

Metaphors of Identity



Operating Metaphors™ & Iconic Change

by
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An Audio Cassette Seminar

Produced by



Genesis II
Creating a World of Possibilities

About Operating Metaphors™

How do we know what to want? That was the beginning for me. We all seek to be happy and fulfilled in our lives, each in our own way. We often strive, struggle, sweat and sacrifice to achieve it. Yet how many of us ever really choose what we strive so hard for? How is it that so many others choose goals so different from our own? And which of us hasn't sought long and hard after some particular goal, only to get there and find it's not what we really want? How is this possible?

Operating Metaphors makes sense of all this. Our everyday metaphoric expressions build up to form unconscious patterns that create and organize the meaning of our lives. They become filters through which we make sense of our world. Our Operating Metaphor(s) determine the content of our lives: what we focus on, what the world means to us. Consequently, they shape our beliefs, actions and lifestyle.

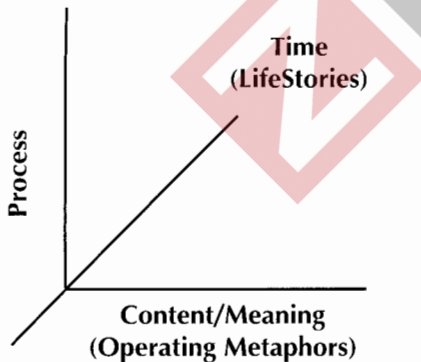
Part of a larger model that is a unique and grounded way of discovering one's Personal Mythology, Operating Metaphors will allow you to easily change what you want, what you value and what you believe. It is a real step towards conscious evolution and real freedom of choice.

About this booklet

This booklet is designed to accompany the Metaphors of Identity audio cassette seminar, providing graphics and outlines for the examples, demonstrations and lecture.

The 3 Dimensions of Human Experience

Human experience can be thought of as being made of three dimensions: content (or meaning), process, and time. Time creates our LifeStories. Our Operating Metaphors are what our LifeStories will be about.



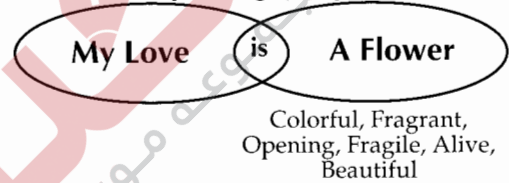
Metaphor

Whenever we describe something in terms of something else, we are making a metaphor. *My Love is a Flower*. Metaphor takes an entire **experience** of one thing, in this case, *My Love*, and contrasts it with an **idea**, in this case, *a Flower*. Elements in the experience of *My Love* are identified and understood in terms of elements of the idea of *a Flower*.

This is how people make meaning, by comparing an experience and an idea, or comparing an idea and another idea. It is not good or bad, it is.

With every metaphor, some experiences will become more important and embellished while others will be diminished or deleted. For example, is a flower understanding or passionate? Can a flower hold you?

Operating Metaphor



Metaphors

All stories and analogies make metaphors whether we are aware of them or not. They can be used deliberately in education, therapy, business and politics because they:

- Relate domains of/for meaning
- Provide a context
- Provide experience
- Have sequences of emotional states or reactions
- Are isomorphic, universal, iconic and narrative
- Can be constructed or elicited
- Can be of natural analogies or from the realm of imagination
- Can be vicarious or living/symbolic
- Can be "shallow" (evident) or "deep" (obscure)
- Can be for conscious or outside-conscious appreciation
- Are then and/or there: Occur anytime people are not referring to the here & now, such as discussing sports, people, nations, etc., even listening to songs
- Carry presuppositions, beliefs, criteria and desired states

Metaphors of Identity

How Operating Metaphors™ Determine Values, Beliefs, & Presuppositions

Some examples from some currently popular therapy models including benefits and drawbacks.

Drawbacks	Behaviorism: Stimulus/Response, Anchoring	Negotiation: Parts Model, Family Therapy	Decision-Making: Strategies, Planning
	Mechanism	Politics	Computer Programming

Operating Metaphor™ Format (Part V)

Part V of the Operating Metaphor Format will allow you to determine the Desires, Values, Beliefs and Presuppositions for a particular Operating Metaphor. For every Operating Metaphor these will be different.

