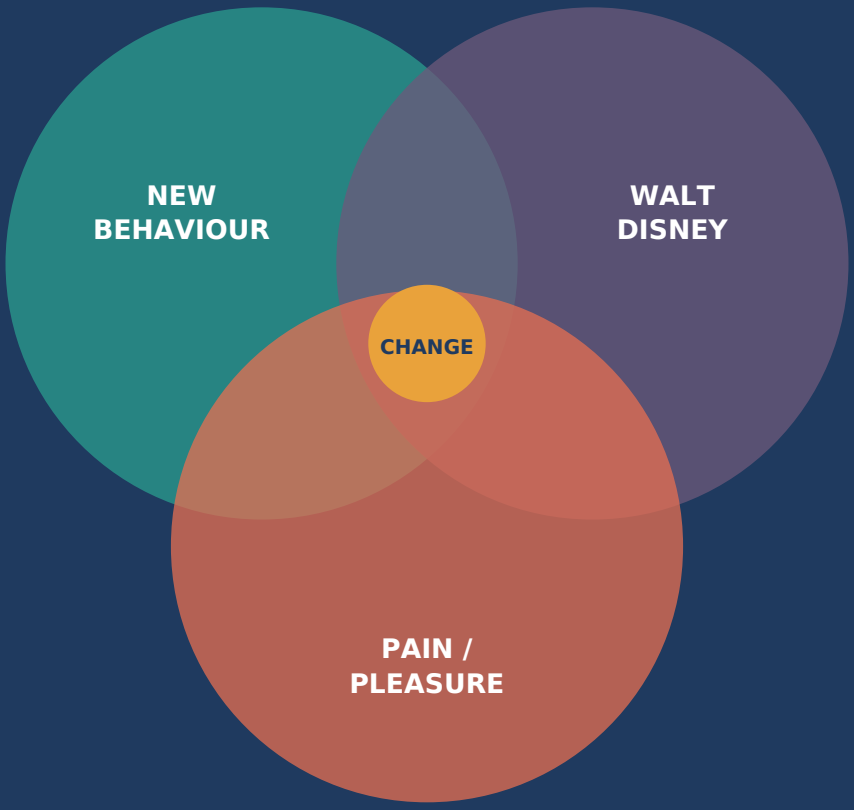


NEURO-LINGUISTIC PROGRAMMING · A VISUAL SUMMARY

Key Coaching Strategies

New Behaviour Generator · Walt Disney Strategy · Pain / Pleasure

Concepts · Step-by-Step Processes · Coaching Questions · Worked Examples

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SECTION 01

What Is an NLP Strategy?

In NLP, a strategy is the sequence of internal and external steps a person runs to produce a result — like a recipe for a behaviour.

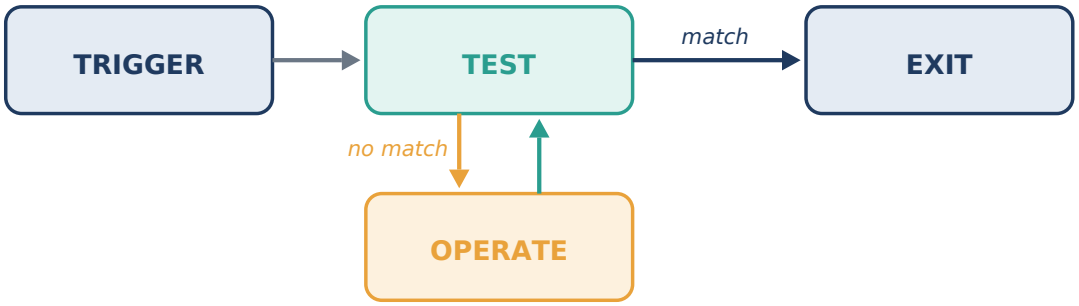
NLP describes thinking as a series of **representations** in the senses — pictures, sounds, self-talk and feelings — run in a particular order. By making a strategy explicit, a coach can **model** what works, **change** what doesn't, or **install** a new sequence. All three strategies in this guide are examples of deliberately designed sequences.

Strategy notation — the building blocks

V	A	K	Ad	O / G
Visual	**Auditory**	**Kinaesthetic**	**Auditory digital**	**Olf. / Gust.**
pictures	sounds, tones	feelings, body	self-talk	smell / taste

Superscripts add detail: **e** = external (out in the world), **i** = internal; **r** = remembered, **c** = constructed (imagined). So $\mathbf{V^c}$ means an imagined picture and $\mathbf{A^d}$ is inner dialogue.

Every strategy is a TOTE



Trigger starts the strategy. **Test** compares the current state with a criterion. **Operate** takes action to close the gap. **Exit** when the test is satisfied.

Strategy	Main purpose	Typical sequence (simplified)
New Behaviour Generator	Create and rehearse a new behaviour	A^d → V^c → K → test → refine
Walt Disney Strategy	Turn ideas into workable plans	Dreamer (V^c) → Realist (V/K) → Critic (A^d) → loop
Pain / Pleasure	Build motivation to change	Vc/K of costs → Vc/K of benefits → decision

SECTION 02

Three Strategies at a Glance

Each strategy answers a different coaching question. Used together, they move a client from “why change?” to “how will I do it?”

PAIN / PLEASURE

Why change?

Builds motivation and commitment by linking strong feelings to the old and new behaviour.

WALT DISNEY

What exactly will I do?

