1 Introduction
An artist frames a painting. A carpenter frames a house. Project managers establish a time frame for getting the work done. A criminal evades capture by framing a patsy while a film director frames a shot. Optimists have a particular frame of mind while bowlers get ten frames each game. Authors sometimes use flashbacks to frame a short story and 35mm movie cameras run twenty-four frames per second.

There are dozens of definitions for the word “frame” but most of them have to do with a structure, or a way of perceiving an event, and sometimes even an agenda. In the study and implementation of Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP), frames are particularly important. In Introducing NLP, Joseph O’Connor and John Seymour define frames as “The way we put things into different contexts to give them different meanings; what we make important at the moment” (158). In Sleight of Mouth, Robert Dilts explains that “Frames greatly influence the way that specific experiences and events are interpreted and responded to because of how they serve to ‘punctuate’ those experiences and direct attention” (22). The point is that a frame is the context through which a person, thing or environment is perceived; and framing is a way you can shape an interaction to hopefully achieve the results you desire.

NLP experts often refer to pre-defined types of frames. O’Connor and Seymour list five useful frames: outcome frame, ecology frame, evidence frame, as-if frame, and backtrack frame. Dilts, meanwhile, refers to outcome frames and problem frames. Most of their defined frames use examples from the business world. For the purposes of the Stylelife Challenge, we’re only going to concentrate on one frame: yours.

One word of warning before we proceed… a frame can be a mental point of view, or it can be a context for a conversation. The term is used quite loosely within the seduction community and this can make the discussion somewhat confusing. It can be an outward technique you use with other people, or it can be an inward technique you utilize yourself. In the course of this paper, we’ll use the term somewhat interchangeably. In some cases, we’ll talk about reframing as a verbal technique you can use during conversation with a woman. In other cases, we’ll talk about reframing as a way to see a situation from a different point of view.

2 Establishing Frames and Reframing
The concept of being an alpha male can also be thought of in terms of frames: The person with the dominant frame (or point of view) controls an interaction. So you want to have a strong frame when meeting women, so that she is trying to meet your approval rather than the other way around. This is one of the reasons why you are filling your Stylelife Calendar with events, so that the woman can enter your world rather than the other way around. Even pickup no-no’s like supplication – such as buying a woman drinks in order to talk to her -- can be interpreted in this context and seen as evidence of having a weak frame and giving in to the woman’s frame.

2.1 Using Questions to Reframe
Seduction community member Swinggcat effectively describes that nature of controlling a frame in one of his field reports. Swinggcat’s technique involves constant qualification of his romantic targets. “You seem like you might be adventurous, are you?” he asks them. For him, an adventurous nature is a crucial characteristic in the women he selects. Swinggcat frames an interaction where the woman has to prove she possesses the values he requires. He also maintains a position of power by requiring her to qualify herself, and not the other way around.
When the conversation moves in a way that isn’t conducive to his agenda, Swinggcat “reframes” the interaction to suit his purposes. In this instance, reframing is simply a way to bring the interaction back into line with what he wants to achieve. In larger NLP discussions, reframing does not have to be a return back to any other perspective. It’s just a new view. “Reframing literally means to put a new or different frame around some image or experience,” Dilts writes. “Psychologically, to ‘reframe’ something means to transform its meaning by putting it into a different framework or context than it has previously been perceived” (31). But in the context of Swinggcat’s field report, he typically reframes back to his agenda, so he can control the interaction.

For example, when the romantic target asks his age, Swinggcat answers but immediately reframes the question so it supports his agenda. “One thing to keep in mind is that you never want to respond to a shit test direct,” he writes. “Now, that is not to say, you want to be the sort of guy that never addresses a woman’s question in a direct way. What I am saying is that you never want to address a shit test at the same logical level or within the shit test’s frame… What I like to do is reframe the meaning of their shit tests.” So when he answers the age query, he reframes the answer. When a woman you’re your age, she is making you jump through a hoop in an effort to meet her approval. Most guys will answer the question nervously, hoping they meet her right age criteria and are not too old or too young. Instead, Swinggcat will reframe the situation and put her on the defensive instead. He does this by immediately following an answer with a challenge. He might say something like, “I’m forty-five, you’re probably not mature and sophisticated enough for our relationship to work out” or “I’m twenty-one, so you’re probably not energetic enough to keep up with a young stallion like me.” He answers the question, but immediately puts the inquisitor back on her heels. Within a matter of seconds, she is in a position where she has to prove herself instead.

