactile awareness), feelings within self about self and others.

Less commonly used senses are **taste and smell**:

location in the body, high or low intensity, size (large or small), warm or cool, moving or still, continuous or intermittent, sweet or sour or salty or pungent or sharp or tangy, appealing or unappealing.

**Anchors** are anything that stimulates or triggers you to respond emotionally. An anchor can have both negative and positive impacts, depending on whether it is triggering a resource rich or resource impoverished state. Anchors can be found in all five senses. Sensations, sounds, words, touch, self talk. They can be triggered with a single, intense emotion (traumatic or joyous), or built up over time. Anchors are the foundation of habits.

**An anchor can happen automatically, or can be deliberately installed.**

Triggering an anchor means that you are triggered to respond to some form of stimulus.

Good anchors need to be specific and unique, set at a peak response, and refreshed through use.

An anchor can be **stacked** (like compounding and stacking suggestions strengthens the preceding suggestions), **chained** (so that one fires another), and **collapsed,** so that two different anchors are triggered simultaneously with the goal of neutralizing a negative or resource poor state, creating a more integrated resource rich state.

**Setting a Positive Anchor:**

1. Think of a time when you \_\_\_\_ (laughed, felt happy, succeeded at something meaningful, felt peaceful, felt contented, experienced pride in success and accomplishment). Remember it. A time when you were particularly \_\_\_\_\_. A time in which your had a heightened sense of \_\_\_\_. (happiness, success, accomplishment, love, humor, health, bliss, drive, joy, delight, excitement, satisfaction, contentment)
2. Now rebuild that memory, use all your senses; seeing, hearing, feeling, smelling, tasting, all that stuff, again.
3. Intensify the feelings by modifying the submodalities.
4. As your feelings strengthen, just as they are about to peak, do your gesture (set your anchor), and let go just before that peak sensation subsides
5. Move physically, change your state, and test your anchor. Touch yourself, do the gesture exactly as you did it before. How much of that feeling that you were eliciting is aroused by the anchor.
6. Repeat the anchor, set it until it is reliable.
7. Repeat it to keep it fresh

Often, a simple response is needed, and the anchor can be collapsed, integrating the states, perhaps neutralizing a negative state with several positive states layered upon each other, resource rich and flexible.

**Collapsing anchors:**

1 – elicit state, remember a time when you responded to something with \_\_\_\_\_ (appropriate joy, happiness, excitement, contentment, success, satisfaction, job well done, comfortable in your own skin. . . ), imagine stepping in and being that person, again, intensify the feeling, anchor it somewhere on your body, someplace unique. Set the state, and then change the state.

2 – elicit the state of something you want to change. Remember a time when it was particularly strong. Anchor that state to a different part of your body. Set the state, and then change the state.

3 – Fire first one and then the other anchor

4 – fire both anchors simultaneously. There will generally be a “wiggle” of confusion that crosses the persons face, ask when the confusion or jello like experience passes, watch. As the confusion / jello like response subsides, release the negative anchor, hold the resource positive anchor for another 30 seconds or so,and then release it.

5 – test the response of the previously anchored negative / resource poor state, it should respond as neutral or even slightly resource rich.

References

Bandler, R. (2008). Richard Bandler’s Guide to Trance-formation: How to harness the power of hypnosis to ignite effortless and lasting change. Health Communications, Inc., Deerfield beach, FL

Geers, M. (1994). Hypnotherapy. Key West: author.

O’Connor, J. (2005). Free yourself from fears: Overcoming anxiety and living without worry. Boston: Nicholas Brealey Publishing.

Powell, Tag. (1988-1994). Silva Method educator, Florida. Top of the Mountain Press.

