

THE IMAGINATION PROCESS
An integrated and holistic healing and transformational model

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Introduction

I am honored and excited to have the opportunity to write this chapter during this most moving, inspiring and profound evolutionary time in history. Healing and transformation has been my passion in life and I now present and support this model. Imagination is an integrated whole healing process model which takes into account the many fascinating aspects of the human being and being alive – body, mind, spirit, emotions; past, present and future; consciousness and unconsciousness; left brain, right brain; old and new; psyche and spirit; traditional and non-traditional; east and west. I have learned that I must seek to know the big picture, the bigger story, in order to heal and transform my life or help any other person do the same. How individuals think, feel, eat, move, meditate, work, communicate, and dream has developed his personality and will create the future. Each of these domains must be evaluated and worked with for a whole healing and transformation.

GENESIS

Dare I say that the beginning of this process was deep within my own psyche returned to me in a vision? Yes, I saw the work I must do in 1987, long after the foundations had been laid by the many theorists, counselors, teachers, writers, psychotherapists, thinkers, physicians and metaphysicians. I sought after my own healing, traveling the world through books, education and workshops of all kinds, physical, mental, and spiritual. I laughed and wept, moved and breathed, meditated, studied and became still. The answers were inside me. I noticed I had healed and transformed. This was a *process, a passage*. Every aspect of my being must be addressed through a series of actions, changes and functions to bring about my desired result. It would take time.

There were no coincidences. My body, my vocation, my relationships, my experiences were all a segment of the process of the whole, painful and joyful. Every part of my personality took on the shape of my feelings, beliefs and thoughts, conforming to the structure and systems blueprinted in my psyche. I had created the past, present and future. I seemed to attract to me experiences that matched my state of being, thinking, and feeling. Could it be so?

I was inspired by my studies in family systems, developmental psychology, life cycles and the healthy or dysfunctional navigation of such. Erickson (1963), in his psychosocial theory, informed me of stages a child must master in order to progress toward independence and wholeness. John Bradshaw (1990) presented the precious and wounded inner child and dysfunctional family to the recovery community, which definitely created a portal for my own reclaiming of self. I was influenced by Maslow's Hierarchy of needs. (1983) and attentive to Freud's (1988) presentation of the unconscious. Joseph Campbell (1991) inspired me with myth and symbol. I was fascinated with Jung's work (1985), which connected me with the unconscious archetypal themes, myths and depth psychology. I loved and personally participated in Gestalt group work with a therapist who loved Fritz Perls. This quest lead me to the study of spiritual and transpersonal psychology with Jacquelyn Small (1991), directing me toward the works of Stanislav Grof (1990), perinatal psychology, birth trauma, womb work and a world of sensory and transpersonal enlightenment. Deepak Chopra, MD (1990) awakened my inquisitive mind to energy, information and quantum physics as well as the

Indian medical system, Ayurveda. Dr. Gabriel Cousens (1986) intrigued me with his incredible system of spiritual nutrition and conscious eating. These disciplines allowed me to think, feel and create in new dimensions. Later, the study of psychoneuroimmunology through the work of Candace Pert (1997), Era III Medicine and Larry Dossey (1989), and age old concepts of the body maps and chakra system allowed me to integrate the mind/body connection in a bold and major way for myself and the private practice I had developed in the mean time as a Marriage and Family Therapist.

It seems that the more open I became, the more information came to me. Albert Einstein seemed to follow me around in those days, with a book, a picture or quote everywhere I turned. Expanding my horizons, I was introduced to the richness of ritual and ceremony from Shamanism and Eastern healing systems combining all of these together with the creative expressive arts, drama therapy, music, sound, movement, dance and writing. This was the genesis of what would become Imagination... a healing and transformational process, *a complete and whole integrated process* for the healing of the human being. It would include the past, present and future, integrating old and new psychology, eastern and western healing systems, body, mind, and spirit taking into account the mystery of life, and the whole memory of the soul. I began to see how it was all connected and that all aspects of the human being must be addressed. Imagination was born!

Today, I am teaching this holistic and integrated Imagination healing and transformational model to students who have chosen to work and study with me through Soul Studies Institute, an outgrowth of Solutions Center for Personal Growth, Inc. in Stuart, Florida. Students working in independent degree programs will earn an MA Degree in Transpersonal Transformational Creative Arts Therapy and will be certified in this Imagination Model. Student interns, who eventually assist in the Imagination process as part of their fieldwork experience, also have gone through this process as part of the training program.

The Evolution of Solutions and Soul Studies Institute

I am thinking back about the last decade for me at Solutions Center for Personal Growth, Inc. In 1989, I decided to open my own business, interested in risk taking, going to the edge of reality, taking people to new places of being, experiencing pain and joy to break through the old and transform into the next. In my effort to heal and transform my own self, Solutions Center for Personal Growth, Inc. and the Imagination process manifested.

I had wanted to leave the old place, express my personal best, be my own boss, because there was so much I wanted to do. Other people, old bosses, thought my ideas were too "far out." This way, I could do what I wanted to. If we wanted to yell and scream and march around the room singing the Italian National Anthem, or crawl and cry and feed each other singing nursery rhymes, it would all be ok. Because I decide!

So, I took the risk to quit. I found a quaint little office on Seminole Street with one large room, a small room and a bathroom. It was in downtown Stuart, Florida, on the water, a perfect location, and a building I had always loved. I must have it! After finding it for rent one Friday afternoon, I told the landlord who lived next door that I would "take it". I had no money. By Monday morning I would need first, last and a deposit, around \$1200. I told no one about this. After all, was I being realistic? On Sunday afternoon two different people, unknown to each other, called me saying, "God told me to give you \$1000." By Monday morning I had the money and I was even able to have power and a telephone. It was a sign. I was on the right track.

I remember my friends painting and re-painting that first office. And I remember when two men carried the secretary desk up the stairs for me. They placed it in the perfect spot and we began to wipe off the dust. In the bottom drawer we found a 20 year old newspaper on which was printed two advertisements for two separate businesses in town. Incredibly, the ads had been taken out by the two men who had at this moment lovingly volunteered to carry this desk up stairs, unknown to each other. It was another sign that I was on the right path.

I turned 40 that year. The clients lined up a city block holding balloons for me in celebration. I was touched and surprised. I was helping people take risks to express their pain and joy, going beyond the traditional. I was loving people well and it was working. We were attacking co-dependency, addiction and repressed feelings from our lives. We were learning to sing and dance together too.

Today, 12 years later, Solutions Center for Personal Growth, Inc. is a holistic health center. In addition to the Imagination process, a variety of classes are offered including Yoga, Music Together™, Integrative Bodywork, Imagine Transpersonal Breathing™, Reiki, Awakening the Artist Within, Soul Writing, Therapetee Theater, African Drumming, Live Foods, Meditation, Mind Body Workshops, Money Grows On Trees, and Sound Therapy. Solutions Center for Personal Growth, Inc. is thought of as a sacred and powerful energy field in which to heal, transform and co-create life.

In 2001, Soul Studies Institute, Inc. was birthed – a non-profit educational and research institute, committed to transforming the lives of people and the community, connecting to our passion and potential through evolutionary education and the arts. We are educating current and aspiring practitioners of the helping professions as we guide, teach, mentor and supervise students toward their highest potential and being. The Imagination Process is at the core of the Institute’s educational experience. All students, interns, and teachers join together to participate. It is our intention to bring forth effective human healing, personal growth and transformation, methods and materials. Soul Studies Institute offers an offsite classroom working with various US accredited colleges’ Independent Study Programs, personal growth and holist health programs and opportunities to participate in research and development worldwide. Students enrolled in Soul Studies Institute, holistic health practitioners and volunteers have joined the Solutions team in an effort to offer the community a whole and integrated healing system.

FRAME OF REFERENCE

Imagination is based on the theory that people are constantly moving toward and desiring wholeness, health, intimate relationship, love, peace, joy, magic and connection to the divine, that there is a natural unfolding and evolution toward wholeness and balance. It is my belief that one's effective attainment of these values and states of being, doing, and feeling are initially dependent upon a healthy navigation of the developmental stages of growth and the healing and transformation of all soul wounds. The soul brings all memory and emotionally inherited passion and pain to the womb. Experiences from the womb, birth and early childhood form a blueprint or imprint in the psyche that individuals continue to match or re-enact until which time, this imprint is healed or transformed. One's original imprint is unconscious until it becomes conscious. Pivotal to the *Imagination* model views, is the tapping into unconscious stored material in the body/mind. The unconscious mind is manifested in the body and life of each individual. As the body and mind are one, illness and issues of health are directly related to and dependent upon the unconscious or conscious imprints in the psyche. Upon healing and transformation, the individual has the ability and power to create a desired future of unlimited possibilities, to re-program the mind and transcend this early blueprint, as well as move toward a greater human experience, connecting with a greater divine purpose, and commitment to mindful transformational practices.

People who embark on such a healing journey open their heart where it has been closed, attain physical and mental health, which heretofore was in question or serious

trouble, and connect and acquire a spiritual belief system, which, individuals can depend upon to move through life's experiences.

Imagination is a whole and integrated system based on theory and practice which includes core concepts in the areas of health and healing, consciousness, family systems, spiritual emergency, psychoneuroimmunology, psychospiritual integration, and group process, and principles of quantum physics. In general these core concepts and frame of reference include the mind, body and spiritual aspects of the self.

Basic Concepts

Health, Healing and Transformation:

Health is freedom from disease or abnormality. It is soundness, a condition of optimal well-being. (The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 3rd Edition). Excellent health is about vitality, wholeness, fitness, goodness and celebration. Maslow's concept of self-actualization (19??) or the capacity to expand into higher states of consciousness while unfolding life purpose is key. Maslow's model is simple and profound to me. In his hierarchy of needs, he states that one cannot achieve these states of being, optimum health or self – actualization, until one's physical, safety and security, love and belongingness, and self-esteem needs are met first, in the order given.

