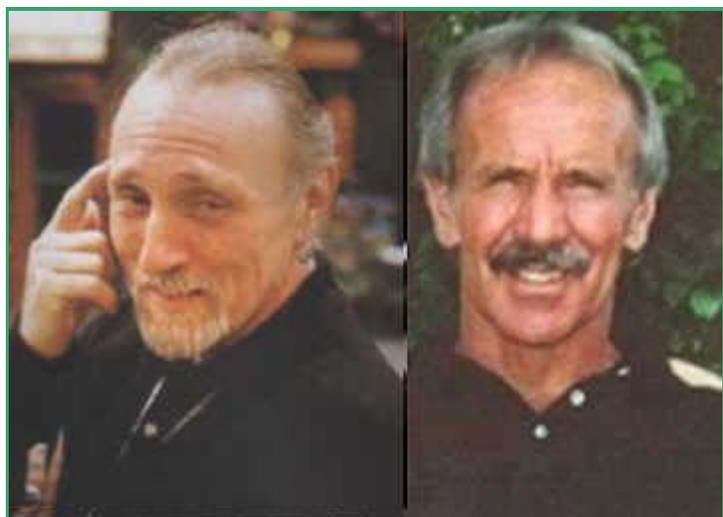


Site Map: [MAIN](#) / [A Reader's Treasury](#) / [This Page](#)

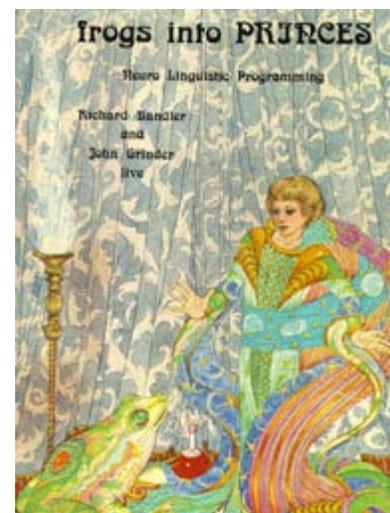


*A READER'S TREASURY*

**Frogs into Princes  
Neuro Linguistic  
Programming  
Chapter: Psychotherapy**

by  
**Richard Bandler and John  
Grinder**

Published by Real People  
Press/UT in 1979



A Book Review by Bobby Matherne ©2000

In the fall of 1977 I went to Berkeley to attend the Association for Humanistic Psychology Conference. On the heels of the AHP conference came the Gestalt Conference. Since I'd been in Gestalt training for over a year I decided to stay for that conference also. During lunch this tall young man with Birkenstocks came over and sat across from me. He introduced himself as John Stevens and his girl friend as Connirae Andreas. Finding out that they were attending the Gestalt Conference also, I told them about the exciting new work that Bandler and Grinder were doing. They didn't believe me and seemed a little bored by the prospect of some new guru - after all, who could replace Fritz Perls. I don't believe that I knew at the time that John's mother was Fritz's girl friend, Barry Stevens. So I told them about the eye cues, about the fast phobia cure, about the six step reframing model using the most powerful case histories I had been exposed to, maybe one I did myself. This happened twenty-three years ago, so my memory of what I said is sketchy, but I must have said something that excited them a little, because they showed up at Eric Marcus's afternoon workshop to learn more about what was to become the subtitle of this book, Neuro Linguistic Programming, which later received a hyphen and a trademark.

Here's what John had to say about my introduction of him to NLP:

**[page i] When I was first introduced to Neuro Linguistic Programming I was both fascinated and *very* skeptical. I had been heavily conditioned to believe that change is slow, and usually difficult and painful. . . . If you are skeptical, as I was, you owe it to your skepticism to check this out, and find out if the outrageous claims made in this book are valid.**

John and Connirae apparently went to the very next Bandler and Grinder workshop they could and this book is the transcription of that workshop. The comments of his mother, Barry Stevens on the inside cover highlights the refreshing approach of Bandler and Grinder:

**"How tiresome it is going from one limiting belief to another. How joyful to read Bandler and Grinder, who don't believe in anything, yet use everything! NLP wears seven-league-boots, and takes 'therapy' or 'personal growth' far, far beyond any previous notions."**

What are some of the previous notions, Barry referred to? How about the practice of using the phrase "resistant client" to refer to an approach by the therapist that doesn't work? Would we have ever put a man on the Moon if we had blamed our rocket failures on the rocket? (Paraphrased from page 13.) Here's

another example of disabusing therapists of non-useful notions:

**[page 17] I think it's extremely useful for you to behave so that your clients come to have the illusion that you understand what they are saying verbally. I caution you against accepting the illusion for yourself.**

That sounded quite a bit like John Grinder, the transformational grammar expert. Who's saying what is not credited in the book, and anyone who's been to a Bandler and Grinder workshop can attest that they switch talking sometimes in mid-sentence without breaking stride. What they strove to do was not to teach how to do therapy in those workshops, but rather they taught expert and novice therapists alike to *pay attention to the world around them - to come to their senses*. Here's an example of one of them doing that:

**[page 17] If you take nothing else away from this workshop, take away the following: You will always get the answers to your questions insofar as you have the sensory apparatus to notice the responses.**

Bandler and Grinder were not therapists so much as they were modelers that came to therapy as a neat way of applying their modeling techniques. By modeling, I'm not talking about making balsa wood miniatures of airplanes, but rather cybernetic simulations of notions, internal maps of some external territory. As modelers, they say a lot of things that people took to be true, so they explained that everything they said were lies. That one statement tended to wake up the expert therapists in a hurry! Here's how they did in this particular seminar.

**[page 18] Everything we're going to tell you here is lie. All generalizations are lies. Since we have no claim on truth or accuracy, we will be lying consistently through this seminar. There are only two differences between us and other teachers: One is that we announce at the beginning of our seminars that everything we say will be a lie, and other teachers do not. Most of them believe their lies. They don't realize that they are made up. The other difference is that most of our lies will work out really well if you act *as if* they are true.**

Want some more examples of useful lies? How about hypnosis? That's a useful lie. Near the middle of the seminar a woman asked them, "Do you use hypnosis for that?" In this case, the responses were credited to the speakers.

**[page 100] Richard: *Everything* is hypnosis.**

**John: There's a profound disagreement between us. There is no such thing as hypnosis. I would really prefer that you didn't use such terms, since they don't refer to anything. We believe that *all* communication is hypnosis. That's the function of every conversation.**

Some conversations are more powerful than others. There was a therapist on Hayward Avenue in Phoenix who held conversations with people that were so powerful that few of them were able to stay awake while the man was talking. Here's a story about a visit to this man, Milton Erickson, probably by Bandler, who tells us that Milton told him something that has taken him some time to figure out:

**[page 136] "You don't consider yourself a therapist, but you are a therapist." And I said, "Well, not really." He said, "Well, let's pretend . . . that you're a therapist who works with people. The most important thing . . . when you're pretending this . . . is to understand. . . that you are *really* not . . . You are just pretending . . . And if you pretend really well, the people that you work with will pretend to make changes. And they will forget that they are pretending . . . for the rest of their lives. But don't you be fooled by it." And then he looked at me and he said: "Goodbye."**

----- Reference Links for Bandler and Grinder -----

Reference Links to Material on [Bandler and Grinder](#)  
written by Bobby Matherne  
<http://www.doyletics.com/arj/bnglinks.htm>

