

Our Inner Wonderland: Using the Powers of Imagination for Deep Healing

Margo Adair

I never cease to be amazed at the profound nature of consciousness. For me it has been a journey into Alice's Wonderland. Ask a question and you already know the answer; make up a story and you find that you've described reality. Contrary to conventional wisdom, I have come to see the imagination as the aspect of consciousness best suited to reveal the truth of the matter. I have learned how profound this quality is in helping us bring about deep healing, for ourselves and those around us.

My journey began thirty years ago when I went through the exercises of Silva Mind Control. This involved six days of being lead through dozens of guided meditations, the last of which was called "doing a case." I was given only the name, age and address of someone who was struggling with a physical problem. I was expected to discover exactly what was happening with the person. When I heard the name of the woman I was to tune in on, I waited...but nothing happened. No inner voices told me what to say, no images popped into my mind. Meanwhile everyone in the room was waiting for me to say something. Left to my own devices, I used my imagination. I proceeded to make up a story, and talked for the next half hour. When I was finished I was told that everything I had said was accurate, down to the layout of the woman's kitchen, her dog's name, the print on her dress and the chalky substance on her spine.

This was an awe-inspiring experience. I was no longer a separate entity moving through the world. I was somehow intimately connected to everything. Having been raised in an academic family that viewed psychic phenomena as a hoax and spirituality as a way of escaping reality, I was entirely ill-equipped to understand this experience. If I could get to know someone by simply directing my imagination, there had to be much more to the intricacies of the universe than I'd ever been taught through a scientific worldview. My consciousness was infinitely more than I had ever imagined.

The experience showed me that we are all part of the cosmic whole. Each of us is held in the web of life—an invisible energy that connects *all that is*. And consciousness is entwined with this energy. I became committed to understanding the nature of consciousness and how we are all connected through it. I now believe that the imagination itself plays a central role. It is both the medium of psychic awareness, as well as mysteriously connected to probabilities. Imagination affects what actually happens in the world.

How does the imagination work?

Most of us have been taught that the imagination is the part of our consciousness that operates independent of reality. Think of how many times you have heard the expression "It's all in your imagination" as a way of declaring how *un-true* something is. The very opposite is the case. Our imagination has the powerful ability to depict reality.

It gives us information through our intuition, and is also able to establish patterns of energy that influence probability in the world around us.

Imagination and psychic knowing

We are all psychic. I have guided over a thousand people through case readings, and all of them are able to reveal the intimate details of total strangers, as I was. These case readings give people a direct experience of how we are connected. Yet many times people will discount the most accurate pieces of information first.

On one occasion, a case reader who was having trouble kept saying he wasn't getting anything. I encouraged him to just make it up. Eventually he said that he saw a man in a wheelchair and he didn't know why, but he thought the man couldn't walk. After this reader came out of his meditative state I informed him that he was correct—the person for whom he had read had become a paraplegic by falling off a roof. The reader's jaw dropped, and he told me that when he first heard the case subject's name he had seen the fleeting image of a man falling but had dismissed it.

Our rational selves are truly tenacious about dismissing the legitimacy of our inner perceptions! If we deny what we are aware of in those moments when we are the most attuned, we cut off access to our deepest sources of knowledge and healing. The knowing is easy; taking this awareness seriously is much more difficult. As we do, however, not only do we find we have more insight, but we feel part of—rather than apart from—the universe.

Imagination and the Healing Process

Both the world and our bodies are loyal to our imaginings. Part of the way I see healing work is in reclaiming the power of the imagination. I am often awed by both the profound opening that happens when people engage in their own healing, and how elegant the imagination is at providing a metaphoric, and highly accurate, depiction of reality. When working with the images and sensations, the objective and subjective realities influence each other. A shift on one side causes a shift on the other. Awareness and deep understanding come from being in tune with this inner dance.

The power of the imagination can be applied to our professional lives as healers as well. We know that our attitude about our patients' ability to heal affects the course of their healing. When working with our clients, we can tap into our own imagination, paying attention to the intuitive "hits" we receive. As the images arise, we learn to trust that they hold specific information—about the client's reality, or about a course of action we might take to facilitate healing. We can also use the powers of our imagination to touch base with ourselves about our work—to remind ourselves of our original intentions, or to chart a positive course for our future development.

It's all about probability.

Our subjective worlds are intuitively aware of what's going on in the objective world. And what happens in the outside world is shaped by what we are imagining subjectively. The world responds to our imaginings. Is it any surprise that the winning

lottery number in New York State on September 11, 2002 was 9-1-1? (Over five thousand New Yorkers won.) When you start directing the imagination, synchronous events will become commonplace. It has been my experience that when I begin taking responsibility for what my imagination is projecting, everything moves into synchrony.

Active Imagination, Receptive Imagination and the Inner Witness—Three Parts to the Whole.