**Visual:**

Brightness (bright / dim)

Perspective, Location (above / below / front / back / left / right)

Associated / dissociated

Image size (large / small)

Duration (steady / intermittent / strobe like)

Black and white / color

Framed / unframed

Balance / unbalanced

Shape

Flat / dimensional

Distance (close / far)

Focus (clear / foggy / obscure)

Opaque / transparent

Contrast (vivid / blended)

Sparkly / dull

Moving / still

Speed (fast / slow / still)

Direction (toward / away from)

Vertical / horizontal

Texture

Magnification

Digital / analogue

Symmetry / as

ymetrical

Lighting direction / shading

Dense / sparse

Tilt / spin / orientation

Ratio aspect of height / width

Panoramic / framed location

Multiple images / single images

Self in context

Foreground / background

**Auditory:**

Distance

Contrast

Clarity

Number

Pitch

Tempo (speed)

Rhythm

Location

Duration

Consistent / intermittent

Associated / dissociated

Timbre / tonality

Stereo / mono

Internal / external

Symmetrical / asymetrical

Clarity / foggy

Figure / ground

Continuous / interrupted

Volume (loud / soft / quiet)

**Kinesthetic:**

Pressure

Movement

Location

Duration (steady / intermittent)

Frequency (tempo)

Intensity

Texture

Hot / cold

Shape

Size

**Tactile: skin senses**

Proprioceptive – muscle senses and other internal sensations

**Evaluative meta feelings**

about feelings, perceptions or representations

**Olfactory and gustatory**

Sweet

Sour

Bitter

Salt

Burnt

Aromatic

fading in and out

changes in intensity and duration

odors and tastes are powerful anchors of state

**Non-Verbal Cues** (Geers Dahl, chapter 305, p.46, Hypnotherapy)

Non-verbal clues include physical movement, shifts in breathing pattern, color and texture of skin, movement or change in nose, lips, eyes, pupils, hands, feet, head, body, pace and pitch of voice. Look for:

**Skin color** Dark 🡨--------------------------------------🡪 Light

**Skin tones** Not shiny 🡨--------------------------------------🡪 Shiny

**Eyes**  Focused 🡨-------------------------------------🡪 Defocused

Dilated 🡨------------------------------------🡪 not Dilated

**Eyelids**  Wide 🡨--------------------------------------🡪 Narrow

L**ips**  Lined 🡨--------------------------------------🡪 Unlined

Full 🡨--------------------------------------🡪 Thin

**Nose** Relaxed 🡨--------------------------------------🡪 Tense / Flared

**Breathing** High 🡨--------------------------------------🡪 Low

Slow 🡨---------------------------------------🡪 Fast

Deep 🡨-------------------------------------🡪 Shallow

**Face** Mobile 🡨--------------------------------------🡪 Flat

**Body**  Moving 🡨--------------------------------------🡪 Still

Open 🡨--------------------------------------🡪 Closed

**Dear Readers, Here is our latest *Subconsciously Speaking* offering -** Dog Phobia Gone in 30 Minutes by M. Dahl. 07.30.10. **Our goal is to share timely information, inspiration and knowledge to all of you.**As always we must disclaim all responsibility for opinions expressed by contributors. With great gratitude we do thank them for their time and talent. **Please enjoy and feel free to send this on to others who would also enjoy the readings.** Subconsciously Speaking © ISSN 1045-4942

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 Rapid Resolution of a Dog Phobia or Kids are great subjects.   
  
The last time I worked with a young person (12 y/o) with a dog phobia, I was approached by the mother at a public event in which I was setting up a booth.  When she asked if I handled phobias, I asked if she had a doctor's referral as phobias are the domain of psychiatry and psychology.  She didn't have a referral.  I told her i would work with her no charge, see what we could do.  She said it was her daughter.  I agreed to interview her daughter, no charge.  
  
The interview was easy.  I sat across from the daughter and placed a hand lightly on each of her knees.

"Tell me about your problem with dogs."

She started with a story about how her grandmother's little dog had bit her on the lip and hung there growling.  I pressed on one of the knees lightly to set a negative anchor as she hit the part of the story about the dog growling while hanging on her lip.  The mother didn't know that had happened, and expressed surprised at the daughter's recollection of something that the daughter claimed occurred around the age of four.

I released the pressure on the knee, and asked, "Did you bleed?"  She responded, "Yes."  "Did you die?"  She looked at me in what appeared to be astonishment, "No."  I placed slight pressure on the opposite knee to set a positive anchor, "So you survived all that."  "Yes."  I released the slight pressure and reframed the incident something like, "What a shame you had such a bad experience with that nasty little dog, and you didn't know enough to keep your face away from such a nasty little biter.  You were very young then, and you didn't know how to assess if a dog was friendly or not.  You probably thought that dog was as friendly as you, and bent over to say hello.  You've learned a lot about life since then, haven't you?"  She brightened up; I put a slight pressure on the positive anchor, "Yes."  I released the slight pressure on the positive anchor site.