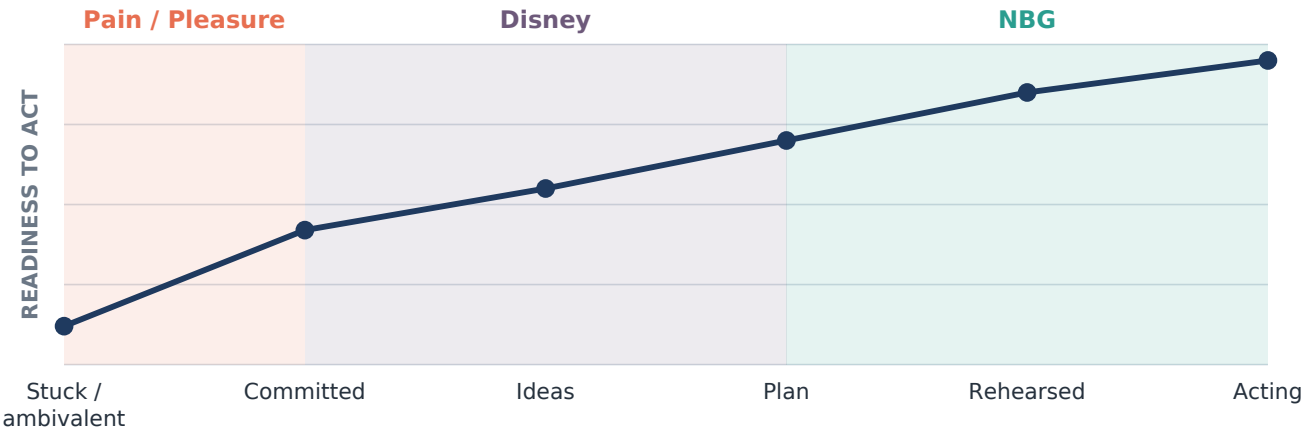
Generates ideas, makes them practical and stress-tests them before acting.

NEW BEHAVIOUR GENERATOR

How will I do it?

Mentally rehearses the new behaviour until it feels natural and ready.

Where each strategy fits in a coaching journey



Conceptual illustration — not measured data.

	Pain / Pleasure	Walt Disney	New Behaviour Generator
Core question	Why change?	What will I do?	How will I do it?
Main tool	Emotional leverage	Perceptual positions	Mental rehearsal
Best for	Ambivalence, low motivation	Projects, ideas, plans	Skills, confidence, habits
Time needed	15–30 min	30–90 min	10–20 min

SECTION 03

New Behaviour Generator · Overview

A mental-rehearsal strategy for creating new behaviours: imagine yourself doing it, step in to feel it, and refine until it feels right.

PART A **NEW BEHAVIOUR GENERATOR**

The New Behaviour Generator (NBG) is associated with NLP co-founder **John Grinder** and was later described in detail by **Robert Dilts** and colleagues. It is built on a simple idea: we can "try out" a behaviour in imagination before doing it in real life — and use our feelings as feedback about whether the behaviour is ready.



SEE IT

Dissociated

Watch yourself perform the behaviour, like a movie on a screen.



FEEL IT

Associated

Step into the movie and experience it from inside your own body.



REFINE IT

Feedback

If it doesn't feel right, step out, adjust the movie and try again.

When to use the NBG

Use it to…	Example
Build a new skill or habit	Speaking up in meetings; saying no politely; giving feedback
Prepare for a specific event	A job interview, a difficult conversation, a sales call
Replace an unwanted response	Responding calmly instead of snapping when interrupted
Model someone else's excellence	Imagining how a confident colleague would handle the situation
Install the output of other strategies	Rehearsing the plan created with the Disney strategy

Why it works (in principle): imagined rehearsal activates many of the same planning and motor processes as real practice. Sports psychology research on **mental practice** supports this broad idea, especially when combined with physical practice.

SECTION 04

NBG · The Step-by-Step Process

A typical version of the New Behaviour Generator, with its representational-system notation.

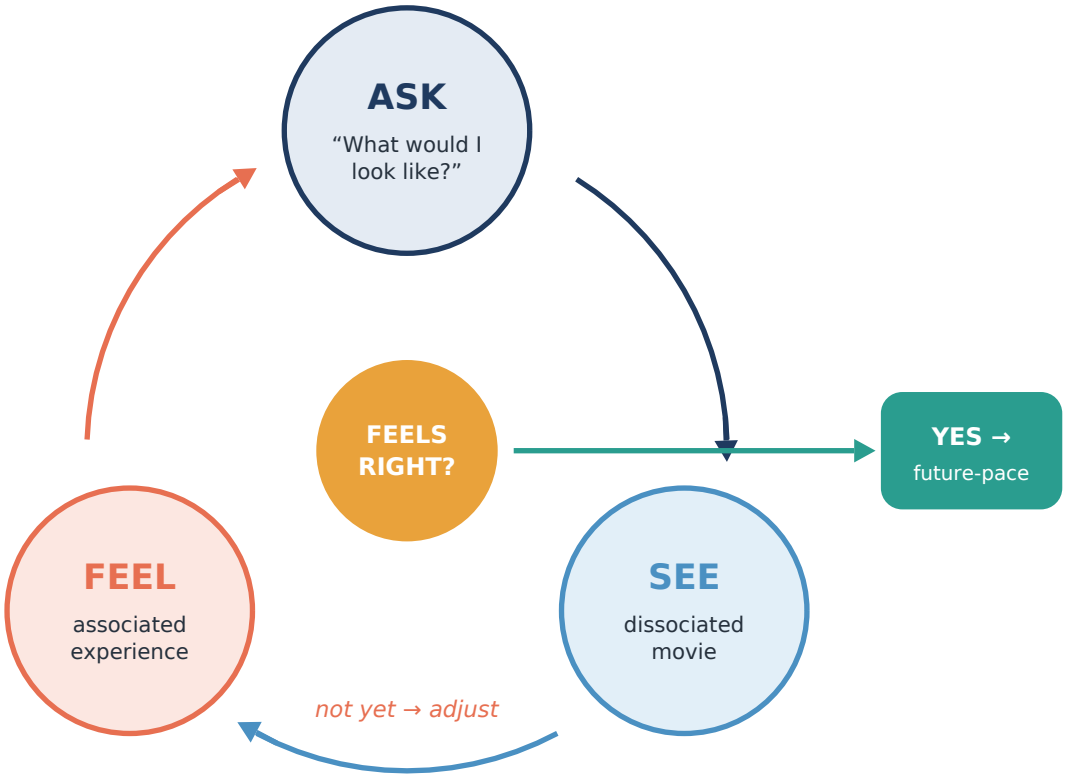
	WHAT YOU DO	TIPS / EXAMPLE	SYSTEM
1 Choose the behaviour	Pick one specific behaviour and context.	*"I want to give clear feedback to my team."*	**A^d**
2 Ask the key question	"If I could do this, what would I look like?"	*Ask yourself in a curious inner voice.*	**A^d**
3 Build the movie	Imagine watching yourself doing it well — dissociated.	*Use a role model if you're unsure how it looks.*	**V^c**
4 Step into the movie	Associate: see, hear and feel it from inside.	*Notice your posture, breathing and voice.*	**K**
5 Check the feeling	Does it feel right, natural and congruent?	*Yes → step 7. No → step 6.*	**K test**
6 Step out & adjust	Identify what is missing; change the movie.	*Add a resource, change words, slow down…*	**$A^d \rightarrow V^c$**
7 Future-pace	Imagine the real future context and run it again.	*Link it to a trigger: "When I see …, I will …"*	**V^c K**

