

FREE CHAPTER

Cracking The Influence Code

— Chapter One —

My Story – The Power and Mystery of Communication

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My Story – The Power and Mystery of Communication

When I was about four or five, my family navigated tight financial currents. Our home was modest, yet my gran possessed a wonderful knack for finding little treasures that sparked pure joy. One day, she handed me a peculiar plastic tube – the inner core from an old-fashioned Roneo duplicating machine. To my sheer delight, I discovered a small rubber ball I owned fitted perfectly inside. A quick puff of air sent the ball shooting out with a delightful pop that provided endless amusement.

This simple toy quickly became an obsession. One afternoon, deep in this familiar game, the ball zipped under a heavy chest of drawers. Instinctively, I sprinted after it, completely forgetting the tube clenched firmly between my teeth. I stumbled, pitched forward, and in that split second, the innocent plastic tube tore through my soft palate, shredding the back of my throat.

A blur of panic, a rush to the hospital, immediate emergency surgery. Hours later, the surgeon emerged, his face grim. He informed my mother that while I'd survived the ordeal, the damage was extensive. There was, he stated quietly, a very real possibility I might never speak again. At best, perhaps partial speech, likely marred by a severe impediment.

Compounding this, my family faced another significant hardship. My sister, four years younger, had been born with Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus, conditions demanding immense emotional and practical resources from my parents. Explaining the prospect of a speech impediment—or worse, a life without a voice—to a young boy already navigating these challenging family dynamics seemed overwhelming, perhaps even cruel. Consequently, no one ever mentioned the surgeon's bleak prognosis. I remained blissfully unaware, my focus solely on healing.

During those long recovery days, my gran became my constant companion, my patient caregiver. Every afternoon, she'd sit beside my bed, reading stories, gently urging me to echo the words back to her. Initially, every sound was a struggle, each sentence a mountainous effort. But slowly, painstakingly, my speech began to return and improve.

It was around this time I developed a deep fascination with the radio. Lying awake during quiet nights, I'd listen intently to the smooth, captivating voices of presenters on Springbok Radio and, when the airwaves permitted, LM Radio. Their words wove intricate, vivid worlds inside my mind, conjuring images that transported me far beyond the confines of my small bedroom. How, I wondered constantly, could mere words wield such magic? How could vibrations in the air paint pictures and stir feelings? In those hushed hours, beneath the bedcovers, a quiet dream took root: someday, I would become one of those voices.

Still utterly unaware of my supposed limitations, I practiced relentlessly, mimicking the tones, rhythms, and cadences of my radio heroes. My voice grew stronger, my articulation clearer day by day. Yet, something deeper stirred within me, beyond just mastering the mechanics of speech. I found myself captivated by fundamental questions: Why did certain words spark such powerful emotions? How could the sound of a voice – its pitch, pace, and timbre – move me so profoundly?

What was the underlying secret to connection?

As I grew older, this fascination intensified, evolving into a burning curiosity. I yearned to understand not just the act of communication, but the intricate workings of the human mind itself. What truly makes us tick? What neurological alchemy allows mere words—vibrations carried on air—to reshape our perceptions, ignite our imaginations, and fundamentally alter our emotional states?

The turning point arrived in my early twenties. My uncle returned to South Africa from the UK, bringing with him knowledge of a methodology utterly new to me: Neuro-Linguistic Programming, or NLP. Intrigued by his descriptions, I enrolled in one of his introductory weekend courses. From the very first session, I was utterly hooked. NLP resonated on a profound level, illuminating the intricate dance between language, thought, and behaviour – mysteries that had captivated me for years.

That single weekend ignited a lifelong passion. I immersed myself completely in the study of NLP, mastering techniques that unveiled the complex interplay between our words, our psychology, and our neurology. Over the decades that followed, this fascination only deepened. I pursued advanced qualifications, becoming an NLP Master Practitioner, earning certifications in Ericksonian Hypnotherapy and sophisticated hypnotic language patterns, and achieving the designation of Master Coach. Even now, after more than thirty years dedicated to study and practice, I remain as intensely curious and awestruck as ever by the incredible, complex instruments we carry within our skulls.

This book represents a distillation of that journey – everything I've learned about the art and science of impactful communication. Within these pages, I aim to share the profound insights, powerful techniques, and transformative tools gleaned from NLP, neuroscience, behavioural economics, and decades of real-world application – tools that have reshaped my life and the lives of countless clients. My hope is both simple and profound: that by mastering these principles, you too can harness the extraordinary power inherent in communication to influence ethically, inspire genuinely, and achieve your most important goals.

Welcome to the journey. Let's begin exploring the influential mind.

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– The story is just beginning –

This is Chapter One of thirty-two.

Three decades of NLP, neuroscience and behavioural economics — distilled into one field guide for anyone who has to move people, without manipulation. **Cracking The Influence Code** launches soon.

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