Healing and restoring to wholeness is a process involving transformation. Each individual can transform, transfigure, recover, evolve, be influenced, affected, and reborn. Evolving toward health and wholeness, a person ultimately moves toward higher potential and possibilities. Through transpersonal psychotherapy and psycho-spiritual group process, the Imagination process invites participants on a holistic healing journey -

“You are about to enter a sacred process resulting in a transformation of your life, your body, your mind and your spirit. You will go deep into the lost places of your soul as you remember your own true essence. You will remember how to love, and this will create peace. You will see and discover the truths you have really always known. Our process utilizes the expressive creative arts: writing, transformational theater, music, sound, movement, dance, art, breathwork, psycho-spiritual group process, body work, and expression.”(Limber, 1997, p.ii).

Transpersonal Psychotherapy is defined as,

The process through which individuals transform their identity from a limited history based sense of self to an experience of their soul essence. From the experience of soul, individuals can access a relationship to the numinous and their unique life purpose (Lewis, 2000, p.260).

The Imagination process assists individuals in discovering the original blueprint designing their lives and further draws participants into a healing process, which corrects and reverses any faulty thought or negative mind-body programming. Participants in the Imagination process learn how they may be mis-creating their lives, unconsciously attracting life experiences into the original plan, with all its characters and themes. Students have the opportunity to re-experience and re-frame past pain, which gives one the power to write new outcomes, hence to design a new kind of future.

The very physical cells of the human being can be transformed, even transmuted in an alchemical dance.

Family Systems and Object Relations

Family Systems theory, therapy and techniques have been a part of the organizational structure, belief system and evolution of the Imagination process. Family systems theory in general teaches that the family represents a complex relationship in which causality is circular and multidimensional (Goldenberg and Goldenberg, 2000). Early family relationships directly affect thoughts, feelings, actions and ways of being. Ways of being turn into major beliefs, patterns, and finally complex interpersonally triggered systems. Systems become creations re-enacted over and over.

Object Relations theory teaches that the infant's primary need for attachment to a caring person is monumental, that an individual who did not receive this in a healthy, loving way does not internalize a good enough care giver. They continually seek for this primary and so needed bonding through other relationships (Scharf and Scharf, 1987). Erick Erickson's work in psychosocial development instructs that each developmental stage results from an interpersonal crisis, primarily with parents, but also with peers and school teachers. The crisis is a time of heightened vulnerability and increased potential; with the resolution of each stage creating the next crisis. Erikson believes that the resolution of each crisis produces coping and adaptations that he identifies as ego strength (Erikson, 1963). A child acquires the ego strengths of hope (infant -trust vs.

mistrust); willpower (toddler-autonomy vs. shame and doubt); purpose (preschooler – initiative vs. guilt and doubt); and competence (school age – industry vs. inferiority). John Bradshaw’s approach supports this hypothesis using transactional analysis – identification of the “inner child” - a combination of Freud’s id and self, psychology’s self, he focuses upon the potential wounding of the precious and wonderful inner child. The original ‘wonder child’ had wonder, optimism, naiveté, dependence, emotions, resilience, free play, uniqueness, and love. Through physical, mental, emotional and sexual abuse the wonder child became spiritually wounded and full of toxic shame. Reclaiming the inner child involves going back through the developmental stages and finishing unfinished business. The most important first step is to help the wounded child grieve its unmet developmental dependency needs (Bradshaw, 1990).

Murray Bowen, family systems theorist presents a Transgenerational model based on natural systems. He describes human behavior as the result of an evolutionary process and as one type of living system. According to Bowen, the human family is seen as appearing as the result of an evolutionary process in nature. In particular, the theory concerns itself with a special kind of natural system – the family’s emotional system (Kerr & Bowen, 1988). Imagination theory maintains that these emotional patterns and systems are indeed transgenerational, moving through time and on into the next generation until they are healed and transformed by whoever becomes the identified healer (patient) of the family.

Structural Family therapy has described the dysfunctional family as a family that has failed to fulfill its function of nurturing the growth of its members (Colapinto, 1991). Dysfunction suggests that the covert rules that govern family transactions have become (perhaps temporarily) inoperative and require renegotiation. (Goldenberg and Goldenberg, 2000). Family systems give us many important concepts with which to work and understand in the healing process: family of origin, functional or dysfunctional family system, boundaries, shame, abandonment, family rules, family trance, communication, fair fighting, feedback loops, developmental tasks, transgenerational, triangulation, and recovery. The Imagination process teaches these concepts as part of the process.

The Imagination process honors the inner child and offers opportunities for healthy re-enactment of one's developmental dependency and attachment needs; to grieve the loss of a healthy and nurturing family of origin and an opportunity to design and live by new functional rules. Therapists and group participants become a new family to trust and believe. Through experiential group process, healthy communication, insight and risk taking, one can heal and transform negative belief systems, family of origin pain and trauma. People are given the opportunity to re-enact and re-experience developmental stages with healthy care-takers and family members through transference and counter transference. Attention is given to the inner infant, inner child and inner –teenager present inside each one, encoded in memories of the cells. Communication becomes overt and functional. A person has an opportunity to become conscious of old systems

and ways of being, pro-actively designing and committing to new patterns and behaviors. Reclaiming childhood and mourning what was absent are components of the *Imagination* process. Grief work left undone becomes neurosis. As Jung said, “all our neurosis are substitutes for legitimate suffering” (Jung, 1963).

Consciousness:

Consciousness, as viewed in the Imagination model, is seen as awareness, a knowing. A core concept of the Imagination model is that people have been unconscious - not aware of why and how they may be having painful or dysfunctional experiences in their present life; that there is truly a reason, a core issue, a core imprint which is unconscious and is a result of their soul memory, womb and birth experience, early childhood and any other trauma held in the body. An end result or goal of the Imagination process is that individuals become conscious of all the aspects of their being; bring forward into consciousness what has been unconscious; reveal the patterns, thoughts, memories and feelings which have been imprinted in the soul and which continue to create the future, re-integrate what was split off and transform to fully self-actualizing individuals.

Jung

Imagination theory is aligned with Jungian view of consciousness. Jungian analysis, involves the conscious revelation of the content and meaning of the unconscious, through the interpretation of symbolic products of the unconscious mind. The interpretation of symbols includes the examination of dreams, fantasies, drawings, religious phenomena,

hallucinations, sculpture, myths, and early memories becomes part of the process. In Jung's scheme, all human behavior is both purposive and prospective – that is directed toward the future. (Bankart, 1997). The psyche is seen as a self-regulating system whose function is purposive, with an internally imposed direction toward a life of fuller awareness (Kaufman, 1989). Imagination recognizes that Jung's theory is based on the demands and transformations of human energy systems, and finds useful the following concepts explored by Jung: a collective unconscious which he called the region of the mind that contains a universal source of mental energy and the psychology of archetypes – universal human symbols passed in the DNA from one generation to the next, from the earliest forms of organic life to the child being born at this very minute. Every human being possess an intuitive, instinctive knowledge of these archetypes. (Bankart, 1997).

The Imagination process is an alchemical process parallel to Jung's alchemical stages, (1) the beginning of the alchemical therapeutic process is likened to chaos and the formless mass of soul, spirit and body together; later a separation where soul and spirit separate from the body or mental identity experienced as a symbolic death; here an individual comes into the therapy office in a state of chaos and darkness. (2) This is followed by a state a state of pregnant, receptive, creative waiting. In this phase the Imagination therapy rooms and processes serve as a container and place for an individual to turn inward. (3) In the third phase, the soul and spirit join the oneness of the universe as the Imagination participant becomes conscious of negative aspects. (4) In the final phase, opposites become united in the sacred marriage, in which illumination

occurs, filled with insight and understanding. When the process is complete, the attention returns to the outer world transformed (Harris, 1996).

Groff

*The work and research of Stanislav Grof, in the field of human consciousness, has had great influence upon the creation, theory and techniques of the Imagination model. Grof, who systematically studied consciousness for over 30 years, views consciousness and the human psyche as expressions and reflections of a cosmic intelligence that permeates the entire universe and all of existence. These fields of consciousness are without limits, transcending time, space, matter and linear causality. From *The Holotropic Mind*, Grof, states:*

“As a result of my observation of thousands of people experiencing non-ordinary states of consciousness, I am convinced that our individual consciousnesses connect us directly not only with our immediate environment and with various periods of our own past, but also with events that are far beyond our physical senses, extending into other historical times, into nature, and into the cosmos” (Grof, 1992, p. 18).

Grof has given us a cartography of the unconscious aspects of the human psyche wherein he has mapped out various types and levels of experience that have become available in certain special states of mind and that seem to be normal expressions of the psyche.

“Besides the traditional (1) biographical level containing material related to our infancy, childhood, and later life, this landscape of the inner space includes two additional domains: (2) The perinatal level of the psyche, which, as its name indicates is related to experiences associated with the trauma of biological birth, and (3) the transpersonal level, which reaches far beyond the ordinary limits of our body and ego. This level represents a direct connection between our

individual psyches, the Jungian collective unconscious, and the universe at large (Grof, 1992, p.20).

The key experiential approach used and taught by Grof to induce non-ordinary states of consciousness and gain access to the unconscious and superconscious psyche is Holotropic Breathwork™, which will be discussed, in greater depth in the therapeutic processes portion of this chapter.

Of particular interest and importance to the Imagination process is Grof's work with womb and birth trauma, the perinatal level of the psyche. Grof describes Birth Matrix I, II, III and IV, which begin with intrauterine experiences, cosmic unity, good or bad womb, expulsion from the womb, the death-rebirth struggle, the agony and ecstasy of birth, and the mystery of the journey, to name a few stages of experiences. Grof also discovered and explains the COEX system – memories of emotional and physical experiences are stored in the psyche not as isolated bits and pieces but in the form of complex constellations, which he calls COEX systems (for “systems of condensed experience”).