Notation summary: A^d (question) → V^c (construct movie) → K (step in, feel) → test → [refine and repeat] → exit with future-pacing. Steps 4–6 loop as many times as needed.

SECTION 05

NBG · The Feedback Loop

The heart of the NBG is switching between watching and experiencing — using feelings to check the behaviour and pictures to improve it.



DISSOCIATED (watching)

- Seeing yourself from the outside
- Good for designing, judging and adjusting
- Emotions are lower — easier to think clearly
- Use to build and edit the movie

ASSOCIATED (inside)

- Seeing through your own eyes
- Good for feeling, testing and learning
- Emotions are fuller — honest feedback
- Use to check the movie feels right

Signals that the behaviour is **not ready**: tension, hesitation, an inner "yes, but…", or the movie feeling like someone else. Each one tells you what to adjust in the next run.

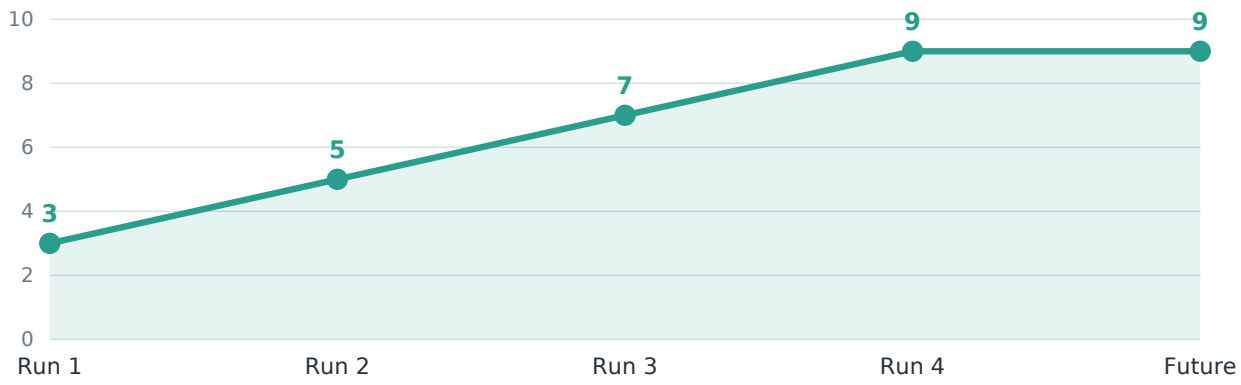
SECTION 06

NBG · Worked Example & Troubleshooting

A manager wants to respond calmly when interrupted in meetings, instead of becoming visibly irritated.

Run	What the client saw / felt	Adjustment made	Feels right? (0–10)
1	Sees self saying “Please let me finish.” Steps in: jaw tight, voice sharp.	Adds a slow breath before speaking	3
2	Calmer, but voice too quiet; feels apologetic.	Imagines a respected colleague’s steady tone	5
3	Steady voice, but no eye contact; feels unsure.	Adds eye contact and a small open-hand gesture	7
4	Calm, clear, friendly; others nod. Feels natural.	Adds trigger: “When I hear an interruption…”	9
Future-pace	Runs it in Monday’s meeting with a specific colleague.	Plans to practise in the next meeting	9

How the “feels right” score improved across runs



Illustrative self-ratings for this example.

Troubleshooting

Problem	Try this
“I can’t see myself doing it.”	Use a role model first, then gradually swap in your own face and voice.
The movie is clear, but it feels fake.	Shrink the change: one small behaviour at a time; check for an inner objection.
Strong anxiety when stepping in.	Stay dissociated longer; add calming resources; step in for only a few seconds.
It works in imagination but not in life.	Rehearse in more contexts; add a clear trigger; practise for real in low-stakes settings.

SECTION 07

Walt Disney Strategy · Overview

A creativity and planning strategy that separates dreaming, planning and critiquing into three distinct roles.

PART B **WALT DISNEY STRATEGY**

Robert Dilts modelled Walt Disney's creative process in *Strategies of Genius* (1994). Drawing on accounts from Disney's colleagues, he observed that Disney seemed to move between three distinct roles — a visionary **Dreamer**, a practical **Realist** and a careful **Critic** — and kept them apart so that each could do its job fully.



DREAMER

"What do we want?"

Generates ideas and vision without limits.



REALIST

"How will we do it?"

Turns the dream into concrete steps and plans.



CRITIC

"What could go wrong?"

Tests the plan; finds risks and gaps.

Why separate the roles?	What happens when they mix
Ideas need freedom to grow	The Critic shuts down the Dreamer too early: "That'll never work."
Plans need concrete thinking	The Dreamer avoids details; the project stays a nice idea.
Risks need honest testing	Without the Critic, plans fail on predictable problems.

Key principle: all three roles are valuable — the problem is when they **talk over each other**. The strategy gives each one its own time, space and physiology.

SECTION 08

Disney · Physiology and Questions

Each role has a typical posture, focus and set of questions. Adopting the physiology helps you fully access the role.