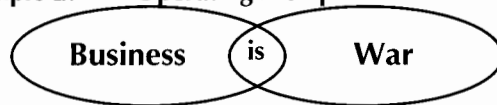
Example 1: Operating Metaphor



Desired State: Get, Have, Keep
Values/Criteria: Valuable, Powerful
Beliefs: Limited, More is better
Presuppositions: Measurable, Exchangeable

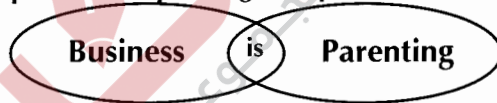
Operating Metaphors™ and Iconic Change

Example 2: Operating Metaphor



Desired State: Victory, Win, Destruction of Enemy
Values/Criteria: Competitiveness, Hierarchy, Obedience, Aggressiveness
Beliefs: Ends justify the means, Survival is at stake, Can't trust anyone, Might makes right, All is fair.
Presuppositions: Organizations fighting to take over each other, Men in uniform, Leaders.

Example 3: Operating Metaphor



Desired State: Growth, Health, Knowledge, Protection, Survival, Reproduction
Values/Criteria: It comes first, Care for/about it
Beliefs: Guardian, Care Taker, Responsible
Presuppositions: Sacrifice, Guardianship

Common Domains of Subjective Experience

People think of their lives as having different parts or domains. Four common domains for modern Americans are:

Career / School
 Relationships
 Health
 Spiritual

Operating Metaphors™ Format (Part I)

What are the significant domains of your experience?

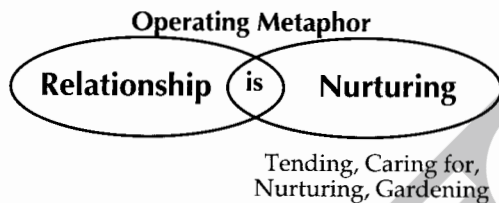
Metaphors of Identity

Operating Metaphor™ Format (Part I)

Part I of the Operating Metaphor Format offers you questions you can ask a person to find their Operating Metaphor(s) for a particular domain. As a person talks, listen for their metaphoric words and phrases. The examples on the tapes will begin to tune your ears.

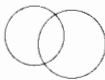
1. Select a Domain (from Page 4)
2. "Tell me about an important/significant experience or event you've had."
Listen for metaphoric words and phrases. Write them down.
3. "What is important to you about this experience?"
Listen for metaphoric words and phrases. Write them down.
4. After a person has talked for awhile and become engaged in their Operating Metaphor(s), you can offer them what you think it might be or you can ask them, "What is [that domain] like?" (See Part III of Operating Metaphors™ Elicitation Format on page 13).

Demonstration with Cal



The 4 ways Operating Metaphors™ are Organized

1. **Umbrella**
Single concept going across all contexts
2. **Pairs**
Often closely related concepts such as Gardening and Parenting
3. **Constellation**
In the same large conceptual area such as Friends, Family, and Pets
4. **Nested**
One metaphor inside another. For example, Family inside of Jungle.



Operating Metaphors™ and Iconic Change

Is Your Operating Metaphor™ Supporting What You Want?

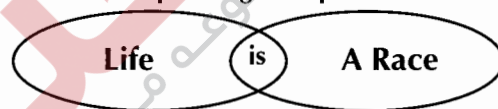
Take a moment to consider what you want in a specific domain of your life (e.g. career, love, family). Compare them with what is possible or likely within your Operating Metaphor.

Domain _____

What is possible _____ What you want _____

Demonstration with Sam

Operating Metaphor



What is possible:

Winning/losing
Another race
Limited time
Focused on the finish line

What you want

Enjoy relationships
Slow down
Read books
Balance
Take care of all parts of myself

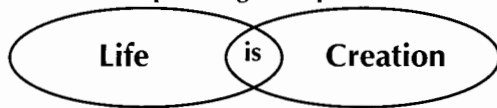
Operating Metaphor™ Format (Part II) Using Objects or Artifacts

1. Ask the person to talk about an individual, expressive/unique object or artifact some one has. Wonder about what presuppositions are naturally embedded in the object or the idea of the object.
2. Ask "What is important to you about this object?"
As they answer, listen for metaphoric phrases and words. Write them down. If you need to, ask them for more detail or again "What's important about that?"

Metaphors of Identity

Demonstration with Sammy

Operating Metaphor



"Tell me about those earrings."

"What is important about those earrings?"