“Each COEX system consists of emotionally charged memories from different periods of one's life, the common denominator that brings them together is that they share the same emotional quality of physical sensation. Each COEX may have many layers, each permeated by its central theme, sensations, and emotional qualities. Each COEX has a theme that characterizes it. For example, a single COEX constellation can contain all major memories of events that were humiliating, degrading or shameful. Rejection and emotional deprivation leading to our distrust of other people is another very common COEX motif. Each COEX constellation appears to be superimposed over and anchored into a very particular aspect of the birth experience. The birth experience contains the elementary themes for every conceivable COEX system. In addition, to these perinatal components, typical COEX systems can have even deeper roots. They can reach farther into prenatal life and into the realm of transpersonal phenomena such as past life

experiences, archetypes of the “collective unconscious,” and identification with other life forms and universal processes. (Grof, 1992, p.24, 25).

Grof explains that his work and research with COEX systems has convinced him that they serve to organize not only the individual unconscious, but the entire human psyche itself. The Imagination model incorporates the work of perinatal psychology into its theory and practice. Participants become aware of their birth trauma, and womb experiences, setting out to reverse and positively re-experience birth. This view and study of consciousness supports the idea that womb and birth experiences create a blueprint, which the human being will continue to re-create until which time the blueprint or COEX is transformed or dismantled in some way.

The Imagination process seeks to transform negative belief systems and programmed thoughts and feelings into healthy awareness. One is able to make new decisions about old ideas; become conscious of old paradigms of thinking and shift into the light of consciousness, energetically correcting and creating new reframes and responses to negative memories which have been buried inside the body/mind complex. It is written in the Phase I Imagination workbook, *I Am The Honored Guest At Your Healing*,

“Memories and experiences are encoded in every cell of the body as the body, mind and soul interprets your experiences from conception to adulthood. Therefore, what happened in your family is significant. It is for this reason that we begin from the beginning, searching deep inside for the lost parts of ourselves. The inner child is that part of ourselves that was vulnerable, feeling, naive, loving, creative and wonderful. The inner child is the body in a sense, the basic earth bound, dependent part of ourselves, as well as the part of us with imagination. To imagine is to create, and if you want to create new patterns and new joy in your life, you must clear out the past once and for all. It is a matter of science and

energy. You do not have enough energy to create what you want now, if energy is stored in the body from the past pain of your life. If this part of ourselves was wounded, we must go back and get our little child for healing” (Limber, 1997).

Work in non-ordinary states of consciousness allows experiences with all soul memory. Many who open the psyche and soul through work in altered states have come to believe in the existence of past lives, that patterns and systems which continue to ‘show up’ may be emotionally inherited or due to abuse, past behaviors and death in former lives. In this way, Imagination participants are healing at the level of soul, clearing “karma”, a Buddhist term defined as “the total effect of a person's actions and conduct during the successive phases of the person's existence, regarded as determining the person's destiny.” (The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, third edition).

Spiritual Emergency

The Imagination process involves evaluation and assessment using a very thorough Life and Family History and the development of a Plan of Intention or treatment plan. This usually takes 2 or 3, hour-long sessions with client and therapist prior to the group process work. The therapist notes a DSM-IV psychological diagnosis as part of the system requirements. There is also always an awareness of the principle of ‘Spiritual Emergency’. Spiritual Emergency refers to the dramatic and intense experiences or unusual states of mind that one may experience on the healing path, which normally

would be treated as a mental illness by traditional psychology. According to Christina and Stanislav Grof in their book, *Spiritual Emergency*,

“Some of the dramatic experiences and unusual states of mind that traditional Psychiatry diagnoses and treats, as mental diseases are actually crisis of personal transformation, or “spiritual emergencies.” Episodes of this kind have been described in sacred literature of all ages as a result of meditative practices and as signposts of the mystical path. When these states of mind are properly understood and treated supportively rather than suppressed by standard psychiatric routines, they can be healing and have very beneficial effects on the people who experience them. The positive potential is expressed in the term spiritual emergency, which is a play on words, suggesting both a crisis and an opportunity of rising to a new level of awareness, “spiritual emergence. Throughout the ages, visionary states have played an extremely important role. From ecstatic trances of shamans, or medicine men and women, to revelations of the founders of the great religions, prophets, saints and spiritual teachers, such experiences have been sources of religious enthusiasm, remarkable healing, an artistic inspiration. All ancient and preindustrial cultures placed high value on nonordinary states of consciousness as an important means of learning about the hidden aspects of the world and of connecting with the spiritual dimensions of existence” (Grof, 1989, p x, xi)

Imagination theory honors non-ordinary states of consciousness, unusual and visionary states of mind as an ordinary part of the healing and transformation process. In addition, such states are viewed as important processes and ways for participants to discover the hidden parts of themselves as well as personal openings and connections to the spiritual dimension. In perceiving such states as natural and important parts of the process, participants are encouraged to allow these states to take their natural course vs. attempting to suppress these conditions with medical or other strategies. Student interns are trained to understand the difference between states of Spiritual Emergency and psychosis, honoring the balance between traditional and spiritual approaches to healing and transformation.

The Body/Mind Connection and Psychoneuroimmunology

Theory, research and work in the field of mind/body and psychoneuroimmunology is an integral part of the Imagination process for two reasons: (1) Physical illness may result from and be a part of the healing and transformation process and (2) a person may come to the Imagination process with the intention of healing a present illness or physical state.

Drs. Elmer and Alyce Green (with Walters, 1969), proposed a rationale for mind-body regulation. It was their suggestion that perception (or imagery) elicits mental and emotional responses which generate chemical responses in the limbic system, thus activating the pituitary and bring about physiological responses. These physiological responses are then responded to, in turn, completing a cybernetic feedback loop. Candace Pert (1997), a biochemist, was one of the first researchers to discover that in order for opiates and other psychotropic drugs to work, there must be receptor sites in the brain. These receptor sites were also found to be scattered throughout the body, not just in the brain. Pert, who believed in the beginning of her work that emotions were in the head or brain, now documents that they are in the body as well- forming an incredible information/communication network (Pert, 1997). Pert and others have shown evidence that one's imagery can change the functioning and chemistry of the body, that changing one's thoughts, beliefs or images can change one's emotional response to the world. Psychoneuroimmunology (PNI), coined by Dr. Robert Ader (1981) is the study of the

connection between the mind/emotions, the central nervous system, the autonomic nervous system, and the immune system. The research in this field is fascinating as in the studies of multiple personalities by Nicholas Hall, Ph.D., who documented with blood samples that changes can occur in six seconds when a different “mind”, or “alter” takes over the body. Dr. Diedre Brigham (1994), in *Imagery for Getting Well*, describes a personal communication with Dr. Hall: “one of his most interesting examples was his finding a full-blown diabetic sub-personality while others, alters of the same person, evidenced perfectly normal blood sugar levels (Brigham, 1994, p.5). In another case study, a multiple personality, Jill, came in for a therapy session with the flu, nose running, laryngitis - a wheezing mess. During the session, the therapist asks to speak to Jane, another of the personalities. In the six or so seconds it took for the transition, Jane appeared – with none of the symptoms Jill was manifesting. The therapist/author reports,

“in that six seconds not only had a “world image” changed, but a body had also changed, significantly. I realized this amazing ”ability” which emerged from a condition usually thought of as pathological was potentially available to anyone willing to change basic images or attitudes” (Brigham, 1994, p.5).

Ernest Rossi, author of *The Psychobiology of Mind Body Healing* (1986), incorporated Pert’s work and suggests that the neuropeptide and the communication system formed by the receptor sites is the psychobiological basis of therapeutic hypnosis and mind-body healing. Rossi says that how we believe and how we project our beliefs in images affects our being, right down to the cellular and genetic level. Rossi suggested later that in the mind-brain connection, the neural networks of the brain encode state-dependent memory and feeling-toned complexes of the mind’s words, images, etc. from the information

substances (hormones, neuropeptides) received from all cells of the body (Rossi, 1990). Drs. Jeanne Achterberg and Frank Lawlis (1980, 1984) did an intense study of the relationship among imagery, beliefs, attitudes and stress and the progression and remission of cancer and other life-threatening conditions discovering statistically sound relationships. James Pennebaker (1990) studied the relationship between the ability to share one's feelings and the physical health of those who are able to do this. He found that "confessional writing" can lead to significant changes in the immune system and better health in general – that inhibiting feelings creates stress for the immune system. Larry Dossey (1989) introduced us to ERA III Medicine and transpersonal healing along with Jon Kabat-Zinn (1990) who reminded us of the practice of "mindfulness" to the healing process.

Carolyn Myss, recognized as a medical intuitive, and a pioneer in the field of Energy Medicine, teaches about the human being's bioenergetic spiritual framework. Eastern religions teach that the human body contains seven energy centers. Each of these energy centers contains a universal spiritual life-lesson that we must learn as we evolve into higher consciousness (Myss, 1996). It is believed by Myss and others in the field of Energy and Vibrational Medicine that physical dysfunctions may occur in any of these charkas which include certain corresponding organs and systems when one does not successfully master developmental mental and emotional issues or life lessons.

The Imagination process honors greatly these core theories and research from psychoneuroimmunology, with the awareness that “every voluntary behavior is preceded by an image of what will occur, no matter how brief or elusive to our consciousness this image may be” (Brigham 1990, p.32). Imagination teaches that one can choose the direction of the mind providing images which will speak directly to the body. In the healing and transformation process, some kind of transcendent consciousness or awareness occurs first as in an epiphany, then the healing of the body, mind or emotions follows. As one becomes conscious and experiences an uncoverage of meaning, the pieces of the puzzle come together. Physical illness as a result of the healing and transformation process is viewed as “part of the process”, a detoxification of emotional pain, a cleansing of the energetic blockages in each chakra or energy center in the body. Imagination is a process of reversing conditioned responses so to eliminate fear. These processes affect the body, for a full healing of body, mind and spirit.