	DREAMER	REALIST	CRITIC
Focus	What? (vision, possibilities)	How? (actions, steps)	Why might it fail? (risks)
Time frame	Long-term future	Short-to-medium term	Long and short term
Posture	Head and eyes up; relaxed, open, symmetrical	Head and eyes straight ahead; slightly forward	Eyes down; head tilted; hand to chin
Main senses	V^c — imagined pictures	V, K — acting it out	A^d — evaluating
Attitude	Anything is possible	Act “as if” it is achievable	Constructive, careful, fair

DREAMER QUESTIONS

“What do you want to create?”

“If there were no limits, what would it look like?”

“Why do you want it? What’s the purpose?”

“Who will benefit, and how?”

“What will it be like when it’s done?”

REALIST QUESTIONS

“What specifically needs to be done?”

“Who will do what, and by when?”

“What resources do we need?”

“What are the first three steps?”

“How will we know it’s working?”

CRITIC QUESTIONS

“What could go wrong?”

“Who might object, and why?”

“What is missing from the plan?”

“When or where would it not work?”

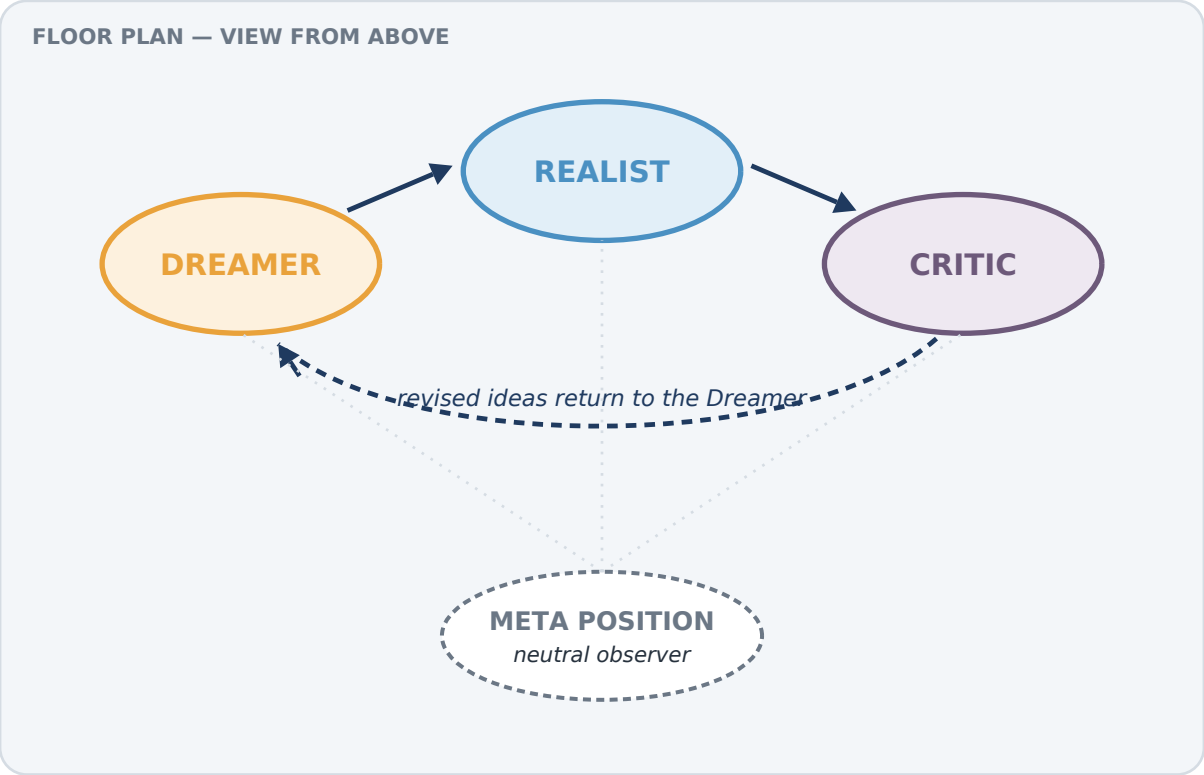
“What would make it stronger?”

Tip for the Critic: turn criticism into questions and aim it at the **plan**, never the Dreamer. “What would make this work for customers on a budget?” is more useful than “It’s too expensive.”

SECTION 09

Disney · Spatial Set-Up

In NLP coaching, the three roles are often given separate physical locations on the floor, plus a neutral “meta” position to observe from.



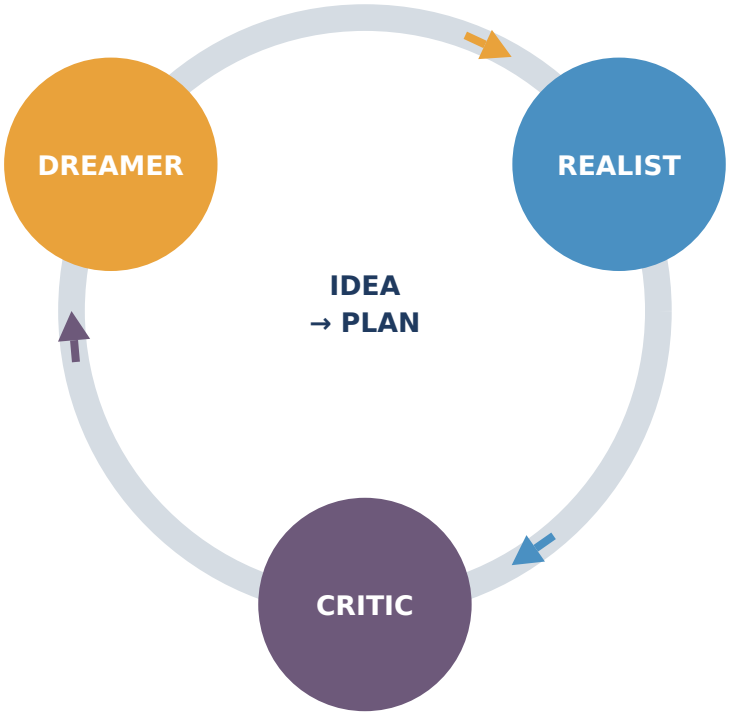
Setting up the space

Step	What to do
1 · Mark three spots	Use sheets of paper, chairs or mats. Leave space between them.
2 · Anchor each role	Recall a time you were truly creative / practical / constructively critical; step into the spot while feeling it.
3 · Break state	Step off into the meta position and shake off each role before moving to the next.
4 · Run the cycle	Bring the project through Dreamer → Realist → Critic, repeating as needed.
5 · Observe from meta	From the neutral spot, notice whether the roles are balanced and what is still missing.