"Freedom, See how everything is a part of everything else, Creation, Transformation"

Operating Metaphor™ Format (Part IV) Iconic Change

So far, our primary approach to Operating Metaphors has been verbal; eliciting and describing them in words. Operating Metaphors delete, generalize and distort our life experience into a meaningful and manageable verbal form. Inner visual images are affected the same way.

An Iconic image is the visual representation of the Operating Metaphor. It is more than just a picture, it is symbolic and imbued with significant meaning.

After you have elicited an Operating Metaphor verbally and confirmed it with artifacts, ask them to what image they see that represents their Operating Metaphor and the location of that image in their mind's eye.

Demonstration with Sarah

Operating Metaphor



"What image comes to mind when you think about what your life is like?"

"A rose."

"Where in your mind's eye do you see that image?"

"It's over there." (Sarah gestures to the location she sees the image).

Operating Metaphors™ and Iconic Change

Conditions for Iconic Change

1. Maintains existing image qualities (location, size, brightness, etc.).
2. Maintains positive function of present Operating Metaphor.
3. New Iconic image/Operating Metaphor is, at least in part, living, animate, active, moving.
4. Rich and detailed imagery of content.
5. Actively involves the person with Iconic image.

Iconic Change

You can change the Operating Metaphor by changing or enhancing the Iconic image.

Example 1. Be an active agent as Sarah did when she became the maker of gardens in which she grows many roses and plans future gardens.

Example 2. Enrich the Iconic image to include more content (or area) as Kaz did when she enlarged the ride to an amusement park the size of the world.

Example 3. Evolve the Iconic image all together to create a new Operating Metaphor that matches current goals. Sam invented a new race in which the person who enjoyed life the most won. He let the old image fade away and then several times brought a new Iconic image back in its place until he had one he liked.

Example 4. Notice the Operating Metaphors of others and consequently what desires, values, beliefs and presuppositions they have in their lives. Try on other Operating Metaphors to discover what's possible and change and evolve your own Operating Metaphor based on what you learn.

Utilization

Joining (or matching) an individual or group's Operating Metaphor will definitely increase rapport. Filling in the Operating Metaphor Format for Desired States, Values/ Criteria, Beliefs and Presuppositions will allow you to know what roles you could play (or will be pressed to play), infer their unstated values and expectations and to predict their future actions.

Metaphors of Identity

Operating Metaphors™ Format

Sam

Part I—Domain of Subjective Experience: Life

(i.e., Career, Relationships, Health, Spiritual, Money, Life)

Part I & II

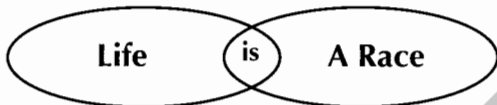
Metaphoric words & phrases: Pitstop, Get on track, Always another race, Overdrive, I don't want to get passed on the right _____

Part II—Artifacts

Lifestyle: Always racing to get somewhere _____

Objects: Drives an MR-2 _____

Part III—Operating Metaphor



Part IV—Iconic Representation

Description: I'm driving my car looking over my left shoulder _____

Location: Out in front of me _____

Part V—Desires, Values, Beliefs & Presupposition

Desired States: Winning, _____

Values/Criteria: Speed, Endurance, _____

Beliefs: Chance to win, Have to win, Winning is the only thing _____

Presuppositions: Competitive, World is made up of winners & losers, Rewards for winning _____

Operating Metaphors™ and Iconic Change

Operating Metaphors™ Format

Kaz

Part I—Domain of Subjective Experience: Life

(i.e., Career, Relationships, Health, Spiritual, Money, Life)

Part I & II

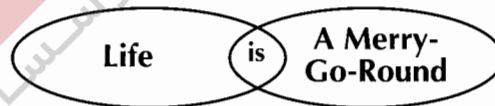
Metaphoric words & phrases: Fun, Silly, Clowning around _____

Part II—Artifacts

Lifestyle: _____

Objects: Wears bright, Oversized, Colorful clown like clothes _____

Part III—Operating Metaphor



Part IV—Iconic Representation

Description: Image of a merry-go-round _____

Location: Over there (gestures out in front) _____

Part V—Desires, Values, Beliefs & Presupposition

Desired States: Fun, Playful _____

Values/Criteria: Fun, Clowning around, Silly, _____

Beliefs: Life is best when it is fun _____

Presuppositions: Going over the same territory, People around _____

Metaphors of Identity

Operating Metaphors™ Format

Part I—Domain of Subjective Experience: _____

(i.e., Career, Relationships, Health, Spiritual, Money, Life)