Psychospiritual Integration and Transpersonal Psychology

The Imagination model is a transpersonal psychological model integrating one’s psyche with the spiritual nature of Self. With healing, transformation, health and consciousness, one is merging the psyche and the spirit - hence the term, psychospiritual integration. According to one of my greatest teachers, Jacquelyn Small,

Psyche is the root of the word “psychology”, and it means soul, or spirit, something psychologists seem to forget. The psyche is huge, our total self. Transpersonal Psychology is attempting to bring back a respect for the wholeness of the Self. Its goal is to move forward along the trajectory of our unfolding lives, to help us manifest the theme” from fragmentation to wholeness” so that we can

actualize our full potential. It is the first psychology (because it includes the work of Carl Jung) that explains the client's process as being a hero's or heroine's journey, an inner awakening or pilgrimage back to our spiritual source. This journey has been known throughout history by many names: The Tao, The Way of the Christ, enlightenment, the shamanic journey, kundalini awakening, the middle path, the Royal Road, the path of Initiation, the hero's journey, or simple "going home," to name only a few" (Small, 1991, p.30).

The Imagination process is the hero journey, described so profoundly by Joseph Campbell - "the goal of the hero trip down to the jewel point is to find those levels in the psyche that open, open, open, and finally open to the mystery of the Self being Buddha consciousness or the Christ (Osbon, 1991, p.23).

Quantum Physics and Universal Law

In addition to core concepts concerning the etiology of one's happiness or unhappiness, functional or dysfunctional living patterns, conscious or unconscious states of mind, integration of psyche and spirit, Imagination aligns closely with theory from quantum physics which states that we are energy and information, and that energy and information can be focused through our intentional thought to create the future. Deepak Chopra, M.D., in Quantum Healing, reports:

"From a famous mathematical formula, known as Bell's theorem, Quantum physics teaches us that the reality of the universe is non-local; all objects and events in the cosmos are inter-connected with one another and respond to one another's changes of state. Physicists now accept inter-connectedness as a ruling principle, along with many forms of symmetry that extend across the universe. Contemporary theorists such as British physicist, David Bohm, has had to suppose that there is an "invisible field" that holds all of reality together, a field that possesses the property of knowing what is happening everywhere at once. The invisible field sounds very much like the underlying intelligence in DNA, and both behave very much like the mind. The mind has the property of holding all our ideas in place, in a silent reservoir so to speak, where they are precisely organized into concepts and categories" (Chopra, 1990).

Chopra says that consciousness remains 95 percent the same from day to day, and it is this consciousness (or imagery) that is the blueprint for what happens to the body, mind and spirit. He asserts that molecules do not produce thought; rather, thought produces molecules (Brigham, 1990). In other words, an individual's present state of consciousness and words create – they are a blueprint for the body, for diseases or health. From this work the concept of the art of co-creation, learning to create with the power of thought is posited. The art and skill of this knowing is that as all energy is connected, it can be moved with an individual's thought and feeling vibration, so to create and attract what is desired. Imagination teaches the art and skill of co-creation, pointing out that clients are creating all the time by their thoughts and feelings in an unconscious way.

Imagination participants are told,

“Each person has the ability and the power to create the future. We are co-creators with the universe. You have been creating your life now unconsciously by the way you believe, think and feel. These processes begin to make your life and your process conscious. In this way, there are no limits to what one can create; all things are possible as we begin to speak a language of power” (Limber, 1997)

Vibrational Medicine

Dr. Gabriel Cousens, in an introduction to the book, *Vibrational Medicine*, by Richard Gerber, MD., reports the conclusion of this book that “we as human organisms, are a series of interacting multidimensional subtle-energy systems, and that if these energy systems become imbalanced there may be resulting pathological symptoms which

manifest on the physical/emotional/mental/spiritual planes. These imbalances can be healed by rebalancing the subtle energy templates with the right frequency of vibrational medicine.”

According to Gerber,

“The Einsteinian paradigm as applied to vibrational medicine sees human beings as networks of complex energy fields that interface with physical/cellular systems. The recognition that all matter is energy forms the foundation for understanding how human beings can be considered dynamic energetic systems. Through his famous equation, $E=mc^2$, Albert Einstein proved to scientists that energy and matter are dual expressions of the same universal substance. That universal energy is a primal energy or vibration of which we are all composed. Therefore, attempting to heal the body through the manipulation of this basic vibrational or energetic level of substance can be thought of as vibrational medicine”(Gerber, 1988, p.39-40).

Likewise, the Imagination process model, through the transpersonal transformation creative arts therapies attempts to heal the body, mind, emotions and spirit through the manipulation of this basic or energetic level of substance, and we call it Imagination.

Transpersonal Transformational and Creative Arts Therapies and Practices At Solutions, Center for Personal Growth, Inc.

Understanding the importance of energy, DNA shifts, psychoneuroimmunology, body/mind biochemistry and the relationship of these to health, healing and transformation, the Imagination model, at Solutions, incorporates techniques and practices, which span and integrate a variety of paradigms. Such therapies include the creative arts therapies utilizing art, music, sound, writing, drama, movement and dance; meditation and breathwork; yoga; exercise; nutrition, especially live foods; body work; and other

physical therapies such as herbs, homeopathic remedies, Ayurveda, Chinese Medicine and more. Each of the expressive therapies or transformational practices are whole systems in their own right, and are woven together in the integrated healing model, known as Imagination. Participants discover their pain and blockages within the body, release and express this energy in an individual unique expression during weekly and weekend intensive group sessions committing also to daily transformational practices.

SUMMARY

These core concepts are integrated into a 21 week program at Solutions Center for Personal Growth, Inc. Simply stated, Imagination holds that as a whole, humanity desires health and healing, self-actualization, peace, success, abundance and loving relationship. Some have achieved this self-actualized and joyful state of being, and others have not. Imagination teaches that human beings have unconsciously created and attracted experiences and people into their lives who energetically match the original blueprint, or COEX system. This blueprint is a physical, mental, emotional and spiritual imprint originating from soul memory, womb, birth, early childhood and/or dysfunctional family of origin system experiences. These experiences continue to be re-enacted until the enactor wants to stop the repetition. Within this consciousness, the individual can move toward wholeness, healing and transformation, dismantling systems, which no longer serve. Becoming conscious in a healing and transformational process may involve bringing painful memories and perhaps traumatic experiences from the psyche and soul memory, into the present waking reality. Here, an individual's true essence or spirit

begins to emerge. In such a process, a person can experience a state of Spiritual Emergency, incur intense and dramatic feelings, visions, experiences and pain, which are part of the process and not to be confused with psychosis. In addition, persons on the healing path, especially those with an intention of healing the whole Self, may experience physical illness as a part of emotional detoxification of core issues held deep within the body. Psychoneuroimmunology teaches that chronic or acute physical illness is part of a process, which when activated toward healing can result in a detoxification or cleansing of the negative and painful thoughts and feelings, which have affected every cell in the body.

With awareness of these principles of healing, clients are ready to heal and transform through psychospiritual group process and transpersonal psychotherapy, merging their psyches with the spiritual aspect of Self. The hero's journey can take each participant to that point where the whole self awakens. Once awakened, nothing is impossible! Imagination participants learn the art of co-creation through the teachings from quantum physics and begin to affirm energetic intentions that not only affect their mind/body but, the cosmos as well creating that interconnectedness which is desired. Finally, a client at Solutions, is introduced to the bigger picture of the life process, becoming aware of the mysteries of the universe, the Shift of the Ages, the questions and opportunities known and unknown. Participants discover, express, release and transform through the transpersonal transformation creative arts and other vibrational practices, which are part of the integrated Imagination model.

Imagination Participants

The following is included in the Imagination Orientation package at Solutions Center for Personal Growth, Inc:

This We Believe.

This work is based on the following ideas, principles and universal laws:

1. All things are possible! It is possible to open your mind to all the possibilities this life can hold.
2. The planet earth is in an evolutionary process, therefore, human beings are in an evolutionary process. In our work, we are merging the psyche and the spirit - hence the term, psychospiritual integration.
3. You have a conscious evolutionary choice. You can consciously change your perception of yourself, others, your life, and your work and discover your true essence. You can know and live your purpose.
4. Each person has the ability and the power to create the future. We are co-creators with the universe. You have been creating your life now unconsciously by the way you believe, think and feel. The Imagination processes will begin to make your life and your process conscious.
5. All your experiences and your pain are part of something BIGGER for your learning and unfoldment and is a gift. You can use your mind, body and spirit to step into all the unlimited potential that exists. As one learns this and heals the past, the victim consciousness is reversed and you begin to attract new healthy experiences, people, and abundance into your life.
6. The universe, including our bodies, is composed of energy and information. The body is a metaphor of the mind and emotions from all time, and a record of your experiences which have been imprinted. Trauma and negative imprinting can be reversed through the healing process of release and expression. Releasing stored energy for detoxification of the body, mind and emotional fields is important for healing.
7. All is well. All is perfect. Everything is happening for a reason. There are no

coincidences. Each person will awaken to his/her own true essence and will remember why they are here on the planet earth in their own perfect time. Therefore, there is no need for fear, tension and control. Love will help you heal and transform.

THE IMAGINATION PROCESS MODEL – THERAPEUTIC TECHNIQUES

Introduction

Imagination is a 21-week process, divided into 3, 7-week phases. The phases are numbered: I, II, and III. A client may enter into the process at the beginning of any phase, as healing is non-linear. Each phase has a beginning and an ending, a primary focus, goals and objectives.

Each phase has a name: Phase I: Imagination, Phase II: Inspiration and Phase III: Intuition. Jacquelyn Small identifies imagination, inspiration and intuition as the three soul powers, “when we access our soul powers, we move on to relationships with “high callings” that enable us to fully develop our creativity” (Small, 1991, p)

There are definite stages in each phase: beginning with a (1) bonding stage, (2) a discovery stage -which is a moving and stirring up of energy held in the body; (3) a release and expression stage; and finally an (4) integration illumination stage which then gives us access to the (5) transpersonal where we go beyond all we have known.

As there are 21 weeks of the process, offered weekly or in Imagination Weekend Experiences, 21 unique and structured therapeutic experiences have been designed for the healing and transformational work. Group sessions are experiential, psycho-educational and usually contain access to non-ordinary states of consciousness which may include visualization, meditation, ecstatic dancing, moving or breathwork. Sessions utilize music, lighting, and creation of safe space and may include expressive therapies of drama, art, movement, writing, sound or transformational theatre. Ritual and ceremony is employed at the beginning and ending of each group session, however, what happens in-between is always a surprise. Imagination promises to take the participant ‘out of control’, as a part of the healing, allowing participants to experience and practice new ways of perceiving and being, giving themselves permission to trust and allow, let go and let the process work.