Swinggcat also provides another example for when a woman asks how many times he has performed his routines. “Good stuff,” the lady might say. “How many other girls have you said this to?” Swinggcat explains that the AFCs tends to answer the question within her frame. The AFC sputters, claims he doesn’t usually say that kind of thing, or he makes up some lie, but the end result is that he flubs the interaction by playing according to her frame and her rules. Swinggcat suggests that a more effective answer to her question is to say something like, “I do this with girls that seem adventurous because I only hang out with women like that. And you seemed adventurous. But maybe you’re not, maybe I was wrong about you, I’m afraid we’re just not going to work out.” Swinggcat explains the effectiveness of this answer. “Often times they will then tell me how adventurous they are,” he writes. “Now who is qualifying who? Who is controlling the frame?”

2.2 Using Positive Words to Reframe

Something as simple as a more positive word choice or interpretation can yield tremendous benefits. Ask any politician and they’ll tell you the value of spin control and euphemism. “Mistakes were made” sounds a lot better than “we screwed up” and “collateral damage” doesn’t carry anywhere near the emotional baggage of “dead babies.” You can reframe a conversation and introduce an atmosphere, thought, or image that is more supportive of your agenda.

For example, suppose you’ve really hit it off with a woman, you’ve gotten all the right signals, but when you move in for a kiss, she pulls away. “This is all happening so fast,” she hesitates. “Exhilarating how time can fly when you find a connection like this one,” you reply. You’ve just taken her negative concern about speed and turned it into a positive statement about your connection.

2.3 Reframing as Sports Strategy

Framing and reframing conversations can be very complicated topics within the realm of serious NLP discussions. But we don’t have to make it that difficult. For our purposes, it’s enough to think of framing
and reframing a conversation in the same way we think of sports. Imagine you are a basketball coach and you’ve got an absolute monster playing center. Your guy makes Shaquille O’Neal look like Gary Coleman. When you walk into the arena, your entire game plan is to feed your beast on the low block and punish the opponents. The other team doesn’t have anybody that can compete with Bobby Bigfoot down low. So their game plan is to keep the ball out of Bobby’s hands and run an up-tempo pace to wear him down.

When the game starts, your players immediately get the ball to Bobby Bigfoot and he’s throwing down the most powerful slams seen since Darryl Dawkins’ “the Chocolate Thunder flying, Robinzine crying, teeth shaking, glass breaking, rump roasting, bun toasting, wham bam glass break I am!” dunk back in 1979. The opponents have no way of stopping Bobby Bigfoot one-on-one. Your game plan is working perfectly. You are controlling the nature of the interaction. You are controlling the frame.

But then, the opponents switch to a zone defense. Using a zone, it’s easier for them to crowd around Bobby Bigfoot and deny him the ball. Your guards force poor entry passes into the big fella. But the opponents pick off those passes and get out in transition. They have now taken over the pace and flow of the game. They’re controlling the frame and Bobby Bigfoot is floundering, having to haul his big ass up and down the hardwood.

If you are to achieve your agenda, then you must get the game back to your plan. You can’t be successful if your team is forced to play a fast-tempo, up-and-down game and Bobby Bigfoot doesn’t touch the ball. So you send in Jimmy Chitwood. He’s your country boy, dead-eye three point shooter. One way to beat a zone defense is to shoot over it. Jimmy starts knocking down three-pointers and forces the opponent out of their zone defense. They have no choice to go back to a man-to-man defense because he’s killing them from outside. Which softens up the middle so you can go back to posting up Bobby Bigfoot. You have effectively reframed the style of play and put it back under your control so you can direct the interaction.

Swinggcat did the same thing in his interactions. When the discussion moved to their frame, he brought it back to further his agenda.

Reframing is like a linguistic fencing match. Full of thrusts, parries, feints, and other moves, the number of techniques you have at your disposal will determine your success. A sports team won’t be effective if they only have one way to play. And you won’t be successful with women if you only have one way to converse. “The person with the most flexibility will be the one who directs the interaction,” asserts Dilts (299).

In fact, most instances of flirting can simply be thought of as reframing. Especially the cocky/funny attitude that David D’Angelo suggests using. For example, if a woman bumps into you and you ask, “Did you just grab my ass?” – you’ve just reframed the situation from an accidental collision to a sexually charged situation.

### 3 Reframing Techniques

In Sleight of Mouth, Robert Dilts provides an extensive system for modeling NLP concepts. In particular, he provides four specific techniques for reframing activities.

