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**How to Escape Out of Thought Traps?**

**By Oz Merchant, C.Ht., NLP Trainer & Coach**

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Have you ever been really sure about something, only to find out you were mistaken?

Did you notice how you operated "as if" you were correct? You may have even seen, heard, touched, tasted, or smelled the world in a way to support your stance. And perhaps you felt you had solid logic to support this position.

So how did the possibility of an opposite opinion make its way through your logic and basically the reality as you knew it, to get you to change your mind?

Did you fight hard to stay where you were? Did you go through so called "denial"? Did you lock in to your position, and build up a wall to prevent entry of any contrary thought?

Now the question I have for you is, "Were you keeping them out or were you trapping yourself in?"

In sales, a prospect may be dead-set in his view about a particular product or service. Now the sales rep may know that the prospect does not have all the facts yet, so he sets out trying to convey this to the prospect.

One of two things can result. One the prospect tightens the grip on his view or two he begins to shift his perception. Now this of course depends on the rapport and sales strategy used by the sales professional to enter into the prospect's "thought blockade" and free him from that "one" perspective. Listen to the conversations around you, perhaps even the words coming out of your own mouth, are you building your own thought blockade or "thought trap"?

If so, how do you get out? Then (If so desired!) how do you get others out?

### **RECOGNIZE THE TRAPS!**

Let's start by looking at the traps of the intellectual mind, the one who weaves such wonderful webs of logic that leaves us feeling good while keeping us quite stuck.

#### **Trap One: Being Right**

I often tell the couples I work with, "Do you want to be happy or do you want to be right?" Surprisingly, I see quite a lot of incongruent responses. It is like they know they should say "be happy" and (that's why they do), but in fact, they really want to say "be right".

Now the real interesting thing is that the intellect wants to be right, regardless of you being right or not. Confused?

Then let's make an important distinction.

You are not your intellect! You the being (soul) are much, much more! The intellect's limitations are not your limitations to the degree that you can separate your "self" (soul) from the intellect. Recognizing these traps and how to avoid them will help in that separation process.

#### **Trap Two: Validation**

The intellect seeks constant validation. It is constantly saying recognize me, notice me, "Hey! I'm over here!" Whether it is validation from authorities or peers, this need for validation becomes a crucial trap to avoid.

Kids learn this early on. A child comes home with their report card in hand and an eager look of anticipation, waiting for those few key words, "Oh honey, you did great!" Yeah! The kids can now feel worthy. Now imagine what happens when this is compounded over a few decades. Pretty soon we are all looking for validation in every direction.

#### **Trap Three: Sharing**

I've just got to tell you about this one. Oh you won't believe it. The intellect likes to share things. Through sharing it can feel more validated and of course be right.

Ever felt like crap and wanted to let others know that you felt that way? Did you hope they would sympathize with your story and tell you how right you are in feeling this way? Hoping they would validate your stance?

If so, then you fell into another trap to feed the intellect while starving your real self.

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### **Trap Four: Safety**

As the intellect spins its logic, forming a thought blockade, it is also creating a sense of safety. If it constructs well-thought-out logic that sounds reasonable, it is safe from any challenges.

So what happens when a contrary idea comes knocking on the door? The intellect's internal safety procedure is kicked in. You may have seen the behaviors that go along with such an internal process if you have ever challenged someone's "sacred cow."

A woman called me up a few weeks back and wanted me to see her son because he was very messy. She asked if I could hypnotize him to always clean up after himself. I told her that it certainly was possible; however I wanted to know a few things first.

So I asked her what happens to her when she sees that he hasn't cleaned up after himself? She replied with great tension in her voice, "Well that just makes my blood boil!" So I asked if it always made her blood boil. She stammered, "Yes!"

Then I asked her what she thought about her response she had to his messiness. I asked her what kinds of effects she thinks this may be having on her own body, her health. I continued by saying, what if she could see a messy room and her blood not boil. Talk about running full force right into a sacred cow. (Mooooove!)

Her intellect's safety alerts kicked in immediately. She got very defensive and went on tirade about how she was right, and no one could see all that she went through day in and day out, raising three kids while working, and if her blood didn't boil she would become just as lazy as her son, and the whole house would be a wreck.

Then she ended the call by saying that she was perfectly fine, and it was her son who had the problem.

Now how many of you identified with her story, sympathized with her stance? Did you get sucked into the trap? Did you let her logical retort validate your own stance?

Go back and read it again. What did she do? How did she trap herself? Her intellect screamed bloody murder the moment we came up on her sacred cow of cleanliness.

It started by building a logical argument around why she was right and he (or me, for challenging her) was in the wrong. She used that along with the lack of validation and recognition from everyone else to validate her logic. And finally, she felt compelled to share it with me to externalize the trap and manifest it into reality.

By sharing, the logic is not just a construct in her mind anymore. Adding voice and breath to it begins to give it a life of its own. This is where the pointing begins. And remember whenever there is one finger pointing outwards, there are three fingers pointing back to the person doing the pointing.