SECTION 10

Disney · The Process Cycle

The strategy is a loop, not a straight line. Each pass through the three roles makes the idea clearer and the plan stronger.



Dreamer output
Vision, goals, possibilities

Realist output
Steps, timeline, resources

Critic output
Questions, risks, improvements

Exit when…
the Critic’s questions are answered and the plan feels congruent

Step-by-step

#	Position	Instructions
1	Dreamer	Step into the Dreamer spot. Imagine the goal fully achieved. Let ideas flow freely — no judging.
2	Meta	Step out. Shake off the state.
3	Realist	Act “as if” the dream is achievable. Map steps, roles, timeline and resources. Walk through it.
4	Meta	Step out. Shake off the state.
5	Critic	Review the plan carefully. List risks and missing pieces as questions.
6	Dreamer	Take the Critic’s questions back to the Dreamer to create fresh solutions.
7	Repeat	Cycle until the plan satisfies all three roles; then commit to the first step.

SECTION 11

Disney · Worked Example

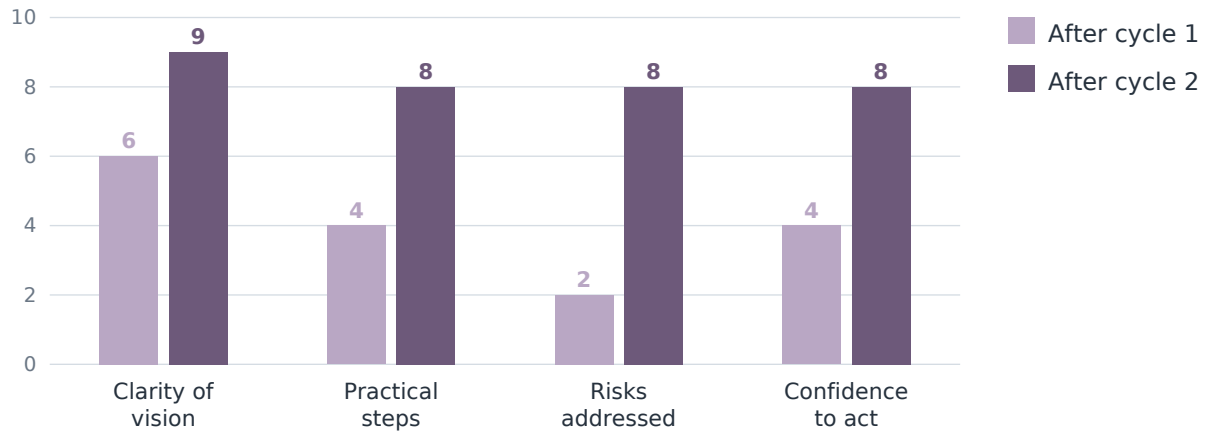
A freelance designer wants to launch an online course. Here is how each role contributes over two cycles.

THE IDEA

“I’d like to teach other designers what I know.”

Cycle	Dreamer	Realist	Critic
1	A popular course, a community of students, freedom to travel while earning.	Record 10 video lessons; host on a course platform; sell at €200.	Who exactly is it for? Why choose me over free YouTube videos? Do I have time to record 10 lessons?
2	A focused course on branding for small cafés — my real niche; students get real client results.	Pilot with 10 students live on video; record the sessions; €120 pilot price; launch by March.	Pricing tested with pilot; demand checked by pre-sales; time: 2 evenings/week. Plan approved.

How the plan improved across cycles



Illustrative self-ratings (0–10) for this example.

Notice: the Critic’s questions in cycle 1 didn’t kill the idea — they gave the Dreamer better raw material. A narrower, clearer dream made the Realist’s plan simpler and the Critic’s concerns easier to answer.

SECTION 12

Disney · Teams and Pitfalls

The Disney strategy works well in groups, where different people naturally prefer different roles.

Running a Disney session with a team



Example 100-minute agenda — adjust to the size of the project.

Tip	Why it helps
Everyone takes the same role at the same time	Prevents one person dreaming while another criticises
Use separate flipcharts or walls for each role	Makes the spatial anchoring visible for the group
Phrase all criticism as questions	Keeps the Critic constructive and the Dreamer safe
Rotate people out of their favourite role	Natural critics learn to dream; natural dreamers learn to plan
Appoint a neutral facilitator (meta position)	Keeps time and notices when roles start to mix

Common pitfalls

Critic too early

× Ideas get shut down before they grow.

✓ **Fix:** Strictly separate the phases.

Endless dreaming

× No concrete plan ever emerges.

✓ **Fix:** Time-box the Dreamer; push to the Realist.

Critic attacks people

× Team members get defensive.

✓ **Fix:** Critique the plan, as questions.

Only one cycle

× Weaknesses remain unaddressed.

✓ **Fix:** Return critiques to the Dreamer.

SECTION 13

Pain / Pleasure · Overview

People are driven to move away from pain and toward pleasure. Coaching can use both forces to build strong motivation for change.

PART C **PAIN / PLEASURE**

The pain/pleasure principle is an old idea in philosophy and psychology. In NLP-influenced coaching — popularised especially by **Tony Robbins** — it is used to create **leverage**: linking strong feelings of pain to the old behaviour and strong feelings of pleasure to the new one. It connects to the NLP meta-program of **toward** vs **away-from** motivation.

