

The art of reprogramming minds

Advocates of nuerolinguistic programming say it offers tools for enhancement of human potential

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What are the images that pop up in one's mind when one thinks of Kochi? For some, the city might resemble a vast dumping yard or a mosquito breeding ground, while for others, the metropolis could be a synonym for a rainbow or even a mermaid. These are metaphors that we associate with the daily life and they open a window to people's minds.

"We use eight to 12 metaphors and similes in a minute. It's usually involuntary for most people. Our perceptions push us forward or pull us back. It's important that we become aware of the metaphors we use and consciously change them to improve the quality of our life," says Mohammed Rafi T.F., behavioural scientist and neurolinguistic program-



Building focus: NLP trainer Mohammed Rafi T.F. demonstrating peak performance ball juggling exercise as others try to distract him. • H. VIBHU

ming (NLP) trainer, sitting on the rooftop lounge of a city hotel where he conducts his workshops.

For Jayasree M., a city resident and computer engineering lecturer at Govt. Polytechnic College, Cherthala, the minds of the engineering students are as important as her subject. Her college's

counselling room has her name at its entrance with another board describing her credential as an NLP master practitioner. As a counsellor, she has helped several students overcome their problems, including stage fright, lack of concentration and low self-esteem. "I use NLP tools such as

clean language and metaphors when I counsel and teach students," she says.

NLP offers tools and methodologies for human potential enhancement and for getting rid of physical and mental challenges, maintains Mr. Rafi.

Though there were only a few practitioners in Kerala in the past, there are now NLP training centres in all the major cities including Kochi, Thiruvananthapuram, and Kozhikode.

In psychotherapy

NLP advocates say it can be used as a method of psychotherapy too. However, Sr. Dr. Shalu Koikara, clinical psychologist and hypnotherapist, says it cannot be applied in severe pathological cases. "There is a huge difference in using NLP techniques in a clinical set-up

and in an educational institution. Because, in a clinical set-up, the majority of the cases are in the pathological category," says Sr. Koikara, author of books on psychology and related subjects.

Jinesh, a city-based entrepreneur and trainer of enhanced learning, says NLP helped him improve his people-handling skills.

Unni K.S., another Kochi-ite, adds the techniques helped him to switch his profession when he faced a job threat, and reduce his craving for food.

As Rafi winds up his five-day session, a few participants come forward and ask, "Sir, what is your metaphor for wealth?" It's like an ocean, says Rafi. For one of the participants, it was like an empty bottle, while for another, it was a huge banyan tree with deep roots.