1. Changing Frame Size
2. Context Reframing
3. Content Reframing
4. Reframing Critics and Criticism
There are innumerable other techniques for reframing. Try to verbally spar with friends and colleagues so you can develop your own strategies. But these four provide a good place to get started.

3.1 Changing Frame Size

Dilts uses the movie *Cabaret* as an example of how the frame size affects our perception. “One scene in the film begins with a close up of an angelic looking young boy who is singing in a beautiful voice,” he writes. “The image appears sweet and wholesome. As the camera begins to pan back, however, we see that the boy is wearing a military uniform. Next, we see that he is wearing an arm band containing a swastika. As the frame size gets larger and larger, we eventually see that the boy is singing at a huge Nazi rally. The meaning and feeling conveyed by the image is completely changed by the information coming from the changes in the frame size of the image” (35).

Imagine that you have a movie camera during your interactions and you determine the frame. Let’s say that you want a woman to leave the bar but she’s worried about her friends’ reaction. “I’d love to hang out with you more and it’s so noisy in here. But what will they think of me?” she says. “We came here together, I shouldn’t leave them.” Her frame is the equivalent of a group shot within your movie camera. Your goal is to get her to leave the bar so you can talk at a more quiet location. So, you reframe the shot by zooming in your movie camera. Imagine a close-up of her and focus on just her wishes instead of the group. “Just forget about them for a second,” you say. “What do you want to do? What would you do if you came here alone tonight? I mean, It’s great that you’re so tight with your friends, I’m sure your bond won’t be affected if we take off.” By reducing the frame size, you’ve effectively cut her friends out of the picture the way a ruthless director leaves unimportant actors all over the cutting room floor.

This is just one example. You might be more effective if you pan back with your imaginary movie camera and show the entire bar. What would you say to reframe the situation by enlarging the frame size?

3.2 Context Reframing

Context reframing is based on the fact that the same event will have different implications depending on the context in which it occurs. “Rain, for example, will be perceived as an extremely positive event to a group of people who have been suffering from a severe drought, but as a negative event for a group of people who are in the midst of a flood, or who have planned an outdoor wedding,” Dilts writes. “The rain itself is neither ‘good’ nor ‘bad.’ The judgment related to it has to do with the consequence it produces within a particular context” (38).

In light of our tasks in the Stylelife Challenge, it might be useful to think of context reframing within your own life. Maybe you tried a new opener on a woman and she laughed in your face. In the context of trying to get a phone number, you would view that interaction as a failure. But, if you reframed the context so your goal wasn’t to obtain some digits but to determine the effectiveness of your new opener, then the interaction was a tremendous success! One context frame leaves you feeling awful about yourself but the other context frame leaves you feeling like you learned a valuable lesson and that you should retire that opener where you ask her favorite serial killer.

How could you use context reframing in conversation with a woman? Think of situations where this technique might be effective for you and play out various strategies in your head. Which ones work the best? For example, think of a situation where a woman might discuss a negative behavior she has that you can reframe as being “naughty.”

A fun exercise to play with friends is to have a friend use one adjective to describe themselves, and then reframe their belief. For example, if your friend says, “I’m shy,” reframe them by saying, “It’s just that you take a while to get comfortable with people.”
3.3 Content Reframing
Content reframing acknowledges that people see the same thing differently based on their own attitudes, likes, dislikes, needs, and values. Dilts uses the example of an empty field of grass. A farmer sees it as an opportunity to plant crops, an architect sees it as a lot to build a Gothic home, a man flying a small plane that is running out of gas sees the field as an emergency landing strip. We all see things differently so to reframe based on content means you have to look at each individual’s perspective. “Content reframing in NLP involves exploring the intention behind a person’s external behavior,” Dilts writes. “This is most commonly accomplished in NLP by finding the ‘positive intention,’ ‘positive purpose,’ or ‘meta outcome’ related to a particular symptom or problematic behavior” (40).

Dilts uses an example that can be easily reframed into a situation you might encounter as part of the Stylelife Challenge. A teenage boy complains that his father doesn’t support his goals and dreams and objects to any plans the young man proposes. The boy sees this as an example of his father exhibiting negative behaviors. The therapist looks beyond the dad’s problematic behavior and examines the intention. “Isn’t it nice to have a father who is trying to protect you from being hurt or disappointed in any way?” the therapist says. “I’ll bet you don’t know very many fathers who care that much about their children” (41). So although it seemed like Dad was being an asshole, in truth, he was actually looking out for his son’s best interests.