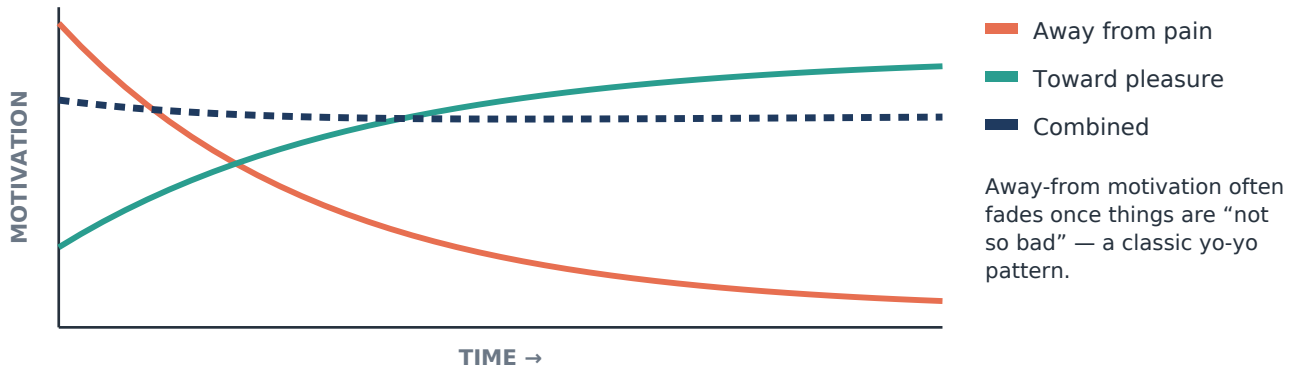
AWAY FROM PAIN

- Fast and powerful to start change
- Focuses on problems and costs
- Fades as the pain reduces
- Language: avoid, stop, prevent, get rid of

TOWARD PLEASURE

- Slower to start, but lasts longer
- Focuses on goals and benefits
- Grows as progress is made
- Language: achieve, gain, get, enjoy

Motivation over time — why you need both



Away-from motivation often fades once things are “not so bad” — a classic yo-yo pattern.

Conceptual illustration — not measured data.

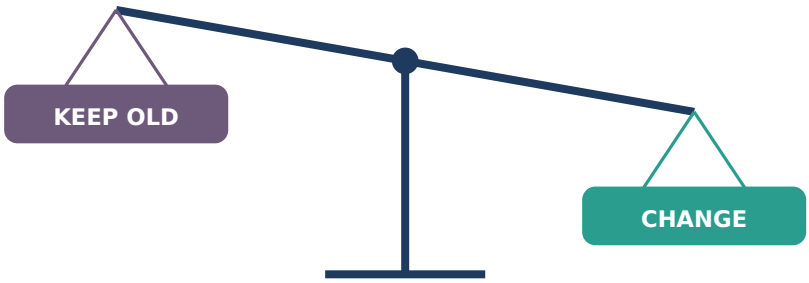
SECTION 14

Pain / Pleasure · The Decision Balance

Every unchanged behaviour persists because it brings some pleasure or avoids some pain. A four-box map makes the hidden trade-offs visible.

	STAY THE SAME	CHANGE
PLEASURE	**Pleasure of staying the same** *What do I get from the current behaviour?* e.g. comfort, ease, familiarity	**Pleasure of changing** *What will I gain if I change?* e.g. health, pride, freedom, money
PAIN	**Pain of staying the same** *What will it cost me if I don't change?* e.g. regret, health, relationships	**Pain of changing** *What will be hard about changing?* e.g. effort, discomfort, uncertainty

Tipping the balance



Change happens when the right side outweighs the left:

Pain of staying + Pleasure of changing
>
Pleasure of staying + Pain of changing

Address **all four boxes**: find new ways to keep the pleasure of the old behaviour, and reduce the pain of changing. This resembles the *decisional balance* exercise used in motivational interviewing.

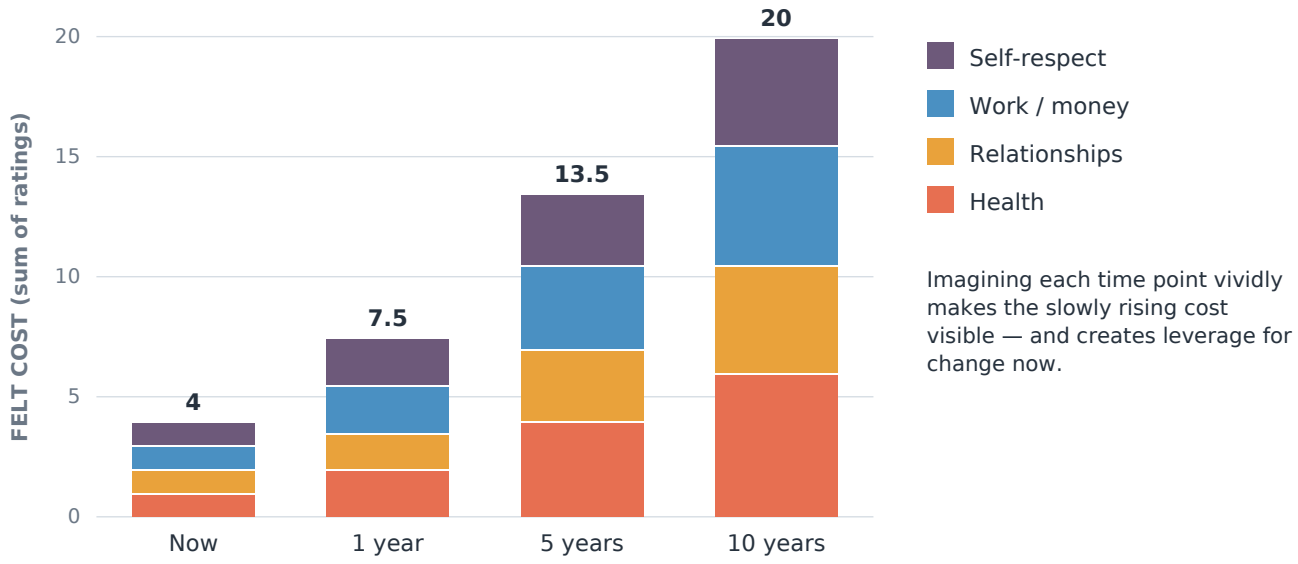
SECTION 15

Pain / Pleasure · Building Leverage

A structured process for turning "I should" into "I must" — by making the costs and benefits real, vivid and personal.

