The Presuppositions of NLP

The thirteen presuppositions are the central principles central of NLP; they are its guiding philosophy, its 'beliefs'. These principles are not claimed to be true or universal. You do not have to believe they are true. They are called presuppositions because you *pre-suppose* them to be true and then act as if they were. You then discover what happens. If you like the results then continue to act as if they are true. They form a set of ethical principles for life.

1.People respond to their experience, not to reality itself.
We do not know what reality is. Our senses, beliefs, and past experience give us a map of the world from which to operate. A map can never be exactly accurate; otherwise it would be the same as the ground it covers. We do not know the territory, so for us, the map *is* the territory. Some maps are better than others for finding your way around. We navigate life like a ship through a dangerous area of sea; as long as the map shows the main hazards, we will be fine. When maps are faulty and do not show the dangers, then we are in danger of running aground. NLP is the art of changing these maps, so we have greater freedom of action.

2.Having a choice is better than not having a choice.
Always try to have a map for yourself that gives you the widest and richest number of choices. Act always to increase choice. The more choices you have, the freer you are and the more influence you have.

3.People make the best choice they can at the time.
A person always makes the best choice they can, given their map of the world. The choice may be self-defeating, bizarre or evil, but for them, it seems the best way forward. Give them a better choice in their map of the world and they will take it. Even better give them a superior map with more choices in it.

4.People work perfectly.
No one is wrong or broken. They are carrying out their strategies perfectly, but the strategies may be poorly designed and ineffective. Find out how you and others do what they do so their strategy can be changed to something more useful and desirable.

5.All actions have a purpose.
Our actions are not random; we are always trying to achieve something, although we may not be aware of what that is.

6.Every behaviour has a positive intention.
All our actions have at least one purpose - to achieve something that we value and benefits us. NLP separates the intention or purpose behind an action from

the action itself. A person is not their behaviour. When a person has a better choice of behaviour that also achieves their positive intention, they will take it.

7.The unconscious mind balances the conscious; it is not malicious.
The unconscious is everything that is not in consciousness at the present moment. It contains all the resources we need to live in balance.

8.The meaning of the communication is not simply what you intend, but also the response you get.
This response may be different to the one you wanted. There are no failures in communication, only responses and feedback. If you are not getting the result you want, change what you are doing. Take responsibility for the communication.

9.We already have all the resources we need, or we can create them.
There are no unresourceful people, only unresourceful states of mind.

10.Mind and body form a system. They are different expressions of the one person.
Mind and body interact and mutually influence each other. It is not possible to make a change in one without the other being affected. When we think differently, our bodies change. When we act differently we change our thoughts and feelings.

11.We process all information through our senses.
Developing your sense so they become more acute gives you better information and helps you think more clearly.

12.Modeling successful performance leads to excellence.
If one person can do something it is possible to model it and teach it to others. In this way everyone can learn to get better results in their own way, you do not become a clone of the model – you learn from them

13.If you want to understand - Act
The learning is in the doing.