

Newsletter from Mary Ann Iyer, MD
Jan-Feb 2017

Imagery as Healing

As human beings, we are storytellers. The stories we tell ourselves define the tilt and tenor of our days. When we have an experience, it stands alone – until we create a story for context. And it is these stories that decide for us our degree of happiness or misery.

Because our habituated patterns of sensations define for us the limits of what we can experience, we often need to pull in the power of the imagination to create the possibility for something different. Unless we have experienced something as possible, we tend to discount its existence, even if it is staring us in the face. So, for example, a sincere gesture of love shown us (which we may be starving for) will be shoved aside with our insistence that it isn't really meant or probably has unsavory strings attached.

Creating an internal environment of true receptivity, then, for that which we most need and want is important. It is not unusual, when engaging in mental exercises designed to introduce us to new ways of being, for all of the old patterns to rise up in unified argument about how this is unacceptable. Keep in mind that there is a natural law operating here. Every form that exists, including our habituated patterns of thinking and behaving, has a built-in self-preservation instinct. Therefore, all the reasons "why not" will naturally come to the surface in an effort to maintain the status quo.

My experience has been that to engage in argument with these facets of ourselves is futile. What we end up with then is simply an internal battle waged between two aspects of ourselves. However, it is possible to disengage from the old way of being. Remember that we feed patterns of behavior and emotions with what we are thinking. It is improbable that we can arbitrarily stop thinking about something; however, it is possible to shift our thinking to something else. I find it particularly useful to ask whether the thought I'm having is actually, definitely true. If not, I entertain the possibility of another possibility. In this way, we can effectively derail our thinking from a maladaptive track to a more productive, useful, and truthful one.

Engaging in imagery as a therapeutic regimen is not using something artificial or unusual. It is simply awakening to what was there to start with, and using it for your benefit. Awakening to the imagery that is going on in your mind *all the time* can become a profound spiritual tool. Noticing your physiologic response will lead you to those mental constructs that engage the mind, and is an invaluable awakening tool.

The ultimate aim of using imagery is to get beneath all your images and recognize them for what they are, not just replace the images that have caught you in their painful grip. Please remember you are still writing stories—you are just writing a more pleasant one for the time being. Do not get caught in the trap of thinking that now you have created the "right" storyline for your life. Your new storyline may create more comfort, but mostly it serves you best as a method whereby you wake up to the recognition that it is simply a story.



Snippets of Information:

- ***Imagery as Healing***
a talk by Dr. Iyer on Jan. 28th, 2017 at Highland Books, Brevard, NC (1 pm):

Engaging in imagery as a therapeutic regimen is not using something artificial or unusual. It is simply awakening to what was there to start with, and using it for your benefit. Awakening to the imagery that is going on in your mind all the time can be a profound tool. Creating an internal environment of true receptivity for that which we most need and want can be life-changing.

- ***Contemplative Journaling***
an ongoing group with Dr. Iyer

- An opportunity for:
- Deep self-reflection
- Opening stuck places
- Releasing and supporting creativity
- Healing
- Coming back to what is true.

1 to 2 pm every Thursday at Elk Haven Wellness Center in Brevard, NC, beginning March 9th, 2017
Drop ins welcome; or preregister for a discounted fee.

Call 828-884-6723 to register or for more information

Group is facilitated by Dr. Mary Ann Iyer, a medical doctor with 4 decades experience in meditation and leading transformational workshops.

- You Tubes of talks: <https://www.youtube.com/user/DocMAWallace/>. Please pass on to anyone who may benefit from these.

Joy to you! ~ Mary Ann Iyer, MD

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