### **Getting Out of the Trap**

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Now that you know what to look out for, you can begin using the tools below to stay out as well as help others to stay out of those thought traps. Remember this takes practice. The hardest step is to recognize it. The moment you do recognize it you are in a sense already on your way out. But then it is about freeing yourself from the logic that the intellect has spun around the trap.

Even then you may find it is easier to spot other people's traps quicker than your own. And the reason for that is because your own logic is most seductive to you not to others. So while they may be seduced by their logic, you can clearly see through it. And it certainly works the other way around as well. So go slowly with this at first. You don't want to find yourself at the end of the week with no friends because you challenged all their sacred cows without maintaining rapport.

Now the simplest way is to first recognize the trap and then begin questioning it.

Avoid "Why" because you will only get justifications, which only help build the thought blockade stronger.

For example, when working on your own thought trap, you may want to begin like this:

Who says you're right? How do you know? According to what criteria? When am I wrong? When was the last time? Where was it? What was going on then? Who was I wanting validation from then? How did I get it then? What did I do as a result of it? What other choices did I have available to me then? What about now? How would things be different if I responded differently?

If you are familiar with the meta-model, you can use it to guide you to different ways of looking at the trap? And as you start finding the edges, the boundaries of the confine, you can find the doorway out of the trap.

Another tool is to use your vertical and lateral thinking strategies to leap you or others out of the trap. In some cases, these strategies will not get you totally out of the trap, but it will begin expand the boundaries, giving you an opportunity to find your way out. Let's use the lady who called me as an example.

(Staying vertical to her position) I could have said to her, "Well, if you can't keep a house a clean without your blood boiling, then perhaps you should hire a 24-hour maid."

(Going lateral to her position) Or I could have said, "A friend of mine had a problem with a wrecked house, so she went out and got herself an apartment—No more wrecked homes."

As you begin discovering your own traps, whether they appear as beliefs, values, or ideals, and regardless of how many layers of logic that are piled on top, you now know how to dig your way out. The more you do this, the more flexibility you will create within your own system. You will find that you don't fall into your own thought traps or anyone else's.

Remember to go easy on yourself and to enjoy the process!

## How to Escape Out of Thought Traps?

As the director of the CORE Changes Institute, Oz Merchant, trains and coaches individuals for personal and professional excellence utilizing cutting-edge transformation technologies such as NLP, Hypnosis, TFT, and EFT to name a few. Get access to the Success Skills E-Letter and remember to get your free copy of his latest e-book "11 Simple Lessons to Manifest Your Destiny," at

### **Nontoxic Pest Control for Your Home and Garden**

#### **By TC Thorn**

Pesticides are toxic and, while often effective against pests, can be dangerous for your family and pets. Outdoors, sprayed pesticides might drift on a breeze and dust your vegetable garden or your neighbor's yard. Indoors, pesticides can linger in the air, exposing the family to harmful chemicals. For these reasons, many people are turning to nontoxic pest control methods.

Prevention is the best way to control pests, but there are times when even the most thorough preventative measures will not save you from intruders, so this article discusses both preventative pest control methods and nontoxic pest control products.

#### Preventative Pest Control Methods

##### Sanitation:

As they say, cleanliness is next to godliness. And it keeps pests out, too. Keeping your home clean is the most effective pest control method. If you don't leave food or dirty dishes lying around the house, animals and insects won't be attracted to the smell. Sweep and vacuum regularly. Remember, just because you can't see crumbs doesn't mean they don't exist. Clean inside pantries and cabinets cabinets, under and around the stove and refrigerator at least once a year.

##### Screens:

This may seem obvious, but screens on doors and windows are a simple and relatively cheap way to keep insects out of the house. Also, screens on crawlspaces keep rodents from obtaining easy access routes into the house.

##### Caulking:

By caulking cracks in your house, you can minimize places for insects to hide and nest. Target bathrooms and the kitchen, especially doors and windows.

#### Nontoxic Pest Control Products

##### Traps:

There are many kinds of traps available that target many kinds of pests. Some examples are sticky traps for cockroaches, glueboards for mice, flypaper, bug zappers, and traps specifically for rats,

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gophers, or moles. You can usually pick up traps at your local Home and Garden store.

### Pheromones:

Pheromones, essentially insect scent hormones, can be used in traps as bait. By emitting the scent of

the female insect, pheromones can be used to lure males into a trap, where they are caught in a sticky glue. Insects are only attracted by pheromones emitted by their own kind, so you need to know exactly what kind of insects you're trying to eliminate and plan accordingly.

### Biological Control:

Biological control is more often used in agriculture but can sometimes be used in home and garden situations as well. Basically it means using desirable organisms to eliminate undesirable organisms. For instance, planting certain plants in your garden can deter certain pests. For example, spearmint repels ants. Garlic repels Japanese Beetles. Indoors, spiders eat fruit flies and houseflies, so it may be worth leaving some of those webs around.

### Repellents:

There are nontoxic repellents available for pest control. Mosquito repellents are the most popular, but if you look around, you can find repellents that target other pests. Some herbs, like eucalyptus and wormwood, are known for repelling animals and insects.

TC Thorn writes for

where you can find more pest control information.

Nontoxic Pest Control for Your Home and Garden

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