THE SOLUTIONS CENTER EXPERIENCE

Pre-Imagination Assessment and Evaluation

When individuals are referred to Solutions, they undergo an extensive evaluation and assessment using a thorough Life and Family History. They are screened and those who have stable ego’s co-develop a Plan of Intention or treatment plan, with the Solutions holistic practitioner. This usually takes two or three, hour-long sessions with the therapist, and may involve several other individual sessions if needed. Upon completion of the 30 page history, the therapist reads and co-creates a Plan of Intention which addresses (1) Family of Origin Pain, (2) Birth Trauma, (3) Repression of Feelings, (4) Physical Issues,

(5) Losses, (6) Abuse, and (7) Addiction. This is one of the most important aspects of the process, as the Plan of Intention has several usages. The plan is a bonding tool for the therapist and client, as the therapist now goes over all the material within the Life History and has spent time designing an individualized plan; secondly, the intention set forth in the plan creates an organizing field for the energy, which is released in the work to follow

Individual Therapy Sessions

Participants participate in individual therapy sessions approximately every other week in addition to the group work to process the material, which has usually come forward from the unconscious. This is very important as a way to work through spiritual emergency.

The transpersonal psychotherapist must be trained and able to handle a variety of unusual experiences as participants open to the deep recesses of the human psyche. Psychic openings may include spiritual, mystical, religious, occult, magical and paranormal experiences such as transformational crisis, the re-living of birth memory, past-life experiences, shamanic crisis, the awakening of kundalini, peak experiences, psychological renewal, communications with spirit guides, ‘channeling’, near-death experiences, and possession states (Grof, 1986).

Most every client at some time or another must work through “the dark night of the soul”, feeling vulnerable, anxious and fearful, as the inner child and all soul memory is

invited into the sacred space to heal. The therapist serves as a guide through the work, holding the energy and safe space.

Safe and Sacred Space

Solutions Center is considered sacred space. When individual's walk through the door, they have entered a temenos of transformation.

Before each phase begins, student interns present the rules and guidelines for the group process in order to re-create a safe and sacred space for the work to take place. The room becomes the "womb" and must be respected as such; therefore food, drinks, shoes, side talking, and running out are discouraged. Confidentiality, being on time, completing assignments, and practicing rigorous honesty is encouraged. Each participant gets a list of the following rules in the Imagination Orientation package and these guidelines are discussed during the first session of every phase or weekend intensive:

IMAGINATION

Program Guidelines for Creating a Safe and Sacred Space

1. Be on time and attend every session. We commit to do our best to begin and end on time. If for any reason or emergency you cannot attend a session, please call the office and let us know. Remember that the times you do not feel like coming are the times you most need to be here. We invite you to perceive any obstacles in your way as part of your process and life patterns.
2. Participate in activities, experiences and projects. Your work is accelerated when you commit to participate! Be accountable to the group and any partner you have the opportunity to work with. You will get out of the process what you put into it.
3. Complete the daily assignments in your Imagination workbook every day. We will use your assignment work during the group each week. Bring any

assignments, which have a star to the group session

4. Stay in the session/room during the group work. Often times intense feelings may surface and it is important not to leave to go to the bathroom or get water, etc. This is a natural defense mechanism to pain and fear; so, please COMMIT TO STAY IN THE SESSION. Bathroom breaks will be given. In addition, please ask for tissues if you need them. Likewise, please do not give other people tissues when they are crying unless they ask for one. In this way, we allow each other to cry, express and release pain and address our own unconscious uncomfortabililty and emotions, which may become triggered.

5. Drink or eat before or after the session. Drinking 8 glasses of water each day is great during this process, as you are detoxifying your body, mind and emotions. You are encouraged to bring a closed water bottle with you to the session. Water helps to cleanse the system.

6. Be free from any mind-altering substances during the entire process. Alcohol and drugs will cover up that which you are here to bring up and heal! Please let us know if you have a problem stopping the use of mind-altering substances.

7. Maintain CONFIDENTIALITY at all times. “Who you see here, what you hear here, when you leave here,” let it stay here. Please do not talk about others unless they are present; become conscious of your communication patterns. In addition, please do not discuss what happens in the sessions, as this may influence someone else who might like to come to Imagination feeling they could not ever “do what we do.”

8. Practice Rigorous honesty WITH YOURSELF AND OTHERS; THE TRUTH REALLY WILL BRING YOU FREEDOM!

9. Be aware that emotional/spiritual intimacy may be mistaken for sexual feelings/ attraction. This is normal when people begin to open up and feel. Relationships with other group members may distract you from your process and is discouraged. If this happens to you, talk about these feelings with your therapist. It is a normal part of the process.

10. Do not make any major decisions during the process. Afterwards, go for it! Change your whole life. As you keep your dreams in your mind, so they will come to pass.

Expressive Model and Energy Cheering

Energy cheering is a process for honoring each person in the process. It consists of moving energy, clapping, noise making and celebrating that a person has spoken and is here, now doing the work. Energy cheering happens after each person speaks in opening introductions. The Imagination model is a fully expressive and energized model resonating to all frequency vibrations for the purpose of moving energy. There are times of extreme release, loud noises, evocative music and movement as well as moments of silence, mindfulness, inner retreat and quiet.

Workbooks and Daily Transformational Exercises

Workbooks are another integral aspect of the Imagination model. A workbook for each phase contains 49 days of work, one teaching for each day of the process, plus templates for the 7 daily transformational practices which include writing (1) intention, (2) affirmations to give energy to intention, (3) expression of feelings using the feelings formula, (4) meditation exercise (5) contemplation of the universal law, (6) live foods commitment, and (7) exercise commitment.

I Am The Honored Guest At Your Healing (Limber 1997), introduces the reader/writer to the inner child, teaching concepts and giving daily assignments, which assist in the process of remembering and releasing. The act of writing is also a therapy in itself, allowing a releasing and commitment to the information. *Journey Into Power* (Limber, 1997), corresponds to Phase II – Inspiration, challenging the Imagination participant to speak a language of power; to learn the art of co-creation so to let go of old energy

blockages, and create future joy. Phase III, Intuition, is accompanied by *The Journey Deepens* (Limber, 1997). This workbook outlines the universal spiritual truths and introduces the journeyer to the shadow aspect of the psyche. Imagination participants are asked to complete the teaching and assignments each day of the process, to allow the workbook to become part of the process. Workbooks include extra pages for journaling and drawing for full expression of the individual.

PHASE I - IMAGINATION (THE BODY)

Goals, Objectives and Focus:

Phase I is the reclaiming of the inner child, birth and womb experiences and full consciousness of family of origin pain. The inner child is invited to come into this waking consciousness through meditation and visualization with the help of a stuffed animal, favorite book, and pictures of Self as infants and children. Participants begin to remember that which has been locked inside. They draw, paint, write with subdominant hand, and get to play as children. Experiences include exercises that build trust and test boundaries, open the heart for those who have been abused and live in fear. Participants begin to risk a new family of affiliation. Stage I recovery principles include “surrendering to pain, trust and telling your secrets, affiliation needs, group support, first order change, experiencing emotions, collapsing grandiosity, giving up denial, self-acceptance, values restored, externalization of shame, rigorous honesty and yin/yang balance” (Bradshaw, 1988, p 204).

Participants are presented with exercises, which “stir up” the energy of anger and give themselves permission to express anger and pain that is to “have a voice.” This is a purposeful process of discovering and releasing feelings which have been stored in the body, to give voice to that which has been sleeping somewhere in the body creating the “same old patterns and experiences over and over again.” The inner children who have feared expression and felt unworthy, guilty, scared and shamed, begin to dance their dance, sing their song, feel and love again. Finally, this phase of work moves into a forgiveness stage wherein the inner child is ready to be nurtured by a new caring adult, the higher self, and let go of the past. Forgiveness is viewed in this model as a liberation of the self from long suffering; taking one’s power back; a letting go of stored energy in the form of anger and resentment. It is not condoning abusive behavior of caretakers and parents or letting someone ‘off the hook’. The goal of this phase is compassion.

“You find the jewel and it draws you off. The purpose of the journey is compassion. When you have come past the pairs of opposites, you have reached compassion. The goal is to bring the jewel back to the world, to join to the two things together” (Osbon, 1991, p. 24).

PHASE II – INSPIRATION – (THE MIND)

Goals, Objectives and Focus

This phase of the Imagination model focuses on how the mind became programmed from internal experiences encoded in the psyche. Inspiration introduces the student to the art and skill of designing one’s life, creating the future, letting go and reversing negative mind programs, thus dis-organizing and breaking apart the COEX system in operation.

The phase begins with “What Do You Want?” and “Why Don’t You Have What You Want?” type of exercises. Students learn concepts about energy, information, and other views of the world from quantum physics. Structured experiences assist the student in discovering hidden negative messages in the psyche and making energetic declarations about reversing those messages, thus creating and coming to a new Language of Power. With a new language of power, students are coached to do *Chasm Jumping*, which is an exercise in stretching beyond the limits one has created for the self. Chasm Jumping, through the use of transformational theater, is the final project and piece of work the student completes, having in some way, gone beyond what he/she has done before. The student gains confidence and self-esteem building, pushing the envelope through the zone of comfortability, thus creating an incredible healing and transformation.

PHASE III, INTUITION (THE SPIRIT)

Goals, Objectives and Focus

The Intuition phase focuses on the spiritual aspect of healing and transformation; introduces the universal spiritual truths and invites participants to discover and integrate the shadow. Jacquelyn Small, quoting Carl Jung, says

“at the very core of our humanness exists a dualism – the shadow and the light. Before we can manifest our light and become that winged bird, we must first come to know and accept our shadow. He called it the “skeleton in the cupboard.” Jacquelyn continues, “the shadow is our holy grit; its sacred purpose is to bring all our unconscious, denied feelings into conscious awareness. It makes such a fool of us with its antics that it forces us to get real and deal with the parts of ourselves we’re trying to skip over. The shadow is our anti-self or negative ego, and it serves as the polar opposite of our positive ego as we learn to

discriminate between our truth and untruth”. Jung said it is an “apprentice” as opposed to the “Master-piece,” which is the Self”(Small, 1991, pp. 41-42).