"Do you have any other incidents like this?"  "Yes."

She told another story about being assaulted by a dog, she was playing in the water with her brother, and a golden retriever ran into the water.  She was scared and ran away, it ran after her, jumped on her, and scratched her.  I pressed the negative anchor slightly, and then released it.  Her brother "saved her" by pulling the dog off of her.  "Did you bleed?"  "Yes."  "Did you die?"  I placed slight pressure on the positive anchor as she "No," and reframed the situation, "That as a very different dog from the nasty little biter you met when you were young. That dog might have been coming to play in the water, but you didn't know that, and you acted like a cat.  You ran and the dog chased you.  I wonder what would have happened if you had continued to play like a little girl instead of acting like a cat by running away?"  I released the positive anchor.

" Are there any other incidents?"  "Yes."

She pulled up her shirt sleeve and showed me multiple scars the size of the tip of my thumb, told me a story about being mauled by a Rottweiler.  This was the only dog story her mother knew about.  I didn't press the negative anchor on this issue, we already had enough anchoring of the negative.  She told me the whole story.   I asked, "Did you bleed?"  " A lot."  "Did you die?"  "No, but I had to go to the hospital."  "I am so sorry you had an encounter with a big mean dog.  Dogs can be just like people, some are mean, and some are nice.  Would you like to let go of that worry you have about dogs."  "Yes."

I asked her to remember something funny, and when her face was laughing, I pressed on the positive anchor spot, and released it.

 I asked her to remember something she had done that she was proud of, and when she had that look of satisfaction on her face, I pressed the positive anchor spot, and released it.

I asked her to remember a time when she had worked hard to achieve something difficult, and had succeeded, and when I noticed her face looking happy, I pressed on the positive spot and then released.  
  
Then I asked if she would like to explore how her nervous system can automatically pull up a memory of emotions without having to remember a specific incident.  She said, "Yes."

 I pressed on the positive spot and asked how that felt.  She said it felt good.  I released the pressure.

 I pressed on the negative anchor spot and asked how that felt.  She said it felt bad.  I released the pressure.

 "Interesting how your body can pull up a feeling automatically, isn't it.  Let's do that two more times to make sure you understand how this works."

We did the anchor comparison two more times.

 I asked, "Would you like to get rid of that problem with dogs now?"  "Yes."

I pressed both sites simultaneously, and watched as the confusing messages rolled across her face, "Feels kind of wiggly like jello doesn't it?"  She nodded.  I suggested, "Tell me when it settles down."

I watched as her face began to relax, and she said, "Ok."

 I released the negative anchor and kept some pressure on the positive anchor for another 30 seconds or so.  "How are you doing now?"  "Good."  I released the pressure from the positive anchor.

"Good deal, here's my card, tell me how things go for you."  
  
The next day I had a visit from the mother, *"What did you do to my daughter?"*"You watched, what did you see?"  
*"I watched you talk to her about her problem with dogs."*  
" And then what happened?"  
*"We left you and walked over to the ice-cream parlor.  She was eating her ice cream cone and a big dog came and lay down on her feet, stuck out its tongue to catch the ice cream drips."*  
"How did she respond?"  
*"Oh, her father and I were freaked out, 'dog, dog, dog'.  She said, 'so what?'  What did you do to her?"*

 The mother explained that they had already spent a lot of money for therapy attempting to get her over her dog phobia, and nothing had worked.  The daughter didn't even remember being afraid of dogs after that one session we had that lasted maybe fifteen minutes.  
  
This is an example of using NLP anchors to overcome a phobia.  I have been told by other NLP practitioners that phobias don't go away using that approach, but I have used it successfully with spider phobias, too.  Does it work with everyone? No.  There are those folks with secondary gain and those who required uncovering to discover the initial sensitizing event and its related decisions so that the emotional load can be discharged.

 © Submitted by Monica Dahl / [gammot@aol.com](mailto:gammot@aol.com)