

Guided Imagery For Healing

by Belleruth Naparstek, LISW, BCD

Belleruth Naparstek, LISW, BCD is a psychotherapist, author, and guided imagery pioneer. She is the creator of the popular guided imagery audio series Health Journeys. Belleruth is teaching a guided imagery workshop in San Francisco on Friday, March 23.

Guided imagery is a gentle but powerful technique that focuses and directs the imagination. Although it has been called "visualization" and "mental imagery," these terms are misleading. Guided imagery involves far more than just the visual sense – and this is a good thing, given the fact that only about 55% of the population is strongly wired visually. Instead, imagery involves all of the senses, and almost anyone can do it. Neither is it strictly a "mental" activity – it involves the whole body, the emotions and all the senses, and it is precisely this body-based focus that makes for its powerful impact.

Over the past 25 years, the effectiveness of guided imagery has been increasingly established by research findings that demonstrate its positive impact on health, creativity and performance. We now know that in many instances even 10 minutes of imagery can reduce blood pressure, lower cholesterol and glucose levels in the blood, and heighten short-term immune cell activity. It can considerably reduce blood loss during surgery and morphine use after it. It lessens headaches and pain. It accelerates weight loss and reduces anxiety; and it has been shown, again and again, to reduce the aversive effects of chemotherapy, especially nausea, depression and fatigue.

One of the most appealing and forgiving features about imagery is that almost anyone can use it. Although children and women probably have a slight, natural advantage, imagery skips across the barriers of education, class, race, gender and age. It is a truly equal opportunity intervention.

Even though it can be considered a kind of meditation, it is easier for most westerners to

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Special Offer!

Promote Healing, Save Money, and Support Healing Journeys

Marty Rossman, MD, author of *Fighting Cancer from Within*, and Advisory Board member of Healing Journeys, has just launched The Healing Mind website offering evidence-based guided imagery CDs and programs for people who want to help to heal themselves.

Marty is offering you 25% off on any CD, book, or guided imagery program ordered from www.thehealingmind.org by Feb. 28th. Enter code HJ107 into the coupon box on checkout. 10% of your sale will be donated to Healing Journeys!

It's Not About The Hair

by Debra Jarvis

Debra Jarvis is a chaplain at the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance and a Healing Journeys speaker. This is excerpted from her book It's Not About The Hair which comes out in October 2007 from Sasquatch Books.

As the general oncology outpatient chaplain at the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance, I see patients who come in for chemo and/or radiation. In 2005 I received the upsetting news that my mother had been diagnosed with breast cancer. However, I didn't have much time to be disturbed about it because five days later I was diagnosed with breast cancer. I had seen

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Upcoming Events

March 23, 2007

Imagery for Healing

Belleruth Naparstek, LISW, BCD
Newman Hall
California and Webster
San Francisco, CA

April 21 & 22, 2007

From Surviving to Thriving

Jan Adrian, MSW & Karen Haas, MA
Beach Resort Monterey, CA
(see insert)

June 23 & 24, 2007

Cancer as a Turning Point, From Surviving to Thriving™

Two-day FREE event
(Pre-registration suggested)
McAlister Hall, Furman University,
Greenville, SC

September 15, 2007

Cancer as a Turning Point™

One-day free program for
Harrison Medical Center
Bremerton, WA
Terri Tate, Debra Jarvis, Sista Monica
and more

September 13 & 14, 2008

Cancer as a Turning Point™

Two-day FREE event
Memorial Auditorium
Sacramento, CA

Northwest News

Portland

Based on requests from you, we are exploring offering our next Northwest conference in Portland in 2008. If you live in Oregon and are interested in helping, please contact Jan at (800) 423-9882 or jan@healingjourneys.org.

You Just Can't Fool Mother Nature. . .

by Liz Lipski, PhD, CCN

Liz will be a keynote speaker at our Greenville, SC, Cancer as a Turning Point™ conference in June. Liz holds a doctorate and is board certified in Clinical Nutrition. The author of Digestive Wellness, Digestive Wellness for Children, and Leaky Gut Syndrome, Dr. Lipski is also the Director of Doctoral Studies at Hawthorn Health and Nutrition Institute, and the nutrition editor for Pilates Style Magazine. She's the founder of www.InnovativeHealing.com and www.AccessstoHealthExperts.com.

Every day our bodies are exposed to about a hundred chemicals and foods that weren't around a hundred years ago. Our liver and the rest of our body work really hard at breaking them down. Why make your body work so hard when your mind and behavior could do some of the work instead?

I'm talking about Aspartame, an artificial sugar that is widely used in soft drinks, yogurt, gum, and 6000 other foods because it is 200 times sweeter than sugar and without calories. It is estimated that more than 8000 tons of aspartame are used each year in the United States alone.