Clients who engage in the Intuition phase explore the shadow side of self as they recognize the disowned and despised part of the psyche along with the hurt, self-destructive patterns and feelings of being “not good enough”. The shadow, which will never stay hidden anyway, is invited out of the basement into this waking reality needing only to be accepted, integrated and honored. Intuition is a deep phase as it invites the secrets of the soul into the healing space. Students dance, create masks, costumes, drawings, music and sounds as they embody and hear the shadow’s voice.

In addition to shadow work, the universal spiritual truths are presented and taught as new ways to perceive, think, feel and be. Universal laws are those spiritual teachings, which appear to be collective across all religions, philosophies and schools of thought. Many spiritual leaders and teachers present these truths in many formats, from business consultants such as Dr. Stephen Covey in the *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, who explains paradigm shifts, proactivity and synergy, to Deepak Chopra’s *7 Spiritual Laws of Success* (1994).

Therapeutic Techniques

Now the question! How in the world does Imagination at Solutions (1) heal the past, addressing soul memory, womb, birth, family of origin experiences, the unconscious blueprint, and COEX systems; (2) focus on the present, reversing negative mind

programs, understanding quantum physics, learning, speaking and writing a new Language of Power; and (3) create the future by integrating the shadow and practicing the universal spiritual laws, not to mention meditating, eating healthy live foods, exercising, expressing feelings, writing intention and affirmation and contemplating the universe?

The expressive therapeutic techniques along with components of the process as discussed earlier (assessment and evaluation, safe and sacred space, workbooks, individual therapy sessions), come together in an integrated approach, which addresses the whole self, the body, mind, emotions and spirit. The integration of these theories, techniques and process is the holistic integrative model: Imagination.

Expressive therapeutic exercises, or the creative arts, are chosen for each exercise to achieve desired outcomes. Drama therapy, sound therapy, art therapy, movement and dance, writing, journaling, chasm jumping, communication techniques, family systems therapy techniques, cognitive-behavioral methods, live foods and nutritional therapy, exercise, yoga, meditation and integrative (holotropic) breathwork are all tools in the therapeutic process. The model is experiential and psycho-educational.

According to Lewis, in *Creative Transformation, The Healing Power of the Arts*,

“The dance between the conscious and unconscious is choreographed in the magical place of the imaginal realm. Creative arts therapists have long known that transformation toward wholeness can only happen through experience within this symbolic realm. The containers are the expressive arts media, the patient’s body, the therapist’s body as vessel for the somatic countertransference, and the

bipersonal field between patient and therapist or within a group. These containers hold this liminal space within which healing can occur” (Lewis, 1993, p. 5).

Experiential

The Imagination model has a major experiential component in that the work is active as participants experience the process in the now. They learn to identify and express feelings, release and let go of pain, which has been buried deep in the body and psyche. Sessions are designed to evoke a depth journey into the psyche for each participant. All experiences are processed and interpreted. Insight or feedback is provided by the therapist and group members, viewing the experience in the now as a symbol and/or metaphor of a re-curing pattern or theme with which to be reckoned. At the end of every session, participants report an awareness from the session and a commitment for the week. The client is perceived as the expert of his/her own process with the right to accept or reject interpretive analysis.

Psycho-educational

The teaching of basic skills and concepts is woven throughout the model; teaching moments include mini-lectures on subjects such as: dysfunctional family rules and roles, COEX systems, map of the consciousness, energy or chakra systems in the body, the feelings formula, fair fighting, and principles from psychoneuroimmunology and quantum physics. Therapists and practitioners in intern training also teach through story telling and personal disclosure when appropriate.

Cognitive Behavioral Strategies

Imagination uses cognitive behavioral strategies, such as cognitive restructuring and reframing to allow a participant to shift existing paradigms of thought. These strategies are used especially during Phase II: Inspiration, when the client is being introduced to his/her own negative schemas and thought processes along with a plan of action for reversing imprints, which no longer serve a purpose. The client's new paradigm is reinforced through group encouragement, feedback and other energy processes. Similar to Zen Buddhism, participants are taught to discipline the mind, to conserve energy, allowing the imagination to work in a positive way. The client moves from a beginners mind to the advanced student, able to become the observer of the experience, and a master of the universal spiritual laws. This place of mindfulness allows the participant to move on to higher levels of consciousness, awareness, clarity, and spirituality, becoming one with the sacred.

Drama Therapy

The Imagination model is a dramatic therapeutic adventure. The 21 structured choreographed sessions are a series of sequential therapeutic activities requiring specific lighting, music, sound and movement in a perfected experiential encounter. Individuals actively participate in each series of 7 sequential group processes with the entire group or sub-group (known as family group). Each session has a specific goal, focus and design, yet moves and honors the energy in the room and so 'goes with the flow' of what is needed in any individual circumstance, which may arise. Imagination utilizes many

different drama therapy techniques combined and integrated together in its own unique design.

Drama therapy is a profession and an action method which is utilized clinically and psychoeducationally. Clinical Drama Therapy is an embodied action method in which a client, the drama therapist(s) and /or group members engage in improvisational play or the enactment of habitual scenes or roles from an individual's life, dreams or fantasies. For many, clinical drama therapy is a depth approach that utilizes the unconscious and in some cases the transference and countertransference relationships while entering into the realm of imagination of the client (Lewis, 2000, p. 442).

Techniques from the field of drama therapy which are employed in Imagination include authentic sound, movement and drama, improvisation and role playing, family sculpting, interactive theater, psychodrama, sand play, opening and closing ritual, freeplay, guided shamanic journeys and visualizations, mask making, replay, role rehearsal, monologue, soliloquy, theater games, therapeutic and transformational theater. These techniques are woven together with other creative therapeutic techniques creating the masterpiece: Imagination.

Sound Therapy

In Imagination participants including facilitators sing, chant, use mantras, tone, warm up the voice, create new names in song and sound, use heartbeat recordings, play musical instruments, especially drumming and rattling, use repetitive sounds with ritual techniques and employ evocative instrumental music for many of the processes. There is a healing power in music and the human voice; which have been used throughout history as natural therapies for healing. According to Olivia Dewhurst-Maddock,

“healing mantras, chants, and incantations have very ancient and obscure origins. Egyptian medical papyri from 2,600 years ago refer to incantations as cures for infertility, rheumatic pain, and insect bites. In about 324 BC, the music of the lyre restored Alexander the Great to sanity. The Old Testament records that David played his harp and lifted King Saul’s depression. The Essenes and Therapeutai used sacred words for healing. And, in Hellenistic culture, flute playing eased the pain of sciatica and gout. Knowledge of sounds, rhythms, and chants was an essential ingredient in the healing powers of the shaman, the medicine man or woman, and the druidic priest-doctors of Celtic cultures. The power of music to evoke emotional response has been a recurring theme of poetic celebration, and the life-blood of performance. Music can bypass the mind’s logical and analytical filters, to make direct contact with profound feelings and passions deep in the memory and imagination. This in turn, produces physical reactions”(Dewhurst-Maddock, 1993, pp. 11-12).

Specific music is used for each of the 21 psychospiritual group experiences; mediations, visualizations and integrative breathwork sessions. Each piece of music is chosen for its vibrational quality and healing effects. Research by sound therapists and biologists has demonstrated the effects of sound vibrations on living cells. Specific sound frequencies that relate to parts of the body have been identified (Maddock, 1993). The Imagination model works with sound and music, matching music to different parts of the body for release in the corresponding body area or chakras.

In *Music and Miracles*, Patricia Warming reports Jung as writing in 1950,

“Music certainly has to do with the collective unconscious...this is evident in Wagner, for example. Music expresses, in some way, the movement of the feelings (or emotional values) that cling to the unconscious processes. The nature of what happens in the collective unconscious is archetypal, and archetypes always have a numinous quality that expresses itself in emotional stress. Music expresses in sounds what fantasies and visions express in visual images” (Warming, 1992, p.233).

Art Therapy

Art is another creative arts therapy utilized in the Imagination model. Participants may be painting, drawing, creating a fear sculpture or quietly completing a breathwork through a mandala piece. There are art projects in the Imagination workbooks to complete, extra drawing pages, and art projects to render during the sessions.

Participants are painting for the process - the healing and transformation; accessing yet another doorway into an experience with the true self, once again releasing and energizing the soul.

“When you paint for process you listen to the magic of the inner voices, you follow the basic human urge to experiment with the new, the unknown, the mysterious, the hidden. Creation is a response. To create is to move into the unknown – to move into the mystery of yourself, to have feeling, to awaken buried perceptions, to be alive and free without worrying about the result” (Cassou and Cubley, 1995, p.5).

The Imagination painting processes and experiences allow participants to journey to the innate creativity inside. When the body/mind expresses, one becomes free, takes risks, and uses color for vibratory healing. Every color has a vibration and is rich with meaning, corresponding to different vibratory frequencies in the emotional, mental, physical and spiritual body. The soul speaks through the hands and the paintbrushes engaging and revealing the psyche. Paintings become symbols and metaphors for the healing and transformation process. Every part of every work of art is purposeful and part of the process.

Movement and Dance

The Imagination process utilizes movement and dance in an effort to free the body, heal past wounds protected by body armor, and open to the passion of the soul in the creation of a new future. We dance ecstatically, move, march, play, do the copycat dance, slip and slide, mill around, become animals or engage the angry walking process. Some use dance to chasm jump (stretch their limits) or for final transformational theater presentations as an initiation rite. According to Gabriel Roth,

“your body is the ground metaphor of your life, the expression of your existence. It is your Bible, your encyclopedia, your life story. Everything that happens to you is stored and reflected in your body. Your body knows, your body tells. So the body is where the dancing path to wholeness must begin. Only when you truly inhabit your body can you begin the healing journey” (Roth, 1989, p. 29 &30).