Part I & II

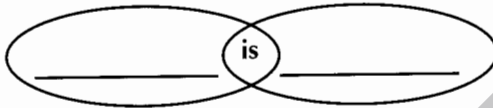
Metaphoric words & phrases: _____

Part II—Artifacts

Lifestyle: _____

Objects: _____

Part III—Operating Metaphor



Part IV—Iconic Representation

Description: _____

Location: _____

Part V—Desires, Values, Beliefs & Presupposition

Desired States: _____

Values/Criteria: _____

Beliefs: _____

Presuppositions: _____

Operating Metaphors™ and Iconic Change

Operating Metaphor™ Format

Part I—Domain of Subjective Experience: _____

(i.e., Career, Relationships, Health, Spiritual, Money, Life)

Part I & II

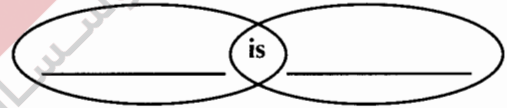
Metaphoric words & phrases: _____

Part II—Artifacts

Lifestyle: _____

Objects: _____

Part III—Operating Metaphor



Part IV—Iconic Representation

Description: _____

Location: _____

Part V—Desires, Values, Beliefs & Presupposition

Desired States: _____

Values/Criteria: _____

Beliefs: _____

Presuppositions: _____

Operating Metaphors™ Elicitation Format

Part I

1. Select a Domain (i.e. Career, Relationships, Life, etc.)
2. "What is a very significant/important event or experience you've had in your (selected domain)?"
3. "What is important to you about that experience?"
As the person talks, listen for the metaphoric words and phrases in their language. Write them down.

Part II

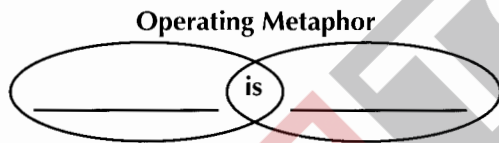
Ask about a significant, expressive/unique, personal (or corporate) object or artifact. See the object "as it is" and consider what presuppositions are embedded in it.

1. "That's a lovely (interesting) _____. Tell me about it."
2. "What is important to you about that object?"

As they answer, listen for metaphoric phrases and words. If you need to, ask them for more detail or again, "What's important to you about that?"

Part III

After the person has talked for awhile about an important event and/or a personally precious object, he or she will be emotionally involved in a "state" in which their Operating Metaphor is more available to consciousness. At this point, ask him or her, "What is [that domain] like for you?" or "What does it mean to you?" They will often state their Operating Metaphor directly.



Part IV

After you have discovered an Operating Metaphor(s) verbally and/or confirmed it with artifacts, ask him/her to notice the image in their mind's eye that represents that metaphor and its location.

Part V

When you discover what their Operating Metaphor is, then you can determine/predict their Desires, Values, Beliefs, Presuppositions, Probable Actions, Relationships and Lifestyle using the Operating Metaphors Format.

Selected Bibliography

When nature wants flying, nature doesn't care who flies first. There is much confirmation for the Operating Metaphors approach from very different fields and individuals. It's intellectual roots are Cognitive Linguistics; the groundbreaking work of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson. There are more, theoretical and popular, a single chapter or an entire text. I have made my selections based on depth, clarity and usefulness. Most of the works describe the territories. To my knowledge, only Operating Metaphors and Iconic Change provide applications for change.

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Metaphors of Identity

About the Author: Charles Faulkner

Beginning his exploration into the human psyche in the 70's, Charles lead Gestalt/TA groups and studied mythology and literature with Joseph Campbell and others. In the 80's, he discovered the skills of accelerated language learning and used them to explore the world's cultures and religions. While studying Cognitive Linguistics, Charles created Operating Metaphors™, Iconic Change and LifeStories. He also became an internationally respected Certified NLP Trainer and Modeler, teaching in the United States, Japan, Europe and Africa. In addition to his speeches, trainings and private clients, Charles consults with companies on corporate identity and vision-making.

Do you want to know more about Operating Metaphors™, LifeStories & Iconic Change?

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