New research, published in *Environmental Health Perspectives*, links the use of aspartame (Nutra-Sweet, Equal) to high rates of lymphomas, leukemia and other cancers in rats. This occurred at rat levels of 400 parts per million, or 20 mg. a day in human terms. Currently accepted levels are 50 mg. daily in the US, and 40 mg. daily in the UK.

According to Joseph Mercola, DO, "aspartame is, by far, the most dangerous substance on the market that is added

to foods." It accounts for 75% of the adverse reactions that are called in to the FDA. Dr. Mercola lists some of the over 90 documented symptoms attributed to aspartame: headaches/migraines, dizziness, seizures, nausea, numbness, muscle spasms, rashes, depression, fatigue, irritability, tachycardia, insomnia, vision problems, hearing loss, heart palpitations, breathing difficulties, anxiety attacks, slurred speech, loss of taste, vertigo, memory loss, and joint pain. As the aspartame breaks down, it becomes formaldehyde and methanol (alcohol), both toxic substances.

According to the *New York Times*, Dr. Ralph Walton, a professor of psychiatry at Northeastern Ohio University College of Medicine, analyzed 166 published articles on aspartame's safety. Of the 74 studies financed by the food industry, all showed aspartame to be safe. Of the 92 independent studies, 84 identified negative health effects.

If you'd like to read more about this topic to make your own decisions, I suggest two books: *Excitotoxins*, by Russell Blaylock, and *Deadly Deception: Story of Aspartame: Shocking Exposé of the World's Most Controversial Sweetener*, by Mary Nash Stoddard.

Personally, for added sweeteners as a treat I'd rather use honey, maple syrup, rice syrup, molasses, fruit, and dried fruit to get my sweet fix. If you are concerned about calories, try stevia or xylitol. Both taste great and will meet your desire for fewer calories.

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use than traditional meditation, as it requires less time and discipline to develop a high level of skill. This is because it seduces the mind with appealing sensory images that have their own natural pull. And because it results in a kind of natural trance state, it can be considered a form of hypnosis as well. People can invent their own imagery, or they can listen to imagery that's been created for them. Either way, their own imaginations will sooner or later take over, because, even when listening to imagery, the mind will automatically edit, skip, change or substitute what's being offered for what is needed. So even a CD or written script will become a kind of internal launching pad for the genius of each person's unique imagination.

Reprinted from *Staying Well with Guided Imagery* by Belleruth Naparstek, LISW, BCD

Healing Journeys



Mission Statement

Our mission is to promote and support healing by assisting people with cancer and other life-altering illnesses to access their healing potential and their ability to thrive.

Our Commitment to Diversity

Healing Journeys is committed to diversity and pledges to include, welcome, and support all individuals of any race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, age, socioeconomic background, religion, sexual orientation, and disability.

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Director's Reflections - Jan Adrian

In 2006, over 2,000 people experienced our free *Cancer as a Turning Point*TM conference, in either Seattle or San Francisco. Both were healing and inspiring events. CDs are available at www.healingjourneys.org.

My personal challenges in 2006 included another recurrence of breast cancer. This was number 8 for me - just when I thought I was going to be cancer-free for 5 years for the first time since my initial diagnosis in 1989. At least I had 4 years, which is more than usual for me. I was diagnosed in May, and my PET/CT scan at the end of August showed no evidence of cancer. Of course the intervening 3 months included daily imagery, treatment, much soul-searching, and going through a range of emotions, arriving at acceptance. My continual prayer for years has been to be used as an instrument of Spirit. I have to assume that whatever happens in my life is an answer to that prayer. I don't always understand it, and sometimes I resist what is happening, but eventually I have to trust it.

We're planning two new events for 2007. In March, Belleruth Naparstek will be presenting a one-day workshop in San Francisco on using Imagery for Healing. She has been part of my inspiration to use imagery more effectively in my own healing and I'm excited to bring her to California and share her with you.

Karen Haas and I will be facilitating a two-day workshop in Monterey, CA, in April. It is designed to give us a chance for more in depth personal exploration of what it means to go from surviving to thriving in the face of illness. We chose this location of a beautiful setting on the beach in Monterey because it's where the first Healing Journeys conference was launched in 1994. There is information and a registration form inserted in this newsletter.

In June of 2007, I'm thrilled to be taking our free conference back to Greenville, South Carolina, for the second time. In September, 2007, I am delighted to be creating a one-day program for Harrison Medical Center in Bremerton, WA (see Upcoming Events). If you would like us to create an event for your organization, please contact me.

The True Meaning of Christmas...Share the Spirit!

by Shirleen Von Hoffmann, author of *The Journey Home: a True Story of Life, Love, Illness, Passage and Healing*
www.journeyhomebook.com.