Dancing and moving heals.

Dance for healing is about moving. With every movement, you embody the creative fire. There, with the dance, your body has a life of its own. Within every one of us is a dancer. Dance heals by spiraling us down inside ourselves to a center where tensions are released and there is freedom and spaciousness. To dance is to harness the fire inside your belly that moves you. Dance is a vehicle for emotional expression, an opportunity to embody emotions. In dance, you are truly embodied, translating thought and emotion into movement. When you get cells moving, neurotransmitters flow, endorphins flow. You express any fluidity you are capable of. Whatever is tense is let go. The body itself leads you to where it wants to be naturally. It is this deeper place of being where you (Samuels, and Lane, 1998).

Writing and Poetry

Writing is a therapeutic component of the Imagination model. This encompasses journaling, prose, poetry, song writing, monologue and more. There are writing

assignments every day of the process contained within the workbooks including a place to write intention, affirmation, and feelings. Writing gives the client a way to express feelings, commit to words, open awareness and express. The writing process begins when the client writes the original Life and Family History. This is a 30 page piece of writing in which the writer must answer questions about his childhood, grandparents, parents, losses, addictions, health, dreams, money, education, birth process, fears, feelings, wishes, obstacles, relationships, life traumas and belief systems. Once individuals commit to writing their life histories, the process is engaged.

Workbook assignments may be anything from subordinate handwriting by the inner child, a goodbye letter to mom or dad or a poem written by the “shadow.” I believe what John Fox writes about in *Poetic Medicine*, is true for all healing writing assignments

“Poetry is a natural medicine, it is like a homeopathic tincture derived from the stuff of life itself – *your experience*. Poems distill experience into the essentials. Our personal experiences touch the common ground we share with others. The exciting part of this process is that poetry used in this healing way helps people integrate the disparate, even fragmented parts of their life. Poetic essences of sound, metaphor, image, feeling and rhythm act as remedies that can elegantly strengthen our whole system – physical, mental and spiritual” (Fox, 1997, p.3).

Writing is a form of therapy and art as the writer is able to release feelings, heal wounds, process grief, commit to new ways of being, set healthy goals, and externalize experiences. Everyone has a story to tell, a poem to write, a song to sing. Our healing becomes art as we capture our own soul and true essence in the writing process.

Breathwork

Participants come to Solutions Center for Personal Growth, Inc. one day a week for 21 weeks and include one weekend per month for an intensive Imagination Weekend Experience and/or a Breathworkshop.

The breathwork, a deep breathing combined with evocative music, is an integral part of the Imagination work, allowing one access to the depth levels of consciousness – the sensory, biographical, perinatal and transpersonal bands of consciousness as written about by Dr. Stanislav Grof in *The Holotropic Mind* (1990). Grof says,

“this seemingly simple process, combining breathing, evocative music, and other forms of sound, body work, and artistic expression, has an extraordinary potential for opening the way for exploring the entire spectrum of the inner world. In work with non-ordinary states, significant biographical material from our earliest years frequently starts coming to the surface in the first few sessions. Not only do people gain access to memories of their childhood and infancy, they often vividly connect with their births and their lives within the womb and begin venturing into a realm of experience even beyond these”(Groff 1990).

Healthy Life Force Eating , Exercise, Yoga and Meditation

As part of a whole process, the Imagination model at Solutions, goes beyond the therapy room, group process and individual sessions encouraging participants to commit to live foods, seasonal fasting, exercise, yoga and meditation as ingredients in the healing and transformation process. What individuals take into the body, how they move or do not move, is part of an integrated whole. Ingestion and movement are absolutely necessary for holistic health. Becoming conscious and mindful of the physical condition is equally as important as healing the past. In fact, a person’s body is the past manifested. “Your

biography becomes your biology” said Caroline Myss (1997). We are called to detoxify and cleanse our bodies and begin to honor our bodies as we are so doing with our minds and emotions. Hence, the work at Solutions is a bio/psycho/spiritual/integration process.

CONSCIOUS EATING

Dr. Gabriel Cousens, a most fascinating teacher in the field of conscious eating, live foods and spiritual nutrition writes,

Our relationship to food is a primary means of survival, which enables us to relate to others and learn the lessons we need to learn while on this earth. What we eat is both the cause and the effect of our awareness. It reflects our ongoing harmony with ourselves, the world, the universal laws, and all of creation. Individualizing one’s diet at the most refined level is eating to further enhance communion with the Divine. The art of conscious eating lies in creating an individualized diet that reflects and supports one’s realization of the highest state of awareness and that is appropriate for the functions in the world of one’s everyday life. (Cousens, 2000, p. 6).

A healthy eating and exercise plan is developed for each client, which supports these energies to activate and increase energy potential for the awakening of the spiritual energy.

If an individual is addicted to alcohol, cigarettes, drugs or any kind of substance, including sugar white flour products or caffeine, the Imagination process is affected. Food is a vibratory energy system - dead or alive, with little or much life force. Simply, when individuals ingest live foods as part of the daily diet, they are cleansing the system of blockages, which correspond to emotional blockages. Every organ in the body corresponds to an emotional issue. Every illness has an emotional counterpart. Working

on the physical is a way of working on the emotional and mental aspects of the Self, as body and mind are not separated.

As the body is the manifestation of an individual's beliefs, thoughts, feelings, behaviors and life patterns; the body cells, tissues and organs are seeded with information and memories from all time, including the past, present and future. As individuals bring more life force into their bodies, they are more clear and able to access this information. As the toxins leave, so might sadness and pain.

Spiritual Fasting

Solutions also offers opportunities for spiritual fasting. According to Cousens,

“Spiritual fasting is conducive to rest and rejuvenation on every level of mind, body, and spirit. It allows our physical bodies to turn to the assimilation of Divine or cosmic energy rather than biochemical energy. Because fasting accelerates purification of the body, it enhances the movement of all levels of energy in the body, including the spiritualizing energy. Fasting has a powerful effect on the body as well as the spirit. It allows the vital force within to rebuild and recharge. Overall mind-body organization is increased with fasting. It is this curative force, which throws off the accumulated toxins, clears the dead cells, and rebalance and rejuvenates the body (Cousens, 2000 p. 229-231).

Yoga

Yoga is also recommended and offered at our holistic healing center, Solutions Center for Personal Growth, Inc.

Yogic teachings focus on the union of the individual with the universal. Yogic practices encourage the development of physical self-regulation and autonomic self-control through prescribed exercises. This enhanced voluntary control over physiological states and processes is believed to be the key to self-realization.

Yoga is based on a view of the self similar to that held by Carl Jung; an eternal, unchanging essence that is the common inheritance of all the people (Bankart, 1997, p. 473).

The yogic practices of meditation, postures, breathing, concentration and control of vital energy greatly enhance the Imagination process as participants are actively promoting the integration of the physical, social, emotional, behavioral and spiritual ways of being. According to Frager & Fadiman (1984),

The discipline of Yoga must include a complete reformation of consciousness. Otherwise the subconscious tendencies eventually will seek to actualize themselves, sprouting suddenly like dormant sides. Through meditation, self-analysis, and other powerful inner disciplines, it is possible to “roast” such seeds, to destroy their potential for further activity; that is through fundamental inner change we can grow free of the influence of the past. (Frager & Fadiman, 1984, p. 411).

Meditation

Meditation is another prescribed practice of the Imagination model. Participants are asked to mediate every day and learn different types of meditation through the workbooks and group practices. “Meditation, which is at the heart of yoga, is known as the royal path toward self-realization, or God consciousness. Through our purified or disciplined consciousness, we can discover our immortal substance, our true identity – the ego transcending Self” (Feuerstein and Bodian, 1993). Imagination teaches meditation so the student will learn to calm the mind, let go and be open to the world and to love.

Exercise

Daily aerobic exercise, which might include walking, running, dancing, or any exercise, which brings more oxygen into the body, is also a part of the process. As the healing process is about bringing light to the darkness, making conscious that which has been unconscious, so oxygen acts as the light, or life force of breath. Any activity, which requires the breath, is a healing and transformational practice. As for the emotional effects of aerobic exercise, Brigham reports in *Imagery for Getting Well*,

“Research tells us that aerobic exercise: is a natural outlet for tension, anxiety and aggression; increases the release of endorphins, has a calming effect on the mind, contributes to better sleep, increases stimulation of the right hemisphere of the brain, allowing for greater creativity, particularly during the exercise, builds self-esteem, confidence and a sense of joy in being in charge of your life, an enhanced ability to enjoy the senses, an awareness of physical well being, a feeling of independence, and self-responsibility, allows one to turn inward, to be in touch with what it feels like inside oneself, to be connected with one’s body and with the miracle of life and being and finally can be used as a meditation connecting one with others, the planet and the universe (Brigham, 1994, p 162-163).

Integrative Bodywork and Massage

Brigham describes therapeutic touch:

“Therapeutic touch (TT) is a technique whereby energy is transmitted from one person to another for the purpose of healing. In a sense, it goes beyond merely relieving pain or helping lungs to clear. It brings everything together. In my mind, TT is tapping into the wholeness and unity of the universe and becoming attuned to the energies of the universe, in which lies true healing of the body, mind and spirit.” (Brigham, 1994, p. 251).

Integrative bodywork is offered at Solutions as an integral aspect of the Imagination process, the whole program. Bodyworkers, who are licensed massage therapists, practice massage, Reike, Cranial-Sacral therapy and Emotional Release work. Each unique type of hands on work begins with an intention and focus for healing, cleansing, relaxation, and release of any energy blockages in the body. Brigham continues,

“People are energy fields. The energy field is the fundamental unit of a living system, and as Einstein indicates, the physical is just one manifestation of that energy. TT assumes that sickness or pain is merely an imbalance or blockages in the energy field, and that people are open systems engaged in continuous interaction with the environment. Therefore, when on person utilizes his or her intent to heal another, the energy transfer takes place, stimulating healing in the other person.” (1994, p. 252).

