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Introduction

“Imagination is not a talent of some people; it is the health of every individual.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Imagery is one of the terms most associated with the mid-1980's. Despite the proliferation and acclaim, most Americans remain unaware of its true nature and application to life. Never before has a society thirsted so for imagination in movies, in literature. What is it about imagination, that has captured the minds and hearts of so many, with such tenaciousness?

While this text doesn't provide a definitive answer to this question, it does however, clearly demonstrate why imagery is so awesome! There is something special about imagery. It's difficult to describe, one must truly experience it fully to understand its magnitude and infiniteness.

The title, *Using Imagery In Creative Problem Solving*, was chosen because it best describes the active and creative nature of the image process. Imagery is a highly creative act—perhaps our most creative human function. It is sheer magic! Its application and effect on learning and living is tremendous.

Until now, most of the imagery work in education has centered around Guided Fantasy Imagery and more recently Guided Academic Imagery. This text represents a bold shift in the study and use of imagery. It clearly demonstrates the importance of Non-Guided Imagery (images evoked and controlled by the imager). It makes that necessary link between learning the skill of imagery and using imagery successfully in everyday life.

The basic theme of the text is Imagery in Creative Problem Solving. No one needs to be reminded that the problems facing society are becoming more complex each day. None of us can avoid prob-

lems, as they are an integral part of living. However, successful living depends greatly on how one approaches problems. The “mind set” or attitude one has toward dealing with problems is crucial to productive living. It is the development of a positive mind set that interests me most, and is the major force behind *Using Imagery In Creative Problem Solving*. I want young people to not feel defeated by each and every problem that comes along. Instead, I want these young people to approach problems in a “positive,” . . . “I’m going to find a solution attitude,” which I hope they will carry with them into adulthood.

Using Imagery In Creative Problem Solving provides a framework, it is a vehicle one can use to attack problems more creatively. Too often we look at problems from a narrow, linear perspective, looking at the same set of variables and circumstances over and over again. Using creative imagery allows one to take a fresh, new and different view of the problem, which ultimately can lead to very interesting and productive idea finding.

The basic purpose of the text is to:

- a) expand one’s knowledge and understanding of the potential of imagery,
- b) provide a framework for attacking problems more creatively,
- c) promote greater use of non-guided imagery,
- d) foster a more positive “mind set” toward encountering and solving problems.

The text is written in an important progression, taking the reader through a series of creativity and imagery principles. In Chapter 1, the reader will find a discussion on the importance of creativity and the creative process. In Chapter 2, the reader will explore some new issues and trends relating to the potential of mind and consciousness. Chapter 3 outlines the step-by-step approach used in solving problems through imagery. Chapter 4 contains Creative Problem Solving Exercises each with activity options and suggestions for creative writing assignments. At the end of the book, the reader will find a select reference list on imagery and related areas and a list of Music To Image By.

Imagery: A Natural Human Ability

“Before the dawn of history men were vividly imaging goals essential to their survival and reinforcing those images by painting them with primitive but lasting colors on the ceilings or walls of the caves that were their homes.”

Anonymous

Before words, images were. The human brain programs and self-programs through its images. The human mind is a slide projector with an infinite number of slides stored in its library, an instant retrieval system and an endlessly cross-referenced subject catalog. Imagery is the way we think. Building a model, driving a car, learning a game, fixing a bike, playing a sport—all skills are acquired through the image-making process. Imagery is the ultimate consciousness tool.

Albert Einstein has said he discovered the theory of relativity by picturing (imaging) himself riding on a ray of light. He has written that words did not play a role in his thought. “The psychical elements in thought are certain signs and more or less clear images which can be voluntarily reproduced and combined.”

During our lifetime most of us will spend about four years involved in actual image production, through dreams, daydreams and directed imagery. It is a normal human function of the brain to produce visual images. Most of the time we aren't even aware that such a process is going on in our heads. We have become so overly dependent on, and preoccupied with words that we have forgotten about our innate capacity to create pictures. The most powerful vehicle for change is the image; it is the central, pivotal part of mind.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF IMAGERY

The earliest record of visualization experiences is in the form of pictures, visual images. During the Ice Age—60,000 to 10,000 B.C.—cave dwellers in France, Spain, Africa and Scandinavia painted on the walls of their caves representations of the images that they saw. Most of these paintings are of animals that people hunted. The use of imagery techniques for physical healing dates back well before the rise of experimental science. In fact, imagery may be the most ancient healing technique used by primitive man. The earliest records of such techniques are found on cuneiform slabs from Babylonia and Summaria. Even today, Indian tribes such as the Canadian Eskimo and the Navahos of the American Southwest use forms of healing based on visualizations.

In psychology, hypnosis is one of the oldest techniques to use imagery. It was through hypnosis that psychologists first discovered memory images. Many of the imagery techniques being used in hospitals and clinics today have their origin from these ancient practices.

In the last hundred years, specialists in different fields have begun to rediscover the existence and meaning of imagery. Historians, religious scholars, archaeologists, physicians, psychologists, and educators have begun to study the nature of the inner image as it relates to their area of specialization.

The image is as old as man himself—what modern man is doing, is recreating a passionate relationship with nature.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CREATIVITY

“My feeling is that the concept of creativeness and the concept of the healthy, self-actualizing fully human person seem to be coming closer and closer together, and may, perhaps, turn out to be the same thing.”

Abraham H. Maslow

The more one creates the better one feels about self—the better one feels about self, the more one creates. As we begin this journey into the world of creativity, imagination and imagery, I would like you to keep this so-called “health concept” of creativity in mind. As Ralph Waldo

MIND AND HUMAN POTENTIAL

“We think much less than what we know. We know much less than what we love. We love much less than what there is, and to this precise extent, we are much less than what we are.”

R. D. Laing
The Politics of Experience

The theme for this second chapter relates to a statement made back in the late 1800's by the father of American Psychology, William James, “The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings, by changing the inner attitude of their minds, can change the outer aspect of their lives. It is too bad that more people will not accept this tremendous discovery and begin living it.” I wonder how many more generations must go by before the majority of people begin to truly understand what James is saying, and start living it. We are so filled with non-positive attitudes concerning our abilities and potential that we don't even give ourselves an opportunity to learn about or experience the power of our inner imagination. As Barbara Brown (1980) says in her book, *Supermind*, “For most of man's existence these powers of mind have been shrouded behind ignorance and myths, or held sacred and unknowable by philosophy or assumed to be predictable and trivial by science.” Brown, Believes that “Sleeping within everyone is a mind of superior intellect and ability, a mind that modern man preoccupied with the wonders of physical nature, has neglected and virtually silenced—the bulk of scientific authority considers mind a foolish and unwarranted concept.” I would like this section of the text to be viewed as your personal “mind stretching” chapter. My aim is to present different points of view regarding the extraordinary potential of the human mind. There are so much data and