Each year at Christmas I struggle with the same dilemma; what to get everyone? It is overwhelming and takes the joy out of the season for me. Having a large family and a huge client list, it requires so much time, energy and money to accomplish this task each year. What does any of us really need, that we cannot buy?

After going through cancer with both of my parents and utilizing the Healing Journeys program, I was on the email list. I received an email saying, "In the spirit of the season, give the gift of love." I decided that this idea truly expresses the spirit of Christmas and from now on, I was only going to give gifts that mattered. I donated a lump sum of money and received some beautiful cards made by individual artists and a note from Jan Adrian acknowledging the donation. I copied Jan's note and included it with a Christmas letter that updated everyone on my year.

I told them that I had donated money, in their name, to Healing Journeys, a non-profit that helps cancer patients by providing support and seminars that inspire. I included the contact and website information and told them if they wanted to do the same, donations are always needed.

My efforts were so well received that many called to tell me that I had inspired them to do the same. Some donated to Healing Journeys, others donated to their favorite charities. Some called to tell me "Thank You" for making a donation in their name as cancer had touched them and they appreciated me thinking of this type of gift. It was a wonderful experience... simple, easy and really provided the true meaning of the season.



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people deal with cancer a thousand different ways. I've listened to patients who tried to pretend that cancer is a million yuks. And I've listened to people who are whiney and tragic.

Somewhere between the joking and whining, there is this precious place of absolute centeredness - peace in the eye of upheaval and chaos. It is an assertive kind of peace because it takes effort to stay grounded and centered while things swirl around you. It's not as if you're just sitting there blissed out, denying your pain or your fear. It means that you feel your feelings, give them a voice and then move on.

I learned much about cancer from being a patient and probably the most astounding

thing to discover was that only a small part of the cancer experience is about medicine. Most of it is about feelings and faith, and losing and finding your identity, and discovering strength and flexibility you never knew you had. It's also about looking at life and staring death in the eye. It's about realizing that the most valuable things in life are not things at all, but relationships. It's about laughing in the face of uncertainty and having the courage to ask for more chocolate and less broccoli.

And, if you haven't figured it out by now, it's about realizing that cancer is the best excuse for getting out of practically anything - except chemotherapy. And although many people asked me about it, how I felt about it, what it was going to be like to lose it, how I was going to deal with not having it . . . it's not about the hair.

Greeting Card Project

Thank you to Cymber "Kiki" Quinn and Julie Jones Rodriguez for the beautiful cover designs for our three greeting cards. The inside message, "You are Loved", is appropriate all year. Check them out at www.healingjourneys.org.



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Return Service Requested

If you want to be on our email list for occasional updates, please email jan@healingjourneys.org with your email address.



If It Weren't For Cancer.....
by Terri Tate

The Lloyd Symington Foundation has awarded Terri a generous grant to create a DVD of her inspiring and hilarious show, Shopping as a Spiritual Path. The DVD will be distributed free to agencies serving the under-served within the cancer community. You can see the show at no charge at California Pacific Medical Center's Institute for Health and Healing Mini Medical School on May 2, 2007 at the San Francisco Jewish Community Center OR at the Healing Journeys program in Bremerton, WA on Sept. 15. For more info, contact Terri at (415) 331-5443 or www.territate.com.

If it weren't for cancer, I wouldn't be writing this article.

It took cancer to give me the guts to leave snow and memories behind in Michigan and move to my favorite town of Sausalito to be near my sons.

And if I hadn't moved to Sausalito and acquired the "Oh, what the hell?" attitude that cancer can install, I never would have entered the Scintillating Sausalito Summertime Queen Contest. And, guess what! I won.

Without the disfiguring disease, I'd still be beautiful and not know it. Like my friends, I'd be grousing about growing old and pondering the possibilities of plastic surgery. Thanks to the damage that

cancer did to my looks, I'm pre-aged.

I would have kept drinking coffee from a cup, never knowing the joys of coffee enemas.

I'd still be spending my evenings "processing issues" with my third husband rather than watching Wheel of Fortune with my fascinating forty-year old South African, gay, triathlete, meteorologist roommate.

Had oral cancer not put the brakes on my speaking career and its six - figure income, I never would have been driven from Nordstrom into Marshall's where I discovered my true spiritual path, discount shopping. I shudder to imagine the money I might have wasted.

I would never have discovered the raging, vile bitch that ruled my decisions. Since treatment for tongue cancer temporarily stole my ability to talk, I had to listen to this voice in my head ad nauseum. But once I let her have her say, kinder voices could be heard. The vile bitch has moved to Boca and rarely visits.

Replaced by the Woman upstairs. That's right. I found God, but not a pious and punitive God. I found a God that reassures me and offers guidance on matters large and small. I've learned to listen to the kinder voices and I live in a place of faith that I never would have found if it weren't for cancer.