1	**Name the behaviour**	Choose one specific behaviour to change and the new behaviour to replace it.
2	**Map the four boxes**	Fill in the decision balance honestly — especially the pleasure of the old behaviour.
3	**Feel the cost over time**	Imagine continuing unchanged: in 1 year, 5 years, 10 years. What has it cost you and others?
4	**Feel the benefit over time**	Imagine having changed: 1, 5 and 10 years on. What have you gained?
5	**Interrupt the old pattern**	Break the state physically — move, stand up, change focus.
6	**Choose a replacement**	Pick a new behaviour that still meets the old behaviour's positive purpose.
7	**Commit & condition**	Decide, act within 24 hours, and reward each successful repetition.

How the cost of not changing can grow over time (illustrative)



Imagining each time point vividly makes the slowly rising cost visible — and creates leverage for change now.

Example client ratings (0–10 per area); not research data.

SECTION 16

Pain / Pleasure · Worked Example

A client wants to stop scrolling on their phone late at night and go to bed by 11 p.m.

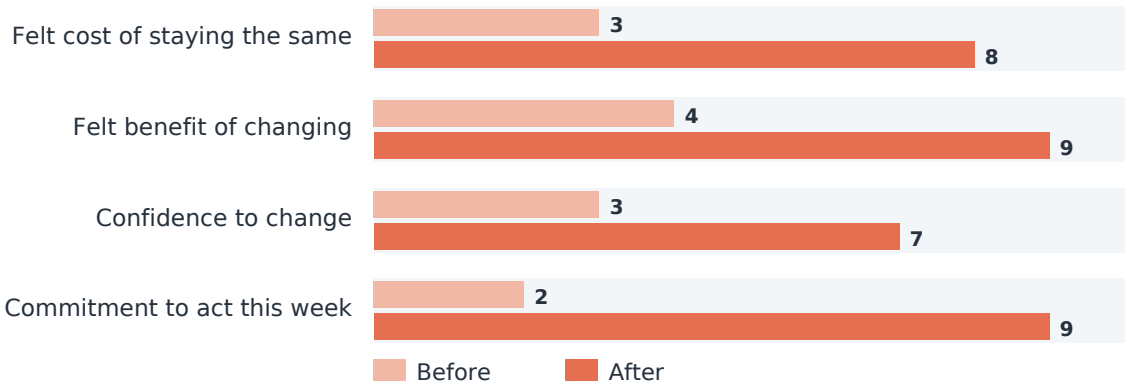
Decision balance

	Staying the same (late scrolling)	Changing (bed by 11 p.m.)
Pleasure	Relaxing “me time”; entertainment; avoids thinking about work	More energy; better mood; clearer focus; time for morning exercise
Pain	Tired every morning; irritable with family; poor work focus; caffeine reliance	Giving up “me time”; boredom at first; breaking a habit

Leverage questions and answers

Question	Client’s answer
If nothing changes, what will it cost you in a year?	Constant exhaustion; missed promotion; snapping at my kids.
…and in five years?	Health problems; kids remembering a tired, grumpy parent.
What will you gain if you change?	Energy for mornings with family; better work; feeling in control.
How can you keep the “me time”?	Read a novel 10:15–10:45 p.m. instead — phone charges outside the bedroom.
What is your first step, today?	Buy an alarm clock; set a 10 p.m. phone reminder.

Motivation ratings before and after the session (illustrative, 0–10)

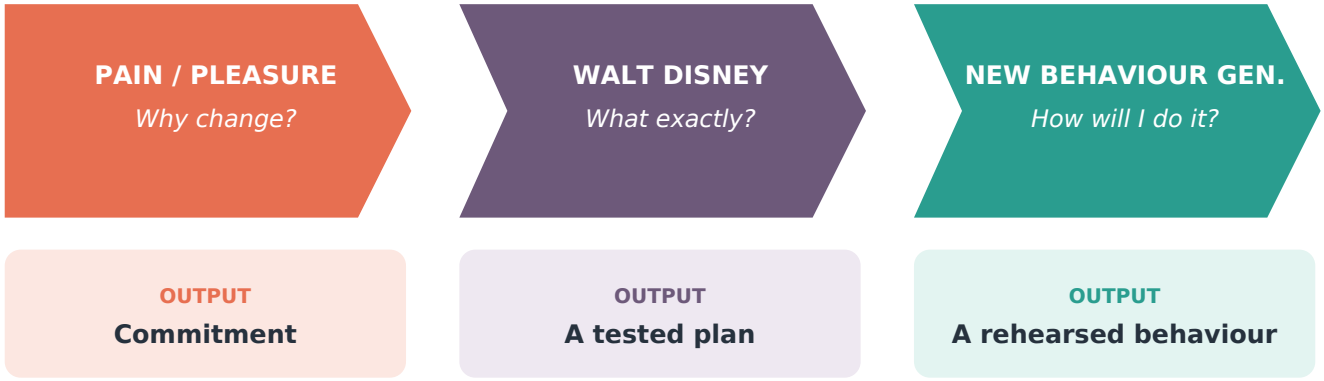


Notice: the session didn’t just add pain. It kept the **pleasure of the old behaviour** (“me time”) through a replacement, which makes the change far more likely to last.

SECTION 17

Combining the Three Strategies

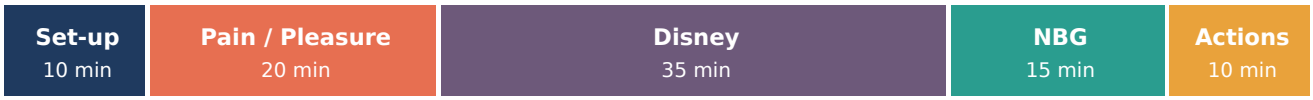
In practice, coaches often chain the strategies: build motivation, design the plan, then rehearse the behaviour.



