

Imagery Here & There

By Jann Fredrickson

Advanced Imagery 307

I was pondering last week just how long I have been "doing imagery". I started my training with the Academy for Guided Imagery in 1985. Yes, it has been a whopping twenty years of doing imagery and seeing its power and wonder. Over the years, my style has grown to become my own "Jann Speak" —a compilation of three modalities with a little added spirituality in the mix. I thought I might share some of this with you. Call it advanced Imagery 307.

1. Thought Field Therapy is a powerful technique founded by Roger Callahan, Ph.D. It has been described as "emotional accupuncture" and I have found that when I combine it with imagery, the results are interesting and at times, down right astounding. I use the technique like this: Say a patient comes in because they cannot get a repeating image out of their mind. This is typical in trauma (my area of expertise) and obsessive compulsive complaints.

Before even doing the imagery, I have the patient use the specific tapping points for whatever their complaint is. (You can learn more in Callahan's book, *The Five Minute Phobia Cure*). I then do the imagery protocol as taught by AGI or BON. Why do both? Because there is less resistance when I start with TFT and also, the TFT further grounds the imagery experience.

2. Several years ago, I was trained in the beginning part of EMDR but was not fond of the technique until I experienced it myself while "trading learning" with a colleague of mine. I then went on to get the second phase of training and I have to say, EMDR is a powerful, powerful technique. It gets down in there like nothing else will. Founded by Francine Shapiro, Ph.D., this technique can actually "cure" folks who have intractable depression, free floating anxiety, deep-seated trauma, and other maladies. EMDR works essentially by helping the brain "digest" the particular trauma by using bilateral stimulation. This can be done with light, or by having the eyes follow the therapist's hand movements back and forth, or by the use of a "tapper" which causes a light pulsing when the patient holds the tapping device. I now use EMDR in nearly all my imagery sessions. EMDR further enhances the imagery process.

HOWEVER, I must give a warning. Francine Shapiro does not allow anyone who is not licensed with a master's degree to take her training. This is not elitism. EMDR gets down to the core quickly and profoundly and unless one is familiar with certain pathology, one can cause further and not insignificant trauma. That's where imagery comes in. When I combine it with imagery, the results come just as quickly but with less intensity and trauma.

3. I now use music frequently in my sessions. Belleruth Naperstack has two music CD's that I just love. My favorite is "Inward Journey".
4. I often tell a story. I work more and more with people who are so traumatized they will not or cannot do imagery, EMDR is too much for them, and they think TFT is "dumb". So, I put on the music, give them the "tappers", and ask them to just listen to a story. The story weaves elements of their own life with whatever they are struggling with. This is a very directive approach that will work with most people. I will frequently tell the story of them in the third person. In order to do this, one must really know their patient and have the ability to tell a darn good yarn. This does not require anyone to close eyes or even "relax". I just say, get comfortable and listen to this most amazing story...

I'm going to use the next column to further discuss "Advanced Imagery 307" but let me end by saying something very simple:

Don't be afraid to test the boundaries. Use your wonderful instincts and do whatever works.

Jann