

The Experience of Metaphor

There is music in metaphors, in the chords of individual perception played upon the patterns of human experience. Metaphors are more than a way to talk about experience. Metaphors *are* our experience, setting the filters through which we perceive and make sense out of the world. Because of this, metaphors can serve as powerful levers capable of moving perception, experience and behavior.

In the world of our subjective experience, we often become the metaphors we have come to believe. In this way a simple story can ignite great personal transformation. Therapeutic metaphors (stories intended to address a specific personal need) can provide a depth of association and potential for insight that is sometimes not available through more direct approaches. This is also an essential skill for those interested in hypnosis, as trance creates a learning state ideal to take advantage of metaphor's multiple levels of communication, suggestion, and insight.

And the compelling nature of metaphor extends beyond the office of the therapist, touching also the realms of business and government:

THERAPY

Metaphors create a shared language, a shared world within which the therapist can easily and impactfully communicate to the client about a problem and how to resolve it. And, perhaps more importantly, that metaphorical world can become one in which the client discovers his or her *own* resolution to the problem.

BUSINESS

Organisations often need to effectively communicate to their staff changes in corporate direction, values, and expectations. Metaphor can be a powerful way to express these organisational changes. Capturing the message in metaphorical form—or even as a story—not only makes it understandable, but also provides an effective way to keep the message present and operating as the team moves forward.

GOVERNMENT

Even more than in the world of business, the world of government is concerned with helping large groups of people understand their role in supporting important initiatives. An effective metaphor can help people understand the significance of what is being asked of them, as well as have a way to hold onto essential ideas as they move through their day, implementing policies.

Like other artistic expressions, a metaphor derives its ability to affect and influence us by virtue of its underlying structure. The masterful storyteller thinks in ways that naturally create the parallels, connections, and discoveries that become utterly compelling to the listener. This ability to think in terms of metaphorical structure is the essence of this workshop.

The goals of our seminars are to:

- Be able to hear and appreciate the significance of the metaphors people use to describe their experience.
- Have ways to use analogy and metaphor to move the perceptions and responses of yourself or of others.
- Learn structural formats and protocols for creating influential metaphors.
- Construct and tell compelling therapeutic metaphors.
- Free yourself up to fully engage in your storytelling.
- Think analogically so that, in time, recognising and generating metaphors becomes a natural part of your interactions with other people.

David Gordon
(reprinted from his website)