Example: a team leader preparing to deliver difficult news

Stage	Strategy	What happened
Motivation	Pain / Pleasure	Cost of avoiding: rumours, loss of trust. Benefit of acting: respect, team clarity. Commits to speak by Friday.
Planning	Walt Disney	Dreamer: an honest, caring meeting. Realist: 20-min team call + 1:1s. Critic: “What questions will they ask?” → prepares FAQs.
Rehearsal	New Behaviour Generator	Runs the call in imagination 4 times; adjusts pacing and adds a pause after the news. Feels ready (8/10).
Action	—	Delivers the news on Friday; follows up with 1:1s the next week.

Session flow (example 90-minute coaching session)



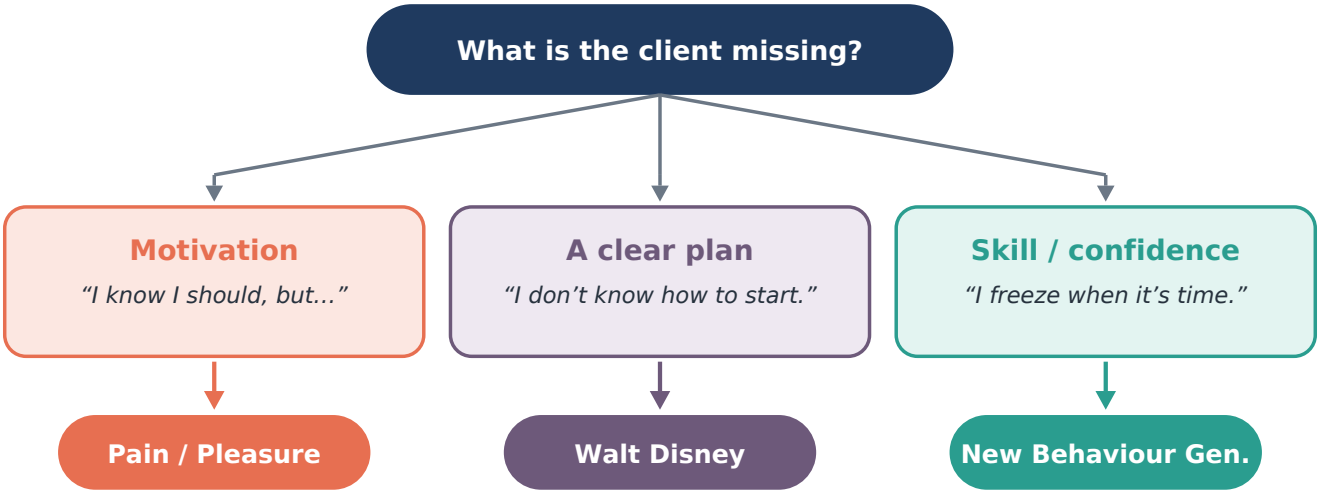
Signals to switch strategy mid-session

If you notice…	It suggests…	Switch to…
“Yes, but…” or low energy about acting	Motivation is still weak	Pain / Pleasure
Vague goals; “I’m not sure what to do”	No clear plan yet	Walt Disney
Clear plan, but fear or hesitation	Skill or confidence gap	New Behaviour Generator
Rehearsal keeps feeling “wrong”	Plan may be flawed	Disney — Critic position

SECTION 18

Choosing a Strategy & a Balanced View

Start with what the client is missing: motivation, a plan, or the ability to perform the behaviour.



Situation	Best fit	Why
Client keeps putting change off	Pain / Pleasure	Ambivalence is the block, not knowledge
A new project or business idea	Walt Disney	Needs ideas, structure and risk testing
Upcoming interview or presentation	NBG	Needs rehearsal and confidence
Team stuck in criticism	Walt Disney	Separates the roles; protects ideas
Old habit returns after success	Pain / Pleasure + NBG	Refresh leverage; rehearse the replacement

BALANCED VIEW

A note on evidence. These strategies come from NLP modelling and coaching practice, and NLP as a whole has limited support from controlled research. Their core ideas, however, overlap with better-studied methods: **mental rehearsal** (sports psychology), **structured creativity** (separating idea generation from evaluation), and **decisional balance** (motivational interviewing). Use them as practical tools within ethical coaching — and use pain-based leverage carefully, especially with clients who are anxious, low in mood or vulnerable. For mental-health concerns, refer to a qualified professional.

SECTION 19

Quick-Reference Sheet & Key Takeaways

One page to keep beside you in coaching sessions.

NEW BEHAVIOUR GENERATOR

1. Choose one behaviour
2. "What would I look like?"
3. Watch the movie (dissociated)
4. Step in and feel it
5. Feels right? If not, adjust
6. Repeat, then future-pace

WALT DISNEY STRATEGY

1. Set up three spaces + meta
2. DREAMER: what do we want?
3. REALIST: how will we do it?
4. CRITIC: what could go wrong?
5. Return critiques to Dreamer
6. Cycle until all three agree

PAIN / PLEASURE

1. Name old and new behaviour
2. Map the four boxes
3. Feel the cost: 1, 5, 10 years
4. Feel the benefit: 1, 5, 10 years
5. Keep the old pleasure
6. Act within 24 hours

Key coaching questions

Strategy	One question to remember
New Behaviour Generator	"If you could already do this, what would you look and sound like?"
Walt Disney	"Which role are we in right now — Dreamer, Realist or Critic?"
Pain / Pleasure	"What will it cost you if nothing changes — and what will you gain if it does?"

Key takeaways

STRATEGIES ARE SEQUENCES
Make the steps explicit and they can be changed.

MOTIVATE FIRST
Leverage turns "should" into "must".

SEPARATE THE ROLES
Dream, plan and critique — one at a time.

REHEARSE IT
See it, feel it, refine it before doing it.

RESPECT ECOLOGY
Keep the good of the old; coach ethically.