

Bouncing out of bed in the morning!

NLP Modelling Project for John Seymour Associates
Practitioner Training

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Abstract

A person should be strong like a lion to arise in the morning for the service of his Creator. Shulhan Arukh (Code of Jewish Law)

My day usually began with my alarm ringing for 20 minutes and me eventually crawling out of bed, wishing I could still be there, snuggling under the covers. I have a friend, L, who mentioned to me that he bounces out of bed within one ring of his alarm clock, taking just a few seconds. In this modelling project, I modelled this skill, and explored what I would need to do differently in order to arise both speedily and happily. Within just a few days of obtaining these results, I have been getting to sleep and getting up far more easily. I hope that these results will enable other people to do the same. The Methodology and Results sections use some technical NLP language; the Practical Application section on page 5 is jargon-free and can be read without reference to the other two.

Methodology

For this particular skill, I decided that the most important areas were likely to be beliefs and behaviours. So I initially explored beliefs around getting up, asking such questions as “How is getting out of bed important to you?” This led to some very interesting information about L and his beliefs about life, and gave some very clear indications of why he gets out of bed with such zest. This question also led him to talk about strategies he uses during the course of the day, when he goes to bed at night, and when he wishes to have a recharging nap during the day. After exploring these beliefs and catching some of the strategies, I moved on to formal strategy elicitation, both using strategy elicitation questions and watching for eye accessing cues as the strategies were being described. I explored the strategy for going to bed first, as I felt, based on information received, that this was likely to be key to the whole skill; after this, I explored the arising strategy. Finally, during the process, I asked TOTE-like questions to determine what L does if his strategy fails, and also some questions to find out whether this skill is location-specific.

Results

As mentioned in the Methodology section, L's beliefs turned out to be very important for this skill. The principal belief appeared to be that life itself is a precious Divine gift, and therefore we must appreciate what we have been given and make the best use of it that we can. It follows that we must not waste it, and so getting up early with energy, ready to make full use of the day ahead, is the only appropriate way to arise. Another somewhat relevant value is that it is important to be bang on time, and getting up when the alarm goes off is important in achieving this.

There are several day-long strategies used by L which follow from the above beliefs; we now describe a few of the most notable ones. The first is a continuous appreciation of and joyfulness about the multitudinous positive details of life. L finds delight in such natural things as the grass, the sun, the rain, and in human interactions such as making his wife a cup of tea in the morning, and finding laundered socks in his cupboard. He frequently looks forward to things, be they large or small. And he spends much of his day vividly dreaming, both creatively and remembering nice things from the past. These dreams seem to be primarily visual, but bring in most of the other representational systems as appropriate, especially hearing music (either V_i^c or V_i^r). He also frequently reframes potentially negative events into a positive frame: "What is good about this?"

When having a nap during the day, the strategy used for falling asleep is to visualise little men coming along and "cranking down the shutters", which are located at his eyelids or just in front of them. This process takes about 10–20 seconds, and apparently always works when he needs a nap.

The primary strategies elicited were those for going to sleep at night and arising in the morning. The evening strategy can begin at any time in the evening, but in any case begins by teeth-brushing time. It runs as follows:

All_i^c	Looking forward to something the next day, for example, breakfast or an orange. Primarily an image with all of the other senses involved (such as smelling and tasting the food). There may also be some giggling (something which L does a fair amount). There is a feeling of excitement and enthusiasm, even a 'buzzing' feeling.
K_e, A_i^c	Brushing teeth, hears music following the rhythm of the brushing.
A_e	Says the <i>shema</i> (bedtime prayers). Everything else stops.
K_e	Gets into bed.

The strategy continues in one of two alternative ways:

Alternative 1

A_i^d or A_e	"Can't wait for tomorrow because . . ." This may be said aloud to his wife. Occasionally, this becomes a reflection on an event of the day instead.
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V_i^c, A_i^c Play through the scene in first position, imagining and planning possibilities.

Alternative 2

A_i^d or A_e Decide on a scenario, possibly by asking his wife: “What shall I be tonight?” This could be a hero, a cowboy, a musician giving a concert or many other things. The scenario must be positive, warm and happy.

V_i^c Curtains on the stage raise for the performance.

V_i^c, A_i^c Watch the performance. There is an orchestra, band or other sounds. Usually this is seen from meta position, but sometimes he may go onto the stage to comfort someone. The other senses may also be involved as appropriate.

The last step usually lasts up to about two minutes, and almost never fails. (L only remembers three such occasions in the last five years.) If it doesn't work, he will get up again, have a drink, read a bit and go back to bed. If the scene becomes unpleasant because a ‘spoiler’ arrives (someone who doesn't want to make the experience totally fun), then he just tells them to get off the stage, and they do. This skill also works everywhere, even on planes, trains and buses.

Finally, the arising strategy is much simpler:

A_e Clock beeps once.

K_e Left arm switches the clock off, while the right arm lifts the quilt off.

K_e Get up from the bed.

This is a learned response to the trigger of the alarm clock beeping, and it seems that there is no internal dialogue or other interruption between the beep and the physical movements. (There is also a value here: he does not want to wake his wife, even though she quite happily sleeps through this alarm!) This whole strategy takes about five seconds only. After this, L begins to start his internal images running again, imagining what he is looking forward to, and another day has begun. Again, this strategy almost never fails for L (excepting times of illness).

Practical Application

Having studied how L is able to bounce out of bed in the morning with such zest, we can now describe how this may be emulated.

The first step is to believe that it is an important thing to do. Among L's major beliefs about life is that life is a precious gift, and therefore it must not be wasted. To lie in bed after the alarm has gone off is to waste time. Beginning to share this belief is an important component of the whole ability.

The next key step is to be excited about everything in life, especially the small things. This makes going to bed a more enjoyable experience, as one will be able to focus on something one is looking forward to.

When preparing for bed, vividly imagine something positive and exciting which you are looking forward to the next day. Imagine seeing it and also, where relevant, hearing it, smelling it, tasting it and feeling it. This could be something major or slightly longer term (for example, a holiday), but it can also be something as small as a glass of orange juice or a banana.

When lying in bed, there are two techniques used by L which can be copied. The first is to think about something positive which you are looking forward to happening the next day. Imagine seeing the scene, with music or appropriate sounds, and play through different scenarios. They must all be positive and exciting. If someone or something appears in the scene whom you do not wish to be there, simply send them away: they will leave on your instructions. Allow yourself to fall asleep as you are vividly imagining these scenes and keeping yourself focused on them.

In the second technique, you watch a play where you are the key character. You may be a hero (or superhero), a diver, a cowboy, a musician in a concert or something similarly positive and exciting for you. Allow the curtains to rise on the stage, the orchestra to strike up, and then watch the play unfold. The same advice follows here as in the first technique. These techniques both allow one to fall asleep in a very positive state of mind.

Finally, to bounce out of bed, one practises the moves when awake, learning to simply do the action of bouncing out of bed in response to the alarm clock, but without saying anything to oneself in the process! Repeated enough times, this will become a learned behaviour that will work for real in the mornings. And once sitting on the bed or standing up, you can start thinking about something you are looking forward to.

And the day has begun in a zestful way!