

Imagery Here and There

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probably because we are having one of the mildest winters on record. I know, I know. People who don't live here would not think that below zero weather was mild, but we have only had a few days of cold weather, not months of it. So, to us hearty Minnesotans, this weather is mild.

Anyway, I was staring at Wylie and he was staring silently at me - or should I say he was probably thinking what a great snack my Turbo would be. Turbo was pulling and straining on his leash and I was trying to reason with him: "Be quiet," I urged him. "Do you want Wylie to eat you?" Of course, Turbo did not listen and so, in the midst of his pulling and my trying to get a better look at Wylie, I twisted wrong and it happened. I fell. I mean, I FELL. And as I said before, falling in the winter is really not that big of a deal most of the time. Usually I feel myself slip and can fall gently. Not

this time. I fell with a CRUNCH that had nothing to do with the ice and snow. Boy, did I hurt! I sat there for a few seconds and I realized that my little finger wouldn't move and my ribs hurt with each breath. Well, oh my. I tried to get up but by this time Turbo was beside himself: trying to lick me and pulling to get at Wylie at the same time. Finally I got up only to find that Wylie had disappeared. I could barely move. My ribs hurt so bad I thought I'd probably broken one of them. And my little finger was already turning the most stunning color of red and black.

So, I limped home. I was only a mile from my house at this point and being very macho about my hobby, I was not about to have John come and get me. After all, I walk in the winter and I am ENLIGHTENED.....

John met me at the door with such love and understanding: "You try to make friends with a wild animal, you walk in conditions that only an idiot would do, and then you probably break your ribs and your finger...but oh, no..... does anyone ever listen to me? Oh no...." (John always says

this).

I whisper to him past my hurt ribs: "You don't understand. It has to do with Enlightenment."

"What?" He nearly screeches. "Did you hit your head, too?" By now he is muttering about Turbo getting eaten by the "damn coyote" and my "obsession" with walking and why can't I just walk on the treadmill like a normal person? After none too gently taping my fingers together, he declares that I haven't broken my ribs, probably just badly bruised them, and that it will be bad for a time. (John knows all about injuries, just ask him. After all HE has taken an Athletic Injury course in College.) And, by the way, he wants to know, did I want to go to the ER?

So after a week with very bruised ribs and not being able to use my little finger I realize: I am ENLIGHTENED!! I have deeper spiritual understanding! AND.... I have met Wylie!!

If only my ribs didn't hurt so bad.....

The Blue-Gown Senior Prom



**By
Kathryn de
Planque, PhD**

In Buddhism, according to Mr. Webster, Enlightenment is defined as "a final blessed state marked by the absence of desire or suffering." That brings to mind those with whom I have the privilege to serve who are experiencing chronic pain and are seeking "the absence of suffering." In treatment we discuss the difference between feeling pain and suffering. That distinction is often part of the powerful healing process of Enlightenment which dissolves the fears and darkness associated with pain. This process involves rising above the pain and healing in the light of love, often with the use of Imagery and/or meditation. Clients often experience an Image of white light with this healing. To

witness someone bathing in the healing light makes it easy to connect and become part of that powerful experience with them.

Those who feel imprisoned by the limitations of their own bodies will often be motivated to use the tools that Imagery provides and seek the power of liberation and Enlightened perspective that alleviates the physical pain. Enlightenment is a process, not an instant response, much like healing, a journey beyond the physical into the spiritual realm. Some find the capacity of their own spirit for the first time. Emotional and/or physical pain

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sometimes inspires one's self-transformation.

I work in a Pediatric Pain Program providing hypnotherapy. For some of the teenagers, I find that the powerful use of intention and/or personal faith to connect with the universal energy of Love is especially seen as the greatest of healers. Inviting this "Image of Enlightenment" into their bodies and connecting with their own spirits can produce the most miraculous results. I have had the good fortune of observing this process many times in my practice.

One particular remembrance is that of a lovely 17-year-old female who was in a wheelchair due her severe CRPS (Central Regional Pain Syndrome). It is important to understand that CRPS is complicated and often takes months or years to heal. Additionally, she was depressed because this was her Senior year and she had been looking forward to the fun events leading up to her graduation, especially the Prom. Instead, due to her severe pain, she was unable to attend school, let alone enjoy any activities. She chose to use the power of the healing light in order to achieve her goal of attending the Prom two months hence. Her healing process was clearly her journey into Enlightenment.

In the very beginning, I used Guided Imagery to help her relax and guide her focus away from the dark and heavy feelings of pain and, instead, connect with her Spirit. She began using the power of white light Imagery to accomplish her goal



of getting out of the wheelchair and into a walker. Because of her strong belief in God, she Imagined the light as God's love filling every part of her body and connecting with her inner spirit. The white light gently illuminated the heaviness of her aches and allowed her to feel weightless. After 3 sessions of using this Imagery and practicing at home, she was able to move herself out of the wheelchair. Her mother cried that day. Once she started using the walker and received physical therapy, her legs became much stronger, she felt greater optimism and hope, and was able to return to school. Within a couple of weeks, she moved from the walker to a cane, and shortly thereafter walked independently.

During her last few sessions with me, she Imagined herself in a beautiful blue gown dancing at the Prom with her boyfriend. I will never forget this 17-year-old's kindness when she called me just prior to leaving for her Prom. She

told me, with great excitement and delight, that she was wearing the beautiful blue gown she had seen in her Imagery. It brought tears to my eyes, and I felt so blessed to share in her amazing achievement and joy. After all, being 17 and going to the Senior Prom is one ultimate high school memory for many of us.

Kathryn de Planque PhD became certified in Integrative Imagery in 2009 through Beyond Ordinary Nursing. Over the past twelve years she has served as an integrative clinician on UCLA's Pediatric Pain Team providing hypnotherapy, Guided Imagery, and Reiki for stress reduction in chronic pain. Considering it a privilege to work with children and young adults experiencing chronic pain and disease, she refers to them as "My Kids," and honors them for being the remarkable heroes they are. Through her private practice she also serves as a Clinical Consultant for the Simms/Mann UCLA Center for Integrative Oncology where she facilitates meditation groups for men and women with cancer to learn relaxation, enhancement of the immune system, and a sense of spiritual well-being.