Role of the Therapist

The therapist is the mentor, teacher, counselor, guide, shaman, healer and magician. The therapist is active and wise, listening to her own inner voice to direct each scene in the production, the group process, allowing the work to “go with the flow” when needed, perhaps diverting from the original plan, although moving always toward the goal. The therapist is an integrator, knowing from whence each theory originated, yet has added her own unique personality to the design. She knows how to create safe and sacred space. People feel safe with her because she remembers how to love.

The therapist has done her own personal work, and is ever moving in her own process of healing and transformation. The therapist is a role model, living the spiritual law and

is a human being as well, with strengths and weaknesses that she tells about when appropriate. She is a storyteller, and surely has a story to tell. How else would she be directing this play, writing the lyrics and melody, putting it all together in this grand design, this tapestry of music, light, sound, love and compassion, healing and transformation into the imagination?

Populations Served

I say quite often, when speaking about Imagination at Solutions Center for Personal Growth, Inc. that just about anyone off the street would benefit from this model of personal growth, healing, transformation and spiritual awakening. Anyone in need of healing past trauma and abuse will definitely benefit from this holistic healing approach, as well as those with subtle negative programming from rigid and perfectionistic families, who do not always know “what is wrong with them.” Imagination especially appeals to those who are wondering what to do next in their life, for those who are seeking their mission and purpose and for individuals who are ready to make major life changes.

Couples come to the program often and have excellent results as each does his and her own healing process as well as learn communication skills for practicing loving kindness.

The model has worked well for clients with depression or other mood disorders, PTSD or any other kind of disorder where pain and trauma has been repressed with a resulting phobia, anxiety or panic disorder. Often times, people come with physical illness or complaints, and they too benefit from this model, becoming aware of the physical

manifestation of their emotional core issues. Most every client I have ever treated has eventually been able to go off of anti-depressant and anxiety reducing medications at the end of their program. Imagination has been used in coordination with addiction treatment programs as part of an intensive outpatient process, where the client is also attending addiction group or 12 step programs. The Imagination model is offered to all age groups, including children and teens.

Summary:

Imagination at Soul Studies Institute, is an integrated holistic healing model, which takes into account the many aspects of the human being - being alive – body, mind, and spirit.

The Imagination components, processes, therapies, techniques and theories are interdependent, and create a whole and complete healing process. The Imagination model works with energy and vibration, past, present and future, incorporating experiences which release the old and bring in the new. Everything a person thinks, feels, believes and practices becomes part of the process. Life takes on new meaning once Imagination is engaged.

I have been the honored guest at many a healing, experiencing those who desire to heal and transform their lives, live in greatness and love. There is an incredible perfection in this process, and I am honored to be the teacher of this work.

CASE EXAMPLES

1. Dave came into the Solutions Center one day in a business suit with slick backed hair driving a high priced car. He said he hated his job and all the pressure of his life. After one 7-week phase and a breathwork session he quit his job and began to roam the beach for a short time. Soon he began picking up beach artifacts and making jewelry. Today he has an abundant business selling his jewelry all over the world.
2. Mary called Solutions one afternoon, drunk, suicidal and feeling guilty about everything in her life. She hated herself and was ready to end it all. During the Imagination process, she was regressed to a time in the womb where she saw that she had a twin brother. The twin brother died at birth and Mary realized she had felt guilty all of her life for being alive. Mary asked her 80-year-old mother if this was true – had she indeed had a twin brother who died. “Yes”, her mother said, “we never wanted you to know.”
3. Josephine came into Solutions Center reporting that she saw visions and heard scary voices all of her life. She was fearful of taking showers and leaving the house. During one particular Imagination process, she began to have memories of someone being murdered in a bathroom with the shower water running. Josephine went into spiritual emergency, thinking she was “going crazy” as the information became more and more real and vivid; she stayed with the process, breathed, and continued to allow the information to come forth as her body and the therapist’s body became a container for this information buried deep in her

soul memory. Josephine reported the information as it came up, crying, feeling scared yet in a safe place to do the work. Since that day, Josephine is able to take showers and leave her home without fear. She immediately went to sign up for college courses so to become a therapist to help others through the same kind of mysterious experiences.

4. Martha and Joe came into Solutions Center because they were having trouble communicating in their marriage. Martha felt as though she was care taking Joe, who was always sick. As both Martha and Joe participated in the Imagination process, each one became aware of the childhood roles they played – Martha had been the caretaker of the family and Joe had been the responsible little boy. He was needless and wantless, no one ever took care of him. In their marriage, Joe was ill all the time needing permission to not be so responsible and desiring someone to take care of him. As they both did their own personal work, the marriage communication became better and stronger. Each became responsible for their feelings and took responsibility for their behaviors. Today, they are very excited and happy about their deep and loving communication.
5. Olivia was a 15-year-old teenager who got caught cheating on a test and took an overdose of Advil, ending up at the hospital. Her parents discovered she had also had sex and tried alcohol and drugs, as this information was on the hospital record. After the 21 week Imagination process, Olivia was able to believe in herself, let go of peer pressure and gave herself permission to be real. Today she

- leads other teenagers into the program and has decided to abstain from drugs and alcohol.
6. Michael was fearful of swimming, almost drowning many times in his life and experienced depression and panic attacks in addition to self-mutilation behaviors. During the Imagination process and several breathwork sessions, Michael became aware that his umbilical cord had been wrapped around his neck in the womb. Additionally in an altered state, Michael had a memory of his father kicking his mother's stomach while he was in the womb. Michael's first imprint was one full of anxiety, panic and abuse. This pattern continued to be re-enacted until Michael healed his birth and womb experience through 21 weeks of the Imagination process. Since that time, Michael has had no more near drowning experiences, does not hurt himself anymore, created a healthy family and reports feeling happy, free and safe.
 7. Susie was married to a person who was very controlling, did not want her to work, and made all the money decisions in the house. Susie, who was very fearful of her husband, came to Solutions often having lied about where she was. After 21 weeks of Imagination, Susie reclaimed her wounded inner child who had been beaten and controlled by her father for 12 years. As she completed the process, she also divorced her husband and began to paint wooden bowls. Today, she has a prosperous painting business, selling painted bowls and furniture, expressing her joy and teaching other women to express.

The stories go on and on. Every day, the people come to Solutions Center and into the process and leave transformed. Participants transform their fears and insecurities into power, discover true mission and purpose, begin new careers, new relationships, are willing and eager to create a life with no limits and connect to something greater outside of themselves – the universe, the divine. We move through time and space together into the mystery of this universe. We open our hearts to love and we love ourselves happy, joyous and free.

EPILOGUE

In all my years of work there is one thing that I have loved the most,
the healing secret, if you will:
that one who risks to speak the truth,
to go inside the depths of one's own psyche
and make known the pain, the joy,
in pure expression
brings healing and transformation
to the journey.

In this way,
the dance between
consciousness and unconsciousness
takes on the story told,

our past,

our dreams,

our love of life.

We are the players in our play.

And when we seek to tell our story,

change our script

and dance our dance,

we honor our own soul.

We write,

we paint,

we sculpt,

we dance,

we move,

we sound,

we sing,

we touch.

We act the parts of all our selves inside,

the ones we love,

the ones we have disowned.

So then we see just who has been

living 'me'.

We can express our history,
our childhood,
and see
in color, light and sound
just where we've been.

The expression is the journey.

So in our work, we build the sacred space,
the sacred bridge—
the womb in which our new intentions
lay to be ignited by the energy of arts —
our masterpiece unfolds.

Our wounds will heal here,
as we trust the process of it all.

We enter the symbolic
and imaginal realm
as we call in our artist Self.

And here, our imagination has a chance!

We use our body,
mind and soul
to navigate the layers of our own
rhythms of energy.

Our bodies
are involved as well.
We move them
in the consciousness of whatever
is coming up for us.

We are closed,
or we are open.

Our bodies tell the secrets
as they move.

Creative arts
allow us to embody all our parts,
our selves,
our pain
and feelings.

There is a transformative power
in expression,
which goes beyond the therapist's chair
in quiet talk.

The talk must one day cease,
and movement must begin
to take its place.

In this expression
we dare to re-enact
whatever holds us
in our pain and patterns.

There is a melody,
which sings our song,
and if it is not written yet,
we write.

We dare to write,
explore the themes of our own lives
that have occurred
at each level of our growth.

There is a re-experiencing,
a re-claiming of our wholeness,
when we bring the story
from the deepness
of our body memories -
the crevices and shadows
of our existence,
into the light of this
reality.

My passion – expression!

For there were days,

I sat in my own corner twirling hair,

my inner child still locked inside.

There was that moment when some helper said,

“come and tell your story,

dance your dance, laugh with me.”

There was the call –

the awakening –

a whole part of my consciousness

I had not even touched!

The years have gone by

quickly now.

I have evolved.

I have become the

Expressive

Therapeutic

Artist.

I have written the opera

of my life!

You think you cannot paint,

or write,

or sing,

or dance.

Your fears and shame sit in your

heart and soul

and wait for you to invite them out to play,

to become real,

to be exposed.

Your patterns keep you prisoner –

as they play old dramas

over and over and over.

There is a way to set them free –

to be,

spontaneous again,

to heal, and know

that all is perfect.

There is a reason for it all.

The universe is changing

every day

and we are one

together walking through our
journey toward the meaning and the purpose.

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FURTHER TRAINING

Soul Studies Institute, Inc. offers training and certification in this integrated and holistic healing model, Imagination, under the supervision of Wendyne Limber, MA., LMFT. In addition, Soul Studies Institute has joined The Institute for Healing and Wellness, Inc, and Omega Theater in Boston, to offer training toward an MA degree in Transpersonal Transformational Creative Arts Therapy through Lesley University's Independent Degree Program. We are offering classes, mentorship, advising, supervision, internships and practica in addition to Imagination Certification and a Certificate in Transpersonal Drama Therapy which fulfills Alternate Route Academic requirements towards RDT (Registered Drama Therapist) credentialing with the National Association for Drama Therapy (NADT.)

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