Now, let’s alter that situation so that it’s more relevant to our challenge. Suppose you are at a large club and you’ve made good progress in a two-set. The target is really into you and she wants to go to a more intimate, more quiet bar so you can get to know each other better. But the obstacle keeps saying, “You guys should just stay here. Why do you need to go anywhere else? You shouldn’t leave with that guy. You just met him.” It would be easy to simply dismiss the obstacle’s problematic behavior as selfish and controlling. But try to find a positive intention in her actions. Maybe the obstacle is just worried about her friend’s safety. Maybe she is concerned that you drive a van with garbage bags taped over the windows and power tools banging around in the back. She may seem hell-bent on your frustration, but her behavior is really coming from a positive place. And the quicker you understand her frame, the better you can handle the objection. For example, I’ve dealt with this situation by winning over the friend and then giving her my phone number, so that if she’s worried about her friend or wants to find out where she is, she can call me.

3.4 Reframing Critics and Criticism
The problem with critics is that they don’t just point out what you’re doing wrong. They often point out what they think is wrong with you. “The most challenging problems occur when a critic doesn’t merely criticize a dream or a plan, but begins to criticize the ‘dreamer’ or ‘realist’ on a personal level,” Dilts writes (43). To deal with a critic, you need to remember that their behavior is positively intended. Simon Cowell is genuinely trying to help those fools that screech on American Idol (well, most of the time). The key is to get beyond the negativity and harness the positive intentions that are lost in the critical mire.

Dealing with critics is especially difficult because even their positive intentions can be expressed in a negative way. “For example, if you ask a critic for the positive intention behind a criticism such as, ‘This proposal is too expensive,’ you are likely to get a response like, ‘The intention is to avoid excessive costs.’” Dilts writes. “Nothing that while this is a ‘positive intention,’ it is linguistically stated or framed negatively—i.e., it states what is to be ‘avoided’ rather than what is to be achieved. The positive statement of this intention would be something like, ‘To make sure it is affordable’ or ‘To be certain we are within our budget’ (44-45).
Stating the positive intention in positive terms is important because now you can actually accomplish something instead of just arguing. Let's say that you suggest a particular routine to open a set of women at a bar. Some of your fellow sargers agree with your strategy but Critical Carl says, “That'll never work.” Faced with criticism like this, the only thing that you can do is argue and the group stands there debating while the women leave. However, if Critical Carl says, “How are you going to pull that off?” then that’s a productive question. You can outline the details of your plan without having to fight on a personal level with the critic.

This type of reframing works well within our own minds. Think of a way in which you are highly critical of yourself. A number of men on the Stylelife Challenge forum have written complaints such as, “I always stall when I talk to women. I can open, but I can't go any further.” There are a number of things wrong with this statement. It's highly negative and makes it seem absolutely impossible that you could do anything other than fail. But what is the positive intent behind the criticism? “To stop stalling out after I've opened,” you might reply. Okay, that's great. But that's not an actionable plan and it's still voiced in a negative way. So rephrase it to a “how” question. “How can I improve my longer-term communication with women?” Looking at it as a “how” question gives you something you can sink your teeth into and you can take concrete steps to improve.

4 Conclusion

We have only scratched the surface of frames and reframing. If you're interested in the topic, there are numerous books and websites that provide a great deal of invaluable information on the more advanced aspects of frames. But to just get started, all you really need to understand is that a frame is a way of organizing, structuring, or perceiving something. You can use frames to better strategize your interaction with women. Or, you can use the frame concept to better examine concepts in your own head from a variety of perspectives.

In general, you want to remember two things:

1. Always keep a strong frame when interacting with a woman. Having her meet you on your frame, rather than stretching to fit into her frame, can make all the difference. If she says she likes Dr. Dre and you hate hiphop, don't give into her frame and pretend to like rap. Be honest. Tell her, “I don't listen to hiphop. I like more melodic music.” See if she backpedals to see things through your frame.

2. Reframing is the key both to persuasion and flirtation. Practice it as much as you can, and you'll soon discover this for yourself.

The frame discussion is deceptively simple yet fiendishly complex. But if you endeavor to become more skilled in using frames to further your seduction agenda, you'll find yourself becoming a more talented speaker and a better-rounded thinker. Awareness of frames and agility in changing them will benefit you in all areas of your life.

By JGatz, Style