I've come to appreciate that there are three aspects of consciousness that work together—the Active Imagination, Receptive Imagination and Inner Witness. When we become familiar with the dynamics of our inner-conscious world, we can experience how these aspects work together to bring about deep knowing. The practice of Applied Meditation integrates these three aspects of consciousness.

Active Imagination

If you have a vision to strive for, you can work with the *Active Imagination* to project a desired outcome. You align your energy with your goals and increase their probability. The Active Imagination is your inner visionary—helping you to become clearer, and increasing the likelihood that your goals will become reality.

When you imagine what you want as though it has already occurred (positive projection), several important things happen: your anticipation illuminates your path, pointing you in the direction of your goals; you provide yourself with an alternative point of reference, which in turn generates a new basis of behavior. (In effect, you inspire yourself.) You will find yourself having impulses that are congruent with your vision. It is as though you set up an internal compass. You so align yourself with your desires that you find yourself intuitively acting in accordance with what you want. You establish the plausibility of your desires rather than your fears.

Receptive Imagination

On the other hand, if you're unhappy and have no vision towards which to strive, you can work with what I call the *Receptive Imagination*. Here we employ the great story-making capacities of the imagination. In the process of letting a story unfold; exactly what is needed to shift the energy—or come to terms with it—becomes apparent.

The insights you receive will reveal what's needed.

Consider the example of someone endeavoring to heal herself of a cancerous tumor. She wants to imagine the tumor shrinking and then disappearing altogether. She finds that she can envision herself being well in a general way, but it becomes harder for her to feel a sense of wellness when her attention is focused on the area of her body where the cancerous growth is. She might be able to momentarily picture the growth disappearing, but then the sense slips away and the more familiar reality of the tumor fills her imagination.

Because the tumor is obstructing her feeling of well-being, the woman engages her Receptive Imagination in a story, portraying what the tumor cares about and conversing with it to try to find another way to address its concerns. Her imagination acts

as a barometer of her state of being: she can know in a profound way what is actually happening in her body and can directly participate with it. If she is successful, then she will be able to imagine the tumor shrinking. If she cannot sustain a sense of the tumor shrinking, then she can engage her deeper experience to discover how she can be at peace with herself and her body. The story-making she does elicits insights into what is needed for her to bring about change in her approach to her circumstances.

The Receptive Imagination calls for a combination of humility, trust, and playfulness. Story-making provides the context for your intuition and creative resources to come forth and address the issue at hand. Give yourself permission to play — the more you let go, open to, and work with your spontaneous responses, the more successful you will be. We have been taught that “making it up” is exactly the wrong thing to do. But this is the way that we intuit information.

The Inner Witness

The third aspect of the inner-conscious world is the *Inner Witness*—which can be likened to mindfulness in Eastern meditation practice. The Inner Witness is the observer. It notices expectations, desires, and where energy is leaning. You will find that where the energy seems to settle reveals current reality—the truth of the moment. Through paying close attention to the flow of energy and awareness you will know where attention is called for.

We all have a Witness, but we must pay attention to it if we are to hear what it perceives. When it is present life is graceful. It is as though the Witness sits on the ground of being itself. Real choice resides in the space between what takes place and your response to it — by expanding the space between stimulus and response; you claim your optimal well-being and effectiveness. The Witness both opens up and resides in this space. It is here that you recognize the answers that are right for you.

In the presence of the Inner Witness, you will find that your awareness takes on a soft and spacious quality. In this spacious awareness, information will come to you in several ways. You will find yourself paying attention to your first impressions, which are carriers of intuitive information. You’ll recognize realizations and become aware of new impulses. The Inner Witness will help you detect correspondences between internal and external limitations, helping you see the internal belief/energy patterns you hold that resonate with external limitations.

The Witness is mindful of both what is coming in and what is going out. For some it sits in the back of awareness, watching what emerges; for others it resides “in the gut.” It knows what you should embrace and what you should avoid. Everything that you learn in the presence of the Witness is vital for making fully informed choices. The Witness holds the key to freedom.

How we imagine our situation holds the key.

There's a subtle but profound relationship between what we can imagine and what's possible. Paying acute attention to what we *cannot* imagine is an important and often overlooked step. Simply thinking about a desired outcome is different from *fully expecting it will come to pass*. It is in this gap between what we can conceive of and what we can truly expect that the work lays.

By noticing where the imagination gets stuck or where the energy settles, we receive important clues to the truth of our situation. Awareness of these stuck places leads us to new ways of responding and helps us to point our efforts in the best direction for healing.

Reclaiming our Imagination

The gifts of our “inner wonderland”—Active Imagination, Receptive Imagination and the Inner Witness—bring powerful tools of awareness into our lives, for healing ourselves and our world. Through working with the imagination we receive insight, shape probabilities, and participate in a deep sense of connection to our world. We may live in a culture that paradoxically relegates the imagination to all that is not real, but by providing a stage upon which the imagination can play, we can all reclaim wholeness in our lives.

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For more information on Margo's work, go to www.margoadair.com, where you will also find examples of meditations. Or call 1-800-99-TOOLS.